

Southern Vermont CEDS

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Executive Summary



2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CEDS Strategic Direction builds on findings from the current and emerging trends analysis and incorporates elements from other regional plans and ongoing initiatives. The CEDS document identifies the overall themes and principles, priorities, goals, and strategies to guide the implementation of the CEDS.

✓ VISION STATEMENT

In 2030, the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone will be home to a resilient, creative, and inclusive community in which businesses and people thrive and prosper.

✓ OUTCOMES OF THE STRATEGY

A coordinated effort to implement the CEDS will lead to progress towards the following outcomes:

- **POPULATION:** Increased population and expansion of the workforce
- **BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT:** Diversified economy that supports job creation, wealth creation, and a sustainable and vibrant economy
- **QUALITY OF LIFE:** Improved quality of life, including access to housing, health care, and recreation assets
- **WORKFORCE:** Expanded quantity and quality of workers in the region
- **CLIMATE RESILIENCE:** Enhanced investment and ability to adapt to climate change impacts
- **COLLABORATION:** Tighter integration of cross-region and cross-state efforts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objectives and strategies established for the CEDS are listed below and specific actions related to each initiative are detailed in the full report.

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Invest in community assets that are attractive to young people
- B. Create programs to train, retain, and attract people with needed skills
- C. Foster an increasingly diverse population
- D. Continue to support policies that improve and strengthen the care and education system

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

- A. Enhance business potential for growth
- B. Strengthen the Southern Vermont entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem
- C. Establish a collaborative regional workforce development system
- D. Increase access to industrial and commercial space

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

- A. Invest in infrastructure and system upgrades to reduce and mitigate climate change impacts
- B. Increase housing options for all
- C. Improve civic and community engagement
- D. Reinforce Southern Vermont's recreation and cultural opportunities

OBJECTIVE 4

PROMOTE GREATER REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALIGNMENT

- A. Create and strengthen structures to support CEDS implementation
- B. Work regionally to address critical economic development issues

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Southern Vermont is a truly special place that has attracted people for decades. The area's open vistas, agricultural heritage, recreational assets, cultural offerings, quaint village centers, and fierce independence have long been cherished by both visitors and residents alike.

The CEDS is a tool that everyone in Southern Vermont can use. This includes towns and villages looking to make improvements, nonprofit organizations looking to advance their programming, and private companies looking to transition toward the future. The 2024 CEDS has been designed to identify new opportunities, tackle challenges, and prepare the region for future disruptions. **The vision is to keep moving toward a more resilient economic future for all that aligns with the region's values.**

NEED FOR ADAPTATION

The path forward demands resilience, innovation, and unity. **This strategy is a roadmap for essential transformation, guiding the region toward a more robust, adaptive, and sustainable economic future.**

The rapid pace of innovation, continuing climate change impacts, and trending demographic shifts make it clear that an adaptive approach is needed in Southern Vermont. While this strategy presents a range of initiatives aimed at addressing specific concerns, the key message is about fostering a shared culture of adaptation. This vision looks to improve tomorrow, and twenty years in the future.



DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS: Recent in-migration has benefited population trends, but Southern Vermont remains older and less diverse than surrounding regions. Refugee resettlement and remote work have increased diversity, and continued efforts to be welcoming to all and to attract younger residents remain essential.



INCOME LEVELS: Despite rising costs of living, particularly housing, income levels in Southern Vermont remain below regional averages. Expanding economic mobility and improving housing accessibility are critical priorities for building a more resilient economy.



INDUSTRY GROWTH: Major industries in Southern Vermont have experienced significant job losses over the past five years. Supporting businesses in diversifying their products, markets, and customer bases will enhance long-term sustainability and economic resilience.



RESILIENCY: Recent challenges, including floods and a warming climate, loss of major employers, and the pandemic, have tested Southern Vermont's resilience. Strengthening regional infrastructure and support systems is crucial for reducing vulnerability to future disruptions.



WORKFORCE: Southern Vermont faces a critical shortage of qualified workers across multiple sectors. Expanding training programs and improving recruitment strategies are essential for continued business relocation, operation and growth.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INFORMING ISSUES

Through the discussions, a series of informing issues rose to the top as critical to be addressed through the 2024 strategy:

WORKFORCE

The region faces a critical shortage of job-ready individuals with the skills and experience local industries require.

MIGRATION

As initial refugee resettlement efforts mature, they pave the way for family reunification and secondary migration, potentially bringing new skills, cultural diversity, and entrepreneurial spirit to the region.

HOUSING

Housing shortages and affordability issues have become critical impediments to economic progress in Southern Vermont.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SPACE

The shortage of developable commercial and industrial space, coupled with inadequate infrastructure for additional development, presents a significant barrier to business expansion in Southern Vermont.

DIVISIVENESS

A climate of divisiveness can create uncertainty, impede decision-making processes, and discourage investments in the public and private sector.

DEMOGRAPHICS

An aging population strains the healthcare system and reduces the available workforce while simultaneously creating gaps in civic engagement and leadership roles.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY

The region's vulnerability to heat and water-related issues poses significant risks to key economic drivers such as the hospitality and recreation industries, as well as to infrastructure and housing.

REMOTE WORK

While increased domestic migration can bring new talent and economic activity to the region, remote workers do not always have the same level of community integration.

PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Concerns about business and workforce readiness in the face of rapid change highlight the need for adaptive strategies and continuous learning initiatives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is intended to be implemented by everyone in Southern Vermont, not just economic development professionals.

The CEDS process facilitated important discussions about the region's future. Southern Vermont has identified opportunities for future growth and investment that leaders from all areas of the region can pursue, including:

MUNICIPALITIES & SCHOOLS:

- Utilize this document to align plans and initiatives with regional priorities and build resilience
- Enhance access to diverse funding and collaboration opportunities by networking and engaging with regional partners and submitting proposed projects to the CEDS

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS:

- Engage in collaborative efforts with regional organizations to implement key strategies
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by participating in regional networks and submitting significant projects to the CEDS

NON-PROFITS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

- Identify opportunities for your organization to play a role in economic growth and resilience building
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by submitting significant projects to the CEDS

RESIDENTS & LOCAL VOLUNTEERS:

- Utilize this plan to understand the region's long-term economic vision
- Support and engage with initiatives that align with identified regional priorities
- Volunteer, participate, and contribute to local, regional, and state initiatives

BUSINESSES:

- Gain insights into regional opportunities, strengths, and priorities to align your organization with complementary efforts.
- Utilize this plan to understand regional goals and identify opportunities for your organization's role in economic growth and resilience building
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by participating in regional networks and submitting significant projects to the CEDS

Southern Vermont CEDS

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



2024



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their support in the preparation of the Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

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Extending deep appreciation for all BDCC and BCRC staff for all their support, coordination, and input throughout the planning process.

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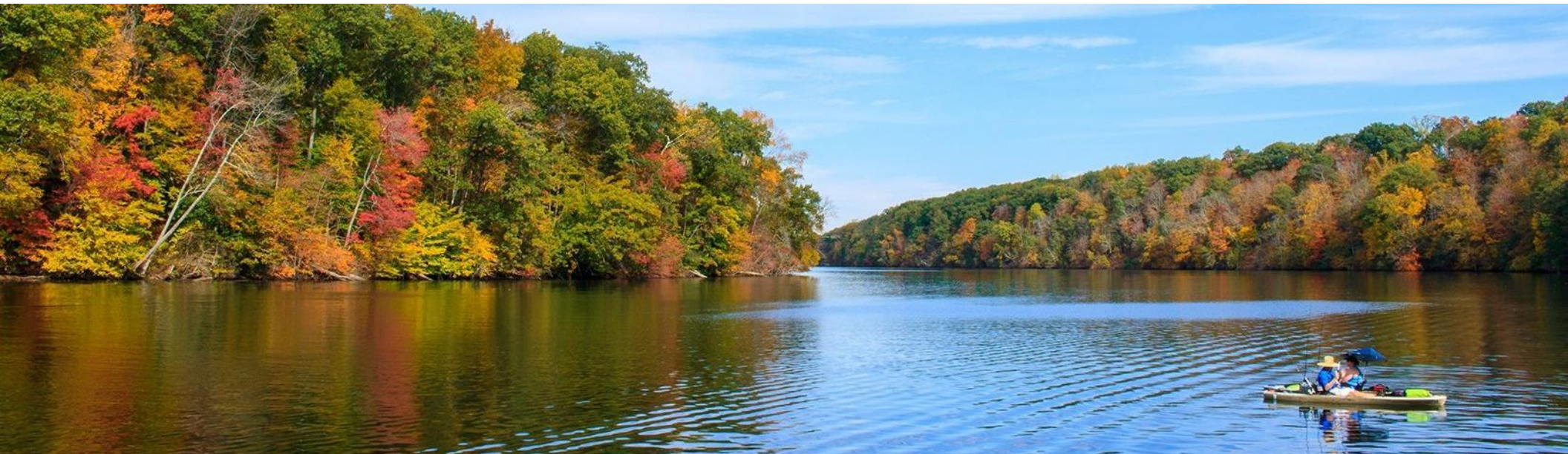
ATTACHMENTS

A: Action Plan Matrix

B: Existing Conditions Report

C: Background Documents

D: Southern Vermont CEDS 2024 Vital Projects List



1 INTRODUCTION

FOREWORD

In early 2024, the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) and the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) initiated an update to the 2019 Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

The 2019 CEDS was created with broad participation across Southern Vermont and has been exceptionally well implemented. Accomplishments include creating targeted workforce development programs in collaboration with regional school districts, increasing resident diversity through the Refugee Resettlement Program, construction of high-speed internet infrastructure through the region's two Communications Union Districts, supporting unique business opportunities, and making progress in addressing the region's critical housing issues.

There are many positive things in Southern Vermont. People love it because of its iconic natural beauty, inclusive community culture, and small-town lifestyle. However, without continued investment and attention on economic development aligned with community values, the trajectory of Southern Vermont will inevitably be towards greater inequity, a quickening pace of disinvestment, and overreliance on a shrinking tax base and pool of talent.

The CEDS is a tool that everyone in Southern Vermont can use. This includes towns and villages looking to make improvements, nonprofit organizations looking to advance their programming, and private companies looking to transition toward the future. The only way that Southern Vermont will be able to continue to make progress will be to work together.

The 2024 CEDS has been designed to identify new opportunities, tackle challenges, and prepare the region for future disruptions. **The vision is to keep moving toward a more resilient economic future for all that aligns with the region's values.**

NEED FOR ADAPTATION

Over the last five years, the pace of change has created both positive and negative impacts on the larger region and economy. The COVID-19 pandemic, a series of catastrophic flooding events for Southern Vermont, increased domestic and international in-migration, expansion of broadband across the region, changes in the employment base from consolidation and closures, and accelerated trends associated with remote work, artificial intelligence development, and their associated housing and community implications are just a few of the things that impacted the regional economy.

The rapid pace of innovation, continuing climate change impacts, and trending demographic shifts make it clear that an adaptive approach is needed in Southern Vermont. The region's challenges are persistent and evolving, requiring a proactive stance to ensure long-term viability and prosperity. While this strategy outlines various initiatives to address specific concerns, the overarching imperative is for the region to embrace a collective culture of adaptation that considers what to do to improve tomorrow and twenty years in the future.

This adaptation encompasses multiple facets of community and economic life. **It involves investing in community infrastructure to withstand and respond to climate change impacts, transforming healthcare, restructuring the educational system to align with shifting demographic realities, and supporting businesses in their transition to operating effectively with a constrained workforce.**

The path forward demands resilience, innovation, and unity. By acknowledging these challenges and committing to a flexible, forward-thinking approach, Southern Vermont can position itself to weather current difficulties in the face of future uncertainties. **This strategy is a roadmap for this essential transformation, guiding the region toward a more robust, adaptive, and sustainable economic future.**

WORK COMPLETED

The following tasks were completed to gain greater insights into the current and emerging concerns and opportunities for Southern Vermont.

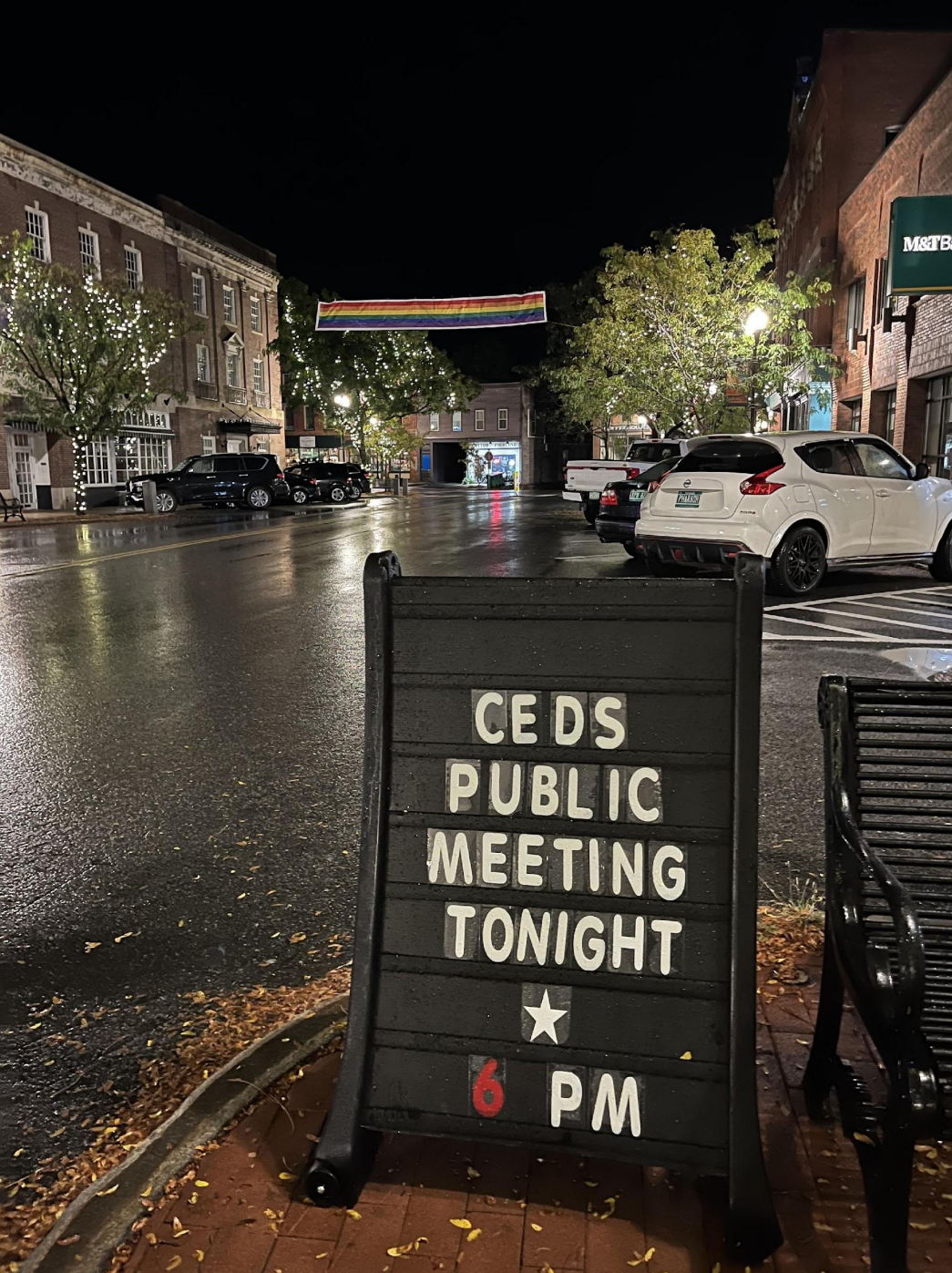
RESEARCH

- **Existing Conditions Profile:** A comprehensive data collection and analysis process was conducted to establish an understanding of the economic, demographic, and resilience-related data that is impacting Southern Vermont's ability to be economically successful. The full report is included in Attachment B with key findings outlined in the following section of this report.
- **Review of Other Documents:** The 2019 CEDS was reviewed and discussed regarding progress on implementation. In addition, town plans, housing needs assessments, statewide policy documents and studies, and other materials were reviewed for alignment with the 2024 CEDS. Full list of documents provided can be found in Attachment C near the end of the document.

ENGAGEMENT

- **Focus Groups:** A series of focus groups covered different topic areas. These included:
 - Workforce Development
 - Local Government
 - Entrepreneurs and Capital
 - Arts/Recreation/Tourism
 - Education
 - Housing
 - Infrastructure
 - Healthcare and Hospitals
 - Manufacturing
 - Agriculture/Forestry

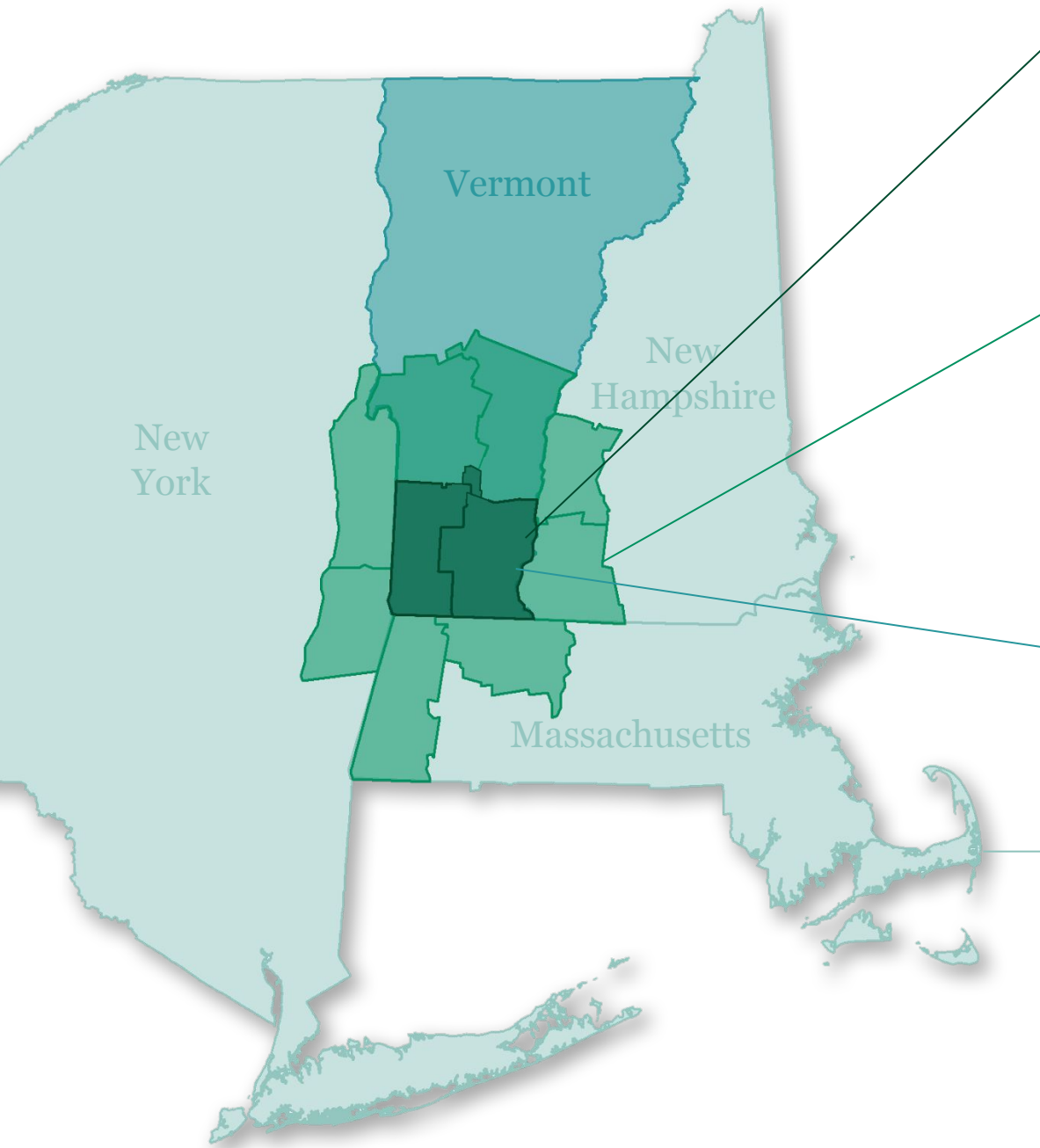




- **Economic Development Summit:** The CEDS process was introduced and discussed at the annual Southern Vermont Economy Summit in May 2024 to receive initial input on direction and critical issues.
- **CEDS Committee Conversations:** Ongoing engagement and discussions with the CEDS Committee to ensure alignment with the regional perspectives and guidance.
- **Town Survey:** Municipalities were surveyed to better understand their perspectives on strengths, challenges, and threats to Southern Vermont’s economy. Seventeen survey responses were received.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** In addition to the focus groups, one-on-one interviews were conducted with key individuals in the region, and 10 additional stakeholder interviews were conducted virtually.
- **Public Meetings:** A series of six public meetings were held throughout the region in late September 2024 to present the CEDS Objectives and Strategies and receive input. These meetings were held throughout the day and included five in person meetings and one virtual option.

Fifty people participated in the public meetings and provided insights on what key issues are impacting their community, ideas on opportunities for collaboration, and detailed ideas for tactics and projects. During these sessions, a call for CEDS projects was also made to invite residents, businesses, municipalities, and non-profit organizations to submit their projects for inclusion in the document. Full list of projects submitted will be included in attachment C, Background Documents.

REGIONAL MAP



SOUTHERN VERMONT

Southern Vermont (referred to herein as Southern Vermont or SoVermont) is shown in green on the map and defined as the area within Bennington County, VT, and Windham County, VT.

REFERENCE REGION

The Reference Region includes the counties within Southern Vermont as well as neighboring counties. The Reference Region comprises the following counties: Berkshire, MA; Franklin, MA; Cheshire, NH; Sullivan, NH; Rensselaer, NY; Washington, NY; Bennington, VT; Rutland, VT; Windham, VT; and Windsor, VT.

VERMONT

The state of Vermont was used as a benchmark for the Southern Vermont Zone.

4-STATE REGION

The 4-State Region includes Vermont, as well as its three neighboring states, New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Existing Conditions Profile thoroughly examines Southern Vermont's economic conditions and trends, providing valuable insights to inform our understanding and guide our strategic approach to developing the 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE DATA

A comprehensive analysis of Southern Vermont reveals a dynamic region undergoing significant demographic and economic transformations. The full and ongoing effects of the pandemic on regional population is still to be seen. However, the aging population and smaller household sizes suggest ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining younger residents and talent.

The economic landscape is characterized by diverse industries, with healthcare, government, and retail trade leading the way. While job numbers have recently declined, the region is poised for future growth in sectors such as healthcare and professional services.

Although income levels in Southern Vermont are lower than in surrounding regions, they are projected to rise. This economic potential and relatively high educational attainment positions Southern Vermont favorably for future growth. Nevertheless, disparities in income and employment trends and the region's distinctive demographic makeup underscore the need for tailored economic strategies.

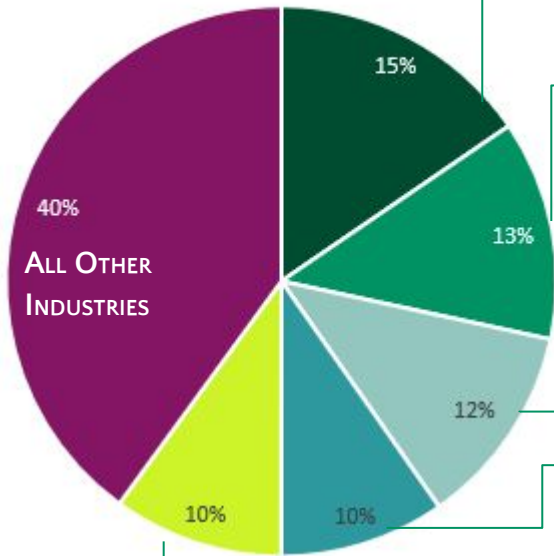
It is important to note that the population and industry projections cited in this analysis draw from data collected during the pandemic period, an unusual period that is not necessarily reflective of actual ongoing trends. While valuable, these projections serve as just one input among many in developing the CEDS, which also incorporates local expertise and on-the-ground insights.

FINDINGS

- 1. Recent in-migration has been a positive for the demographic trends, but overall Southern Vermont remains older and less diverse than the broader region.**
- 2. Income levels remain low in Southern Vermont, even as the cost of living rises.**
- 3. Many of the largest industries in Southern Vermont experienced job losses over the last five years.**
- 4. Southern Vermont is struggling to build resilience in all ways.**
- 5. There is a lack of adequate workforce to fill critical roles.**

TOP INDUSTRY SECTORS

Top Industry Sectors in Southern Vermont, 2023



HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

- The largest sector in Southern Vermont, accounting for over 6,600 jobs and projected to grow.
- Over 550 average openings per year for healthcare-related occupations in Southern Vermont, including over 230 for health-related aides (SOC 31-1100), 160 for counselors and social service providers (SOC 21-1000), and 150 for healthcare diagnosing and treating practitioners (SOC 29-1000).
- Average earnings per job for this sector (\$72,442) is slightly higher than the average for the region.

GOVERNMENT (INCLUDING EDUCATION)

- Second largest sector in Southern Vermont, with just over 5,550 jobs.
- Experienced some employment reduction over the last five years, driven mostly by losses in State Government (13% reduction between 2018-2023).

ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES

- Large number of establishments reporting for this sector, with over 315 payrolled in 2023.
- Substantial number of job openings within the Accommodation and Food Services sector, with over 400 average openings per year for the Food and Beverage Serving Workers occupation (SOC 35-3000). Low average earnings per job for this sector at \$35,800 per year.
- Hotels saw the largest decline in jobs within this sector, reporting a 37% loss (812 jobs) between 2018 and 2023.

RETAIL

- Retail Trade sector accounts for over 5,100 jobs in Southern Vermont or 10% of the total jobs.
- The sector saw losses in total employed people between 2018 and 2023 but is expected to remain steady over the next five years.
- Average earnings per job of just under \$50,000 is lower than the average income for the region of nearly \$65,000.
- Large number of average openings per year of nearly 400 for Retail Sales Workers (SOC 41-2000)

MANUFACTURING

- Food Manufacturing and Machinery Manufacturing make up the largest segments of the Manufacturing sector in Southern Vermont.
- Metalworking Machinery Manufacturing (NAICS 33351) has a very high concentration in Southern Vermont and earnings of around \$75,000.

Source: Lightcast
All data as of 2023
Growth rates from 2018 – 2023

FINDING 1: Recent in-migration has been positive for the demographic trends, but overall, Southern Vermont remains older and less diverse than the broader region.

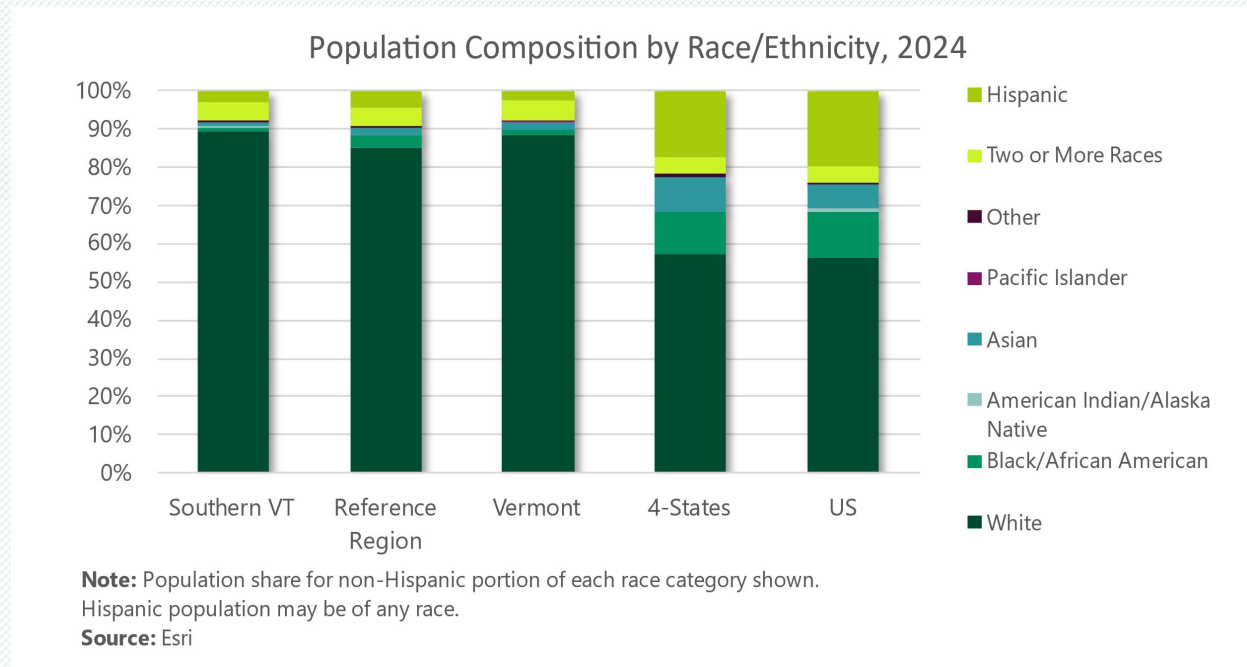
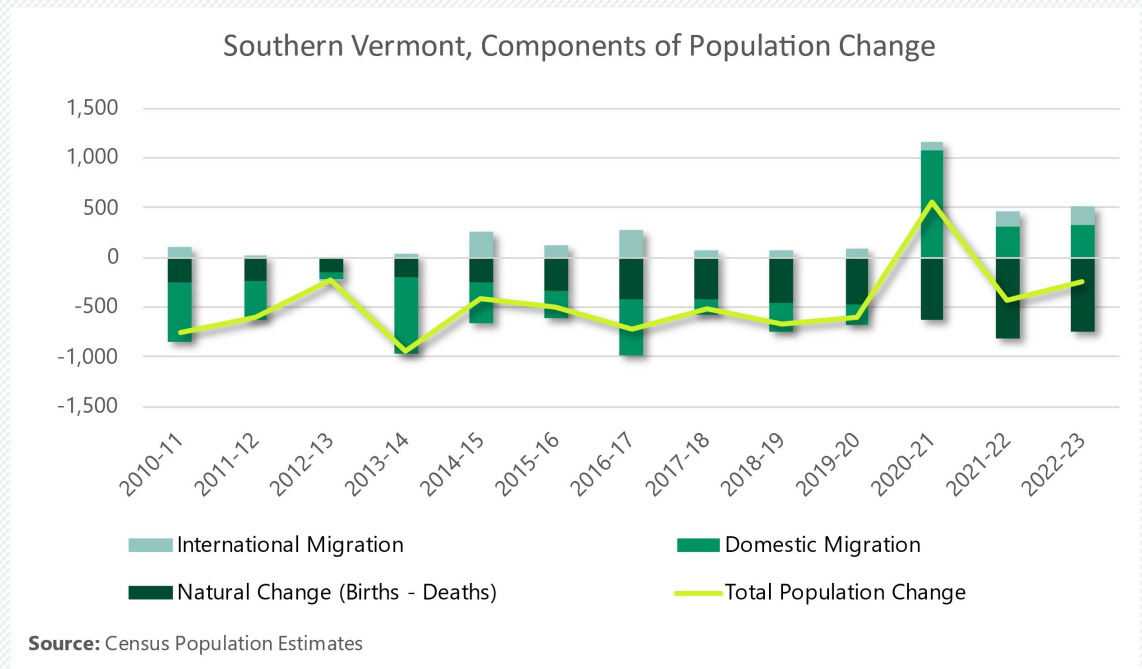
International migration has consistently contributed positively to population growth since 2010, while domestic migration resulted in net losses prior to the pandemic. During the pandemic, domestic migration became the primary driver of population increase in the region. Whether this continues to be the case is still to be seen. Current population models are including impacts resulting from pandemic period migration that are unlikely to continue.

Given the consistently negative natural population change (births minus deaths), the region must prioritize attracting and retaining talent to ensure future population growth. Encouraging the formation of young households is crucial for shifting the balance towards natural increase.

Southern Vermont's demographic profile skews older compared to other analyzed regions, with a median age of 47.8 in 2024, contrasting with 40.1 for Vermont and 39.3 for the United States.

