

V. ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

In the context of economic development, economic resilience centers on three primary elements to preserve and strengthen the economic base including: the ability to recover quickly from a major disruption or “shock”, the ability to absorb the shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether. Disruptions/shocks to the economic base of a region or area can appear as downturns in the national and international economy that impact demand for goods and spending, downturn to major industry sectors critical to the region’s economic base and external shocks (a natural or manmade disaster, a base closure, loss of a major employer, impacts from climate change, etc.).

Goals, strategies and activities that promote and support economic resilience in the region include the following:

GOAL A. EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING: PROMOTE AND SUPPORT AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS THAT IMPROVE THE SKILLS AND EDUCATION LEVELS OF THE REGION'S WORKFORCE.

Strategies and Activities:

1. The Bristol Community College, Center for Workforce and Community Education. BCC provides training and education opportunities for businesses and individuals including the new established Taunton Campus Center.
2. Workforce Investment Boards in the region (Bristol, Greater New Bedford, South Shore and Metro South) work to increase occupational skill attainment, employment, retention and wages of labor force, improve quality of the workforce to enhance the overall productivity and competitiveness of the region.
3. Bridgewater State University, UMass Dartmouth and the CONNECT partnership continue with ongoing efforts to address the skill and curriculum gap in southeastern Massachusetts. SRPEDD, OCPC, CCC, regional WIBs, Chambers of Commerce and others are collaborating on this initiative. Recently, the Massachusetts Workforce Skill Cabinet convened a regional planning meeting of the Southeast Region to initiate the process of developing solutions to the skills issue.

GOAL B. PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: SUPPORT LOCAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS THAT TRAIN ENTREPRENEURS AND STARTUP BUSINESSES.

Strategies and Activities:

1. The UMass Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) in Fall River acts as both a research facility and incubator for new business enterprises.
2. The Quest Center in New Bedford offers a unique combination of entrepreneurial training, hands-on management expertise, and access to technical and business proficiency.
3. The regions six chambers of commerce provide training and workshops for entrepreneurs and small businesses in the region.
4. South Eastern Economic Development (SEED) Corporation provides gap loans to small businesses and offers business technical assistance through workshops and individualized