The region's racial composition is predominantly white, with 89% of Southern Vermont's residents identifying as such. This figure stands in stark contrast to the more diverse populations of the 4-state region and the nation, where white residents comprise 57% and 56% of the population, respectively.

Refugee resettlement initiatives, young professional networks, and the pandemic-induced shifts in work habits have contributed to population growth and increased diversity in the region. However, further efforts are necessary to attract and retain younger residents to support continued demographic growth and economic vitality.



FINDING 2: Income levels remain low in Southern Vermont, even as the cost of living (including housing) continues to rise.

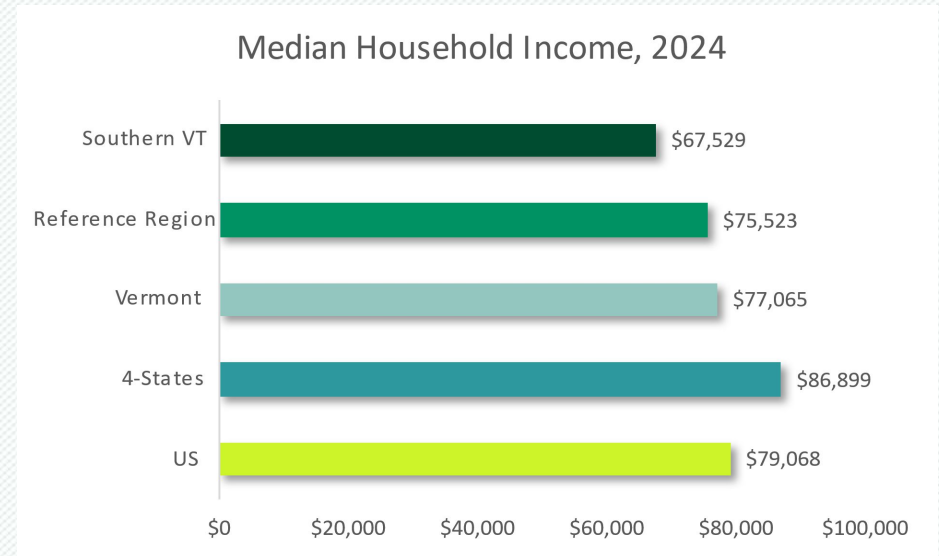
While Southern Vermont wages increased by 30% between 2017 and 2024, this growth rate lags behind Vermont's 33% and the four-state region's 37% increase over the same period.

Concurrently, inflation has driven up the cost of living, resulting in a cumulative change of approximately 29%. The cost-of-living index in Southern Vermont stands at 121 (with 100 representing the US average). Consequently, wage increases in Southern Vermont are barely keeping pace with the rising costs of goods and services.

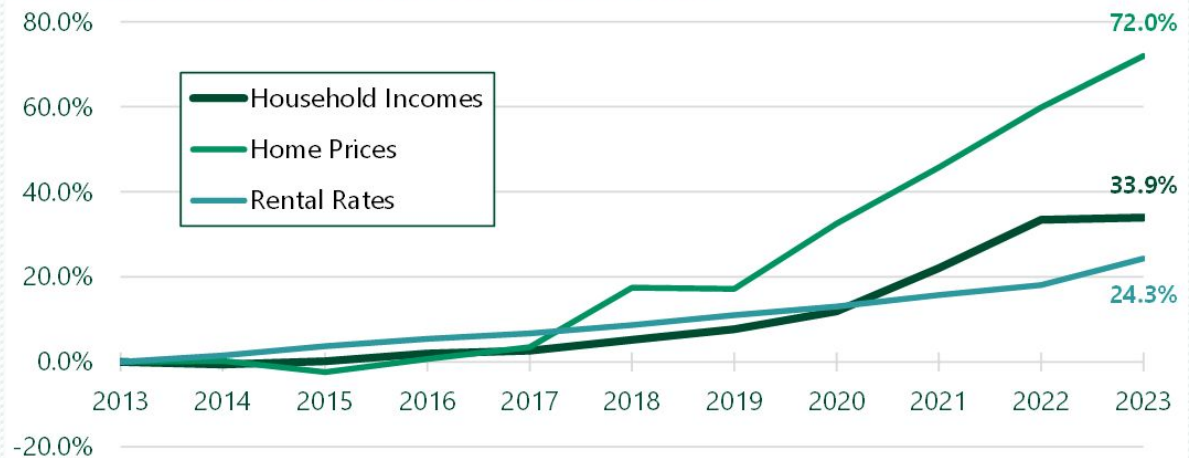
Over the past decade, median household income in Southern Vermont rose by 34%. During the same timeframe, rental rates also showed significant growth, albeit less robust, climbing by 24% from 2013 to 2023. However, far surpassing these increases, the median price of a single-family home in the study area surged by 72%. Much of this increase is due to lack of inventory resulting from decades of underbuilding, focus of public resources on providing for the lowest income levels, and second homeowners.

This sharp rise in home prices has placed property ownership out of reach for many renter households aspiring to purchase a home, as prices are increasing at more than twice the pace of income growth. Further exacerbating the affordability challenge, increased financing costs have pushed homeownership beyond the means of many potential buyers.

The issues of housing affordability and the widening wealth gap are challenges faced nationwide. Continued efforts to expand economic mobility and housing access for all segments of the population will support a more stable and resilient economy.



Cumulative Percent Change in Household Incomes, Home Prices, and Rental Rates for Southern Vermont Since 2013



Source: Esri, CoStar, HousingData.org, Camoin Associates

FINDING 3: Many of the largest industries in Southern Vermont experienced job losses over the last five years.

Of the ten largest sectors by job count in Southern Vermont, eight experienced job losses between 2018 and 2023. Over the next five years, Southern Vermont is projected to recover approximately half of those lost jobs, but an overall decline in employment is still expected for the decade spanning 2018-2028.

As of 2023, 60% of the region's jobs are concentrated in the following five sectors:

- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Government
- Retail Trade
- Manufacturing
- Accommodation and Food Services

Continued efforts to diversify the economy by focusing on how to support local wealth creation within sectors that rely on external revenue will support more sustainable income growth within Southern Vermont for both business owners and residents. This includes tourism-related sectors such as Accommodation and Food Services, as well as Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and various other aspects of the economy.

Southern Vermont has a rich history and established strengths in the Agriculture and Manufacturing sectors, both of which remain crucial to the overall economy and regional traditions but need additional diversification and modernization to remain relevant.

Supporting Southern Vermont businesses across all sectors in their efforts to diversify products, markets, and customer bases will encourage greater resilience and long-term sustainability. The CEDS is designed to enhance the overall business environment, making it possible for all enterprises to succeed and access the resources they need to thrive.



FINDING 3: Many of the largest industries in Southern Vermont experienced job losses over the last five years.

Southern Vermont Economic Base by 2-Digit NAICS Sector

NAICS	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Projected 2028 Jobs	Share of 2023 Jobs	2018-2023 Change in Jobs	2023-2028 Change in Jobs	2023 Avg. Earnings Per Job	2023 Location Quotient
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	6,957	6,649	7,039	15%	(308)	390	\$72,442	1.19
90	Government	5,759	5,559	5,773	13%	(200)	213	\$69,087	0.90
44	Retail Trade	5,348	5,119	5,093	12%	(229)	(25)	\$49,134	1.26
31	Manufacturing	4,872	4,302	4,560	10%	(571)	258	\$72,939	1.30
72	Accommodation and Food Services	5,085	4,180	4,014	10%	(904)	(166)	\$35,817	1.17
61	Educational Services	3,561	2,767	2,819	6%	(795)	53	\$54,650	2.64
23	Construction	2,661	2,714	2,736	6%	53	22	\$63,452	1.09
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,168	1,920	1,945	4%	(249)	26	\$37,197	0.91
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,566	1,845	2,047	4%	279	202	\$118,757	0.61
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,973	1,787	1,903	4%	(186)	116	\$64,001	0.69
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,022	1,194	1,351	3%	172	157	\$36,972	1.57
42	Wholesale Trade	1,211	1,077	1,063	3%	(134)	(14)	\$90,211	0.69
52	Finance and Insurance	881	814	793	2%	(67)	(21)	\$110,275	0.46
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	791	759	756	2%	(31)	(4)	\$46,287	1.51
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	662	732	781	2%	70	49	\$72,438	0.97
48	Transportation and Warehousing	686	690	730	2%	4	40	\$67,676	0.37
51	Information	456	520	534	1%	64	14	\$94,886	0.66
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	262	214	213	0%	(48)	0	\$141,684	0.34
22	Utilities	125	107	100	0%	(18)	(7)	\$175,305	0.74
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	24	24	30	0%	0	6	\$101,967	0.16
Total		46,070	42,973	44,280	100%	(3,098)	1,309	\$64,595	

Source: Lightcast

FINDING 4: Southern Vermont is struggling to build resiliency in all ways.

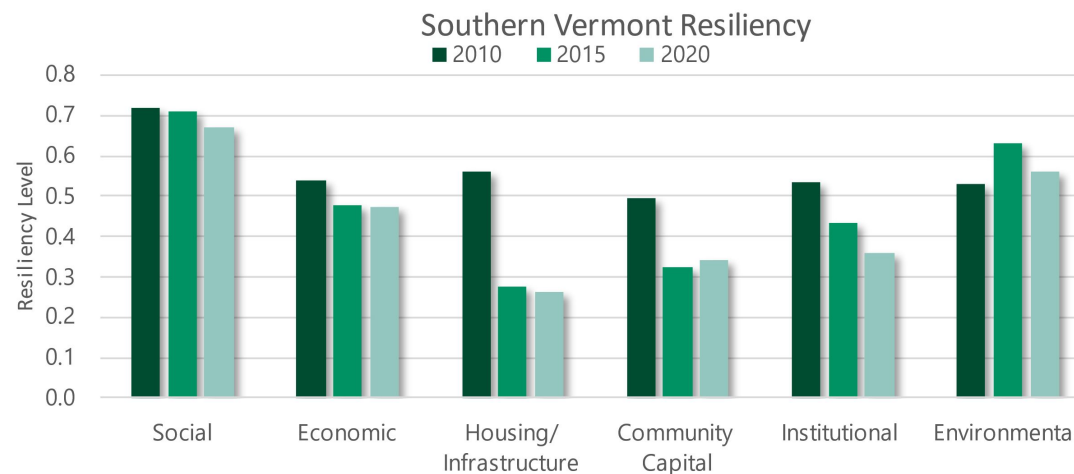
The University of South Carolina’s [Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities \(BRIC\) Index](#) uses 49 variables across six categories to capture community resiliency:

- Human Well-Being/Cultural/Social—physical attributes of populations, values and belief systems (ex: educational equality, food security)
- Economic/Financial—economic assets and livelihoods (ex: employment rate, income inequality, non-dependence on primary/tourism sector)
- Infrastructure/Built Environment/Housing—buildings and infrastructure (ex: housing stock construction quality, temporary shelter, medical care capacity)
- Institutional/Governance—access to resources and the power to influence their distribution (ex: jurisdictional fragmentation, disaster aid experience, population stability)
- Community Capacity—social networks and connectivity among individuals and groups (ex: volunteerism, religious affiliation, attachment to place, political engagement)
- Environmental/Natural—natural resource base and environmental conditions (ex: local food supplies, energy use, perviousness, water stress)

Overall, Southern Vermont’s resiliency has been decreasing across most categories since 2010, with the notable exception being Environmental resiliency, which increased between 2010 and 2015.

Though it has slightly decreased since 2010, Southern Vermont’s Social resiliency level is the highest among the region’s resiliency indicators in 2020. It is worth noting that this data predates the pandemic, so the BRIC scores in Southern Vermont and its counties may have further decreased over the past two years based on the trends seen from 2010 to 2020.

The Southern Vermont economy has had to prove its resiliency through catastrophic floods, the loss of major employers, and international pandemics just in recent years alone. Reinforcing and strengthening the region’s resiliency, including for businesses and residents, will enable greater growth and reduce the harm of future disruptions.



Source: *Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index*

FINDING 5: Lack of adequate workforce to fill critical roles.

The lack of available workforce is an issue impacting many industries throughout Southern Vermont. Seventeen occupations face triple-digit openings every year, many of which are in jobs that impact residents' quality of life, including health care, education, counseling, construction, and more. Many of these occupations also have lower than average wages for the region.

Increasing the number and quality of applicants to fill these open positions is necessary to further support the economy in Southern Vermont to provide companies and organizations with the workforce they need to be successful and continue to grow.

Southern Vermont Occupation - Top Openings

SOC	Description	Avg. Annual Openings	Median Annual Earnings
35-3000	Food and Beverage Serving Workers	366	\$ 35,375
41-2000	Retail Sales Workers	348	\$ 33,941
31-1100	Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides	202	\$ 34,907
53-7000	Material Moving Workers	196	\$ 37,645
25-2000	Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	176	\$ 56,560
37-2000	Building Cleaning and Pest Control Workers	170	\$ 34,531
47-2000	Construction Trades Workers	167	\$ 47,570
35-2000	Cooks and Food Preparation Workers	165	\$ 37,619
11-9000	Other Management Occupations	155	\$ 74,260
53-3000	Motor Vehicle Operators	149	\$ 45,720
43-4000	Information and Record Clerks	143	\$ 40,729
25-9000	Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	131	\$ 36,793
21-1000	Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Community and Social Service Specialists	128	\$ 49,633
13-1000	Business Operations Specialists	127	\$ 70,825
51-9000	Other Production Occupations	117	\$ 43,397
29-1000	Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners	113	\$ 87,649
39-9000	Other Personal Care and Service Workers	105	\$ 34,295
37-3000	Grounds Maintenance Workers	98	\$ 42,816
25-3000	Other Teachers and Instructors	95	\$ 40,174
11-1000	Top Executives	93	\$ 87,069

Source: Lightcast

ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Southern Vermont enjoys easy access to Albany, Boston, New York, and other parts of New England. The transportation networks provide prime opportunities for collaboration with the adjacent states and communities.

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **Route 9** is a state highway that runs between the New York/Vermont border and the Vermont/New Hampshire border, and it received major improvements recently. Much of this route is mountainous and can be difficult to travel in poor weather.
- **Route 7** is a US Route that runs from southwestern Connecticut to the I-89 interchange just south of the Canadian border. It is the main artery of Bennington County, and provides access to Rutland and Burlington to the north and the Berkshires to the south
- **Interstate 91** is a highway that runs between Connecticut and Canada, through Windham County. I-91 provides easy access south to population centers of New Haven, Hartford, Springfield, and other points south.
- **Bus transportation** is available locally in the population centers and along major state Routes . There is a growth in micro transit options to expand options in remote areas, although greater access is needed.
- **Ride-sharing services** and other short-term options are expanding throughout the region, with more needed.
- Expanded **bike lanes and pedestrian infrastructure** continue to be built throughout the region.

TRAIN INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **Amtrak** has daily service on the Vermonter line between St. Albans and Washington DC that stops in Bellows Falls and Brattleboro. The Shires Connector (bus) links Burlington, Manchester and Bennington multiple times per day to Amtrak service to Manhattan and beyond. A new service, the Valley Flyer, has multiple daily trips between New Haven and Greenfield, MA, and is considering expansion to Brattleboro and Bellows Falls.

AIR INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **Major airports** serving the region include Albany International Airport, Bradley International Airport, Logan International Airport, and Manchester International Airport in New Hampshire.



“The federal funding from the Biden-Harris Administration’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will transform the Brattleboro rail station with new features and upgrades, putting rail travel in Vermont back on track for more travelers. I’m thrilled to see the funds we helped pass through this law go to good use right here in our state and can’t wait to see the project completed. Everyone deserves to have a safe, comfortable, accessible experience while riding on Amtrak, and this project will help provide the Brattleboro station with important improvements to enhance passenger experience for all travelers,” said Senator Welch. (Source: Amtrak)

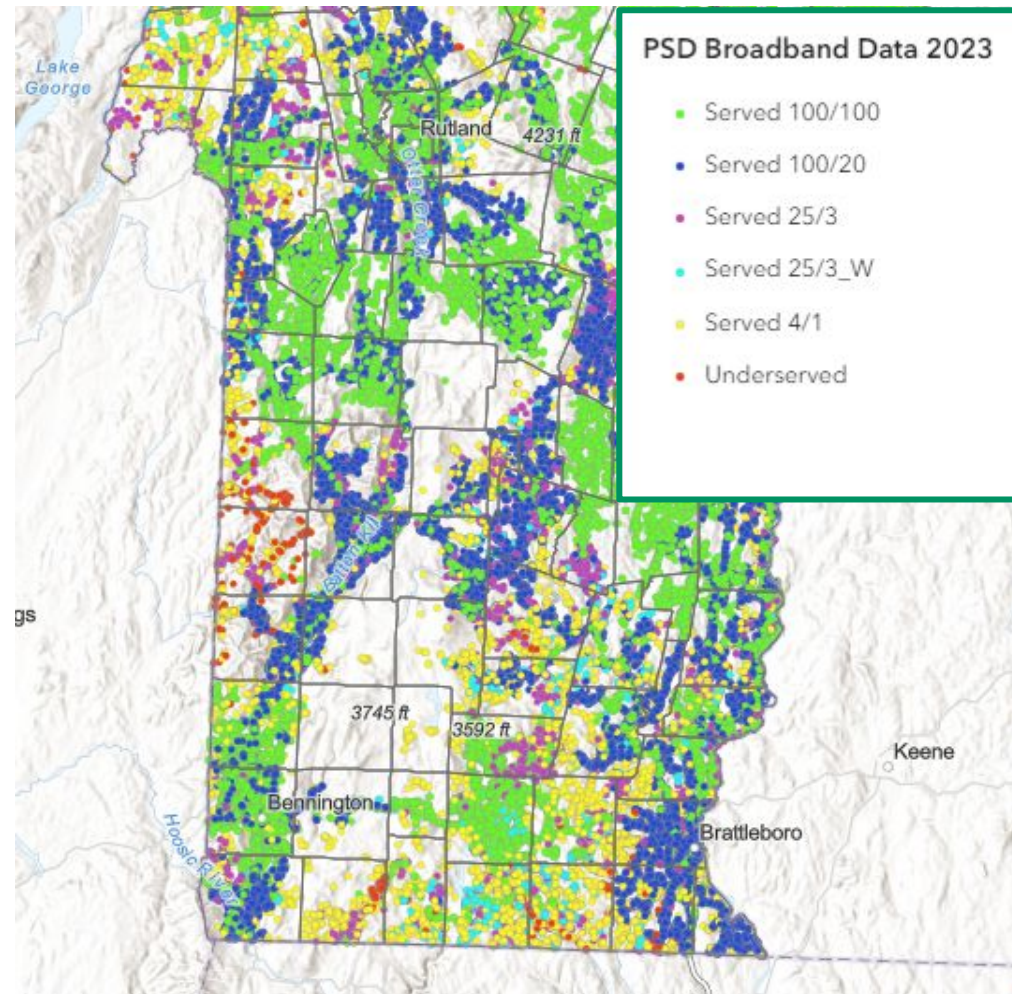


BROADBAND AND CELL INFRASTRUCTURE

Recognizing access to broadband as a critical quality of life, equity, and economic development issue, the Southern Vermont Communications Union District (SoVT CUD) was established “to bring high-speed Internet service to underserved areas of southern Vermont.” Since its establishment, the SoVT CUD has invested millions of dollars to install broadband in Bennington County, covering 14 towns.

Currently the region is also undergoing investment by DVfiber to expand high-quality internet in 24 towns in Southeastern Vermont and has connected more than 700 new addresses as of Fall 2024.

The map to the right was created by the Vermont Department of Public Service to indicate level of broadband available throughout Vermont. The green dots indicate the fastest download and upload speeds. The key population centers in Southern Vermont of Brattleboro, Wilmington, Bennington, Bellows Falls, and Manchester have speeds between 100/100 Mbps or 100/20 Mbps. The United States Federal Communications Commission defines broadband internet as any connection faster than 25/3 Mbps and the State of Vermont is aiming for universal service at 100/100 Mbps speeds.



Since 2019, broadband access has increased substantially for residents and businesses, but cell service remains challenging in certain parts of the region. Lack of cell service in certain locations (both on roads through the mountains but also in developed areas) was a concern raised through public meetings given its impact on business, talent attraction, and retention.

CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE

Southern Vermont's childcare and education system faces challenges similar to those affecting other sectors of the economy. These include workforce shortages, the impact of a declining and aging population, high levels of regulation, evolving student needs, universal Pre-K, and the failure to continually modernize.

While progress has been made to expand access to childcare, with recent Vermont legislation establishing a 0.44% payroll tax on wages and a 0.11% self-employment income tax to fund childcare and early childhood education, significant challenges remain. There are still insufficient childcare spots available, costs remain prohibitively high for many families, and options are limited for parents/guardians with non-traditional work hours. The lack of adequate childcare is a factor deterring individuals from participating in the labor force, exacerbating workforce shortages. Similarly, childcare centers and education institutions face challenges attracting and retaining workers and must recruit and retain a new generation of talent.

The education system in Southern Vermont continues to grapple with intense challenges. The declining number of students is requiring school closures that are having significant consequences for many. In addition, the education system is struggling to meet the intensified needs of students, cultural dynamics from increased international migration, adapting to changing skill requirements from employers, increasing reliance on local municipalities for funding, and rightsizing facilities and districts in response to the decreasing population. These multifaceted challenges necessitate innovative solutions and strategic planning to ensure the region's educational infrastructure remains effective and sustainable.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The workforce development system in Southern Vermont faces a complex array of challenges and opportunities in its mission to cultivate a skilled, adaptable labor force. The region's demographic shifts, evolving industry demands, and economic pressures have necessitated a dynamic approach to workforce development.

Many entities are working to address the needs of those looking for jobs as well as the industry partners with job openings. The region's school districts, Community College of Vermont, University of Vermont Extension, regional development corporations, and other workforce partners are working to address the critical needs of job readiness, skills development, retraining and recertification of youth, adults, and New Americans.

Programs emphasizing career and technical education (CTE), such as the Pipelines and Pathways Reality Fair in the Windham region, and a "Career Month" in Bennington County, have received state and national recognition. However, the system continues to grapple with issues such as retaining young talent, upskilling existing workers, and attracting new residents to bolster the labor pool. Limited funding, lack of access to trainers, finding direct pathways to employment, lack of housing or opportunities upon completion, and the geographic realities of being a large and rural region all make training more difficult.

The impact of remote work, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has introduced challenges and opportunities. While it has expanded job prospects for some residents, it has also intensified competition for local businesses seeking to retain skilled employees.

RESILIENCY

Natural Disasters and Climate Resilience

Southern Vermont is particularly susceptible to flooding-related disasters and has, unfortunately, already begun to experience the impacts of climate change. While Vermont is recognized as a possible “climate haven” that may be safe from climate change impacts, recent catastrophic flooding throughout the region highlights that all communities are facing the need to adapt to the changing climate. Recent reports indicate that Vermont ranks seventh for most federal disaster declarations in the country between 2011 and 2023, with 20 declarations during that time.

As a region, Southern Vermont continues to regard its natural environment as a public asset, a buffer against climate change, and a valuable resource for sustainable development. Given the region's reliance on the outdoor recreation industry and place-based cultural tourism, addressing climate change issues and enhancing resilience is crucial in the face of evolving weather patterns. The outdoor recreation sector has implemented several strategies to bolster resilience, including generating supplemental income by creating year-round attractions and events, and investing in facility improvements.

Beyond private industry initiatives, local municipalities have found it necessary to make substantial infrastructure investments to address flooding-related issues, such as upgrading roads and bridges, and will continue to need long term solutions to relocate people, homes, and community infrastructure out of flood prone areas.

Economic Resilience

Economic diversification is essential to building economic resilience and requires attracting new industries to the region and supporting existing businesses in diversifying their offerings and markets.

Strategies to enhance economic resiliency for existing businesses include:

- Strengthening regional supply chains
- Evaluating and developing value-added processing opportunities
- Expanding into e-commerce platforms
- Creating a more diverse portfolio of revenue streams



This diversification effort will support existing core industries and foster an environment conducive to innovation and sustainable growth across various sectors.

Individual and Community Resilience

The resilience of Southern Vermont is intrinsically linked to the ability of individuals and communities to withstand and adapt to significant challenges.

Throughout the region, residents are experiencing substance abuse, periods of homelessness, poverty, and food insecurity. These issues can destabilize families, neighborhoods, and entire communities, diminishing their capacity to handle disruptions or changes.

Communities across Southern Vermont are grappling with various issues, including vacant storefronts, escalating property tax rates, ongoing climate change impacts, aging infrastructure, and a shrinking workforce to fill critical public employment and volunteer positions.

Addressing these interconnected issues is crucial for building a resilient Southern Vermont that can not only weather current difficulties but also thrive in the face of future challenges.

ALIGNMENT WITH STATE AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES

The Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS aligns with many regional and state planning processes.

- **The Vermont State Strategic Plan** includes many similar goals and performance measures with the Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS, including size of workforce, wage growth, employee growth, and housing costs. Implementing the Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS will support the execution of the goals established by the State.
- **Vermont Resilience Implementation Strategy and Climate Action Plan** is currently being developed but will include a focus on areas that align with the Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS, such as infrastructure design and reinforcement and economic and environmental sustainability.
- Efforts by the **Vermont Futures Project** to educate on the critical nature Vermont's need to increase population and workforce housing aligns with the efforts of the Southern Vermont CEDS.
- **Bennington County Regional Commission** [Regional Plan](#) and **Windham County Regional Commission** [Regional Plan](#) are intended to go hand in hand with the Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS. Both are in process of being updated.
- **State and Regional Housing Studies** conducted throughout Southern Vermont are highlighting the mismatch between the available housing and the median income levels. Pursuing efforts to address the lack of housing in these communities will help support the goals of the Southern Vermont 2024 CEDS.

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Vermont State Strategic Plan Vision:

“Vision: Vermont's economy is growing faster than the costs of living; our state is measurably more affordable each year for families and businesses; and we are meeting our obligation to protect the most vulnerable.” (Source: Strategicplan.Vermont.gov)

Vermont Resilience Implementation Strategy and Climate Action Plan:

Is intended to provide a “coordinated and balanced approach to addressing both the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and accelerating efforts to adapt to the consequences of climate change” (Source: ClimateChange.Vermont.Gov).

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SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Based on the interviews, focus groups, data research, and understanding of the region, the following situational assessment provides the opportunity and challenges in Southern Vermont that inform the strategic framework.

OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSETS

- Reversed population decline through welcoming remote workers and international migration
- Growing diversity in the regional population
- Abundant natural resources offering recreation, clean environment, and agricultural opportunities
- High quality of life characterized by small-town charm and strong community bonds
- Innovative approaches to flood prevention and mitigation
- Preservation and revitalization of authentic, traditional downtowns
- Enhanced cross-state collaboration with neighboring regions
- Strategic location providing access to tri-state markets (NY, MA, NH)
- Accessible governance structure facilitating nimble policymaking and community engagement
- Strong "Vermont" identity coupled with distinct local community characters
- Growing recognition of the benefits of regional cooperation and teamwork
- National and international acclaim for Southern Vermont CEDS implementation supporting further investment
- Rich tourism assets, including diverse cultural and artistic amenities
- Regional solidarity in tackling complex redevelopment projects
- Alignment with consumer trends favoring local, artisanal, and sustainable products
- Culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance fostering innovation
- Social capital and civic engagement
- Shared commitment to preserving Vermont's environmental and community values

CHALLENGES

- Demographic shift towards an aging population and uncertainty about what follows
- High cost of living
- Shortage of diverse and affordable housing options
- Rising education costs amid concerns over quality, declining enrollment, and an abundance of aging buildings.
- Instability and access issues within the healthcare system
- Insufficient childcare, mental health, and healthcare services
- Constrained entrepreneurial ecosystem and customer base
- Aging and inadequate infrastructure across the region
- Lack of accessible capital for business and community investment
- Insufficient long-term business succession planning
- Small scale of employers and education/training opportunities like apprenticeship programs make it difficult to address workforce size and skills gap in key industries
- Community tension between the desire for progress and resistance to change
- High property tax burden impacting residents and businesses
- Inconsistent cellular coverage and broadband connectivity
- Low awareness of available economic development resources and programs
- Prevalence of substance abuse and mental health challenges
- Scarcity of shovel-ready sites and high cost of construction for housing and economic development
- Increasing climate change impacts, particularly flooding events
- Unique challenges associated with rural development including lack of infrastructure, natural resource protection regulations, and concerns around change of community character
- Regional disparities with regards to access to markets and transportation access
- Geographic distance from Vermont's economic and political center
- Perception that significant economic growth is unlikely or undesirable

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Through the multi-faceted approach to engagement, a series of informing issues rose to the top, including:



Workforce challenges remain a significant hurdle for Southern Vermont's economic growth. The region faces a critical shortage of job-ready individuals with the skills and experience local industries require.



The **demographic** landscape of Southern Vermont poses multifaceted challenges to economic development. The small and aging population reduces the available local workforce, constricts the entrepreneurial base, limits the market, and creates voids in civic engagement and leadership roles.



Housing shortages and affordability issues have become critical impediments to economic progress in Southern Vermont. The lack of diverse housing options affects workforce retention and attraction, limits population growth, and impacts the quality of life for residents across age groups and income levels.



Climate change and resiliency planning have emerged as pivotal factors in Southern Vermont's economic development landscape. The region's vulnerability to heat and water-related issues poses significant risks to key economic drivers such as the hospitality and recreation industries, as well as to public infrastructure.



Political divisiveness can create uncertainty, impede decision-making processes, and discourage investments.



The rise of **remote work** presents opportunities and challenges for Southern Vermont's economic development. Increased domestic migration can bring new talent and economic activity to the region, but it also raises concerns about community cohesion and civic engagement. The influx of remote workers may lead to population growth without necessarily providing the corresponding labor force expansion for local businesses.



Supporting **migration**, particularly the settlement of refugees, represents a vital component of Southern Vermont's economic development strategy. As asylum support efforts mature, they pave the way for family reunification and secondary migration, potentially bringing new skills, cultural diversity, and entrepreneurial spirit to the region.



The **accelerating pace of technological innovation** poses both opportunities and challenges for Southern Vermont's economic future. Concerns about business and workforce readiness in the face of rapid change highlight the need for adaptive strategies and continuous learning initiatives.



The shortage of existing and high cost to build **commercial and industrial space with adequate infrastructure** that meets the needs of current and emerging businesses, especially those looking to expand and modernize, constrains the growth potential of existing businesses and hinders efforts to attract new enterprises to the region.

IMPERATIVE FOR ACTION

Southern Vermont is a truly special place that has attracted people for decades. The open vistas, agricultural heritage, recreational assets, cultural offerings, quaint village centers, and fierce independence have long been cherished by both visitors and residents alike.

However, the treasured features of Southern Vermont will be at risk without continued investment and attention to economic development aligned with community values.

Without sustained efforts to address the challenges, the region's trajectory will likely lead to:

- Further population decline and aging and a perpetuation of that decline through lack of investment in the next generation
- Greater inequity and weaker working middle class
- A quickening pace of disinvestment by the public and private sectors
- Ongoing climate-related threats to health, safety, and property
- An overreliance on fewer individuals

Doing nothing is not an option.



3 IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is intended to be implemented by everyone in Southern Vermont, not just economic development professionals.

The CEDS process facilitated important discussions about the region's future; Southern Vermont has identified opportunities for future growth and investment that leaders from all areas of the region can pursue, including:

MUNICIPALITIES & SCHOOLS:

- Utilize this document to align plans and initiatives with regional priorities and build resilience
- Enhance access to diverse funding and collaboration opportunities by networking and engaging with regional partners and submitting proposed projects to the CEDS

BUSINESSES:

- Gain insights into regional opportunities, strengths, and priorities to align your organization with complementary efforts
- Utilize this plan to understand regional goals and identify opportunities for your organization's role in economic growth and resilience building
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by participating in regional networks and submitting significant projects to the CEDS

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS:

- Engage in collaborative efforts with regional organizations to implement key strategies
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by participating in regional networks and submitting significant projects to the CEDS

NON-PROFITS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

- Identify opportunities for your organization to play a role in economic growth and resilience building
- Access funding and partnership opportunities by submitting significant projects to the CEDS initiatives

RESIDENTS & LOCAL VOLUNTEERS:

- Utilize this plan to understand the region's long-term economic vision
- Support and engage with initiatives that align with identified regional priorities
- Volunteer, participate, and contribute to local, regional, and state initiatives

Success will require a coordinated effort

4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The CEDS Strategic Direction builds on findings from the current and emerging trends analysis and incorporates elements from other regional plans and ongoing initiatives. The CEDS Strategic Direction identifies the overall themes and principles, priorities, goals, and strategies to guide the implementation of the CEDS.

In 2030, the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone will be home to a resilient, creative, and inclusive community in which businesses and people thrive and prosper.

✓ ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM

The Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy takes a holistic approach, considering not only traditional economic development but also the role of community development, workforce development, and other factors in creating high-quality places where people and businesses want to be. The strategy includes recommendations around:

- **People:** Empower current and future residents to maximize their individual potential and contribute to regional growth.
- **Businesses:** Assist established and emerging enterprises in maintaining viability, enhancing success, and exploring expansion opportunities.
- **Community:** Preserve and enhance the high quality of life while adapting to evolving circumstances.
- **Implementation:** Facilitate regional organizations' capacity to execute the plan, fostering greater collaborative achievements.

✓ OUTCOMES OF THE STRATEGY

A coordinated effort to implement the CEDS will lead to progress toward the following outcomes:

- **Population:** Increased population and expansion of the workforce.
- **Business Environment:** Diversified economy that supports job creation, wealth creation, and a sustainable and vibrant economy.
- **Quality of Life:** Improved quality of life, including access to housing, health care, and recreation assets.
- **Workforce:** Expanded quantity and quality of workers in the region.
- **Climate Resilience:** Enhanced investment and ability to adapt to climate change impacts.
- **Collaboration:** Tighter integration of cross-region and cross-state efforts.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The objectives and strategies are summarized below, and specific actions related to each initiative are detailed in the following pages. Attachment B contains the Action Plan Matrix, which includes priority level, timeline, and performance measures for each.

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Invest in community assets that are attractive to young people
- B. Create programs to train, retain, and attract people with needed skills
- C. Foster an increasingly diverse population
- D. Continue to support policies that improve and strengthen the care and education system

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

- A. Enhance business potential for growth
- B. Strengthen the Southern Vermont entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem
- C. Establish a collaborative regional workforce development system
- D. Increase access to industrial and commercial space

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

- A. Invest in infrastructure and system upgrades to reduce and mitigate climate change impacts
- B. Increase housing options for all
- C. Improve civic and community engagement
- D. Reinforce Southern Vermont's recreation and cultural opportunities

OBJECTIVE 4

PROMOTE GREATER REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALIGNMENT

- A. Create and strengthen structures to support CEDS implementation
- B. Work regionally to address critical economic development issues

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

Rationale: Increasing and diversifying Southern Vermont's population remains a critical objective to address the region's persistent labor shortages. While some progress has been made, the area continues to grapple with attracting sufficient residents to frequent local establishments and fill open positions at businesses, on volunteer boards, and in community organizations. This workforce scarcity is particularly acute in essential fields such as healthcare, mental health, education, and construction trades, impacting not only economic growth but also the overall quality of life in the region. Addressing these population needs is fundamental to achieving sustainable economic development and ensuring the vitality of Southern Vermont's communities.



1.A) INVEST IN COMMUNITY ASSETS THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG PEOPLE LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING IN THEIR COMMUNITY:

- Vibrant downtowns & social offerings
- Job opportunities & economic stability and mobility
- Affordable & quality housing options
- Career advancement/purpose
- Quality education systems
- Healthcare access
- Safety & low crime rates
- Cultural amenities & diversity
- Outdoor recreation & green space
- Work-life balance
- Family-friendly activities
- Public transportation
- Technology infrastructure
- Networking & professional development options

- I. Support and develop local, regional, and state initiatives and policies that improve the quality of life for young people and their families**, including schools, childcare, arts and culture, diversity of nightlife, family-friendly workplace policies, and recreation amenities to create a more nurturing and supportive environment for young people and their families.
- II. Continue to invest in programs and initiatives designed to attract and retain young adults and newcomers** in Southern Vermont. This includes supporting existing programs that offer social activities, networking opportunities, affordable housing options, and career development resources. Explore opportunities to create new programs such as mentorship programs, entrepreneurship workshops, and community engagement initiatives.
- III. Pursue housing to accommodate younger people.** Identify and develop housing options suitable for young adults in size, price, amenities, and location. Including affordable housing projects, encouraging the conversion of existing properties into multi-family units, providing financial support for first-time home buyers, and promoting the construction of new housing developments.
- IV. Develop targeted marketing materials** that highlight how Southern Vermont's lifestyle aligns with young people's values/preferences. Coordinated efforts among multiple organizations are necessary to emphasize the region's natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, vibrant arts and culture scene, and strong sense of community to attract a new generation of residents and visitors to the region.

1.B) CREATE PROGRAMS TO TRAIN, ATTRACT, AND RETAIN PEOPLE WITH NEEDED SKILLS

BENEFITS THAT EMPLOYERS CAN OFFER TO BE ATTRACTIVE:

- Competitive compensation packages
- Comprehensive health benefits
- Generous paid time off
- Retirement benefits
- Professional development opportunities
- Career advancement pathways
- Flexible work arrangements
- Family-friendly benefits
- Housing assistance programs
- Work-life balance initiatives
- Employee assistance programs
- Recognition programs
- Student loan repayment assistance
- Commuter benefits
- Technology stipends for remote workers
- Corporate social responsibility programs
- Health & wellness initiatives
- Diversity, equity, & inclusion programs
- Social events & team building

- I. Identify and prioritize the most in-demand skills and occupations for today and the future** to ensure a sufficient pipeline of qualified talent for Southern Vermont's workforce. Collaborate with workforce development partners, such as local colleges and universities, technical schools, and private training providers, to establish the necessary training programs, educational pathways, and support services. Continue efforts to develop programs and expand existing ones to address the skills gap and create a skilled and competitive workforce that attracts businesses to the region and fosters economic growth.
- II. Increase the public's awareness of the specific skilled workforce needs and sector transition opportunities.** Launch an information campaign focused on Southern Vermont students, residents, families, and educational professionals highlighting the opportunities available.
- III. Create coordinated strategies that blend public and private incentives to make Southern Vermont employers more attractive places to work for top talent.** This could include financial incentives such as loan repayment or forgiveness programs, home-buying assistance, sign-on bonuses, and tuition reimbursement.
- IV. Pursue housing to accommodate the workforce.** Identify and develop housing options suitable for the workforce in terms of size, price, amenities, and location to ensure that Southern Vermont has the necessary housing stock to support economic growth and attract a talented workforce. Consider opportunities to partner with local real estate developers and property management companies to create housing options that cater specifically to the workforce's needs, such as offering rental assistance programs, flexible lease terms, and on-site amenities.
- V. Continue to support affordable transportation** for employees to access their workspace and training programs.

1.C) FOSTER AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE POPULATION

UNIQUE NEEDS OF THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION TO CONSIDER:

- Access to non-personal vehicle transportation options to access work, goods, services, & entertainment
- Space for cultural celebrations
- Access to cultural food, goods, & other products
- Encouragement to invite the community to learn about their cultural identity, celebrations, & customs
- Greater language education opportunities, both for immigrants but also Americans who may want to learn different languages to decrease barriers

- I. Elevate collaboration among key organizations involved with refugee resettlement program and immigration efforts** to ensure the continued success and sustainability. These discussions should focus on identifying areas for improvement, sharing best practices, and developing strategies to enhance the program's effectiveness. By bringing together representatives from government agencies, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders, we can develop a community-based organization to foster collaboration, address challenges, and ensure that the region's refugee resettlement program continues to provide essential support to newcomers and contribute positively to the community.
- II. Continue to improve economic and community development expertise and knowledge** to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of economic and community development programs. This includes ensuring that materials are accessible, culturally relevant, and available in multiple languages. Incorporating diverse perspectives into the development and implementation of economic and community development programs can help ensure that these initiatives are responsive to the needs of all community members.
- III. Develop entrepreneurial support targeted to underserved communities to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse entrepreneurial base.** Build critical resilience among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals within the regional small business/entrepreneurial communities by fostering essential connections, providing culturally appropriate support services, and implementing models of shared capacity building. Foster a supportive and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem by creating mentorship programs, providing access to affordable resources, and advocating for equitable policies. Providing access to affordable resources, such as business training, financing, and workspace, can help entrepreneurs from underserved communities launch and grow their businesses. These initiatives can help close the economic gap, create a more equitable society, and foster innovation and growth.
- IV. Build diverse leadership and representation within economic and community development organizations and initiatives.** Creating a supportive and inclusive work environment is necessary for attracting and retaining diverse talent. This involves fostering a culture of respect, inclusivity, and belonging, as well as implementing policies and procedures that promote diversity and equity. Additionally, organizations should ensure that there are opportunities for employees from diverse backgrounds to participate in decision-making processes and contribute to the organization's goals.



1.D) CONTINUE TO SUPPORT POLICIES THAT IMPROVE AND STRENGTHEN THE CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEMS

- I. **Continue to invest in creative solutions to expand access to care (child and elder care),** by supporting programs that facilitate training, funding for starting in-home care programs, and guidance on meeting state requirements. Additionally, explore alternative business models and structures to help offset the economic difficulties faced by these businesses. Focus on increasing the availability of childcare spots throughout the region to enable greater access through regional collaborations like ‘Child Care Counts’.
- II. **Pursue innovative solutions to strengthen the health care system (including mental, physical, dental, etc),** including telemedicine, workforce attraction/retention, mobile medicine, small business support services, and greater access. Increasing accessibility through culturally competent care, mobile service providers, interpreter services, and affordable insurance options can ensure that everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, can receive the care they need.
- III. **Participate in conversations about school districts’ ability to modernize.** Conversations should consider many aspects of modernizing the system, including investing in technology, expanding educational offerings, providing year-round programming, expanded support for students facing challenges, strategies for educator attraction and retention, shared services, consolidation, and repurposing of closed schools. Continue efforts to provide job readiness curriculum and skills training.
- IV. **Foster greater collaboration among school districts to strengthen schools and improve educational outcomes.** Address challenges like declining enrollment and aging buildings, identify opportunities for reduced costs, increased efficiencies, enhanced programming, and innovative problem-solving. Actively promote the positive work that school districts are doing with their resources to recognize and celebrate achievements to build community support and foster a sense of optimism about the future of education.
- V. **Establish targeted workforce attraction efforts focused on growing the pipeline of care, mental health, and education system needs.** Continue efforts to develop programs that align with specific workforce needs, streamline licensing requirements, and assess the feasibility of offering incentive packages, such as loan forgiveness or signing bonuses, to attract qualified candidates.

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

Rationale: To foster business success in Southern Vermont, a multifaceted approach is necessary. This includes building resilience against future economic disruptions, strengthening existing workforce pipelines, developing alternative revenue streams, and preparing for an increasingly digital future. These strategies are integral to realizing key economic development goals, such as diversifying the local economy, supporting existing businesses, encouraging new startups, and creating fresh resident opportunities. Southern Vermont can create a more robust and adaptable economic landscape by focusing on these areas.

2.A) ENHANCE BUSINESS POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH

BENEFITS OF BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION VISITS:

- Strengthens local business relationships
- Identifies growth opportunities early
- Addresses business concerns proactively
- Supports long-term economic stability
- Provides opportunities to connect vendors/suppliers
- Increases awareness of resources and improves the business climate

- I. Foster a culture of business growth and resilience that provides tools and empowers owners to invest in their own success.** For those looking to improve operations, adopt digital technologies, prepare their workforce, pursue new markets and establish resiliency and recovery plans, provide comprehensive support to align with their investments and help them achieve their goals.
- II. Enhance alignment and effectiveness of the existing Southern Vermont business support organizations, economic development organizations, and leaders who are actively advancing business assistance through the development of metrics and goals to stimulate growth.** To achieve this, the region should develop a strategic entrepreneurial ecosystem framework and work plan, establish public-private partnerships, and create programs that leverage professional business service providers. These solutions will address challenges like scaling.
- III. Continue conducting business retention and expansion visits by regional and local economic development organizations throughout the region to engage with businesses of all sizes, phases, and locations.** Use these meetings to identify areas of concern, inform priorities for business and entrepreneurial ecosystem development, facilitate connections between suppliers and buyers, and with regional, state, and federal programs and resources, and provide solutions to support the success of regional businesses.
- IV. Establish sustainable funding streams, increase access to capital to serve regional businesses.** Include targeted funding for businesses of all sizes and in all locations led by individuals from historically underfunded populations.
- V. Support businesses of all sizes through periods of transition** through comprehensive awareness campaigns, ongoing programming, and access to capital. Including for startups, expansion projects, and succession planning.
- VI. Catalyze and facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities and access to preeminent business expertise for business owners** to expand the degree of information sharing, expanded market access, and resource identification that might otherwise be unavailable in a rural region. Prioritize a continuum of learning and connection opportunities that are accessible, consistently available, and of exceptional quality.

**ELEMENTS OF
ENTREPRENEUR-LED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

Entrepreneurial activity provides positive personal and societal benefits in addition to the economic growth it sparks. Entrepreneurship leads to:

- Job creation and economic growth
- Innovation and knowledge exchange
- Enhanced community through diversification
- Retention of local talent
- Long-term economic transformation
- Cultural and social enrichment
- Increased culture of resilience and adaptability

Supporting this activity requires attention to:

- Workforce and Talent Development
- Support Networks for entrepreneurs
- Access to Capital
- Access to Physical Space
- Supportive Regulations
- Market Access
- Cultivation of Culture and Community for Entrepreneurs

2.B) STRENGTHEN THE SOUTHERN VERMONT ENTREPRENEURIAL AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

- I. Establish a more formalized small business incubator program** to provide aspiring entrepreneurs the resources, support, and mentorship they need to realize their business ideas. Key components of the incubator program could include affordable workspace, reducing rent on space that will last a set number of years, and then phasing into full market rent business development resources, funding assistance, and administrative support.
- II. As part of developing a focused strategic entrepreneurial ecosystem framework and work plan, identify key metrics, methodologies, and resources to support start-ups, innovation and modern business ideas to make it from ideation to launch.** Ensure that would-be entrepreneurs are equipped with the technical expertise to pursue the development of their product or service, the financial and business acumen to be successful, and the network of support needed to sustain the effort.
- III. Build critical resilience among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals within our regional business/entrepreneurial communities by fostering essential connections, providing culturally appropriate support services/programs, and implementing models of shared capacity building.** Continue to offer training on emerging business topics and create opportunities for mentoring among entrepreneurs in the region accounting for a diverse range of cultural, educational, and professional experience levels.
- IV. Center and support entrepreneur-led initiatives** to strengthen the culture of entrepreneurship and support the success of those who risk investing in themselves.
- V. Continue to support the creation of locally owned small businesses that enhance community vibrancy, build wealth, and diversify the regional economy.** Simultaneously, gather data and insights from these efforts to demonstrate that both our smallest and our largest businesses are crucial to the success of our rural economy.

2.C) ESTABLISH A COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS:

- Basic Computer Skills
- Software Proficiency
- Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology
- Cloud Computing and Virtualization
- Robotics and Process Automation
- Digital Communication and Collaboration
- Digital Ethics and Cybersecurity
- Coding and Programming Basics
- Digital Marketing and Social Media
- Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- Data Analytics and Visualization
- E-Commerce and Online Business Development

- I. Use economic data, information from employers, surveys, and regional coordination to establish a list of the top critical workforce needs** and leverage data-driven insights to identify the most critical occupations, trades, and skills required for growth. Develop targeted strategies to train, attract, and retain individuals with these qualifications. To implement these strategies effectively, pursue funding to support training programs, talent acquisition initiatives, and employer-employee matching services.
- II. Invest in training programs that equip the workforce with the skills needed to enhance productivity and drive innovation** to strengthen the competitiveness of businesses and organizations. Collaborate with local, regional, and national institutions to expand access to in-person and online training programs focusing on emerging technologies, digital literacy, and other future-ready skills.
- III. Strengthen regional collaboration related to workforce development**, including educational institutions, businesses, and workforce development organizations. Working together can help develop accessible and affordable in-person training programs that address the most critical workforce needs, such as internships, apprenticeships, and skill-building workshops.
- IV. Foster a robust workforce pipeline** to bridge the gap between the emerging workforce and available employment opportunities. Expanding job-readiness training is crucial for strengthening the workforce pipeline, including providing essential career awareness, job readiness, and coaching to Vermonters seeking to enter, reenter, or advance in the job market. This comprehensive support will empower individuals and contribute to a more vibrant and competitive workforce.
- V. Support employers in embracing an evolving workforce** and equip employers with the tools they need to embracing an evolving workforce and build more diverse, engaged, and successful teams. This includes access to various funding sources for employee development, expert guidance on creating inclusive hiring practices, and assistance in evaluating and implementing effective technologies.



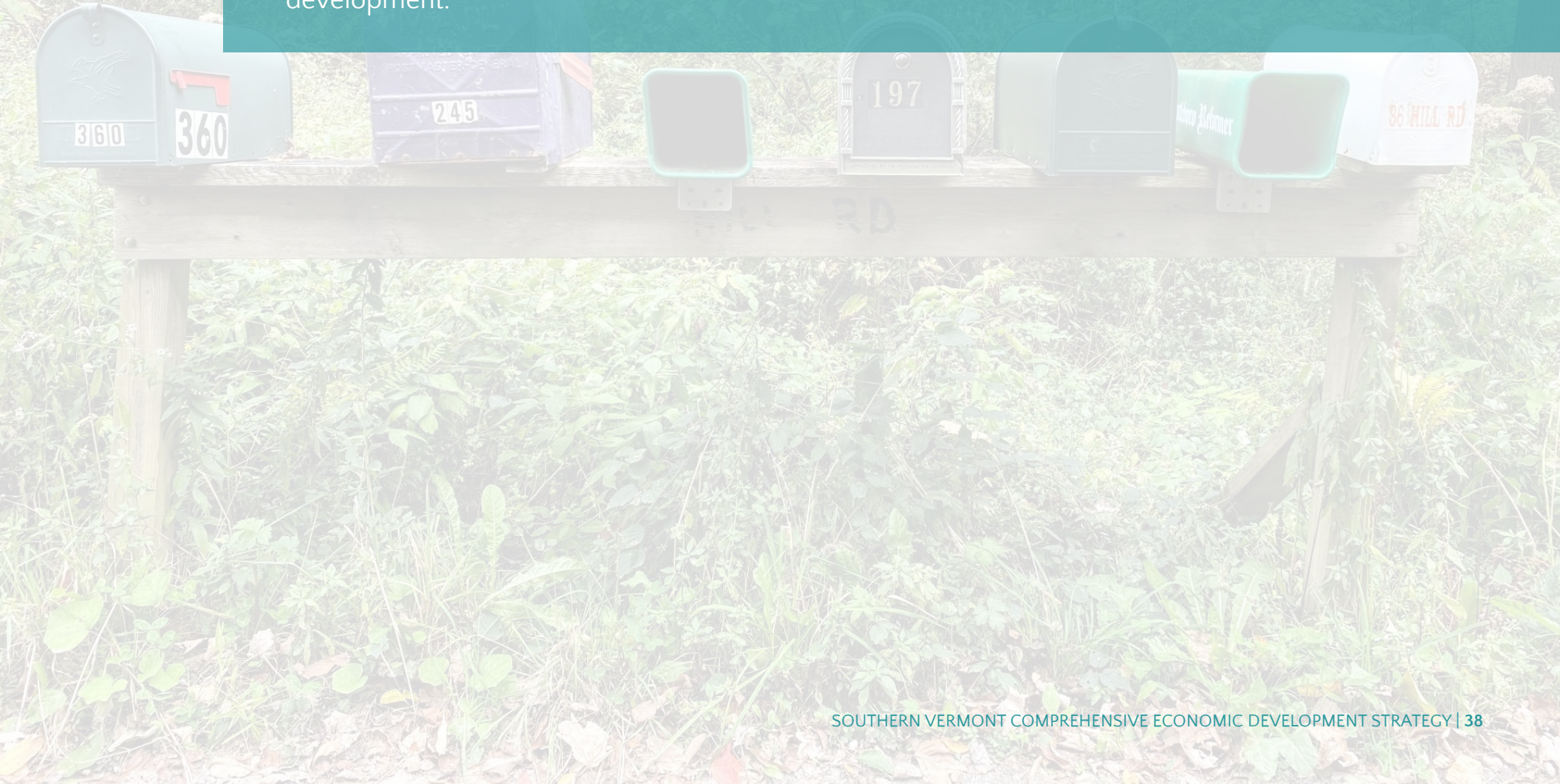
2.D) INCREASE ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL SPACE

- I. **Request information from municipalities to establish an inventory of key information about interest, availability, and infrastructure related to industrial and commercial space.** Prioritize working with communities open to industrial and commercial development, with available space and needed infrastructure. Work to identify any parcels of land that are particularly challenging to develop due to legal or physical constraints to establish inventory. Assist interested communities without the needed infrastructure to develop it through financing and technical assistance.
- II. **Continue to pursue mission-based real estate purchases to increase access to industrial and commercial space and provide opportunities for businesses to expand and build resilience within the region.** Align mission-based real estate purchases with data and insights into existing business sectors and the emergent needs of burgeoning sectors.
- III. **Support the development and redevelopment of commercial and industrial uses within existing village centers** throughout the region to encourage infill development, greater density within areas of existing infrastructure and services, and alignment with local and regional goals.
- IV. **Identify catalyst properties/parcels within the region's downtowns and village centers** that have challenges around redevelopment, engage partners to find a market and financially feasible redevelopment options, and/or support municipalities in partnering in the redevelopment process.

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

Rationale: The creation of resilient and adaptable communities is equally crucial for Southern Vermont's economic development. This effort directly contributes to establishing high-quality living environments that attract and retain residents. Key focus areas include addressing the ability to withstand the increasing frequency of historically significant flooding events, expanding housing options, promoting civic engagement, and enhancing the region's recreational and cultural offerings. These initiatives not only make Southern Vermont more appealing to potential residents but also improve the quality of life for current inhabitants, fostering a cycle of growth and development.



3.A) INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEM UPGRADES TO REDUCE AND MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

VERMONT MUNICIPAL CLIMATE CHANGE VULNERABILITY INDICATORS TOOL:

The Municipal Vulnerability Indicators Tool (MVI) is a mapping tool created by the State of Vermont to help municipalities understand their vulnerabilities to climate change across several social, economic, and environmental factors.

- The tool tracks 48 factors of climate vulnerability over six domains:
 - Infrastructure
 - Community
 - Built Environment
 - Social
 - Natural Environment
 - Economy and Jobs
- It includes information on 13 climate hazards including drought; extreme precipitation; erosion; ice, hail and snowstorms; high and low temperatures; wind; wildfire; landslides; flooding; and invasive species

Source:
Climatechange.vermont.gov

- I. Implement infrastructure upgrades** to build resilience and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Create a comprehensive list of at-risk locations and utility redundancy needs to help develop targeted infrastructure upgrade plans. Increase regional capacity to execute plans and projects to protect critical assets and ensure the safety of residents. In addition, share information about the Municipal Climate Change Vulnerability Indicators Tool, which can help communities assess their vulnerability to climate-related hazards and inform decision-making. Discuss different funding and shared service approaches for municipalities to support this effort.
- II. Engage with businesses and property owners in vulnerable areas at risk of damage from flooding or erosion.** Assess specific vulnerabilities and explore proactive options to better understand potential risks and develop effective mitigation strategies to be prepared for future flooding.
- III. Initiate regional discussions to explore innovative approaches to mitigate climate change impacts** including funding, mitigation, adaptation, and related workforce/industry development. Focus on infrastructure hardening, energy system resiliency, and other cutting-edge strategies that could be adapted and scaled for other places.
- IV. Advocate for state and federal funding to support the development of comprehensive resilience plans and implementation** to address both adaptation and relocation strategies, enabling individual towns to envision sustainable futures. Explore opportunities to align resilience initiatives/planning with other municipal funding streams and investigate diverse financing options to ensure successful implementation.
- V. Research and support the creation of local or regional water and wastewater districts and projects** to support village and neighborhood densities. Consolidating operations and implementing innovative approaches can create sustainable methods for operating, maintaining, and expanding the infrastructure necessary to support our communities.
- VI. Sustain and grow the food supply chain to decrease reliance on long-distance transportation and increase regional resilience.** Facilitate conversations among key players to identify areas for greater regional collaboration and coordination.

PROMOTING INFILL AND “MISSING MIDDLE” HOMES:

3.B) INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR ALL

One way to create more housing while preserving the character of Vermont’s traditional settlement patterns is through the development of ‘Missing Middle’ homes. These include home types that were common before local zoning codes began to separate different kinds of uses and building types. They include:

- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Duplexes
- Small-scale multi-household buildings
- Neighborhood-scale mixed-use/live-work buildings

The State of Vermont has released several tools to help communities promote the development of MMH’s including:

- [Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods \(2020\)](#)
- [Homes for All: A ‘Design and Do’ Toolkit for Small-scale Home Builders, Investors, and Community Leaders \(2024\)](#)

Source:

<https://accd.vermont.gov/home sforall>

- I. Survey all regional municipalities to gauge interest in increasing housing and willingness to receive additional support.** Cross-reference this data with areas that possess adequate infrastructure. Prioritize public investments and support in communities with both interest and the necessary foundation for development and reach out to municipalities that express interest but lack sufficient infrastructure or resources.
- II. Develop town-level mapping of locations where housing development can occur** (aligned with zoning, design, and conservation constraints), offering developers a clear roadmap for potential projects. Identifying specific locations that meet these criteria can bridge the gap between town-level housing goals and regional housing needs, providing developers with actionable starting points for their initiatives.
- III. Foster community conversations to expand awareness of the importance of housing to thriving communities.** These conversations should emphasize the positive impact of housing on both community well-being and the tax base, demonstrating the return on investment (ROI) of infrastructure improvements. Facilitate the coordination of a regional network of small developers to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and best practices in the field.
- IV. Pursue greater housing options for seniors of all income and service needs** to allow older residents to remain in the community but in a housing type that better meets their needs. Create adaptable housing units that are attractive to older residents but could also be used by other generations in the future to ensure longevity and strength of the housing market.
- V. Encourage private investment in large-scale workforce housing development/redevelopment project** through comprehensive support services, including facilitating stakeholder meetings, assisting with funding applications, and guiding developers through permitting process assembling necessary parcels of land. Providing these resources can create a more favorable environment for private investment, encouraging the realization of large-scale projects.
- VI. Facilitate the coordination of a regional network of small developers** to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and best practices in the field



- VII. Support the development of mixed-income housing and mixed-use development within existing village centers and neighborhood districts throughout the region to encourage infill development.** Encouraging denser development in areas with established infrastructure and services will maximize land utilization and reduce the need for new development in the more rural areas. This infill approach aligns with local and regional goals of creating sustainable, walkable communities that offer various housing options and amenities.
- VIII. Support residential rehabilitation and redevelopment programs.** Modernizing older homes through energy-efficient upgrades, structural repairs, and accessibility features can increase their resilience, improve their overall condition, enhance the quality of life for residents, and expand options for residents in different income brackets.
- IX. Facilitate access to homeownership programs that provide pathways to owning a home.** Consider programs that provide financial education, down payment assistance, and other resources to help individuals build wealth, increase neighborhood stability, and foster community belonging. Explore alternative, community-centered housing opportunities that engage prospective homeowners in cooperative or mission-based housing initiatives. Look for ways to align programs with entrepreneurial skill-building and offer pathways for generational wealth creation.
- X. Further expand the funding and assistance specific to housing development to establish greater stability and predictability for developers.** This includes implementing Tax Increment Financing programs to fund necessary infrastructure improvements, increasing access to capital through loans and grants, facilitating participation in tax credit programs, ensuring access to suitable real estate parcels, and streamlining the permitting process.



3.C) PROMOTE CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- I. **Reinforce the importance of civility in community conversations** through education, public statements before meetings, continued support of local media outlets, and ongoing focus on constructive behavior. Improving the public engagement environment will make serving on boards a more rewarding endeavor. Recognize the mental health toll that serving on boards can take and provide support as appropriate.
- II. **Strengthen the effectiveness and capacity of non-profit organizations and other mission-driven enterprises** to serve the community and enhance their operational efficiency. Connect these organizations with mentors and other experienced professionals to provide guidance on refining their processes, financial management, HR practices, and overall "business" model. Continue to promote awareness of available resources and training opportunities designed to improve their functioning. Encourage collaboration between local non-profit organizations and municipal boards to strengthen community engagement and volunteerism. This support will empower non-profits to optimize their operations and ultimately deliver a greater impact on Southern Vermont.
- III. **Use the CEDS as a tool for active engagement in community discussions**, inviting a regionally driven, inclusive approach to economic development. Facilitating open dialogue and discussion, the CEDS can help bridge divides and reduce political polarization, ensuring that economic development initiatives are aligned with the needs and priorities of all stakeholders.
- IV. **Establish a meaningful way to engage with remote workers, retirees, and newcomers to the region.** Establishing various engagement initiatives will foster community and belonging among newcomers to Southern Vermont. Investing in public space design, implementing effective communication strategies, inviting participation in local and non-profit boards, organizing social events, providing co-working spaces, and creating opportunities for gathering can cultivate a welcoming and inclusive environment that fosters meaningful connections and strengthens the community.



3.D) REINFORCE THE REGION'S RECREATION AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

- I. **Support major regional tourist destinations in implementing a more diversified marketing and programming strategy.** By targeting a wider range of demographics, exploring opportunities beyond their traditional offerings, collaborating with other regional sectors, and preparing for future changes, these destinations can enhance their appeal, attract a more diverse visitor base, and position themselves for continued success to ensure long-term sustainability and growth.
- II. **Incorporate the implications of climate change on recreational and cultural resources in planning initiatives.** Collaborate with industry stakeholders to identify and implement strategies to enhance the resilience of these resources, including necessary upgrades to lodging, destination infrastructure, and transportation systems.
- III. **Help recreational and cultural organizations consider exploring ways to diversify offerings** to boost resilience and profitability and reduce their dependence on seasonal factors. Consider supporting initiatives such as targeted marketing campaigns to locals, special packages, infrastructure upgrades, and innovative business models that cater to year-round activities. Small changes can make a big difference in adapting to market shifts and supporting long-term success.

OBJECTIVE 4

PROMOTE GREATER REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Rationale: Southern Vermont has a long history of collaboration, with numerous organizations actively engaged in advancing economic, workforce, and community development. This strong foundation creates a unique opportunity to bring even greater alignment and cohesion to these efforts. By enhancing coordination among these dedicated entities, we can streamline services and strengthen our collective impact. It is crucial to communicate effectively with residents, policymakers, and business leaders regarding matters of local and regional import. A positive, forward-thinking, and coordinated approach will be key to breaking through any perceived challenges. Together, we can build on Southern Vermont's strengths, realizing its full potential and achieving meaningful, lasting change for the entire region.





4.A) CREATE AND STRENGTHEN STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT CEDS IMPLEMENTATION

- I. **Expand access to capital through strategies including revolving loan funds (RLF) and other tools** that can level the playing field for capital access. These financial tools can provide critical funding for projects promoting affordable housing, job creation, and community development. Increasing uptake and Leveraging RLF and other capital resources can support local businesses, revitalize neighborhoods, and improve residents' overall quality of life.
- II. **Investigate the feasibility of establishing specialized entities to build greater regional capacity for project implementation.** Internal development services could provide direct support for key community and economic initiatives. At the same time, a Project Development Authority (PDA) could be created to manage complex projects on behalf of local communities. The PDA would bring a high degree of expertise and financial insight to the table, ensuring that projects are executed efficiently and effectively.
- III. **Pursue targeted outreach to expand the economic development ecosystem and increase opportunities for business connections**, including:
 - **Expand Capital Access for Business Growth:** Develop structured pathways for businesses to access capital, focusing on both scaling existing enterprises and supporting startups, using a mix of federal, state, and regional funds.
 - **Develop Investment Vehicles:** Establish and expand regional investment funds, angel networks, and revolving loan programs, securing capital from national-scale sources to fuel local growth.
 - **Promote Regional Collaboration:** Strengthen collaboration between economic development organizations (EDOs), municipalities, and private partners to create a unified regional pitch for external investors.
 - **Targeted Outreach and Networking:** Actively engage with national philanthropic organizations and capital networks, showcasing regional opportunities and successful initiatives that align with their priorities.

SOLUTION HIGHLIGHT:

Approaches to Local Wealth Creation

Many organizations have developed data-driven approaches to local and regional economic development that focus on local wealth development.

- Wealthworks is an approach that brings together and connects a community's assets in multiple areas to meet market demand in ways that build livelihoods that last.
- Aspen Institute CSG's, Thrive Rural Framework is a new tool to help communities take stock, target action, and gauge progress on equitable rural prosperity.
- Main Street America's Four Point Strategy addresses inclusive Economic Vitality and emphasizes asset inventory as a key component of downtown/Main Street development.
- Rural LISC strives to assist rural communities in developing opportunities at the local level with a partnership model that helps develop local leadership and capacity to carry out critical projects, building on local assets.

4.B) WORK REGIONALLY TO ADDRESS CRITICAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

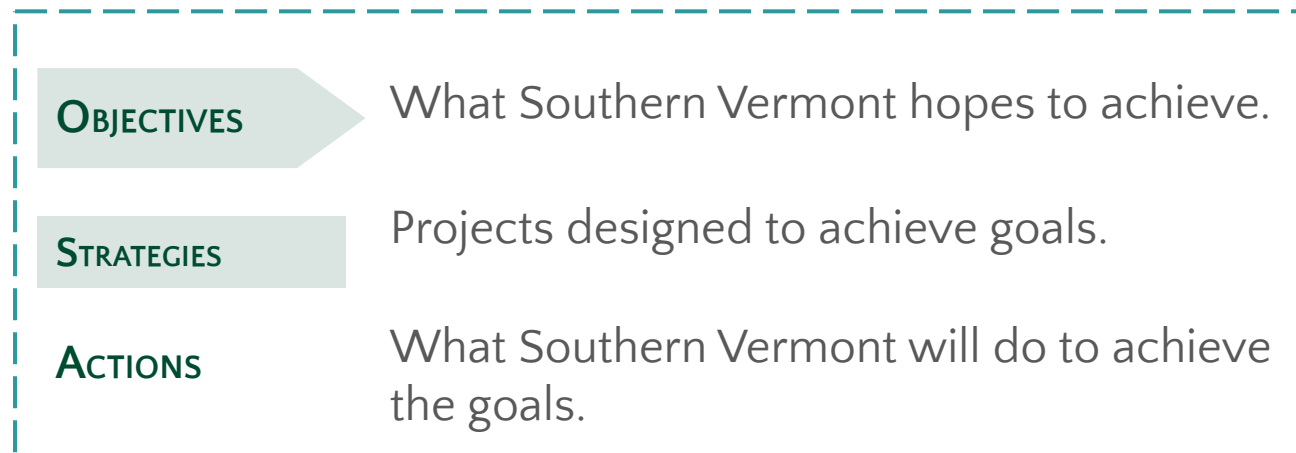
- I. Engage in state-level conversations about regionalization and shared municipal service agreements.** Exploring opportunities to collaborate with neighboring municipalities and share resources can identify ways to optimize service delivery while minimizing expenses.
- II. Engage businesses, municipalities, non-profits, and the public in conversations about the wealth of resources available to achieve economic development-related goals.** Foster open dialogue and encourage greater adoption of existing programs and technical assistance. This collaborative approach will empower stakeholders to work together towards shared goals, driving positive change and fostering a more vibrant Southern Vermont.
- III. Explore the applicability of data-driven approaches to supporting and building local wealth creation** in multiple areas, including intellectual, financial, natural, cultural, political, individual, and social capital. The goal is to increase collaboration and expand opportunities across the region.
- IV. Facilitate regional and cross-state conversations to identify areas for shared municipal services, collaborative approaches, and coordinated resource deployment.** Encouraging collaboration and cooperation among local governments can streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance the delivery of essential services to our communities.

ATTACHMENT A: Action Plan Matrix

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

PERFORMANCE MEASURES KEY

- **Population:** Total number of residents in Southern Vermont; Diversity
- **Workforce:** Job openings per sector; Working age residents; Educational attainment
- **Income:** Per capita income; Unemployment rate; Wage growth
- **Housing Units:** Number of housing units
- **Care System:** Number of sector job openings; Number of childcare seats; Number of providers
- **Business Growth:** Number of jobs; Number of businesses assisted
- **Entrepreneurship:** Number of business starts. Availability of capital
- **Investment:** Number and value of redevelopment projects; Vacancy rates
- **Resilience Infrastructure:** Amount of investment in infrastructure; Number of new or upgraded systems; Amount of investment
- **Collaboration:** Depth of involvement with partners; Number of meetings held



ACTION PLAN MATRIX

PERFORMANCE MEASURES CROSSWALK

The following table shows the performance measures addressed by each objective.

Objectives	Performance Measures									
	Population	Workforce	Income	Housing Units	Care System	Business Growth	Entrepreneurship	Investment	Resilience	Collaboration
1. Address Critical Population Needs for the Future	X	X	X	X	X		X			X
2. Empower Businesses to Thrive Long-Term		X	X			X	X	X	X	X
3. Foster Resilient, Adaptable Communities				X		X	X	X		X
4. Promote Greater Regional Economic Development Alignment							X			X

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

STRATEGY 1.A) INVEST IN COMMUNITY ASSETS THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
1.A.I Improve quality of life for young people and their families	Support and develop local, regional, and state initiatives and policies that improve quality of life for young people and their families, including schools, childcare, arts and culture, diversity of nightlife, family-friendly workplace policies, and recreation amenities.	High	Ongoing	29
1.A.II Invest in programs to attract and retain young people	Support existing programs and explore opportunities to create new programs that cater specifically to the needs and interests of young adults.	Medium	Ongoing	29
1.A.III Pursue housing to accommodate younger people	Identify and develop housing options that are suitable for young adults in terms of size, price, amenities, and location.	High	Short	29
1.A.IV Develop targeted marketing materials	Highlight alignment of Southern Vermont's lifestyle with young people's values/preferences and work in coordination with state marketing and attraction programs.	Low	Mid	29

Performance Measure: Population · Workforce · Housing Units · Care System

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

STRATEGY 1.B) CREATE PROGRAMS TO TRAIN, ATTRACT, AND RETAIN PEOPLE WITH NEEDED SKILLS

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
1.B.I	Identify and prioritize the most in-demand skills and occupations Collaborate with workforce development partners to establish the necessary training programs, educational pathways, and support services.	High	Short	30
1.B.II	Increase the public's awareness of the specific skilled workforce needs Based on data, launch a targeted marketing campaign highlighting the opportunities available.	Medium	Ongoing	30
1.B.III	Empower Southern Vermont employers to be employers of choice Help employers be attractive places to work through financial incentives, work/life balance, community engagement, and family-friendly policies.	Medium	Mid	30
1.B.IV	Pursue housing to accommodate the workforce Identify and develop housing options that are suitable for the workforce in terms of size, price, amenities, and location.	High	Short	30
1.B.V	Continue to support affordable transportation for employees Identify and develop affordable transportation options for employees to access their workspace and training programs	Medium	Ongoing	30

Performance Measure: Workforce · Housing Units · Income · Care System

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

STRATEGY 1.C) FOSTER AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE POPULATION

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
1.C.I	<p>Convene discussions among key organizations and stakeholders involved with refugee resettlement efforts</p> <p>Focus on identifying areas for improvement, sharing best practices, and developing strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the program.</p>	High	Immediate	31
1.C.II	<p>Improve economic and community development related materials</p> <p>Enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of economic and community development programs.</p>	Medium	Mid	31
1.C.III	<p>Develop entrepreneurial support targeted to underserved communities</p> <p>Foster a supportive and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem by creating mentorship programs, providing access to affordable resources, and advocating for equitable policies.</p>	Medium	Mid	31
1.C.IV	<p>Build diverse leadership and representation within economic and community development organizations and initiatives</p> <p>Foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and belonging, as well as implementing policies and procedures that promote diversity and equity.</p>	Low	Ongoing	31

Performance Measure: Collaboration · Entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVE 1

ADDRESS CRITICAL POPULATION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

STRATEGY 1.D) CONTINUE TO SUPPORT POLICIES THAT IMPROVE AND STRENGTHEN THE CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEMS

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE	
1.D.I	Invest in creative solutions to expand access to care (child and elder care)	Support programs that facilitate training, funding for starting in-home care programs, and guidance on meeting state requirements.	High	Ongoing	32
1.D.II	Pursue innovative solutions to strengthen the health care system	Increase accessibility through culturally competent care, mobile service providers, interpreter services, workforce retention and attraction efforts, and affordable insurance options.	High	Short	32
1.D.III	Participate in conversations about school districts' ability to modernize	Equip schools to meet the needs of today's students and prepare them for future success.	High	Ongoing	32
1.D.IV	Foster greater collaboration among school districts	Strengthen Southern Vermont schools and improve educational outcomes.	Medium	Ongoing	32
1. D.V	Establish targeted workforce attraction efforts to grow the pipeline of care, mental health, and education system needs	Address the growing workforce needs to expand access and improve service provision.	High	Short	32

Performance Measure: Care System · Collaboration · Workforce · Population

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

STRATEGY 2.A) ENHANCE BUSINESS POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
2.A.I	Foster a culture of business growth and resilience Support businesses in their efforts to remain viable and transition towards future opportunities.	High	Ongoing	34
2.A.II	Enhance alignment and effectiveness of the existing Southern Vermont business support organizations, EDOs and leaders Develop a strategic entrepreneurial ecosystem framework and work plan, establish public-private partnerships, and create programs that leverage professional business service providers.	Medium	Mid	34
2.A.III	Continue conducting business retention and expansion visits Engage with businesses of all sizes, phases, and geographic locations to understand specific needs, concerns, and aspirations.	Medium	Ongoing	34
2.A.IV	Establish sustainable funding streams and access to capital to serve regional businesses To expand access to funding for businesses to pursue their strategic initiatives.	Medium	Mid	34
2.A.V	Increase access to capital Support business transitions of all types and for all business sizes.	High	Ongoing	34
2.A.VI	Catalyze and facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities Expand the degree of information sharing, expanded market access, and resource identification that might otherwise be unavailable in a rural region.	Medium	Ongoing	34

Performance Measure: Business Growth · Entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

STRATEGY 2.B) STRENGTHEN THE SOUTHERN VERMONT ENTREPRENEURIAL AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
2.B.I	Establish a more formalized small business incubator program Provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the resources, support, and mentorship they need to realize their business ideas.	High	Medium	35
2.B.II	Identify key metrics, methodologies, and resources to support start-ups, innovation and modern business ideas to make it from ideation to launch Ensure that would-be entrepreneurs are equipped with the technical expertise to pursue the development.	High	Ongoing	35
2.B.III	Build critical resilience among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals within our regional business and entrepreneurial communities Continue to offer training on emerging business topics and create opportunities for mentoring.	High	Medium	35
2.B.IV	Center and support entrepreneur-led initiatives To strengthen the culture of entrepreneurship and support the success of those who risk investing in themselves.	High	Ongoing	35
2.B.V	Support the creation of locally owned small businesses To enhance community vibrancy, build wealth, and diversify the regional economy.	High	Ongoing	35

Performance Measure: Entrepreneurship · Business Growth · Collaboration

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

STRATEGY 2.C) ESTABLISH A COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
2.C.I	Establish a list of the top critical workforce needs Leverage data-driven insights to identify the most critical occupations, trades, and skills required for growth.	High	Short	36
2.C.II	Invest in training programs that equip the workforce with the skills needed to enhance productivity and drive innovation Collaborate with local, regional, and national institutions to expand access to in-person and online training programs focusing on emerging technologies, digital literacy, and other future-ready skills.	High	Short	36
2.C.III	Strengthen regional collaboration related to workforce development Provide essential career awareness, job readiness, and coaching to Vermonters seeking to enter, reenter, or advance in the job market.	Medium	Mid	36
2.C.IV	Foster a robust workforce pipeline Work from a young age to develop a job-ready workforce with the skills needed.	Medium	Mid	36
2.C.V	Support employers in embracing an evolving workforce Expand access to funding sources for employee development, expert guidance on creating inclusive hiring practices, and assistance in evaluating and implementing effective technologies.	Medium	Ongoing	36

Performance Measure: Workforce · Collaboration · Income

OBJECTIVE 2

EMPOWER BUSINESSES TO THRIVE LONG-TERM

STRATEGY 2.D) INCREASE ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL SPACE

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
2.D.I	Establish an inventory of sites for development Prioritize working with communities open to industrial and commercial development, with available space and needed infrastructure.	Medium	Short	37
2.D.II	Continue to pursue mission-based real estate purchases Increase access to industrial and commercial space and provide opportunities for businesses to expand and build resilience within the region.	Medium	Mid	37
2.D.III	Support the development and redevelopment of commercial and industrial uses within existing village centers Encourage infill development, greater density within areas of existing infrastructure and services, and alignment with local and regional goals.	Medium	Mid	37
2.D.IV	Identify catalyst properties/parcels within the region's downtowns and village centers Engage partners to find a market and financially feasible redevelopment options, and/or support municipalities in partnering in the redevelopment process.	Medium	Long	37

Performance Measure: Investment · Resilience Infrastructure

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 3.A) INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEM UPGRADES TO REDUCE AND MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
3.A.I	Plan for infrastructure upgrades Create a comprehensive list of at-risk locations to develop targeted infrastructure upgrade plans.	High	Short	39
3.A.II	Engage with businesses and property owners in vulnerable areas Assess specific vulnerabilities and explore proactive options.	High	Short	39
3.A.III	Initiate regional discussions to explore innovative approaches to mitigate climate change impacts Explore innovative approaches to mitigation, adaptation, and related workforce/industry development.	Medium	Mid	39
3.A.V	Advocate for state and federal funding to support the development of comprehensive resilience plans Help communities plan for and navigate the challenges of climate change and ensure that villages and neighborhoods persist and thrive.	Medium	Long	39
3.A.VI	Research and support the creation of regional water and wastewater districts and projects Consolidating operations and implementing innovative approaches can create sustainable methods for operating, maintaining, and expanding the infrastructure necessary to support our communities.	Medium	Mid	39
3.A.VII	Strengthen the food supply chain To decrease reliance on long-distance transportation and increase regional resilience.	Medium	Mid	39

Performance Measure: Resilience Infrastructure · Collaboration

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 3.B) INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR ALL

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE	
3.B.I	Survey all regional municipalities to gauge interest in increasing housing	Identify areas in Southern Vermont that are best suited for further housing development.	High	Short	40
3.B.II	Develop town-level mapping of locations where housing development can occur	Provide developers with actionable starting points for their initiatives.	High	Short	40
3.B.III	Foster community conversations to expand awareness of the importance of housing to thriving communities	Emphasize the positive impact of housing on both community well-being and the tax base, demonstrating the return on investment of infrastructure improvements.	Medium	Ongoing	40
3.B.IV	Pursue greater housing options for seniors of all income and service needs	Expand housing options for older residents.	High	Mid	40
3.B.V	Encourage private investment in large-scale workforce housing development and redevelopment project opportunities	Create a more favorable environment for private investment, encouraging the realization of large-scale projects that contribute to community growth and revitalization.	Medium	Long	40

Performance Measure: Housing Units · Investment

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 3.B) INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR ALL (CONT.)

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
3.B.VI	<p>Facilitate the coordination of a regional network of small developers</p> <p>Support and facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and best practices in the field</p>	Medium	Ongoing	40
3.B.VII	<p>Support the development of mixed-income housing and mixed-use development</p> <p>Encourage denser development in areas with established infrastructure and services.</p>	High	Ongoing	41
3.B.VIII	<p>Support residential rehabilitation and redevelopment programs</p> <p>Modernize older homes through improvements such as energy-efficient upgrades, structural repairs, and accessibility features.</p>	High	Ongoing	41
3.B.IX	<p>Facilitate access to homeownership programs that provide pathways to owning a home</p> <p>Support programs offering financial education, down payment assistance, and other resources to help individuals build wealth, increase neighborhood stability, and foster a sense of community belonging.</p>	Medium	Mid	41
3.B.X	<p>Expand the funding and assistance specific to housing to create a greater sense of stability and predictability for developers</p> <p>Examples include implementing Tax Increment Financing programs to fund necessary infrastructure improvements, increasing access to capital through loans and grants, facilitating participation in tax credit programs, ensuring access to suitable real estate parcels, and streamlining the permitting process.</p>	Medium	Long	41

Performance Measure: Housing Units · Investment

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 3.C) PROMOTE CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
3.C.I	<p>Reinforce the importance of civility in community conversations</p> <p>Improving the public engagement environment will make serving on boards a more rewarding endeavor.</p>	High	Ongoing	42
3.C.II	<p>Strengthen the effectiveness and capacity of non-profit organizations and other mission-driven enterprises</p> <p>Connect these organizations with mentors, teachers, and other experienced professionals to provide guidance on refining their processes, financial management, HR practices, and overall "business" model.</p>	Medium	Ongoing	42
3.C.III	<p>Use the CEDS as a tool for active engagement in community discussions</p> <p>Facilitating open dialogue and discussion, the CEDS can help bridge divides and reduce political polarization, ensuring that economic development initiatives are aligned with the needs and priorities of all stakeholders.</p>	Medium	Immediate	42
3.C.IV	<p>Establish meaningful way to engage with remote workers, retirees, and newcomers to the region</p> <p>Investing in public space design, implementing effective communication strategies, organizing social events, providing co-working spaces, and creating opportunities for gathering can cultivate a welcoming and inclusive environment.</p>	Medium	Mid	42

Performance Measure: Collaboration

OBJECTIVE 3

FOSTER RESILIENT, ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES

STRATEGY 3.D) REINFORCE THE REGION'S RECREATION AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
3.D.I	<p>Assist regional tourist destinations in implementing diversified marketing and programming</p> <p>Support destinations in their effort to enhance their appeal, attract a more diverse visitor base, and position themselves for continued success to ensure long-term sustainability and growth.</p>	Medium	Mid	43
3.D.II	<p>Incorporate the implications of climate change on recreational and cultural resources in planning initiatives</p> <p>Collaborate with industry stakeholders to identify and implement strategies to enhance the resilience of these resources.</p>	High	Ongoing	43
3.D.III	<p>Help businesses consider ways to diversify their offerings</p> <p>Enhance the resilience and profitability of businesses in the region and reduce their dependence on seasonal factors.</p>	High	Ongoing	43

Performance Measure: Collaboration · Entrepreneurship · Business Growth

OBJECTIVE 4

PROMOTE GREATER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

STRATEGY 4.A) CREATE AND STRENGTHEN STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT CEDS IMPLEMENTATION

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
4.A.I	Expand access to capital through strategies including, revolving loan fund (RLF) and other tools Provide critical funding for projects promoting affordable housing, job creation, and community development.	High	Short	45
4.A.II	Investigate establishing specialized entities to build greater regional capacity for project implementation Internal development services to provide direct support for key community and economic initiatives.	Medium	Short	45
4.A.III	Pursue targeted outreach Expand the economic development ecosystem and increase opportunities for business connections	Medium	Ongoing	45

Performance Measure: Collaboration · Entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVE 4

PROMOTE GREATER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

STRATEGY 4.B) WORK REGIONALLY TO ADDRESS CRITICAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	TIMELINE	PLAN PAGE
4.B.I	Engage in state-level conversations about regionalization and shared municipal service agreements Explore opportunities to collaborate with neighboring municipalities and share resources to optimize service delivery while minimizing expenses.	Medium	Mid	46
4.B.II	Engage in conversations about resources available to achieve economic development-related goals Foster open dialogue and encourage greater adoption of existing programs and technical assistance.	Medium	Mid	46
4.B.III	Explore data-driven approaches to supporting and building local wealth creation Increase collaboration and create expanded opportunities for the region.	Medium	Short	46
4.B.IV	Facilitate regional and cross-state conversations to identify areas for collaborative approaches and coordinated resource deployment Encourage collaboration and cooperation among local governments to streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance the delivery of essential services.	High	Ongoing	46

Performance Measure: Collaboration

ATTACHMENT B: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

EXISTING CONDITIONS PROFILE

SOUTHERN VERMONT





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Executive Summary

Southern Vermont is experiencing a complex long-term demographic shift characterized by an aging population and declining household sizes. While the region has begun to experience population growth, primarily driven by migration, it lags behind the state and nation in overall population expansion.

Economically, Southern Vermont presents a mixed picture. The region has experienced job losses in recent years, although projections indicate modest growth in the coming years. Key industries you'd expect to find, such as healthcare, government (which includes k-12 education), retail, and hospitality, dominate the economy. There are some industries that round out the economy, such as manufacturing and distribution, or which exhibit high growth potential. Each sector faces challenges, from warm winters to automation due to a lack of skilled workforce and outmoded economic models.

Income levels in Southern Vermont are lower than those in surrounding regions. However, the region boasts a solid base of middle-income households. Educational attainment is relatively high, with a significant portion of the population holding a bachelor's degree or higher.

Overall, the economic profile document highlights challenges facing Southern Vermont related to population aging, economic diversification, and talent retention. However, the region has opportunities to leverage its diversifying population, high education levels, and tourism strengths. Addressing these challenges and capitalizing on these opportunities will be critical for the region's future success and will be used to inform the 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Aging population:** Usher in a generational transition by embracing new and emerging workforce and entrepreneurs while attracting and retaining younger residents.
- **Narrow economic base:** Reducing reliance on a limited set of industries is essential for adaptation to globalization, technological innovation, and remote workers by encouraging a diversified economy and employment.
- **Limited workforce and workforce development opportunities:** Attracting, retaining, and investing in a skilled workforce is crucial for economic growth.
- **Income inequality:** Fostering employment that provides strong wages, career growth, and workforce development systems that ensure access to economic mobility.
- **Leveraging concentrated industries:** Building on the region's industry strengths and helping them adapt.
- **Need for economic development promotion:** Attracting new businesses and supporting existing ones. Attracting and supporting businesses and attracting state and federal investment in community infrastructure development.

So VERMONT

To inform the 2024 Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a thorough analysis of past, present, and future economic conditions was conducted for Southern Vermont. This assessment encompasses socioeconomic, demographic, industry, occupational, and resiliency factors. The results will inform the strategy development and identify specific regional opportunities and challenges.

GEOGRAPHIES STUDIED

SOUTHERN VERMONT

Southern Vermont (referred to herein as Southern Vermont or SoVermont) is shown in green on the map and defined as the area within Bennington County, VT, and Windham County, VT.

REFERENCE REGION

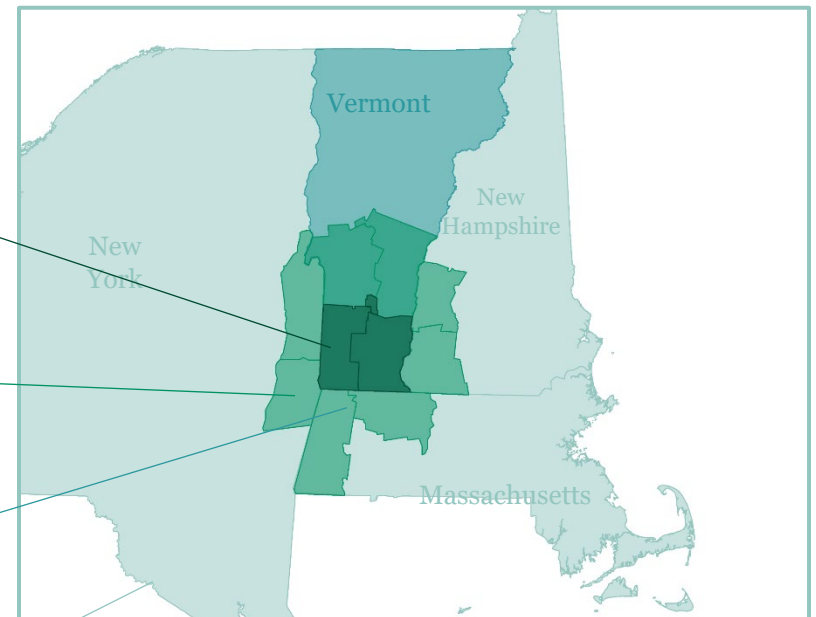
The Reference Region includes the counties within Southern Vermont as well as neighboring counties. The Reference Region is comprised of the following counties: Berkshire, MA; Franklin, MA; Cheshire, NH; Sullivan, NH; Rensselaer, NY; Washington, NY; Bennington, VT; Rutland, VT; Windham, VT; and Windsor, VT.

VERMONT

The state of Vermont was used as a benchmark for Southern Vermont.

4-STATE REGION

The 4-State Region includes Vermont, as well as its three neighboring states New York, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.





Socioeconomic Profile

This comprehensive analysis of Southern Vermont aims to provide a foundational understanding of the region's economic landscape, informing the development of the Southern Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This assessment identifies specific regional opportunities and challenges by examining socioeconomic, demographic, industry, occupational, and resiliency factors as quantified by the University of Southern Carolina's Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities index.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Southern Vermont's population is on the rise**, fueled by an influx of both domestic and international migration. This shift is from 2019, when the population had been declining steadily. Due to a higher death rate than the birth rate, Southern Vermont must rely on migration to maintain and increase its population.
- **Southern Vermont has an aging population**, with a higher proportion of older residents than the state and the nation. However, since 2019, the rate of aging has slowed, and the median age has decreased slightly due to relative growth in younger cohorts (e.g. more young adults).
- **Southern Vermont's economy presents a mixed picture, with industries experiencing varying levels of growth and concentration**. For instance, the Educational Services sector is concentrated within the Region but faces job losses, while Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services is expanding rapidly despite a lower concentration, likely due to remote workers. Conversely, the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry demonstrate both strong growth and a high concentration within the region.
- **Southern Vermont's median household income levels lag behind comparison regions**. However, the region is projected to see nominal income growth at a pace of 2% to 5% faster than neighboring geographies through 2029.
- **Educational attainment is higher in Southern Vermont** than the national average.
- **Overall resiliency in Southern Vermont is decreasing across most categories**. However, Community Capital resiliency has slightly improved since 2015. Social resiliency is the strongest indicator for Southern Vermont.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Aging population**: Usher in a generational transition by embracing a new and emerging workforce and entrepreneurs while attracting and retaining younger residents.
- **Narrow economic base**: Reducing reliance on a limited set of industries is essential for adaptation to globalization, technological innovation, and remote workers.
- **Lack of affordable properties**: Ensuring adequate housing options for all residents and affordable commercial real estate options.

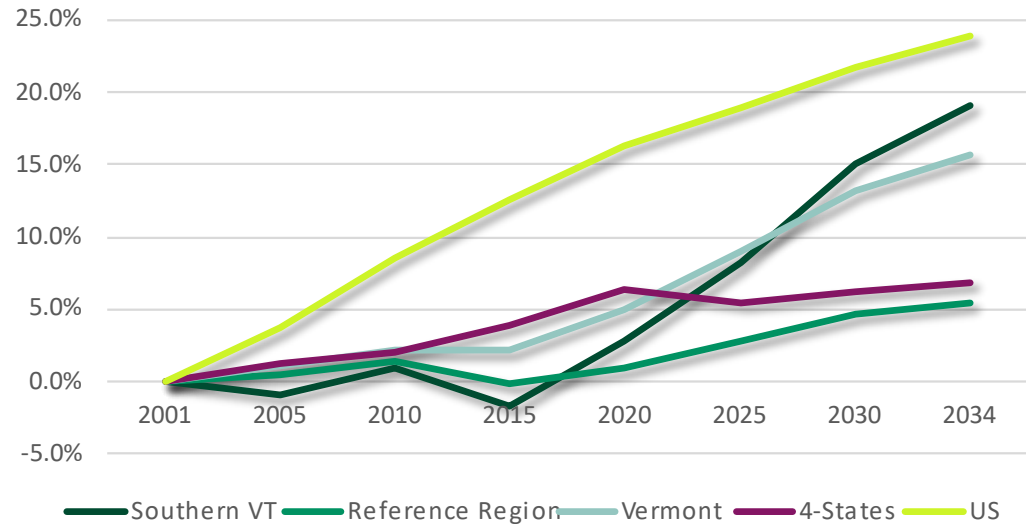
So VERMONT

POPULATION TOTALS

Southern Vermont (SoVT) experienced a population decline in 2015 but rebounded by 2020 and has seen growth in total number, reaching approximately 84,846 residents in 2023. The Lightcast model projects the growth will continue. **However, it is important to note that the population projections cited in this analysis draw from data collected during the pandemic period, an unusual period of growth in population for the Southern Vermont region and that is not necessarily reflective of actual future trends. Actual population growth in the region is likely to be much more conservative if not stable.** While valuable, these projections serve as just one input among many in developing the CEDS, which also incorporates local expertise and on-the-ground insights.

The table below provides population data and projections by count for Southern Vermont, the Reference Region, the 4-State Region, Vermont, and the US from 2001 to 2034. SoVT had the second-highest growth rate from 2001 to 2034, coming in behind the nation and ahead of the state.

Population Change Totals & Projections



Source: Lightcast

Population Totals

Region	2001	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2034	% Change 2001-2034
Southern VT	80,874	80,144	81,584	79,507	83,150	87,546	93,032	96,380	19%
Reference Region	735,595	739,245	745,971	734,795	742,787	756,470	770,476	775,996	5%
Vermont	612,153	618,814	625,886	625,810	642,893	667,641	693,355	708,266	16%
4-States	27,369,740	27,704,151	27,909,089	28,418,095	29,125,505	28,872,803	29,092,628	29,260,562	7%
US	285,081,556	295,753,151	309,327,143	320,738,994	331,511,512	338,863,206	346,934,561	353,071,616	24%

Source: Lightcast

So VERMONT

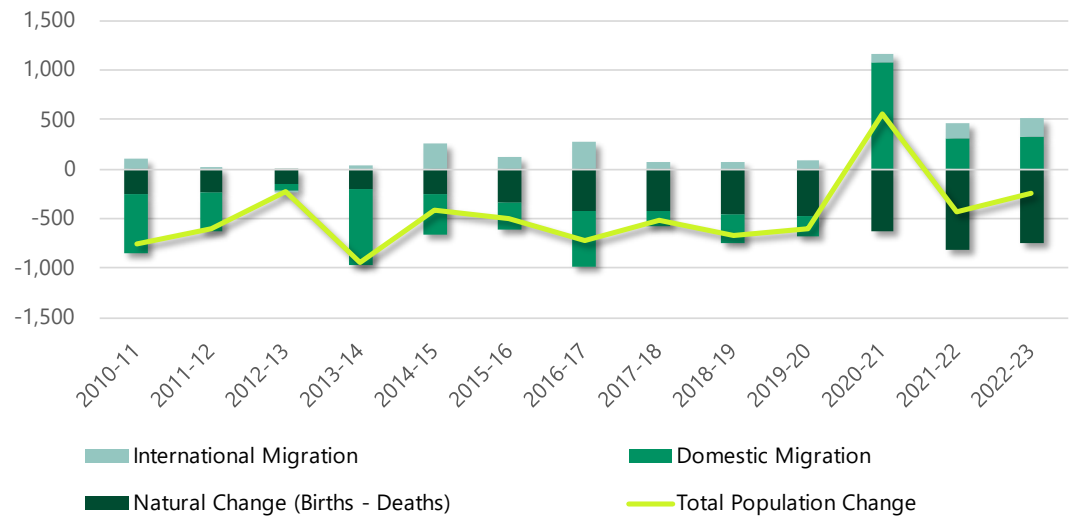
COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

From 2010 to 2019, Southern Vermont's population growth was negligible. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, domestic migration was a the primary driver of population increase in the region. While international migration has consistently contributed positively to population growth, domestic migration was a net loss prior to the pandemic.

Vermont experienced consistent but low international migration since 2010. Since 2022 a refugee program has increased rate of change which will soon show in Census data, including over 300 New Americans in Bennington and Brattleboro.

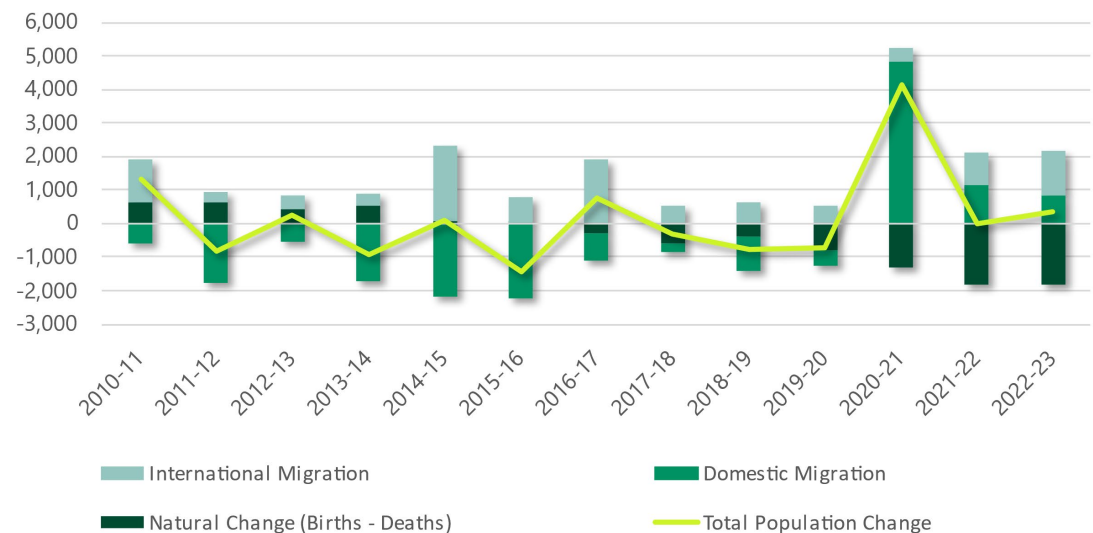
With a consistently negative birth-to-death rate, near term Southern Vermont's population growth hinges on both international and domestic migration. Long term, Southern Vermont must focus on attracting and retaining talent to ensure future population growth and fostering younger households which will shift the math on "natural increase" - births vs deaths.

Southern Vermont, Components of Population Change



Source: Census Population Estimates

Vermont, Components of Population Change



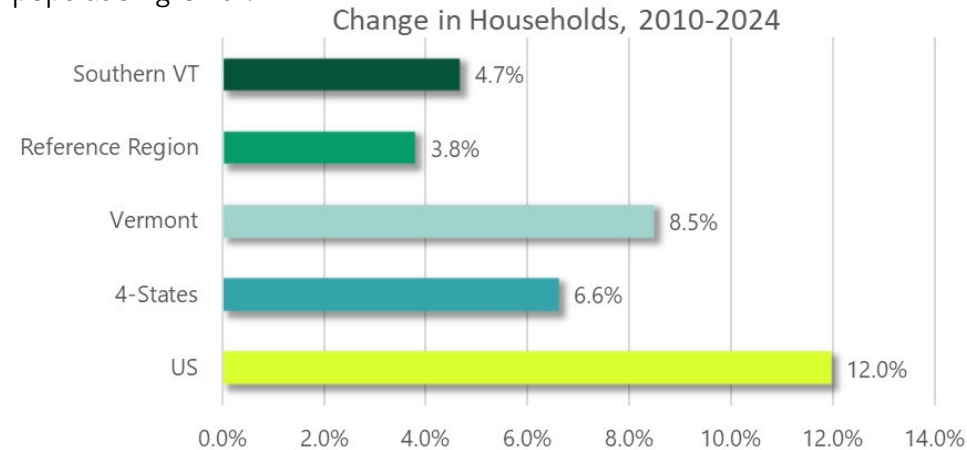
So VERMONT

HOUSEHOLDS

Southern Vermont's housing landscape is characterized by a steady increase in household numbers and a trend toward smaller household sizes. The region counted 36,400 households in 2024, a significant growth from 34,760 in 2010. However, Southern Vermont's average household size is smaller than the state and national averages, at 2.20 persons per household compared to 2.25 and 2.53, respectively.

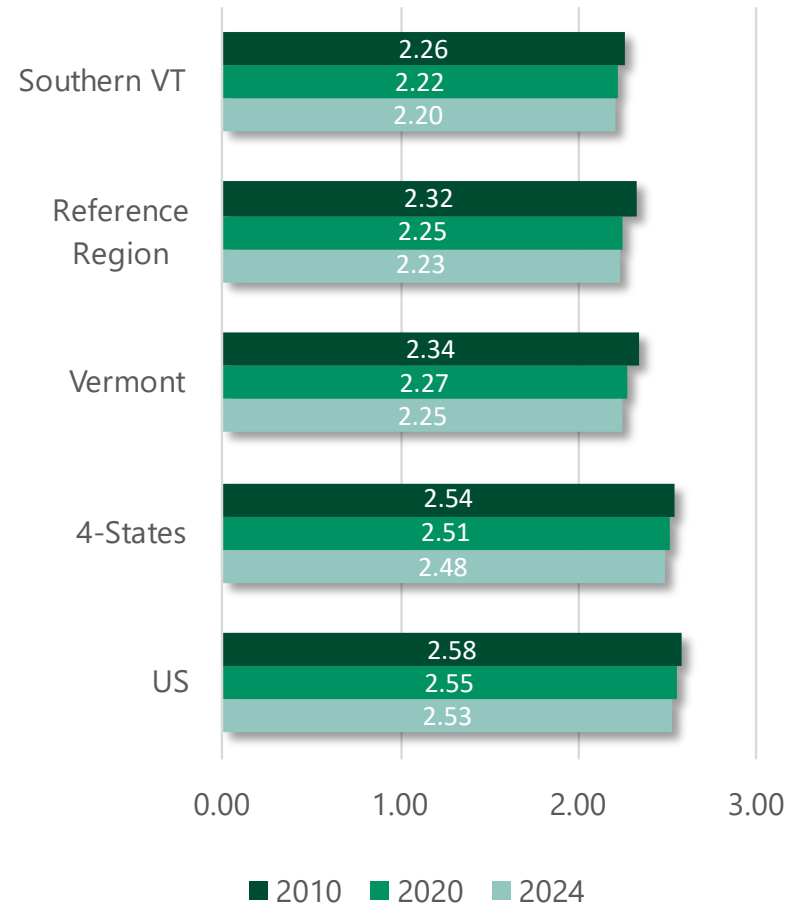
This trend of decreasing household size is mirrored across all comparison regions and the nation over the past two decades. Vermont, in particular, experienced a notable decline from 2.34 persons per household in 2010 to 2.25 in 2024. Smaller household sizes are often associated with an aging population. But it's also a long-term trend that includes a growing share of single person households and smaller family sizes.

The growth in the total number of households in a region informs the number of new housing units needed. Between 2010 and 2024, Southern Vermont experienced a 4.7% increase in households, with slow growth in housing stock, the shift to smaller household size contributes to depressing population growth.



Source: Decennial Census; Esri

Average Household Size



Source: Decennial Census; Esri

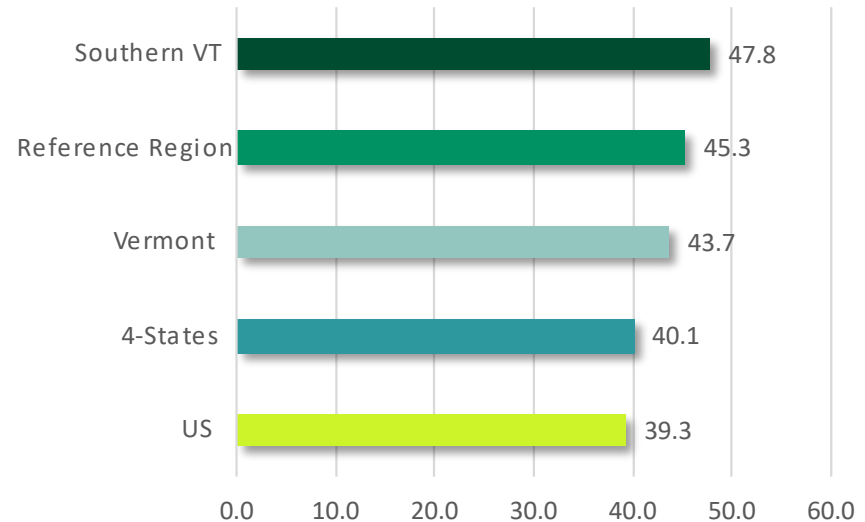
So VERMONT

AGE

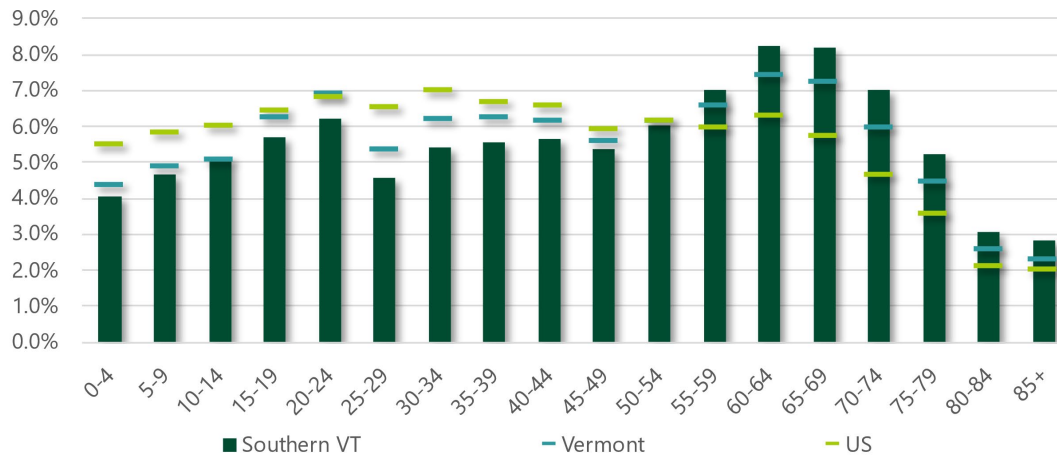
Southern Vermont's population is notably older than the state and national averages. Southern Vermont has a significantly higher proportion of residents aged 55 and over compared to Vermont and the United States.

This demographic trend is reflected in the median age, which is considerably higher in Southern Vermont (47.8) than in the rest of the regional geographies, the state (43.7) or the country (39.3). This indicates a shift in the age demographics, with a larger proportion of older residents, a smaller proportion of younger residents, and a growing number of Baby Boomers born 1946-1964. This raises the median age.

Median Age 2024



Age Distribution, 2024



Source: Esri



So VERMONT

Southern Vermont has experienced an increased share of its population in 60+ cohorts, mirroring statewide and national trends.

The demographic makeup of Southern Vermont is characterized by a disproportionately large number of older residents (35%), particularly in the younger and older senior age groups, compared to both Vermont (30%) and the United States (25%).

Conversely, Southern Vermont has a lower percentage of children, young adults, and middle-aged adults (66%) than the state (70%) and the nation. (76%)

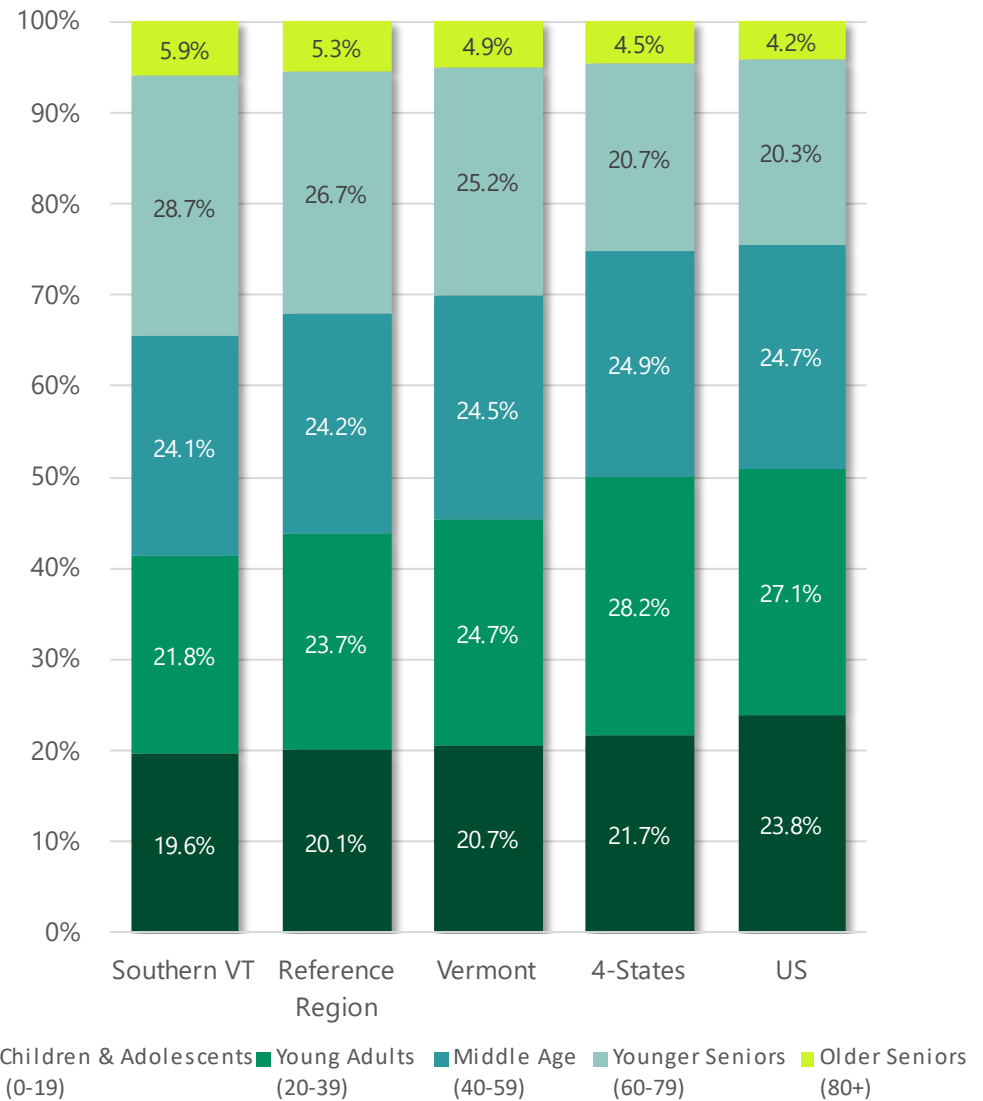
With fewer young people there are fewer births, creating a cycle of aging population that is reinforcing.

Median Age

Geography	2010	2024
Southern VT	45.0	47.8
Reference Region	42.8	45.3
Vermont	41.5	43.7
4-States	38.4	40.1
US	37.1	39.3

Source: Decennial Census, Esri

Composition by Age Cohort, 2024



So VERMONT

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Southern Vermont's racial and ethnic makeup is distinct from both the broader 4-state region and the United States. While mirroring the demographic profile of Vermont and its Reference Region, the region exhibits a significantly larger white population.

Specifically, 89% of Southern Vermont's residents identify as white, a figure that contrasts sharply with the 57% and 56% white populations in the 4-state region and the nation, respectively.

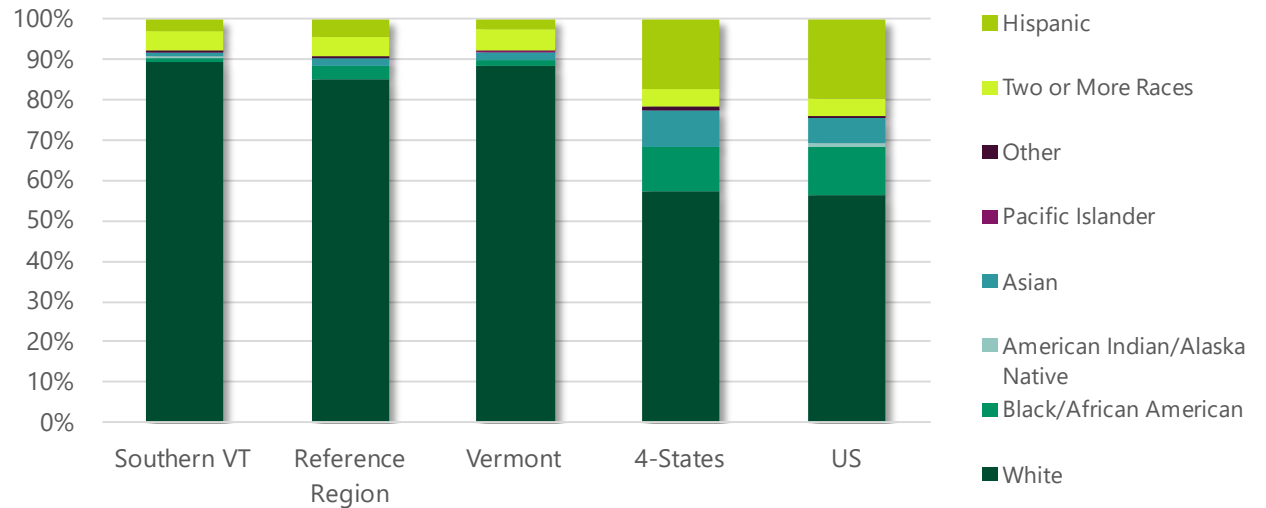
In Southern Vermont, 5% of individuals identify as 2 or more races, which is higher than the four regional states and the United States.

Population Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2024

Race/Ethnicity	Southern VT	Reference Region	Vermont	4-States	US
White	89%	85%	88%	57%	56%
Black/African American	1%	3%	1%	11%	12%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Asian	1%	2%	2%	9%	6%
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Two or More Races	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Hispanic	3%	4%	3%	17%	20%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Esri

Population Composition by Race/Ethnicity, 2024



Note: Population share for non-Hispanic portion of each race category shown. Hispanic population may be of any race.

Source: Esri



So VERMONT

INCOME

Southern Vermont exhibits the lowest median household income among the compared regions but is projected to experience the most significant growth, at 18.1%. This increase is likely due to an increase in remote workers bringing higher salaries and wage pressure from labor market shortages during the pandemic. While the model incorporates recent wage data from during the pandemic to make its projections, the actual growth in earnings is not likely to continue at such a fast rate as the labor market cools.

Despite the lower overall income, Southern Vermont maintains a substantial base of middle- to upper-middle-income households and a relatively small low-income population.

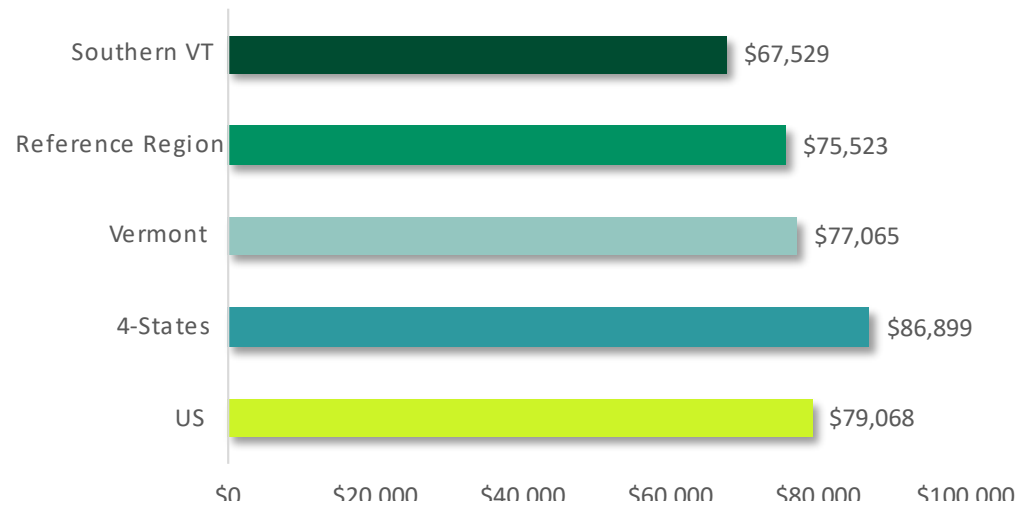
Southern Vermont's low-income rate (households earning less than \$25,000) is comparable to both the Reference Region and the nation at 15%, slightly lower than Vermont's 14% and higher than the 4-State region's 16%. Notably, Southern Vermont has the lowest proportion of high-income households (earning over \$200,000).

Median Household Income

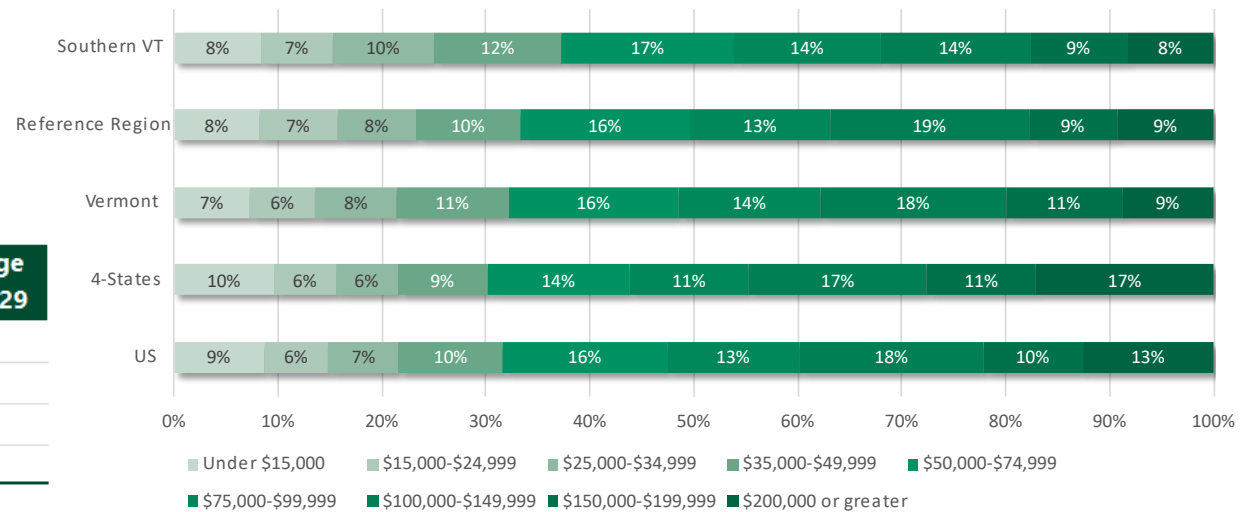
Geography	2024	2029	% Change 2024-2029
Southern VT	\$67,529	\$79,720	18.1%
Reference Region	\$75,523	\$84,992	12.5%
Vermont	\$77,065	\$89,541	16.2%
4-States	\$86,899	\$100,456	15.6%

Source: Decennial Census, Esri

Median Household Income, 2024



Distribution of Income by Study Region, 2024



So VERMONT

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

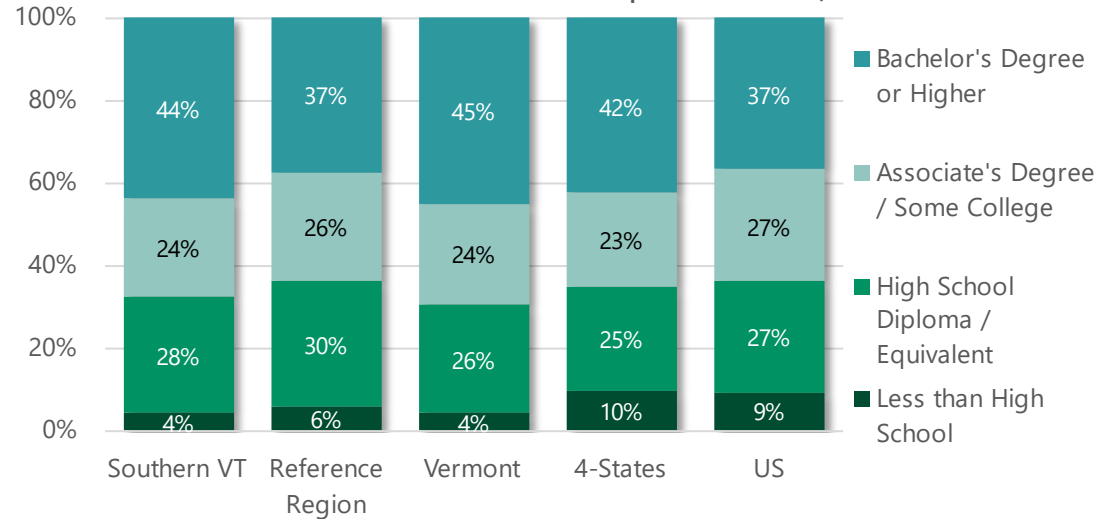
Educational attainment is presented here because it impacts the qualifications of the workforce and the types of industries and occupations that can be supported.

Nearly half of Southern Vermont's residents have a bachelor's degree or higher (44%); a rate comparable to the state (45%) but surpassing the national average (37%).

Many of the region's best career pathways require credentials, training or skills that do not correlate with college degrees, such as healthcare, trades and manufacturing jobs. Note that there is limited data available on skills and credentials.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, only 28% of the region's population have only a high school diploma or equivalent, slightly exceeding the state (26%) and national (27%) figures.

Educational Attainment of Population 25+, 2022



Educational Attainment of Age 25+ Population, 2024

Educational Attainment	Southern VT	Reference Region	Vermont	4-States	US
Less than High School	4%	6%	4%	10%	9%
High School Diploma/Equivalent	28%	30%	26%	25%	27%
Associate's Degree/Some College	24%	26%	24%	23%	27%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	44%	37%	45%	42%	37%

Source: Esri



Housing Profile

A review of the fundamental characteristics of the housing market in southern Vermont provides a context to determine how the region might begin to alleviate the ongoing housing crisis.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Southern Vermont's housing stock is aging**, and with an exceptionally slow pace of development, the average age of a home will likely continue to rise. These older homes require a greater degree of maintenance and muted building activity means limited opportunities for new home buyers.
- **A significant portion of Southern Vermont's housing stock is claimed by seasonal and vacation properties.** There are actually a greater number of these second homes than there are full-time rental properties.
- **Home prices have shown exceptional increases** despite much more limited income growth, pushing the cost of purchasing and financing a home of their own beyond the reach of many would-be buyers.
- **Rental rates have also posted significant gains over the past decade or more**, though not to the same degree as home prices. This makes saving for a down payment more difficult for those more well-off while causing notable financial for those of more limited means.
- **The region faces a significant degree of households being "Cost Burdened"**, spending excessively high proportions of their incomes on housing which can lead to difficulties affording other necessities such as food and medical care.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Lack of affordable properties** remains the greatest challenge for households in Southern Vermont.
- **Rising home prices and the high cost of financing** have made homeownership unattainable for many, particularly first-time buyers and renters hoping to transition to ownership.
- **The limited amount of buildable land and high cost of construction** makes building new units in Southern Vermont exceptionally difficult and slow.
- **A review of zoning and other policies** around housing can identify areas to improve the prospects for new development (including the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)). In addition, supporting maintenance and renovation of homes falling into disrepair can limit the loss of existing homes from becoming obsolete.

TOTAL AREA HOUSING STOCK

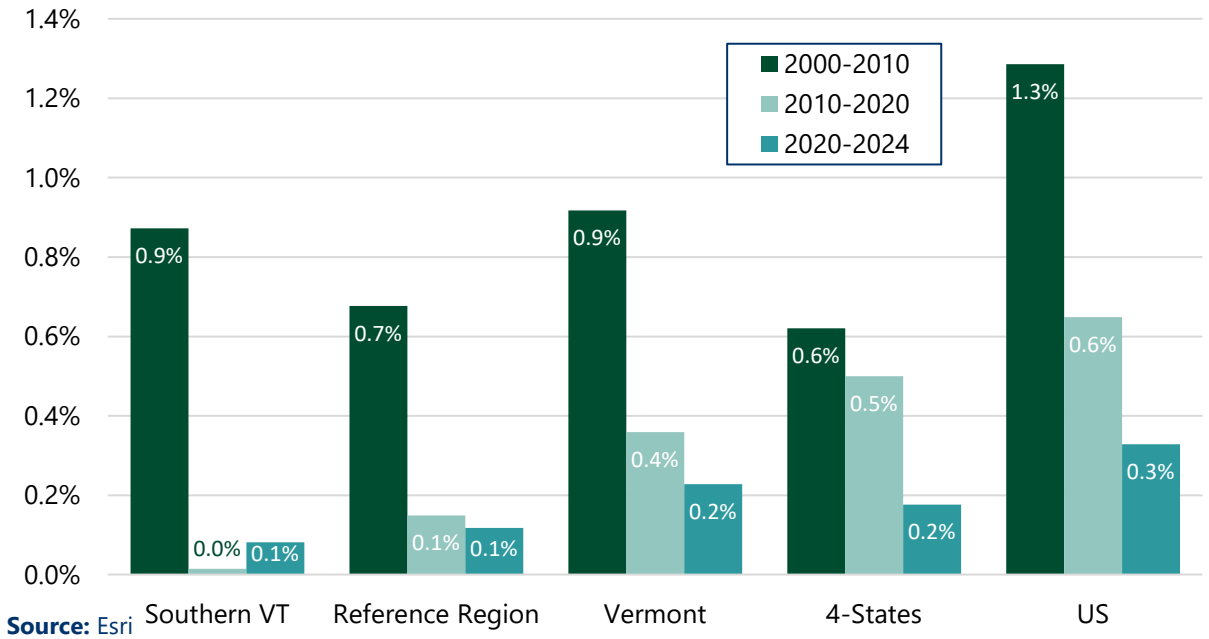
Southern Vermont has posted steady growth in the number of homes available over the past two decades, adding 4,700 units since 2000 – a 10% increase.

This growth is on par with the Reference Region but falls shy of the pace set by Vermont as a whole (16%).

Locally and more broadly, most new residential development occurred during the 2000 to 2010 timeframe. Over the past 14 years, new construction has contributed a mere 1% of the region's total housing stock.

The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment: 2025-2029, prepared by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, calculated a housing deficit of between 1,461 and 2,275 units in Windham County and between 985 and 1,588 units in Bennington County.

Growth in Housing Inventory - Annualized Percent Change, 2000-2024



Housing Inventory, 2000-2024								
Geography	Housing Units				Percent Change			
	2000	2010	2020	2024	2000-2010	2010-2020	2020-2024	2000-2024
Southern VT	46,442	50,657	50,731	51,146	9.1%	0.1%	0.8%	10.1%
Reference Region	353,565	378,243	383,933	388,488	7.0%	1.5%	1.2%	9.9%
Vermont	294,382	322,539	334,318	342,005	9.6%	3.7%	2.3%	16.2%
4-States	11,142,700	11,853,648	12,459,716	12,681,027	6.4%	5.1%	1.8%	13.8%
US	115,904,641	131,704,730	140,498,736	145,184,826	13.6%	6.7%	3.3%	25.3%

Source: Decennial Census; Esri



HOUSING STOCK TENURE

One-quarter (29%) of Southern Vermont’s residential units are vacant due to the high concentration of vacation and seasonal units in the area.

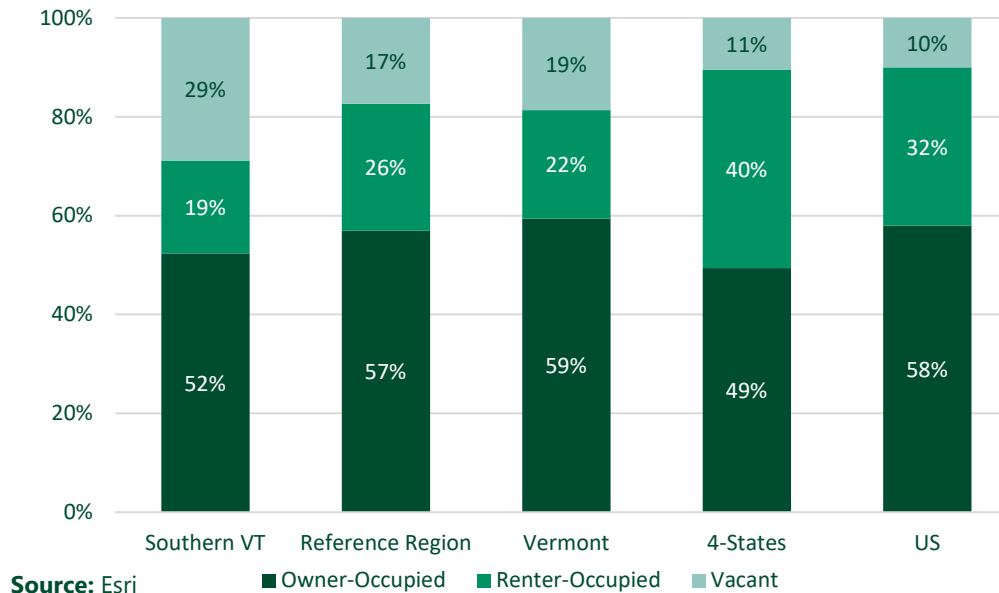
Meanwhile, another one-fifth (19%) is dedicated to renters. Excluding vacant units, rentals rise to 26%—a figure on par with the state (27%) but well below the Reference Region (31%) or Four-State area (45%).

Housing Inventory, 2024

	Southern VT	Reference Region	Vermont	4-States	US
Owner-Occupied	26,771	221,221	203,200	6,259,490	84,133,084
Renter-Occupied	9,629	99,833	75,067	5,087,792	46,583,487
Vacant	14,746	67,434	63,738	1,333,745	14,468,255
Total	51,146	388,488	342,005	12,681,027	145,184,826

Source: Esri

Housing Inventory, 2024



So VERMONT

AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

One-quarter (27%) of Southern Vermont's housing units were built before 1940. This is on par with the share seen at the statewide level (25%) and it contributes to the advanced median age of the community's housing stock - 41 years. The surrounding region and Four-State area, however, both report notably higher shares of these 80+ year-old homes and report correspondingly higher median age figures.

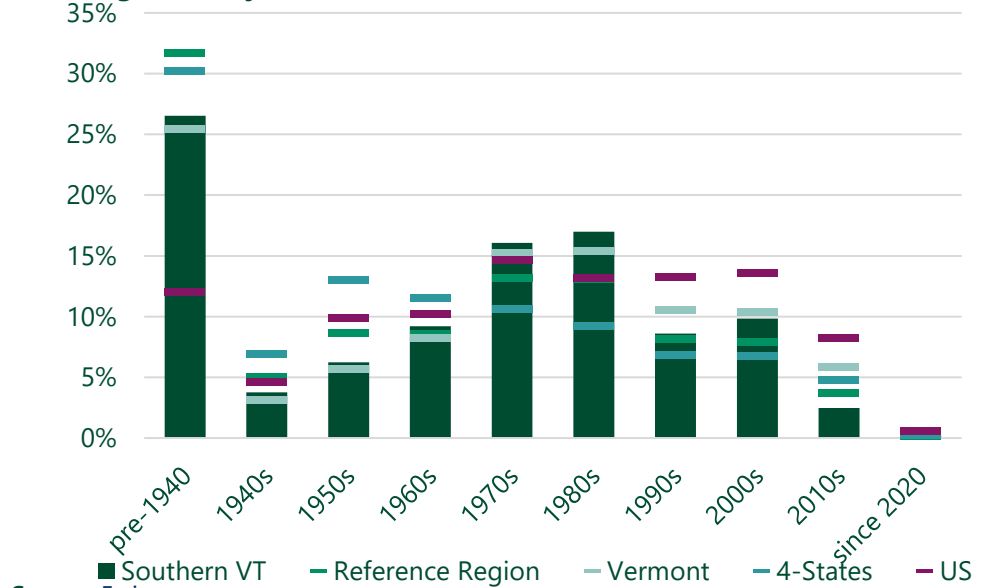
Following strong building activity from the '60s through the 2000s, new construction dropped off considerably over the past decade and a half. Since 2010, just 1,400 new units have been added to Southern Vermont's total stock, the slowest pace of development in more than 80 years.

Housing Stock Year Built by Share, 2022

	Southern VT	Reference Region	Vermont	4-States	US
2020 or later	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
2010 to 2019	2%	4%	6%	5%	8%
2000 to 2009	10%	8%	10%	7%	14%
1990 to 1999	9%	8%	11%	7%	13%
1980 to 1989	17%	13%	15%	9%	13%
1970 to 1979	16%	13%	15%	11%	15%
1960 to 1969	9%	9%	8%	12%	10%
1950 to 1959	6%	9%	6%	13%	10%
1940 to 1949	4%	5%	3%	7%	5%
1939 or earlier	27%	32%	25%	30%	12%
Total Housing Units	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Median Year Built	1973	1965	1975	1960	1979
Median Age in Years	51	59	49	64	45

Source: American Community Survey via Esri

Housing Stock by Year Built, 2022



Source: Esri

HOUSING STOCK BY TYPE

Three-quarters (75%) of Southern Vermont’s housing stock is found in single-family units – a proportion slightly above the state (72%) and well above the national rate (68%).

Of the study area’s multifamily units, over half (53%) are found in smaller 2- to 4-unit properties – a share similar to the Vermont average (51%).

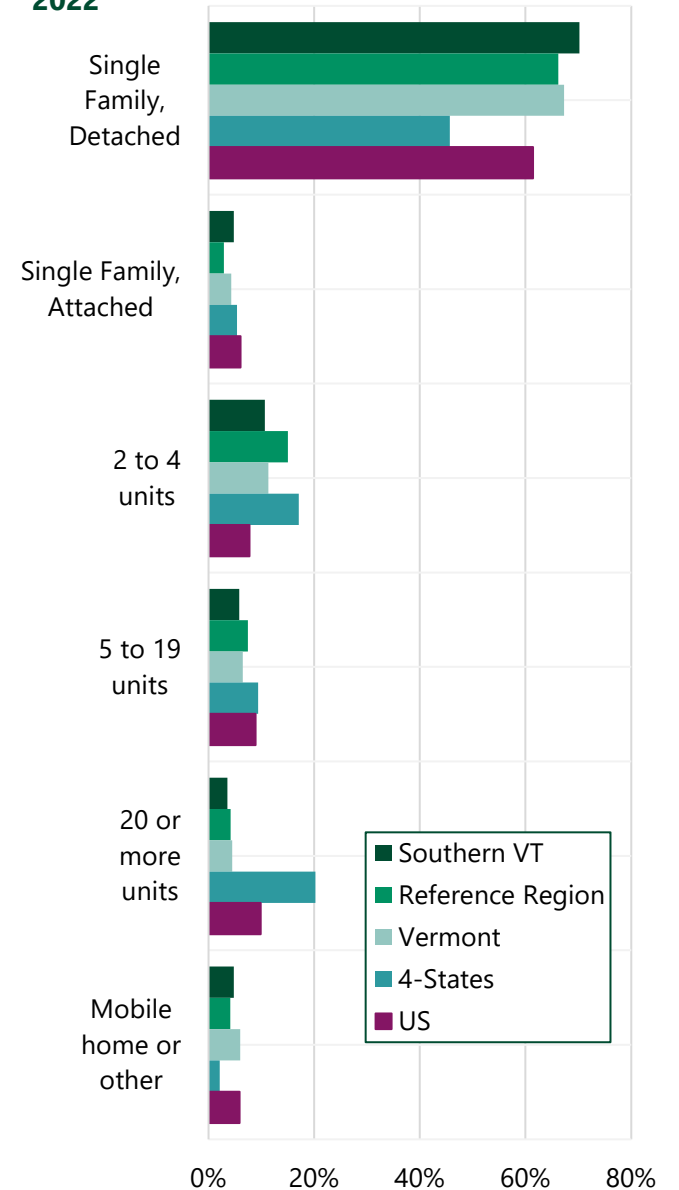
The proportion of Southern Vermont’s housing stock made up by mobile homes (5%) also aligns with the state and national rates (both 6%).

Housing Units in Structure by Share, 2022

	Southern Reference		Vermont	4-States	US
	VT	Region			
1-unit, detached	70.2%	66.2%	67.3%	45.7%	61.4%
1-unit, attached	4.8%	2.9%	4.3%	5.4%	6.1%
2 units	4.6%	7.8%	5.2%	9.4%	3.4%
3 or 4 units	6.1%	7.2%	6.1%	7.7%	4.3%
5 to 9 units	5.1%	5.0%	4.6%	5.3%	4.6%
10 to 19 units	0.8%	2.5%	1.9%	4.2%	4.3%
20 to 49 units	2.0%	2.0%	2.6%	7.1%	3.7%
50 or more units	1.6%	2.2%	1.9%	13.1%	6.2%
Mobile home	4.8%	4.1%	6.0%	2.1%	5.8%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Total Housing Units	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: American Community Survey via Esri

Housing Units in Structure by Share, 2022



Source: American Community Survey via

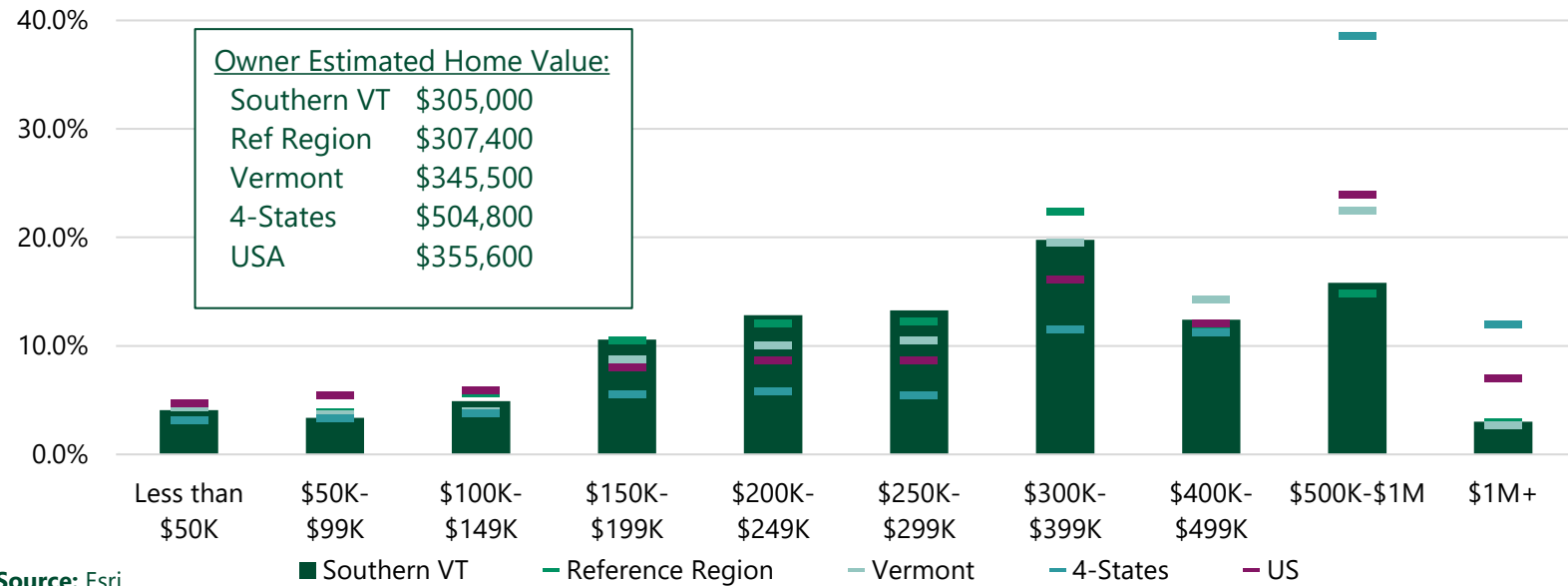
So VERMONT

HOME VALUES

The US Census surveys homeowners (2022 5-Yr ACS) on their estimated home value. This data typically registers well below reported home sales prices but still provides a highly granular view of relative home values within and between communities.

At \$305,000, home values within Southern Vermont rate notably lower than registered at the state level (12% lower). Nevertheless, half (51%) show valuations of \$300,000 or more. For both the state and the nation, 59% show an estimated value of \$300,000 or more.

Home Value Distribution, Owner-Occupied Homes, 2024



HOME SALE PRICES

Home sale prices have posted exceptionally strong gains over the past decade. MLS data shows that the median sale price of a single-family home in Bennington and Windham Counties stood at \$280,000 and \$298,000, respectively, in 2023.

These prices amount to a noteworthy 60% surge over the 2013 level in Bennington and an even more remarkable 83% leap in Windham County.

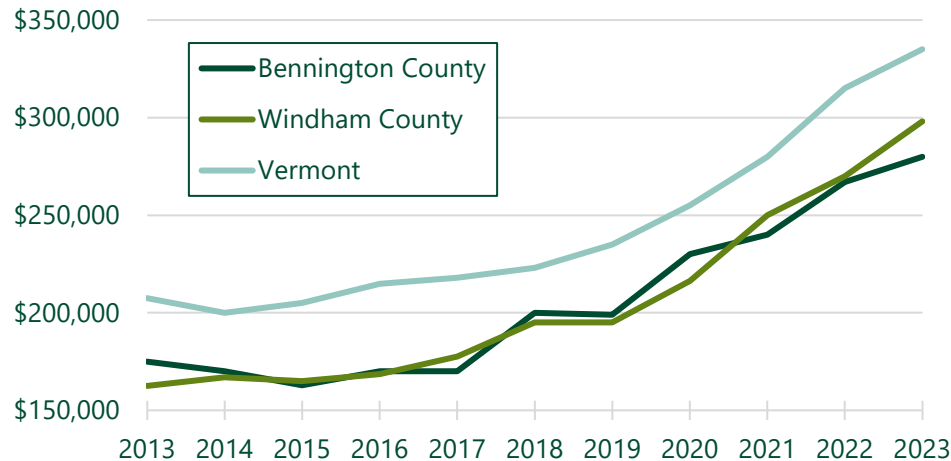
For those fortunate enough to own their homes, these increased values provide a significant boost to personal wealth. At the same time, these price increases push ownership out of reach for many renters hoping to buy.

Median Single Family Home Prices

	Bennington County	Windham County	Vermont
2013	\$175,000	\$162,500	\$207,500
2023	\$280,000	\$298,000	\$335,000
2013 to 2023			
Growth	60.0%	83.4%	61.4%

Source: HousingData.org

Median Single Family Home Sales Prices



Source: HousingData.org

RENTAL RATES

Similar to home prices, rental rates have also increased substantially over the past decade. According to the commercial real estate information service CoStar, the median monthly gross rental rate in Southern Vermont stands at over \$1,200 – a 24% increase over the past 10 years. This compares to growth of 27% for all of Vermont. Note that CoStar data focuses on investment-grade commercial properties. The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment report indicates fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is \$1,340 and \$1,241 in Bennington in 2024.

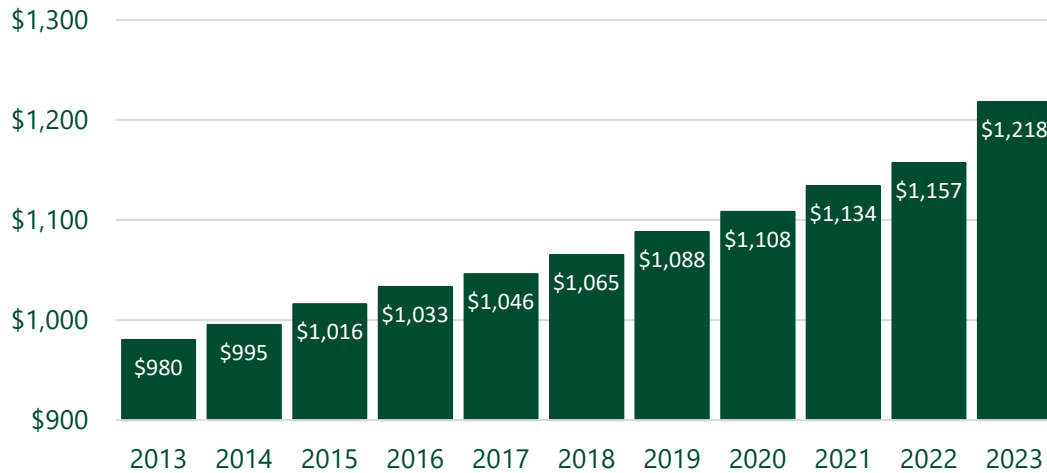
Separately, the US Census surveys renters (2022 5-Yr ACS) regarding a variety of characteristics around their residence including monthly costs of rent plus utilities. By these measures, Southern Vermont renters show a relatively narrow distribution of gross rental rates than is seen in the surrounding communities and the state. One-fifth (20%) of renters pay under \$500 per month – a much higher proportion than is seen at the state level (15%). At the same time, a relatively modest share of renters (13%) in Southern Vermont pay over \$1,500 per month – half the proportion seen at the state level (27%).

Average Multifamily Rental Rate

Southern VT	
2013	\$980
2023	\$1,218
2013 to 2023 Growth	24.3%

Source: CoStar

Multifamily Rental Rates in Southern Vermont



Source: CoStar

Gross Monthly Rental Rates* by Percent of Renter-Occupied Households, 2022

	Southern Reference				
	VT	Region	Vermont	4-States	US
No rent paid	7%	5%	5%	3%	5%
Less than \$500	13%	11%	10%	9%	7%
\$500 to \$999	33%	32%	27%	16%	24%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	33%	35%	31%	23%	29%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	8%	12%	19%	20%	18%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	2%	4%	6%	13%	9%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	1%	1%	1%	6%	4%
\$3,000 or more	2%	1%	2%	9%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Median Rent	\$1,000	\$1,059	\$1,149	\$1,508	\$1,268

*Note: Rental rate for those paying rent from 2017 to 2022, expressed in 2022 inflation-adjusted dollars. Rates do not reflect currently available units but are consistent for comparison across geographies.

Source: Esri



COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

Households whose housing costs exceed 30% of total income are considered “Cost Burdened” and are more likely to face difficulties meeting other needs beyond shelter. In Southern Vermont, more than one-third (34%) of households are cost burdened, and that share jumps to more than half (53%) when focusing on renter households. These rates of cost-burdened households in Southern Vermont register generally on par with neighboring counties and states.

Further, those households spending 50% or more of their income on housing are considered “Severely Cost Burdened”. In Southern Vermont, while more than 6,100 households are *Moderately* Cost Burdened, fully 5,150 households fall into the category of being Severely Cost Burdened – 16% of the total.

The Vermont Housing Needs Assessment reports on the number of cost-burdened households in 2024, with 33% of households in Bennington and 35% of all households in Windham County listed as cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened.

For individuals, being cost burdened results in financial strain and limits the ability to pay for necessities such as food and healthcare. It increases the risk of housing instability, making households more vulnerable to eviction or homelessness, and often forces them to live in substandard conditions. This can negatively impact quality of life, physical and mental health, and long-term financial security. More broadly, the widespread degree of cost-burden households in Southern Vermont indicates a lack of affordable housing options which can in turn affect community stability and the local economy.

Cost-Burdened Households - 2022

	Southern VT	Reference Region	Vermont	4-States	US
Renter Households	53.2%	49.0%	50.6%	51.2%	49.9%
Owner Households	27.7%	23.5%	24.8%	26.7%	22.0%
Total Households	34.2%	30.9%	31.5%	36.8%	31.4%

Source: Esri

Cost-Burdened Households in Southern Vermont - 2022

	Renter Households	Owner Households	All Households
Moderately Cost Burdened	2,306	3,820	6,126
Percent of Total	27.3%	15.6%	18.6%
Severely Cost Burdened	2,185	2,972	5,157
Percent of Total	25.9%	12.1%	15.6%
Total Cost Burdened	4,491	6,792	11,283
Percent of Total	53.2%	27.7%	34.2%

Note: Cost-Burdened households spend 30%-49% of income on housing. Severely Cost-Burdened households spend 50% or more on housing.

Source: Esri

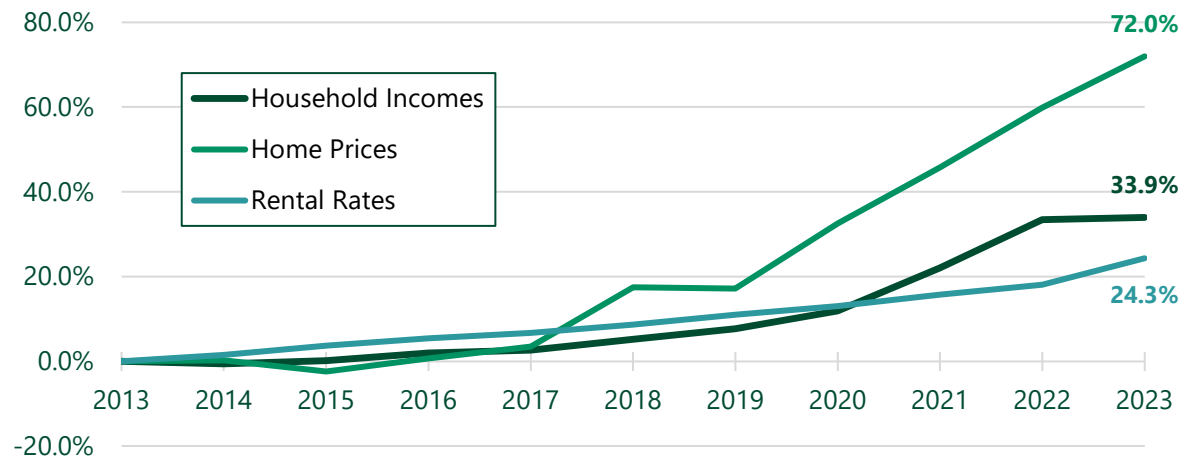
HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND THE COST OF HOUSING

Over the past decade, median household income in Southern Vermont increased by 34%. During the same timeframe, rental rates also showed strong increases, though not quite as robust, climbing by 24% from 2013 to 2023. Far surpassing these increases, however, the median price of a single-family home in the study area posted a 72% increase.

While rental rates grew at a pace below the median income, households continue to find it difficult to afford the typical rental apartment or home. More than half of all rental households spend over 30% of their incomes on housing and 26% of renters, housing costs are consuming more than half of their income. In addition, those households on fixed incomes may not have witnessed the pace of income growth represented by the median household.

For renter households hoping to purchase a house, the rise in home prices has put these properties out of reach, given that prices are rising at more than twice the pace of income. Further confounding the affordability challenge, the cost of financing has pushed home ownership beyond the means of many would-be buyers.

Cumulative Percent Change in Household Incomes, Home Prices, and Rental Rates for Southern Vermont Since 2013



Source: Esri, CoStar, HousingData.org, Camoin Associates

Resiliency Outlook

RESILIENCY METHODOLOGY

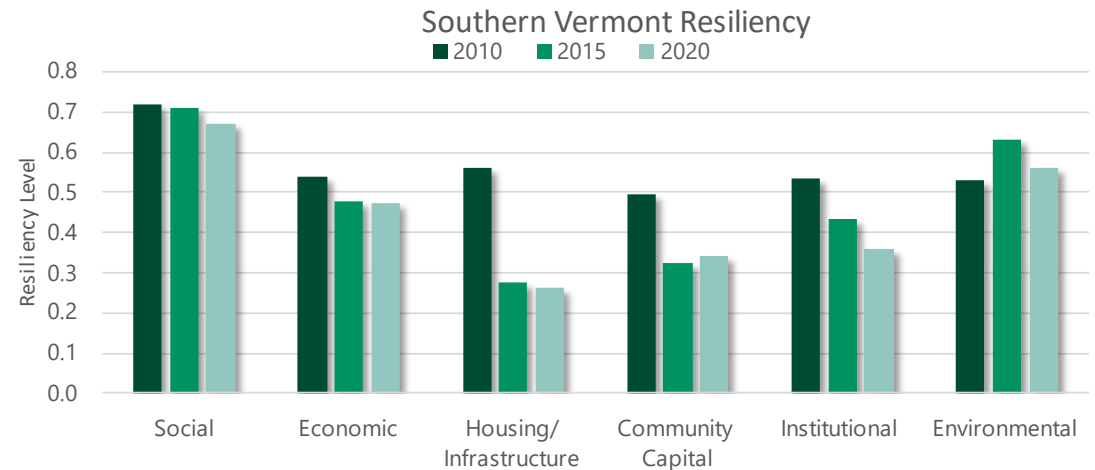
The Sustainable Growth and Economic Resilience Analysis uses the [University of South Carolina's Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities \(BRIC\) Index](#). The BRIC Index includes 49 variables across six categories to capture community resilience:

1. **Human Well-Being/Cultural/Social**—physical attributes of populations, values, and belief systems (ex: educational equality, food security)
2. **Economic/Financial**—economic assets and livelihoods (ex: employment rate, income inequality, non-dependence on primary/tourism sector)
3. **Infrastructure/Built Environment/Housing**—buildings and infrastructure (ex: housing stock construction quality, temporary shelter, medical care capacity)
4. **Institutional/Governance**—access to resources and the power to influence their distribution (ex: jurisdictional fragmentation, disaster aid experience, population stability)
5. **Community Capacity**—social networks and connectivity among individuals and groups (ex: volunteerism, religious affiliation, attachment to place, political engagement)
6. **Environmental/Natural**—natural resource base and environmental conditions (ex: local food supplies, energy use, perviousness, water stress)

The index is scaled from 0 to 1 with 1 meaning greater resilience. The six categories are then summed to create an overall BRIC score ranging from 0-6 for each county.

SOUTHERN VERMONT OUTLOOK

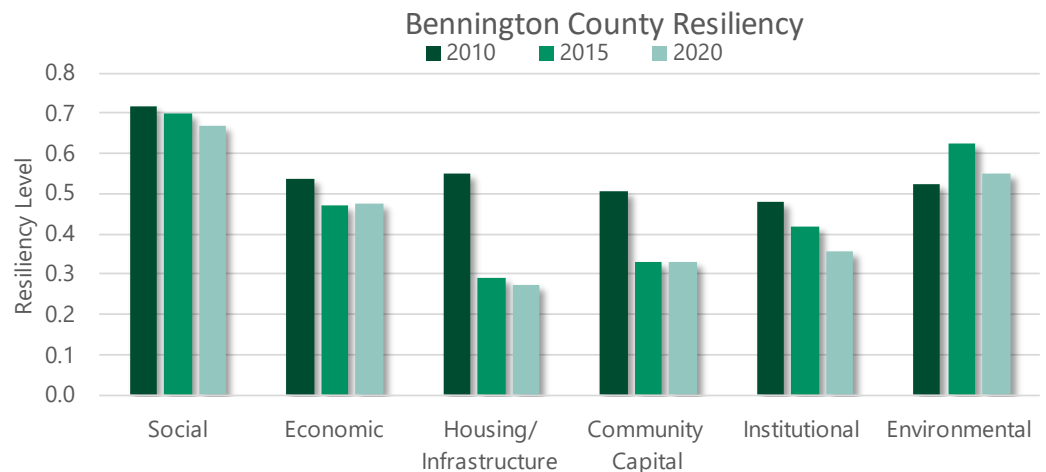
Overall, Southern Vermont’s resiliency has been decreasing across most categories since 2010, with the notable exception being Environmental resiliency. This trend continued between 2010 and 2020, yet Environmental resiliency improved slightly in 2015 and started to decrease again over the last five years. Though it has slightly decreased since 2010, Southern Vermont’s Social resiliency level is the highest among the region’s resiliency indicators in 2020. It is worth noting that this data predates the pandemic, so the BRIC scores in Southern Vermont and its counties may have further decreased over the past two years based on the trends seen from 2010 to 2020.



Source: Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index

BENNINGTON COUNTY OUTLOOK

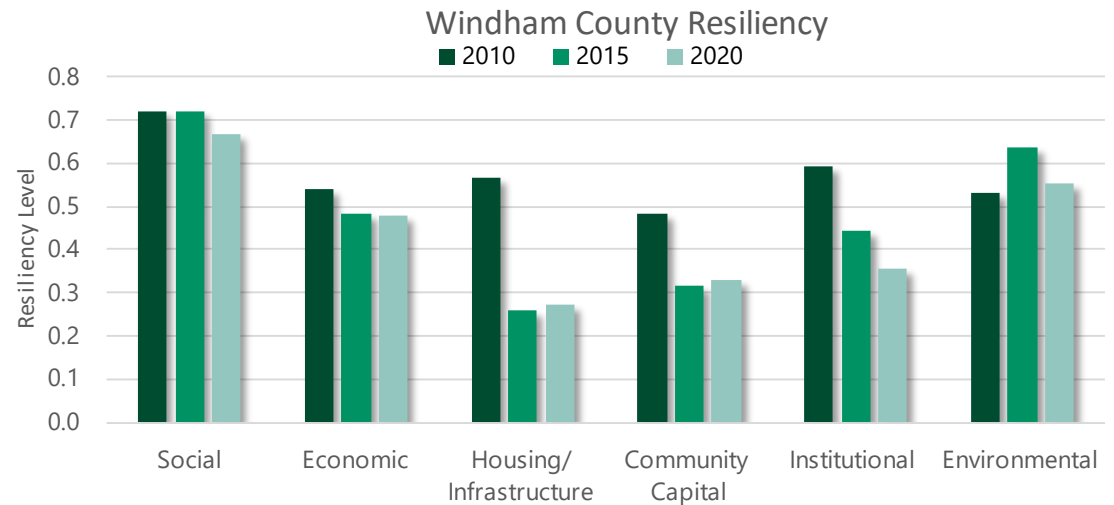
Within Bennington County, resiliency has been decreasing across most categories since 2010, with the notable exception being Environmental resiliency. However, the last five years show a minimally better trend, with Economic and Community Capital resiliency levels both up slightly since 2015. The Social resiliency level in Bennington County is the highest among the resiliency indicators in 2020.



Source: Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index

WINDHAM COUNTY OUTLOOK

Within Windham County, resiliency has been decreasing across most categories since 2010, with the notable exception being Environmental resiliency. However, the last five years show a slightly better trend, with Housing and Community Capital resiliency slightly up from its 2015 level. Following the regional trend, the Social resiliency level in Windham County is the highest among the resiliency indicators in 2020.



Source: *Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index*



Economic Profile

The Economic Profile comprehensively analyzes employment trends and characteristics within Southern Vermont from 2018 to 2028. This analysis utilizes the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) at the two- and four-digit levels to examine industry performance. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system also provides detailed insights into occupational trends.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Southern Vermont has experienced job losses recently**, but the region's economy shows signs of recovery with projected modest growth. This economic landscape is characterized by a mix of expanding and contracting industries.
- The **region's economy is dominated by Healthcare, Government, Retail, and Hospitality sectors**, which employ a significant portion of the workforce. Industries such as education, healthcare, manufacturing, and restaurants are concentrated in the region compared to the national average.
- **Wage disparities are evident across sectors**. While high-paying industries like Management of Companies and Enterprises offer substantial earnings, lower-wage sectors such as retail and food services employ a larger share of the workforce. Occupations within these sectors, like retail, manufacturing, and healthcare, often require varying levels of education and experience, contributing to wage differences.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **More job growth**: Accelerating job growth, particularly in higher-wage sectors, is crucial.
- **Workforce development deficit**: Investing in education and training to meet the needs of the changing labor market.
- **Narrow economic base**: Reducing reliance on a limited set of industries is essential for adaptation to globalization, technological innovation, and remote workers.
- **Income inequality**: Foster employment that provides strong wages, career growth, and workforce development systems that ensure access to economic mobility.



LOCATION QUOTIENT

Location Quotient (LQ) analysis compares the concentration of an industry within a specific region to its concentration nationally. An LQ greater than 1.20 indicates a higher concentration of that industry in the region compared to the nation, suggesting a potential competitive advantage. Conversely, an LQ below 0.80 implies a lower concentration.

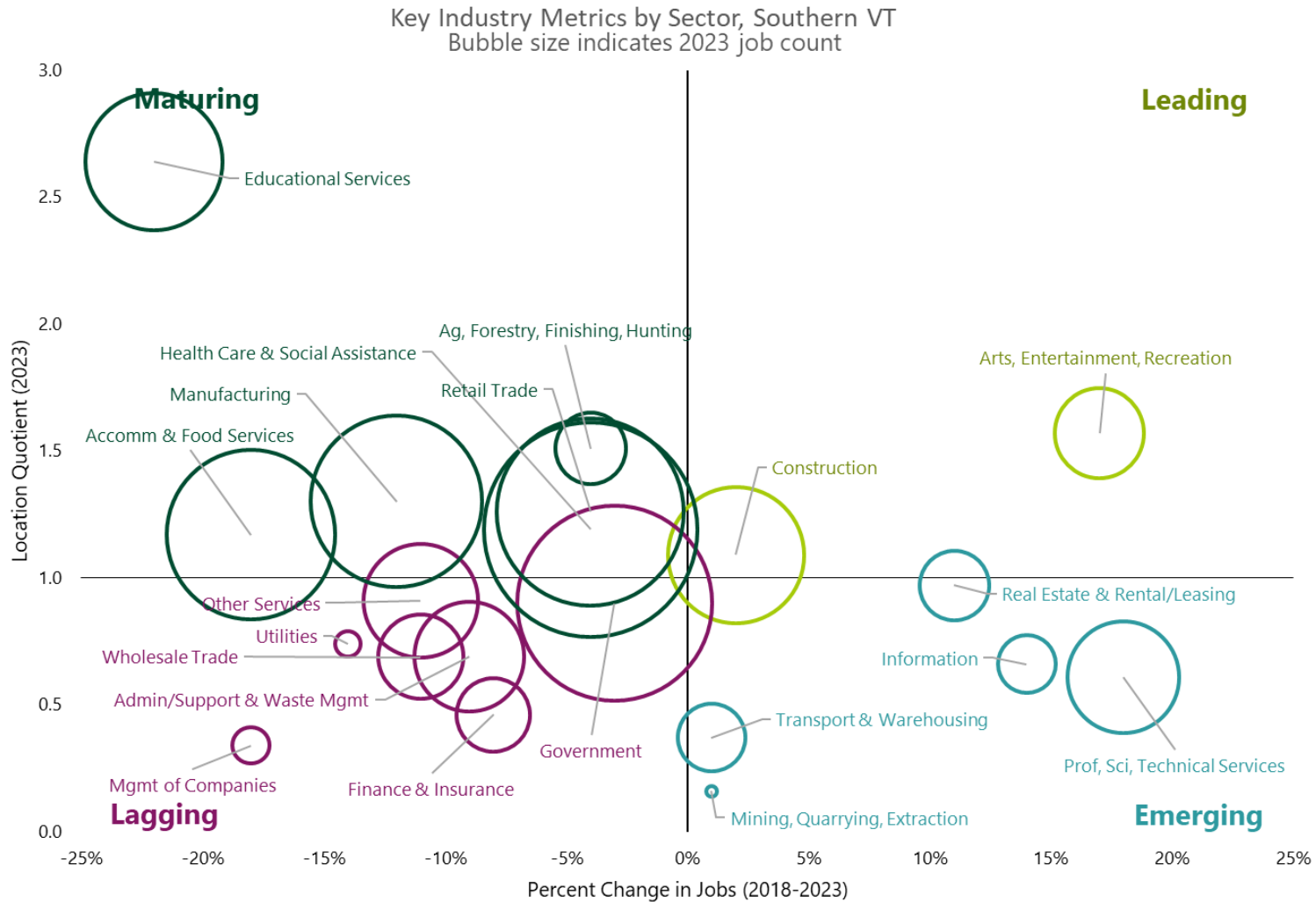
LQ is calculated by dividing the percent of jobs within each industry locally by the percent of jobs in the same industry at the national level. For example, suppose the finance and insurance industry accounts for 2% of jobs in a community and at the national level. In that case, this industry has 1% of the total jobs, the community has an LQ of 2.0 ($0.02 \div 0.01 = 2$). In this example, the local community employs twice as many individuals in the industry as expected based on national employment patterns. Typically, only values above 1.20 or below 0.80 are considered “significant” findings in LQ analysis. Industries with a high LQ and high employment numbers are assumed to produce more than what is needed locally (i.e. a surplus) and export their products and services.

The bubble chart displayed on the next page shows 2-digit NAICS industries in Southern Vermont by 2023 location quotient and job growth between 2018 and 2023. Most 2-digit industries have location quotients below 1.20, indicating they are not highly concentrated in Southern Vermont. Additionally, the majority of the 2-digit industries show negative job growth, as displayed on the left side of the y-axis.

While Educational Services displayed the highest LQ (2.64), it also suffered a 22% job decline. Conversely, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation showcased both a high LQ (1.57) and positive job growth (17%). However, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, despite experiencing the highest job growth (18%), had an LQ below 1.20 (0.61), indicating a lower concentration compared to the national average.

So VERMONT

This chart compares different industry sectors. Each sector is classified as leading, emerging, maturing, or lagging. The gray column lists the definitions for those terms.



This chart displays how these sectors compare. Each sector is classified as **leading**, **emerging**, **maturing**, or **lagging**.

Leading industries experienced job growth over the last five years and have a location quotient greater than 1.

Emerging industries saw positive job growth over the last five years but have a location quotient of less than 1.

Maturing industries have a location quotient greater than 1 but had negative job growth over the last five years.

Lagging industries have a location quotient of less than 1 and saw negative job growth over the last five years.

Source: Lightcast

TOP 20 CONCENTRATED INDUSTRIES 2023-2028 IN SOUTHERN VERMONT

Table 1 presents the top 20 industries in Southern Vermont by 2023 job count, highlighting those with a Location Quotient (LQ) greater than 1.20. A significant fourteen of the top twenty industries exhibit high concentration levels within Southern Vermont.

Despite projected job losses in half of these concentrated industries between 2023 and 2028, all are expected to maintain their high concentration relative to the nation. Education and Hospitals (Local Government) and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals rank among the top three employers and demonstrate strong regional concentration (LQ > 1.20). Plastics Manufacturing stands out with a particularly high LQ of 3.9 in 2023, projected to increase to 4.15 by 2028. Elementary and Secondary Schools and Traveler Accommodations also exhibit notable concentration levels with LQs exceeding 1.20, both coming in above 3.5.

Table 1: Southern Vermont Top 20 Concentrated Industries by 2023 Job Count

Southern Vermont Top 20 Concentrated Industries by 2023 Job Count, 2023-2028								
NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	2023 Employment Concentration	2028 Employment Concentration	Avg. Earnings Per Job
9036	Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	3,140	3,408	268	9%	1.45	1.57	\$67,124
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	2,218	2,246	28	1%	0.8	0.79	\$31,730
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,832	1,932	101	5%	1.48	1.52	\$90,526
7211	Traveler Accommodation	1,615	1,438	-177	-11%	3.56	3.08	\$41,898
4451	Grocery Stores	1,179	1,135	-44	-4%	1.65	1.61	\$40,891
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	1,106	1,126	20	2%	3.64	3.52	\$62,430
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	1,040	953	-87	-8%	2.28	2.05	\$51,947
9039	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	961	931	-30	-3%	0.67	0.64	\$67,796
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	900	899	-1	0%	1.19	1.16	\$40,202
2361	Residential Building Construction	746	742	-4	-1%	2.04	1.97	\$57,726
7139	Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	659	746	87	13%	1.7	1.81	\$40,778
6241	Individual and Family Services	646	853	207	32%	0.82	0.93	\$44,247
9029	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	613	606	-7	-1%	1.09	1.09	\$93,523
6214	Outpatient Care Centers	610	708	97	16%	2.1	2.14	\$66,231
3261	Plastics Product Manufacturing	588	635	47	8%	3.9	4.15	\$68,478
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	577	612	34	6%	0.85	0.87	\$67,947
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	521	512	-9	-2%	1.81	1.77	\$66,065
4244	Grocery and Related Product Merchant Wholesalers	508	465	-43	-8%	2.44	2.19	\$75,171
4571	Gasoline Stations	500	496	-4	-1%	2.01	2.03	\$36,077
6231	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	475	477	3	1%	1.32	1.36	\$57,293

Source: Lightcast

EMPLOYMENT TOTALS

Businesses in Southern Vermont employed approximately 42,974 people in 2023. Job numbers decreased by 7% between 2018 and 2023 but are projected to rise by 3% between 2023 and 2028. In 2023, the largest employers were Health Care and Social Assistance (6,649 jobs), Government (5,559), Retail Trade (5,119), and Accommodations and Food Services (4,180). These sectors are expected to expand and remain the top three industries in the region through 2028.

As indicated in Table 2, the average annual wage for all jobs within Southern Vermont is \$64,600. Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services offer substantial average wages of \$141,684 and \$118,757, respectively. Both industries have expanded since 2018 and are projected to continue growing; this is likely due in some part to an increase in remote work.

Table 2: Southern Vermont Total Jobs

Southern Vermont Total Jobs, 2018-2028									
	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	791	759	756	10	9%	5	4%	\$46,287
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	24	24	30	(49)	(43%)	9	14%	\$101,967
22	Utilities	125	107	100	(8)	(11%)	6	8%	\$175,305
23	Construction	2,661	2,714	2,736	(8)	(1%)	(8)	(1%)	\$63,452
31	Manufacturing	4,872	4,302	4,560	(222)	(17%)	69	6%	\$72,939
42	Wholesale Trade	1,211	1,077	1,063	(5)	(1%)	19	4%	\$90,211
44	Retail Trade	5,348	5,119	5,093	(456)	(11%)	118	3%	\$49,134
48	Transportation and Warehousing	686	690	730	(189)	(30%)	86	20%	\$67,676
51	Information	456	520	534	18	7%	30	11%	\$94,886
52	Finance and Insurance	881	814	793	(127)	(8%)	74	5%	\$110,275
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	662	732	781	88	16%	76	12%	\$72,438
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,566	1,845	2,047	346	27%	197	12%	\$118,757
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	262	214	213	237	83%	106	20%	\$141,684
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,973	1,787	1,903	110	12%	76	8%	\$64,001
61	Educational Services	3,561	2,767	2,819	(16)	(1%)	93	4%	\$54,650
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	6,957	6,649	7,039	344	6%	850	13%	\$72,442
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,022	1,194	1,351	(188)	(11%)	160	11%	\$36,972
72	Accommodation and Food Services	5,085	4,180	4,014	(399)	(9%)	530	13%	\$35,817
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,168	1,920	1,945	34	5%	(2)	(0%)	\$37,197
90	Government	5,759	5,559	5,773	(471)	(21%)	(122)	(7%)	\$69,087
	Total	46,070	42,974	44,282	(3096)	(7%)	1,308	3%	\$64,600

TOP 20 INDUSTRIES IN SOUTHERN VERMONT

Table 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of the top 20 industries in Southern Vermont at the 4-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) level. This level offers a clearer picture of the specific industries that shaped the regional economy in 2023. The leading industries at the 4-digit level include Education and Hospitals (Local Government), Restaurants and Other Eating Places, and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, employing 3,140, 2,218, and 1,832 individuals, respectively. These industries are projected to maintain their top positions in 2028. However, it's noteworthy that half of the top 20 industries are expected to experience minor declines by 2028.

Table 3: Southern Vermont Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count

Southern Vermont Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count, 2018-2028									
NAICS	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
9036	Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	2,869	3,140	3,408	271	9%	268	9%	\$67,124
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	2,370	2,218	2,246	(152)	(6%)	28	1%	\$31,730
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,840	1,832	1,932	(8)	0%	101	5%	\$90,526
7211	Traveler Accommodation	2,346	1,615	1,438	(730)	(31%)	(177)	(11%)	\$41,898
4451	Grocery Stores	1,236	1,179	1,135	(57)	(5%)	(44)	(4%)	\$40,891
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	1,158	1,106	1,126	(52)	(4%)	20	2%	\$62,430
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	1,830	1,040	953	(790)	(43%)	(87)	(8%)	\$51,947
9039	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	1,264	961	931	(303)	(24%)	(30)	(3%)	\$67,796
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	1,008	900	899	(108)	(11%)	(1)	0%	\$40,202
2361	Residential Building Construction	735	746	742	12	2%	(4)	(1%)	\$57,726
7139	Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	538	659	746	121	23%	87	13%	\$40,778
6241	Individual and Family Services	473	646	853	173	37%	207	32%	\$44,247
9029	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	710	613	606	(96)	(14%)	(7)	(1%)	\$93,523
6214	Outpatient Care Centers	568	610	708	42	7%	97	16%	\$66,231
3261	Plastics Product Manufacturing	520	588	635	67	13%	47	8%	\$68,478
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	528	577	612	50	9%	34	6%	\$67,947
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	514	521	512	7	1%	(9)	(2%)	\$66,065
4244	Grocery and Related Product Merchant Wholesalers	579	508	465	(71)	(12%)	(43)	(8%)	\$75,171
4571	Gasoline Stations	524	500	496	(23)	(4%)	(4)	(1%)	\$36,077
6231	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	461	475	477	14	3%	3	1%	\$57,293

Source: Lightcast

TOP 20 OCCUPATIONS IN SOUTHERN VERMONT

Table 4 provides an overview of top occupations in Southern Vermont using Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. The top 20 occupations are based on 2023 employment numbers. Retail Salespersons and Registered Nurses lead with 1,005 and 963 positions, respectively. While both are projected to maintain top rankings through 2028, Retail Salespersons' employment is expected to stabilize, while Registered Nurses will see a modest 3% increase. Of the top 20, only five occupations are anticipated to decline by 2028.

Educational requirements for these top occupations vary widely. Approximately 60% require only a high school diploma, while roughly 20% need a bachelor's degree. Only one occupation in the top 20 requires a doctoral or professional degree (Postsecondary Teachers). Work experience is generally not a prerequisite, except for General and Operations Management positions. On-the-job training needs also range mostly from none to short-term, with only 2 occupations requiring an apprenticeship or moderate on-the-job training. (Please note that due to recent college closures, Post Secondary Teachers projections may be less reliable).

Table 4: Southern Vermont Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count

Southern Vermont Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count, 2023-2028									
SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	1,005	1,007	0%	1	\$20.31	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
29-1141	Registered Nurses	963	995	3%	32	\$41.39	Bachelor's degree	None	None
41-2011	Cashiers	955	928	(3%)	(27)	\$16.21	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	949	995	5%	46	\$51.05	Bachelor's degree	5+ years	None
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	877	940	7%	62	\$17.71	Some college, no degree	None	None
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	707	745	5%	37	\$15.67	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	680	665	(2%)	(15)	\$29.36	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	674	688	2%	14	\$16.54	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	643	658	2%	15	\$18.46	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	629	638	1%	8	\$20.32	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	610	631	3%	21	\$19.05	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	564	564	0%	0	\$21.85	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	555	473	(15%)	(82)	\$16.81	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	550	593	8%	43	\$29.35	Bachelor's degree	None	None
47-2031	Carpenters	508	505	(1%)	(4)	\$26.83	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	508	512	1%	3	\$24.87	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Short-term
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	479	513	7%	34	\$30.02	Bachelor's degree	None	None
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	473	474	0%	1	\$24.29	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate-term
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	465	457	(2%)	(8)	\$21.83	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	444	453	2%	9	\$45.85	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None

Source: Lightcast

EMPLOYMENT TOTALS

Table 5 shows that total employment experienced a slight decline of 2% between 2018 and 2023, decreasing from approximately 365,031 to 356,627 jobs. However, a more optimistic outlook is projected for the state, with a 5% job growth anticipated between 2023 and 2028, adding an estimated 16,578 positions. Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade emerged as the top three employment sectors in 2023, with 58,723, 54,698, and 37,774 jobs, respectively. Despite projected 2%, 4%, and 4% declines in these sectors, they are expected to maintain their dominance in the Vermont job market through 2028. Vermont's average earnings per job stood at approximately \$74,144 in 2023.

Table 5: Vermont Total Jobs

Vermont Total Jobs, 2018-2028									
	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,129	6,931	7,192	(197)	(3%)	261	4%	\$45,686
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	620	674	731	54	9%	56	8%	\$89,298
22	Utilities	1,254	1,255	1,321	1	0%	66	5%	\$165,589
23	Construction	22,057	21,834	21,895	(223)	(1%)	61	0%	\$70,883
31	Manufacturing	31,234	30,288	31,462	(946)	(3%)	1,173	4%	\$82,868
42	Wholesale Trade	9,390	9,134	9,475	(256)	(3%)	340	4%	\$97,116
44	Retail Trade	39,347	37,774	38,192	(1,573)	(4%)	417	1%	\$48,265
48	Transportation and Warehousing	7,481	7,158	7,447	(323)	(4%)	289	4%	\$67,619
51	Information	4,579	5,155	5,641	577	13%	486	9%	\$96,818
52	Finance and Insurance	9,627	9,642	9,933	15	0%	291	3%	\$121,673
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4,579	4,961	5,366	382	8%	405	8%	\$73,343
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	18,563	21,356	23,575	2,793	15%	2,219	10%	\$118,197
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,018	2,106	2,403	88	4%	297	14%	\$145,588
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	14,904	15,946	17,865	1,042	7%	1,918	12%	\$65,349
61	Educational Services	16,996	14,289	14,808	(2,707)	(16%)	519	4%	\$51,602
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	57,120	54,698	57,387	(2,422)	(4%)	2,689	5%	\$72,752
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6,399	6,631	7,417	232	4%	785	12%	\$33,491
72	Accommodation and Food Services	33,400	30,903	31,952	(2,497)	(7%)	1,049	3%	\$35,799
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	18,157	17,148	18,019	(1,009)	(6%)	871	5%	\$41,209
90	Government	60,178	58,723	61,093	(1,455)	(2%)	2,370	4%	\$82,945
	Total	365,031	356,627	373,206	(8,404)	(2%)	16,578	5%	\$71,144

TOP 20 INDUSTRIES IN VERMONT

Table 6 highlights Education and Hospitals (Local Government) as the leading industry sector in terms of job count in 2023. Restaurants and Other Eating Places, and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals also emerged as significant contributors to the regional economy, employing approximately 16,766 and 13,791 individuals, respectively. Outpatient Care Centers are poised for substantial growth within the healthcare sector, with a projected 13% increase and over 600 new jobs between 2023 and 2028. Additionally, the Computer Systems Design and Related Services industry is expected to expand, experiencing a 13% growth rate during the same period.

Computer Systems Design and Related Services boasts the highest average earnings, exceeding \$155,000 per job. Offices of Physicians and Federal Government, Civilian follows closely with average earnings of about \$136,000 and \$131,500, respectively.

Table 6: Vermont Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count

Vermont Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count, 2018-2028									
NAICS	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
9036	Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	20,012	22,063	23,305	2,050	10%	1,242	6%	\$75,199
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	17,899	16,766	17,269	(1,133)	(6%)	503	3%	\$30,870
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	13,920	13,791	14,618	(130)	(1%)	828	6%	\$94,820
7211	Traveler Accommodation	11,744	10,283	10,564	(1,461)	(12%)	280	3%	\$45,166
9029	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	9,948	9,779	10,319	(169)	(2%)	541	6%	\$105,590
6241	Individual and Family Services	10,269	9,605	10,169	(664)	(6%)	564	6%	\$39,991
4451	Grocery Stores	8,942	9,031	9,206	89	1%	175	2%	\$37,195
9026	Education and Hospitals (State Government)	9,391	8,794	9,300	(597)	(6%)	506	6%	\$63,842
9039	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	9,921	7,672	7,705	(2,249)	(23%)	33	0%	\$76,163
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	10,457	7,397	7,343	(3,060)	(29%)	(55)	(1%)	\$51,150
9011	Federal Government, Civilian	7,103	7,121	7,339	18	0%	218	3%	\$131,506
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	5,971	6,193	6,481	223	4%	287	5%	\$38,797
6211	Offices of Physicians	5,467	5,587	5,834	119	2%	248	4%	\$136,299
6214	Outpatient Care Centers	5,249	5,207	5,890	(42)	(1%)	682	13%	\$65,230
2361	Residential Building Construction	4,806	5,082	5,171	276	6%	89	2%	\$60,861
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	4,630	4,986	5,611	355	8%	626	13%	\$155,863
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	4,915	4,958	5,083	43	1%	125	3%	\$74,459
8141	Private Households	5,360	4,320	4,363	(1,040)	(19%)	42	1%	\$21,649
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	3,579	4,107	4,641	528	15%	534	13%	\$125,553
6244	Child Day Care Services	4,072	3,947	3,951	(125)	(3%)	4	0%	\$36,382

Source: Lightcast

TOP 20 OCCUPATIONS IN VERMONT

Table 7 provides an overview of the top occupations in Vermont using SOC codes. Home Health and Personal Care Aides, General and Operations Managers, and Registered Nurses emerged as the top three occupations in 2023, with 9,192, 8,191, and 7,600 positions, respectively. While these occupations are projected to maintain their top spots through 2028, growth is anticipated to be minimal.

General and Operations Managers are expected to experience the most significant growth, with a projected 6% increase and 513 new positions by 2028. Notably, this occupation is the only one among the top 20 requiring five or more years of work experience. Most top occupations require minimal or short-term on-the-job training, with a few exceptions that necessitate moderate-term training or apprenticeships.

Table 7: Vermont Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count

Vermont Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count, 2023-2028									
SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	9,192	9,620	5%	428	\$16.81	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	8,191	8,704	6%	513	\$50.88	Bachelor's degree	5+ years	None
29-1141	Registered Nurses	7,600	7,990	5%	390	\$42.35	Bachelor's degree	None	None
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	7,439	7,578	2%	139	\$19.38	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
41-2011	Cashiers	7,173	7,045	(2%)	(128)	\$15.51	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	5,535	5,806	5%	270	\$18.93	Some college, no degree	None	None
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,497	5,744	4%	247	\$19.11	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	5,474	5,771	5%	297	\$47.81	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	5,433	5,737	6%	304	\$16.42	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,131	5,198	1%	67	\$22.21	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	5,013	5,335	6%	322	\$17.92	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	4,786	4,836	1%	50	\$28.82	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
47-2031	Carpenters	4,230	4,244	0%	14	\$27.88	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,200	4,190	0%	(10)	\$17.57	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	4,070	4,034	(1%)	(36)	\$22.39	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	4,037	4,098	2%	62	\$24.31	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate-term
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3,924	4,034	3%	109	\$21.46	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	3,827	4,072	6%	245	\$20.41	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,781	3,851	2%	69	\$25.60	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Short-term
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	3,360	3,576	6%	216	\$31.64	Bachelor's degree	None	None

Source: Lightcast

EMPLOYMENT TOTALS

The Reference Region employed approximately 326,829 individuals in 2023, with Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade as the primary job providers, as shown below in Table 8. While these sectors are expected to maintain their top positions, Transportation and Warehousing is projected to experience the most significant growth, increasing by 16% from 7,158 to 7,447 jobs between 2023 and 2028. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction is also anticipated to grow by 14% during this period. In 2023, the region's average earnings per job were approximately \$71,694. Utilities and Management of Companies and Enterprises emerged as the highest-paying industries, with average earnings of \$187,122 and \$125,482, respectively.

Table 8: Reference Region Total Jobs

Reference Region Total Jobs, 2018-2028									
	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	4,603	6,931	7,192	430	9%	367	7%	\$47,601
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	771	674	731	240	31%	143	14%	\$91,399
22	Utilities	1,790	1,255	1,321	(15)	(1%)	185	10%	\$187,122
23	Construction	20,093	21,834	21,895	555	3%	416	2%	\$73,918
31	Manufacturing	33,838	30,288	31,462	129	0%	2,508	7%	\$104,254
42	Wholesale Trade	6,970	9,134	9,475	99	1%	798	11%	\$98,594
44	Retail Trade	38,622	37,774	38,192	(681)	(2%)	328	1%	\$47,733
48	Transportation and Warehousing	7,036	7,158	7,447	1,723	24%	1,406	16%	\$68,838
51	Information	3,929	5,155	5,641	(154)	(4%)	153	4%	\$103,621
52	Finance and Insurance	7,610	9,642	9,933	(718)	(9%)	(231)	(3%)	\$106,515
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3,759	4,961	5,366	74	2%	247	6%	\$71,390
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12,914	21,356	23,575	1,179	9%	1,143	8%	\$105,019
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,027	2,106	2,403	(29)	(1%)	120	4%	\$125,482
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	12,778	15,946	17,865	(740)	(6%)	730	6%	\$59,116
61	Educational Services	17,519	14,289	14,808	(2,027)	(12%)	1,063	7%	\$62,117
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	50,086	54,698	57,387	(3,181)	(6%)	1,834	4%	\$70,715
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	7,115	6,631	7,417	254	4%	752	10%	\$37,356
72	Accommodation and Food Services	29,936	30,903	31,952	(1,592)	(5%)	1,138	4%	\$33,772
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	18,221	17,148	18,019	(2,183)	(12%)	189	1%	\$40,435
90	Government	55,109	58,723	61,093	(2,506)	(5%)	1,527	3%	\$84,573
	Total	335,810	326,829	341,732	(8,981)	(3%)	14,903	5%	\$71,694

TOP 20 INDUSTRIES IN REFERENCE REGION (VT: BENNINGTON, RUTLAND, WINDHAM, WINDSOR; MA: BERKSHIRE, FRANKLIN; NH: CHESHIRE, SULLIVAN; NY: RENSSELAER, WASHINGTON)

Table 9 details the top industries within the Reference Region at the 4-digit NAICS level. Education and Hospitals (Local Government) is at the top, with approximately 24,455 jobs in 2023. Restaurants and Other Eating Places, as well as Local Government (excluding education and hospitals), are also major contributors to the region's economy, employing 17,865 and 12,343 individuals, respectively. While most industries are projected to maintain or slightly increase employment through 2028, Pharmaceutical and Medicine Manufacturing stands out with a projected growth rate of 35%, adding 1,535 jobs. This sector also boasts the highest average earnings per job at an impressive \$240,334.

Table 9: Reference Region Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count

Reference Region Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count, 2018-2028									
NAICS	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
9036	Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	24,253	24,455	25,510	202	1%	1,056	4%	\$76,541
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	19,115	17,865	18,490	(1,250)	(7%)	626	4%	\$29,789
9039	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	13,447	12,343	12,502	(1,104)	(8%)	159	1%	\$71,796
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	11,484	10,977	11,143	(507)	(4%)	165	2%	\$92,500
4451	Grocery Stores	8,905	8,482	8,331	(423)	(5%)	(152)	(2%)	\$36,868
9029	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	7,831	7,314	7,778	(517)	(7%)	464	6%	\$142,955
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	9,405	7,297	7,807	(2,109)	(22%)	510	7%	\$70,924
7211	Traveler Accommodation	7,766	7,252	7,587	(515)	(7%)	336	5%	\$43,154
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	6,332	6,511	7,016	178	3%	505	8%	\$41,895
6241	Individual and Family Services	6,114	6,506	7,481	392	6%	975	15%	\$41,256
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	5,374	5,409	5,638	35	1%	229	4%	\$58,886
6231	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	6,095	4,504	3,986	(1,590)	(26%)	(518)	(11%)	\$61,168
2361	Residential Building Construction	4,091	4,387	4,473	296	7%	85	2%	\$59,255
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	4,511	4,376	4,420	(134)	(3%)	44	1%	\$79,098
3254	Pharmaceutical and Medicine Manufacturing	2,529	4,327	5,862	1,798	71%	1,535	35%	\$248,334
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	3,691	3,714	3,770	22	1%	57	2%	\$71,621
6211	Offices of Physicians	3,889	3,661	3,603	(229)	(6%)	(57)	(2%)	\$134,799
7139	Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	3,415	3,536	3,853	121	4%	317	9%	\$32,628
3261	Plastics Product Manufacturing	3,409	3,513	3,787	104	3%	274	8%	\$89,508
9011	Federal Government, Civilian	3,423	3,466	3,548	43	1%	82	2%	\$115,803

Source: Lightcast

TOP 20 OCCUPATIONS IN REFERENCE REGION (VT: BENNINGTON, RUTLAND, WINDHAM, WINDSOR; MA: BERKSHIRE, FRANKLIN; NH: CHESHIRE, SULLIVAN; NY: RENSSELAER, WASHINGTON)

Table 10 provides an overview of the top occupations within the Reference Region. Home Health and Personal Care Aides, Cashiers, and Retail Salespersons hold the largest number of positions, with 8,470, 7,790, and 7,782 jobs, respectively. These occupations typically require minimal education and experience, require short-term training, and offer relatively low average hourly wages.

While most occupations are projected to experience modest growth, Laborer and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand is anticipated to see the most significant increase, with a 14% growth rate through 2028. Conversely, occupations with higher average earnings often require greater educational attainment and experience. General and Operations Managers lead in terms of earnings, with an average hourly wage of \$58.72. This position typically demands a bachelor's degree and at least five years of experience. Postsecondary Teachers, which typically require a Doctoral or Professional degree, also command a substantial wage of \$45.96 per hour and are projected to grow by 7% through 2028.

Table 10: Reference Region Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count

Reference Region Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count, 2023-2028									
SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	8,470	9,232	9%	762	\$17.50	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
41-2011	Cashiers	7,790	7,612	(2%)	(178)	\$15.15	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	7,782	7,942	2%	160	\$19.03	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	7,255	7,676	6%	421	\$58.72	Bachelor's degree	5+ years	None
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	6,330	6,536	3%	206	\$15.38	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
29-1141	Registered Nurses	6,040	6,150	2%	110	\$43.81	Bachelor's degree	None	None
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	5,759	6,325	10%	567	\$18.12	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	5,174	5,351	3%	176	\$17.91	Some college, no degree	None	None
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	4,811	4,827	0%	15	\$21.51	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,783	5,032	5%	249	\$18.78	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	4,430	4,718	7%	289	\$45.96	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	4,358	4,483	3%	125	\$22.80	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	4,139	4,180	1%	41	\$21.28	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,978	3,898	(2%)	(80)	\$22.15	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	3,951	4,151	5%	200	\$33.96	Bachelor's degree	None	None
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	3,887	4,167	7%	280	\$20.92	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,495	3,666	5%	171	\$26.45	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Short-term
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,491	3,972	14%	481	\$19.89	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	3,354	3,500	4%	146	\$34.60	Bachelor's degree	None	None
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,311	3,243	(2%)	(68)	\$17.88	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term

EMPLOYMENT TOTALS

Table 11 demonstrates the 4-State Region as the leading job growth area among all studied regions. Employment expanded by 70,856 jobs between 2018 and 2023 and is projected to increase by an additional 9% (or 1,343,195 jobs) by 2028. Health Care and Social Assistance, and Government are the dominant industries, employing 2.6 million and 2.1 million workers, respectively. Average earnings within the region are relatively high at \$103,122 per job. Finance and Insurance leads in average earnings at approximately \$276,930, followed by Utilities at \$194,310 and Management of Companies and Corporations at \$190,442.

Table 11: 4-State Total Jobs

4 - State Total Jobs, 2018-2028									
	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	70,715	75,531	82,179	4,816	7%	6,648	9%	\$55,770
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	7,135	7,247	7,919	113	2%	672	9%	\$103,460
22	Utilities	52,479	54,610	59,372	2,132	4%	4,762	9%	\$194,310
23	Construction	744,672	752,188	794,102	7,516	1%	41,914	6%	\$93,632
31	Manufacturing	808,231	779,030	812,488	(29,201)	(4%)	33,459	4%	\$105,461
42	Wholesale Trade	504,548	485,505	499,844	(19,043)	(4%)	14,338	3%	\$128,603
44	Retail Trade	1,473,414	1,358,006	1,389,407	(115,408)	(8%)	31,400	2%	\$55,487
48	Transportation and Warehousing	457,035	497,560	555,980	40,526	9%	58,419	12%	\$74,447
51	Information	402,961	415,628	456,687	12,668	3%	41,059	10%	\$188,744
52	Finance and Insurance	767,543	794,830	859,798	27,287	4%	64,968	8%	\$276,930
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	305,034	310,802	335,349	5,768	2%	24,546	8%	\$100,833
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,202,168	1,309,804	1,451,610	107,636	9%	141,806	11%	\$164,028
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	229,895	225,891	244,777	(4,004)	(2%)	18,886	8%	\$190,442
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	825,106	828,202	916,031	3,096	0%	87,828	11%	\$73,667
61	Educational Services	722,222	694,955	743,563	(27,267)	(4%)	48,608	7%	\$78,403
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,465,551	2,641,345	3,005,887	175,795	7%	364,541	14%	\$78,450
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	326,703	319,503	357,439	(7,200)	(2%)	37,935	12%	\$67,606
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1,211,943	1,161,113	1,290,843	(50,830)	(4%)	129,729	11%	\$40,618
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	836,120	760,809	800,586	(75,311)	(9%)	39,777	5%	\$50,248
90	Government	2,133,631	2,105,423	2,235,718	(28,208)	(1%)	130,296	6%	\$117,136
	Total	15,566,017	15,636,873	16,980,069	70,856	0%	1,343,195	9%	\$103,122



TOP 20 INDUSTRIES IN 4-STATE REGION

Table 12 presents the top 20 industries at the 4-digit NAICS level for the 4-State Region. Notably, all of these industries are projected to experience growth through 2028. The healthcare sector is particularly dynamic, with Home and Health Care Services and Individual and Family Services leading the charge with projected growth rates of 30% and 20%, respectively, adding over 200,000 new jobs combined. Additionally, Restaurants and Other Eating Places and Education and Hospitals (Local Government), the two largest industries by job count, are expected to expand by 96,097 and 62,536 positions, respectively.

Over half of the top 20 industries boast average earnings exceeding \$100,000 per job, with six surpassing the \$150,000 mark. Computer Systems Design and Related Services claims the top spot in average earnings, with a substantial figure of \$196,342 per job.

Table 12: 4-State Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count

4-State Top 20 Industries by 2023 Job Count, 2018-2028									
NAICS	Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	2023 - 2028 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	912,846	880,596	976,693	(32,250)	(4%)	96,097	11%	\$36,775
9036	Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	838,373	847,215	909,751	8,841	1%	62,536	7%	\$109,110
9039	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	614,262	587,156	615,272	(27,106)	(4%)	28,116	5%	\$124,053
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	567,430	581,782	634,019	14,352	3%	52,237	9%	\$112,647
6241	Individual and Family Services	370,883	437,328	526,816	66,445	18%	89,487	20%	\$43,421
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	436,765	408,019	433,828	(28,746)	(7%)	25,809	6%	\$89,691
6216	Home Health Care Services	294,982	383,154	498,550	88,172	30%	115,396	30%	\$44,310
4451	Grocery Stores	302,481	291,581	302,422	(10,900)	(4%)	10,841	4%	\$39,932
6211	Offices of Physicians	247,690	261,616	288,521	13,927	6%	26,905	10%	\$143,323
5613	Employment Services	274,636	257,956	286,060	(16,680)	(6%)	28,104	11%	\$82,418
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	242,604	249,674	272,888	7,070	3%	23,214	9%	\$49,874
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	227,514	238,489	272,362	10,975	5%	33,873	14%	\$196,342
9029	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	246,032	237,124	247,820	(8,909)	(4%)	10,696	5%	\$160,832
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	229,155	234,427	250,674	5,273	2%	16,247	7%	\$100,148
5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises	229,895	225,891	244,777	(4,004)	(2%)	18,886	8%	\$190,442
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	172,175	206,973	237,038	34,798	20%	30,065	15%	\$165,496
5411	Legal Services	185,679	186,784	196,503	1,105	1%	9,719	5%	\$179,406
9011	Federal Government, Civilian	177,466	180,197	186,470	2,731	2%	6,272	3%	\$129,423
5221	Depository Credit Intermediation	169,875	179,375	195,005	9,500	6%	15,630	9%	\$187,219
9026	Education and Hospitals (State Government)	174,693	173,701	190,916	(992)	(1%)	17,215	10%	\$95,558

Source: Lightcast

TOP 20 OCCUPATIONS IN 4-STATE REGION

Table 13 presents the top 20 occupations within the 4-State Region. Home Health and Personal Care Aides are projected to experience the most significant job growth from 2023 to 2028, with an anticipated increase of 156,911 positions, representing a 21% growth rate. The tech industry is also thriving, with Software Developers projected to expand by 20%, adding 36,307 jobs.

These occupations exhibit stark contrasts in terms of earnings and educational requirements. Home Health and Personal Care Aides typically require a high school diploma or equivalent, offer no work experience prerequisites, and have an average hourly wage of approximately \$18.41. Conversely, Software Developers demand a bachelor's degree and command an average hourly wage of \$70.76.

General and Operations Managers lead in terms of earnings, with an average hourly wage of \$75.53. Postsecondary Teachers and Accountants and Auditors also offer substantial compensation, at \$58.53 and \$52.97 per hour, respectively. Both occupations require a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 13: 4-State Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count

4-State Top 20 Occupations by 2023 Job Count, 2023-2028									
SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 % Change	2023 - 2028 Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	756,574	913,485	21%	156,911	\$18.41	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	361,745	392,428	8%	30,682	\$75.53	Bachelor's degree	5+ years	None
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	351,771	360,419	2%	8,648	\$20.39	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
29-1141	Registered Nurses	310,506	347,150	12%	36,644	\$50.91	Bachelor's degree	None	None
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	309,457	338,426	9%	28,968	\$16.77	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	280,572	302,816	8%	22,245	\$20.70	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
41-2011	Cashiers	276,386	277,465	0%	1,079	\$17.01	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	238,028	260,337	9%	22,309	\$58.53	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	235,710	245,433	4%	9,723	\$24.00	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	228,576	238,022	4%	9,446	\$23.13	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	211,017	230,810	9%	19,793	\$19.25	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	200,758	219,801	9%	19,043	\$23.01	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	196,084	197,878	1%	1,795	\$24.04	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	185,953	200,167	8%	14,214	\$52.97	Bachelor's degree	None	None
15-1252	Software Developers	180,293	216,601	20%	36,307	\$70.76	Bachelor's degree	None	None
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	180,276	193,107	7%	12,831	\$19.52	Some college, no degree	None	None
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	178,688	192,264	8%	13,576	\$27.12	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term
33-9032	Security Guards	153,997	167,712	9%	13,715	\$21.32	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	150,451	167,659	11%	17,209	\$21.13	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	149,735	154,617	3%	4,882	\$27.33	Some college, no degree	None	Moderate-term

Source: Lightcast

Appendix A: Data Sources



Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type. [Click to learn more.](#)



Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst combines proprietary statistical models covering demographic, business, and spending data with map-based analytics to offer insights on market opportunities for industries, businesses, and sites. Business Analyst integrates datasets covering a wide range of topics including demographics, consumer spending, market potential, customer segmentation, business locations, traffic counts, and crime indexes, which can be overlaid spatially to produce customizable maps and uncover market intelligence. Data can be pulled for standard and custom geographies, allowing for valuable comparison between places. [Click to learn more.](#)



The **American Community Survey (ACS)** is an ongoing statistical survey by the US Census Bureau that gathers demographic and socioeconomic information on age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, commute patterns, and other topics. Mandatory to fill out, the survey is sent to a small sample of the population on a rotating basis. The questions on the ACS are different than those asked on the decennial census and provide ongoing demographic updates of the nation down to the block group level. [Click to learn more.](#)



Conducted every ten years in years ending in zero, the **US Decennial Census of Population and Housing** is a complete count of each resident of the nation based on where they live on April 1st of the Census year. The Constitution mandates the enumeration to determine how to apportion the House of Representatives among the states. The latest release of the 2020 Census contains data for a limited number of variables, including: total population by race/ethnicity, population under 18, occupied and vacant housing units, and group quarters population. [Click to learn more.](#)

Population Estimates Program | US Census Bureau

The Census Bureau's **Population Estimates Program (PEP)** produces estimates of the population for the US and its states, counties, cities, and towns. Demographic components of population change—births, deaths, and migration—are produced at the national, state, and county levels. PEP provides population estimates on an annual basis. [Click to learn more.](#)

Economic Census | US Census Bureau

The **Economic Census** is the US Government's official five-year measure of American business and the economy. It is conducted by the US Census Bureau for years ending in 2 and 7. The Economic Census is the most comprehensive public source of information about American businesses

from the national to the local level. Published statistics cover more than 1,000 industries, 15,000 products, every state, over 3,000 counties, 15,000 cities and towns, and Puerto Rico and other US Island Areas. [Click to learn more.](#)



University of South Carolina BRIC- The Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) index considers six broad categories of community disaster resilience: social, economic, community capital, institutional, infrastructural, and environmental at the county level. Used as an initial baseline for monitoring existing attributes of resilience to natural hazards, BRIC can be used to compare places to one another, to determine the specific drivers of resilience for counties, and to monitor improvements in resilience over time. Presently, county-level BRIC is available at two time-periods, 2010 and 2015 for the continental U.S., with 2015 also including Alaska and Hawaii. The BRIC index uses a capitals approach in providing an overall baseline assessment for monitoring existing attributes of resilience to natural hazards. Developed for U.S. counties, BRIC can compare one county to another, help to understand the specific drivers of resilience for individual counties, and monitor improvements in resilience over time.

CoStar is a comprehensive source of commercial real estate intelligence, offering an inventory of over 6.4 million commercial properties spanning 135 billion square feet of space in 390 markets across the US. CoStar covers office, retail, industrial, hospitality, and multifamily markets. Property- and market-level data on absorption, occupancy, lease rates, tenants, listings, and transactions are researched and verified through calls to property managers, review of public records, visits to construction sites, and desktop research to uncover nearly real-time market changes. [Click to learn more.](#)

“Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025-2029” Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development. (June 2024). Accessed 10/31/2024 https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/Housing/Housing-Needs-Assessment/2025-2029/VT-HNA-2025.pdf?_gl=1*kxa46n*_ga*MTU2NTIwMDc4NC4xNzI4NDAwMDg1*_ga_V9WQH77KLW*MTczMDQ1NDY4NS42LjEuMTczMDQ1NDc0NS4wLjAuMA..

ATTACHMENT C:

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED FOR 2024 CEDS

2014 SMART CEDS Report
2019 Southern Vermont CEDS
2022 Annual Report: BDCC and SoVT EDS
2023 Annual Report: BDCC and SoVT EDS
Apprenticeship Project Study
BDCC & Six College Collaborative Internship Program
BDCC Project Report
Bennington County Regional Plan
CEDS Annual Performance Report: 2020 Annual Performance Report
Economic Impacts of Vermont Yankee Closure
ECVEDD CEDS
Hiring Needs Assessment: Administrative, Clerical, Bookkeeping, Accounting
Hiring Needs Assessment: CDL & Logistics
Hiring Needs Assessment: Production and Manufacturing
INSTIG8: Entrepreneur and Innovation Culture Creation
Northern VT EDD CEDS
Northshire EDS
Southern VT CEDS: Economic Profile
Southern VT Development Zone Committee Report
SoVermont Business Accelerator Feasibility Study
Targeted Expertise Recruitment: Task Force Report to New Chapter
Today's Recruiting Solutions
Vermont Advanced Manufacturing Partnership: Final Report
Vermont Arts & Economic Prosperity 6
Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2025–2029
West Central VT CEDS
What is a good job? Defining Opportunity in Southern Vermont
Windham Region: Economic Data Overview
Windham Regional Plan

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

The following list of Southern Vermont CEDS 2024 Vital Projects is presented in alphabetical order by project name.

Project: A New Home for Vermont Paws & Boots

Impact Region: A Single Town in the Bennington County

Submitting Organization: Vermont Paws & Boots, Inc.

Description: Over the past 18 months, Vermont Paws & Boots has completely renovated a 7,000 square foot structure just outside of Old Bennington, transforming it into a state-of-the-art, best-in-class facility for forming productive and lasting bonds between disabled military veterans/first responders and their service dogs. The facility is one piece of a much larger collection of older structures, and VPB is taking on new redevelopment and renovation challenges to expand its programming and services, including residential and work-based opportunities for clients.

Project: Bellows Falls Intermodal Transportation Center

Impact Region: Multiple Towns in the Windham Region

Submitting Organization: Town of Rockingham

Description: The 1923 Bellows Falls Union Station, a contributing structure on the national register, and active intercity bus and rail station is dilapidating and no longer part of the business plan for the owner, Vermont Rail System, with no access to grant funding for a multi-million price rehab and preservation project. The Town will purchase the station, remediate the lead, asbestos, & vapor intrusion, repair & restore brick facade, doors and windows. Next phase will renovate all the mechanical, HVAC, plumbing, electrical systems. VTrans and Amtrak are improving/restoring the intercity passenger rail platform. Feasibility options include the town master lease to Local Development Corp LLC for tax credits and lease space to passenger travel related businesses like localvore teaching restaurant.

Project: Compost Facility Expansion

Impact Region: Multiple Towns in both regions

Submitting Organization: Windham Solid Waste Management District

Description: A new enclosed food waste composting facility is being constructed to serve residents, businesses, and schools. The previous facility exceeded its state permit capacity and therefore a new permit with twice the capacity has been received. Other permits include Brattleboro zoning, Vermont stormwater, and Act 250. The new facility includes a 4,000 sf fabric building on a concrete pad with aeration trenches which will accelerate the composting process. The state-of-the-art facility will include an odor control biofilter and heat recovery from the compost piles. Construction started in October 2024 with the facility operating by December 2024. Total budget is approximately \$700,000 and required funds have been obtained without WSWMD incurring long-term debt.

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

Project: DVFiber High Speed Internet

Impact Region: Multiple Towns in both regions

Submitting Organization: Deerfield Valley Communications Union District

Description: The Deerfield Valley Communications Union District (dba DVFiber) is a community-driven, non-corporate fiber optic internet provider serving Southern Vermont. Our mission is to bring reliable, high-speed internet to every corner of our district. In our fifth year of operation, we are implementing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grants, totaling \$26 million, to construct the initial phases of the high-speed fiber optic network that will ultimately serve 24 towns. We are applying for additional funds through the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program to support these efforts, with the goal of ensuring equitable access to 21st century technology that supports our region's continued growth and prosperity.

Project: Expanding Access to Trades Training in Southern Vermont

Impact Region: Windham Region

Submitting Organization: HatchSpace

Description: HatchSpace is a growing community workshop and school in the heart of downtown Brattleboro devoted to advancing the learning, practice, and applications of woodworking skills. HatchSpace is expanding programs to serve as Southern Vermont's workforce development center for trades training with a focus on careers in the wood product industries, carpentry and related construction sectors. HatchSpace fills the community, cultural, and economic needs stemming from the disappearance of craft education within our schools by delivering innovative, accessible, vocationally relevant, and skills-based training in woodworking for diverse audiences. By growing our workforce development programs and offering access to specialized equipment and tools, we're poised to have broad economic impact.

Project: Grace Cottage Family Health New Primary Care Clinic Building

Impact Region: Southern Vermont

Submitting Organization: Carlos G. Otis Health Care Center, dba Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital

Description: Grace Cottage Family Health has outgrown its primary care facility, currently located in two 1840s-era houses that lack efficiency. Patient visits have increased 50% over the last four years and there is a community need for further growth, but the existing clinic space cannot accommodate it. This project improves healthcare access and allows space for several additional well-paying jobs in the future. Grace Cottage's new clinic building is designed (see gracecottage.org/future), and permitting is nearly complete.

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

Project: Renovation Project for the Old School Community Center

Impact Region: Multiple towns in both regions

Submitting Organization: Old School Enrichment Council, Inc.

Description: Renovations (including siding, window replacement, ADA entry ramps, bathrooms, meeting room spaces, roof repair, music space, parking lot paving, etc.) at the Old School Community Center are critical to sustaining essential services that currently benefit residents of all ages across Deerfield Valley and other Southern Vermont towns. The center in Wilmington is a vital hub, housing small businesses, non-profits, childcare services, community events, senior programming, recreational activities, artist lofts, teen programs, and youth sports. By maintaining and improving the facility, we ensure that these crucial services and opportunities for engagement continue to thrive, fostering community well-being and economic growth in the region.

Project: Rockingham Industrial Park Stormwater Planning, Design, and Implementation

Impact Region: A Single Town in the Windham Region

Submitting Organization: Town of Rockingham

Description: The stormwater mitigation Best Management Practices (BMP) 30% design by Watershed Consulting for the Rockingham Industrial Park includes infiltration, bioretention, and stormwater management on Imtec Lane, Spencer, and Industrial Drive, and associated Industrial parcels. These infrastructure improvements support existing business, (Town Plan 2023 Draft, P. 30) create an environment that encourages more jobs and opportunities, (2019 CEDS Objective 2 P. 13) and mitigates severe storm water run-off to stop the erosion at Rockingham's largest employers. Sonnax, Chroma, Whitney Blake, Silver Forest, and Vermont Homegrown Cannabis, who employ almost 500 people. More than \$2 million public and private investment has been made on Chroma and Whitney Blake stormwater mitigation measures since 2021.

Project: Storage and Distribution Infrastructure for a Thriving Regional Food System

Impact Region: Southern Vermont

Submitting Organization: Food Connects

Description: Food Connects is building a multi-faceted food storage and distribution facility with the BDCC Business Park in Brattleboro that will serve various needs of the regional food system, including farms, food producers, retail grocers, farm stands, general stores and institutions. As a "food hub" we work with over 150 food producers and distribute to over 250 wholesale customers. When complete, our facility will provide over 10,000 sq ft of food-safe cold, frozen and dry storage and various distribution services. Project outcomes include rural economic development, job creation, food entrepreneurship, marketing of Southern Vermont as a food destination, and increased regional food security.

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

Project: SUSU commUNITY farm: Deepening & Widening our Impact

Impact Region: Windham Region

Submitting Organization: SUSU commUNITY farm

Description: We are an Afro-Indigenous farm, committed to centering food and land sovereignty through educational opportunities, land-based relationships, and ancestral healing, in so-called southern Vermont. Our commitment to cultural reclamation is not only an antidote to colonialism and racial capitalism but serves as a path to climate resilience. We embody this work by practicing food + land sovereignty, offering land-based connections, and ancestral healing. As part of our core programming, we offer a weekly no-cost CSA to 55 BIPOC families in Southern Vermont, alongside multigenerational initiatives including workshops and classes through our Trauma Conscious School of Liberation and our Youth2Liberation Pipeline Program.

Project: The Village at Winston Prouty - Phase One

Impact Region: Southern Vermont

Submitting Organization: Winston Prouty Center

Description: The Winston Prouty Center is embarking on an ambitious, collaborative, and forward-thinking project to build housing on its existing campus in Brattleboro, VT. In addition to housing, the project will continue and expand existing services and amenities on campus including office space, small retail, community services, and recreation opportunities available to the entire Brattleboro community. The purpose of the project is to contribute to creating a robust housing continuum in the community and region by adding up to 300 units of housing. The goal is to create a broadly mixed-income neighborhood since research demonstrates that generates better outcomes for all. Housing is the linchpin needed to unlock the economic promise of the region.

Project: WheelPad L3C

Impact Region: Windham Region

Submitting Organization: WheelPad L3C

Description: WheelPad L3C manufactures universally designed home attachments, and accessible tiny homes in the most sustainable way possible. www.WheelPad.com The overall project is to evolve WheelPad into a stable, sustainable, business. WheelPad is in the middle of upgrading a dilapidated site: 211 Route 9 West, Wilmington, VT 05363. The project for Q4 2024 - Q1 2025 is to complete renovations of our manufacturing facility (PETE) enabling three teams of local workers to construct our home models to bring our construction in-house, rather than subbing out to contractors in other states. In 2025 we will begin the significant renovation of an abandoned building to turn it into office and training program space with site-readiness for worker housing.

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

2024 Southern Vermont CEDS Projects (alphabetical by project name)

- A New Home for Vermont Paws & Boots - Vermont Paws & Boots, Inc.
- Arlington Common Community Center - Arlington Arts and Enrichment Program
- Athens Community Center - Town of Athens
- BCRC College Connections Internship Program - Bennington County Regional Commission
- BDCC Development Services - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- BDCC Extension of Business Technical Assistance to Serve SEDI Businesses - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Bellows Falls Area Wide Plan - implementation 0 Bridge St Mixed Use - Town Of Rockingham
- Bellows Falls Intermodal Transportation Center (BFITC) formerly BF Historic Train Station Purchase and Renovation - Town of Rockingham (TOR)
- Bellows Falls Opera House Lower Theater and Main Theater improvements - Town of Rockingham
- Benn High Redevelopment Project - Hale Resources LLC
- Bennington Community Market - Bennington Community Market
- Bennington Skatepark - Town of Bennington
- BFADC - Robertson Paper Site - Seeking Developer/Tenant(s) - Facility scoping, predevelopment, permitting, D&E, and Construction - Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation (BFADC)
- Brattleboro Microtransit Pilot - Southeast Vermont Transit
- Brookline Meetinghouse Historic Restoration - Town of Brookline
- Buzzy Towne Park - Wilmington Recreation Commission
- Chalet Preservation and Redevelopment - Windham & Windsor Housing Trust
- Community Center & Town Offices - Town of Shaftsbury
- Compost Facility Expansion - Windham Solid Waste Management District
- Cotton Mill Campus Expansion, Incubation, and Workforce Housing - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Creative Sector Hub - High Street & Green, LLC

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

2024 Southern Vermont CEDS Projects (alphabetical by project name)

- Destination: SoVT / Welcoming Communities (combined) - Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)
- Dover & Wilmington Bi-Town Strategic Marketing Plan - Southern Vermont Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Dover Municipal Water System - Town of Dover - Municipal Water Task Force
- DVFiber High Speed Internet - Deerfield Valley Communications Union District
- Energizer Facility Reuse - Town of Bennington
- Estey Organ Complex Redevelopment - Phase 1 - Community Development Support Inc.
- Expand cardiovascular care to achieve \$1.3M in annual regional economic growth - Southwestern Vermont Medical Center
- Expanding Access to Trades Training in Southern Vermont - HatchSpace
- Flood Adaptation Planning & Design for Windham Region Designated Centers - Windham Regional Commission
- Flood Hazard Mitigation in Jacksonville Village - Town of Whitingham
- Future Ready Initiative - Boys & Girls Club of Brattleboro
- Grace Cottage Family Health New Primary Care Clinic Building - Carlos G. Otis Health Care Center, dba Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital
- Greater Rockingham Area Services Energy Improvements - Greater Rockingham Area Services
- Green Island Project - Great Falls Food Hub - Town of Rockingham
- Hotel Windham - Windham Development Group LLC
- In-Sight Photography Project Career Pathways - In-Sight Photography Project
- Island St Revitalization - Town of Rockingham (TOR) and Bellows Falls Area Development Corporation (BFADC)
- Lake Raponda Dam Sustainability Project - Town of Wilmington
- Library ADA accessibility including walkway and first floor bathroom - South Londonderry Free Library
- LiveVT - GROW Program in SW Vermont (Grants for Relocation and Outreach Work) - Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Living Memorial Park Pool Renovation - Town of Brattleboro
- Manchester Sewer Line Extension - Town of Manchester
- Melrose Terrace Redevelopment - Brattleboro Housing Authority dba Brattleboro Housing Partnerships
- Miss Bellows Falls Diner - Rockingham for Progress

ATTACHMENT D:

2024 VITAL PROJECTS

2024 Southern Vermont CEDS Projects (alphabetical by project name)

- Ninja Path - Bennington County Regional Commission
- Out in the Open's Rural LGBTQ+ Organizing & Retreat Campus - Out in the Open
- Potash Hill - Potash Hill, Inc.
- Preserving, Protecting, and Enhancing Rudyard Kipling's Naulakha - The Landmark Trust USA
- Putnam Block Redevelopment - Phase 2: Mount Anthony House - Putnam Community Health LLC
- Readsboro Highway Garage - Town of Readsboro
- Regional Capacity Building - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Registered Apprenticeship Program as a High Performance Builder - Sustainable Energy Outreach Network
- Renovation Project for the Old School Community Center - Old School Enrichment Council, Inc.
- Retreat Farm Food Center Facility Improvements - Retreat Farm, LTD
- Rich Earth Institute's Urine Nutrient Reclamation Program (UNRP) - Rich Earth Institute
- Rockingham Community Health Center - Greater Rockingham Area services
- Rockingham Industrial Park Stormwater Planning, Design, and Implementation - Town of Rockingham
- Route 9 Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Expansion Project - Town of Wilmington
- Rupert Town Green - Town of Rupert
- Rural Business Stability and Recovery Center (RBSRC) - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- SEVT Brattleboro Bus Facility - Southeast Vermont Transit
- South Londonderry Master Plan - South Londonderry Master Plan Task Force
- South Londonderry Village Wastewater System - Phase II - Town of Londonderry
- Storage and Distribution Infrastructure for a Thriving Regional Food System - Food Connects
- Stratton Employee Housing - Stratton Mountain Resort
- Sunderland Union Church Rehabilitation & Reuse - Northshire Community Land Trust
- SUSU commUNITY farm: Deepening & Widening our Impact - SUSU commUNITY farm
- The Village at Winston Prouty Phase One - Winston Prouty Center
- TLR, Wyman Flint Master plan BF Greater Island District - Town of Rockingham (TOR) and Sustainable Valley Group (SVG)
- Town of Rockingham - Adams Grist Mill - Town of Rockingham and Bellows Falls Historical Society (BFHS)


ATTACHMENT D:


2024 VITAL PROJECTS


2024 Southern Vermont CEDS Projects (alphabetical by project name)

- Trails and Outdoor Recreation - Walk-Bike-Safety Plan - Town of Rockingham
- Tri-Park Master Plan Projects - Tri Park Cooperative Housing Corporation
- Vermont Employment Pathfinder - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Vermont Museum of Natural History-Project Feasibility & Workplan - Vermont Museum of Natural History, Inc.
- Vilas Bridge Rehabilitation - Town of Rockingham
- Welcoming Communities - Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- WheelPad L3C - Wheel Pad L3C
- Whitingham Public Works Garage Renovation for Resilience - Town of Whitingham
- Whitingham Sewer Infrastructure - Town of Whitingham
- Windham Cultural Plan - Vermont Creative Network, Southern Zone
- Windham Region Infrastructure Characterization: Developing a Town-Level, Region-Wide Understanding of Actions Necessary to Address Infrastructure Limitations to Support Economic and Community Development - Windham Regional Commission
- Workforce Center of Excellence - BDCC


DATA SOURCES

 **Lightcast** Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type. [Click to learn more.](#)

 **Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst** combines proprietary statistical models covering demographic, business, and spending data with map-based analytics to offer insights on market opportunities for industries, businesses, and sites. Business Analyst integrates datasets covering a wide range of topics including demographics, consumer spending, market potential, customer segmentation, business locations, traffic counts, and crime indexes, which can be overlaid spatially to produce customizable maps and uncover market intelligence. Data can be pulled for standard and custom geographies, allowing for valuable comparison between places. [Click to learn more.](#)

 **PolicyMap** is a spatial analysis and data tool that facilitates the creation of compelling, interactive maps from 50,000+ indicators related to public policy. Geospatial analysis, including advanced querying and filtering facilitated by data-rich maps, can be used for storytelling and decision-making. PolicyMap's library of variables spans topics such as demographics, housing, lending, quality of life, economy, education, health, and government programs. Functionality is optimized for use by policymakers in government, business, healthcare, universities, academic, and others. [Click to learn more.](#)

 **IBISWorld** is a leading provider of expert industry research and analysis for broad sectors and niche industries across the economy. Thoroughly researched industry reports from IBISWorld leverage economic, demographic, and market data into forward-looking insight, providing detailed data and narrative on current and historic trends, as well as future outlook and projections. Topics covered include products and services, major markets, upstream and downstream supply chain industries, performance drivers, factors for competitiveness, operating conditions, major players, and key statistics on industry performance. Reports are available by industry at the global, national, and state level. [Click to learn more.](#)

 **CoStar** is a comprehensive source of commercial real estate intelligence, offering an inventory of over 6.4 million commercial properties spanning 135 billion square feet of space in 390 markets across the US. CoStar covers office, retail, industrial, hospitality, and multifamily markets. Property- and market-level data on absorption, occupancy, lease rates, tenants, listings, and transactions are researched and verified through calls to property managers, review of public records, visits to construction sites, and desktop research to uncover nearly real-time market changes. [Click to learn more.](#)



The **American Community Survey (ACS)** is an ongoing statistical survey by the US Census Bureau that gathers demographic and socioeconomic information on age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, commute patterns, and other topics. Mandatory to fill out, the survey is sent to a small sample of the population on a rotating basis. The questions on the ACS are different than those asked on the decennial census and provide ongoing demographic updates of the nation down to the block group level. [Click to learn more.](#)



Conducted every ten years in years ending in zero, the **US Decennial Census of Population and Housing** is a complete count of each resident of the nation based on where they live on April 1st of the Census year. The Constitution mandates the enumeration to determine how to apportion the House of Representatives among the states. The latest release of the 2020 Census contains data for a limited number of variables, including: total population by race/ethnicity, population under 18, occupied and vacant housing units, and group quarters population. [Click to learn more.](#)



The **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)** program estimates total employment and unemployment for approximately 7,500 geographic areas on a monthly basis, from the national level down to the city and town level. LAUS data is offered through the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by combining data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, and state unemployment (UI) systems. [Click to learn more.](#)

Business Dynamics Statistics | US Census Bureau

The Business Dynamics Statistics (BDS) program provides annual measures of business dynamics—such as job creation and destruction, establishment births and deaths, and firm startups and shutdowns—for the economy and aggregated by establishment and firm characteristics. It covers the entire US economy and is available at the national, state, and MSA (metropolitan statistical area) levels. [Click to learn more.](#)

Population Estimates Program | US Census Bureau

The Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (PEP) produces estimates of the population for the US and its states, counties, cities, and towns. Demographic components of population change—births, deaths, and migration—are produced at the national, state, and county levels. PEP provides population estimates on an annual basis. [Click to learn more.](#)

OnTheMap | US Census Bureau

OnTheMap is a tool developed through the US Census Longitudinal Employer–Household Dynamics (LEHD) program that helps to visualize Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data about where workers are employed and where they live. It offers visual mapping capabilities for data on age, earnings, industry distributions, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and sex. [Click to learn more.](#)

Economic Census | US Census Bureau

The Economic Census is the US Government's official five-year measure of American business and the economy. It is conducted by the US Census Bureau for years ending in 2 and 7. The Economic Census is the most comprehensive public source of information about American businesses from the national to the local level. Published statistics cover more than 1,000 industries, 15,000 products, every state, over 3,000 counties, 15,000 cities and towns, and Puerto Rico and other US Island Areas. [Click to learn more.](#)

ABOUT CEDS PARTNERS

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC): The mission of the Bennington County Regional Commission is to build strong, resilient, and sustainable communities that are home to economic prosperity and a high quality of life for the residents of seventeen municipalities in southwestern Vermont. It is one of two organizations in the state that functions as both a regional planning commission (RPC) and regional development corporation (RDC). BCRC accomplishes its mission by providing planning, economic development, and project management services to municipalities, businesses, and community organizations in our service region, as defined by 24 V.S.A. Section 4341. For more information visit: <http://www.bcrvvt.org/>

The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC): The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) is a private, nonprofit economic development organization with the mission of *investing in the drivers of the regional economy so that people, businesses, and communities in Southern Vermont can thrive*. BDCC serves as the State of Vermont's certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) for the greater Windham County area (including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, Winhall and Weston). BDCC is one of 12 RDCs throughout Vermont. BDCC activity is made possible in part by a grant from the State of Vermont through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. For more information visit: <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/>

Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS): An affiliate of BDCC that grew from a 2008 grassroots effort, initiated by BDCC, to understand and create long term strategies needed to reverse the economic decline of the Windham Region and plan for the economic impacts from the closure of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant. In 2014, after multiple years of regional input, education and data gathering, SeVEDS received federal approval for the Windham Region's federally recognized S.M.A.R.T. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). SeVEDS partnered with Bennington's Regional Economic Development Group in 2018 to develop the 2019 Southern Vermont Zone CEDS. For more information visit: www.seveds.com.

The Southern Vermont Economic Zone: The Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone was created by act of the Vermont Assembly during the 2015 legislative session as a result of continued population and tax receipt decline. It comprises the geographic areas served by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and the Bennington County Regional Commission. Work has been ongoing since 2015 with a Zone Committee report chaired by Wayne Granquist of Weston, the annual Southern Vermont Economy Summit held each May, and the USDA-funded Southern Vermont Economy Project sponsoring training sessions across Windham and Bennington counties for economic and workforce development entities. In 2019 the first SoVermont CEDS was completed and approved by the EDA. A proposal for federal designation of the zone as an EDA Economic Development District is underway.

ABOUT CAMOIN ASSOCIATES

As the nation's only full-service economic development and lead generation consulting firm, Camoin Associates empowers communities through human connection backed by robust analytics.

Since 1999, Camoin Associates has helped local and state governments, economic development organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses across the country generate economic results marked by resiliency and prosperity.

To learn more about our experience and projects in all of our service lines, please visit our website at www.camoinassociates.com. You can also find us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube.

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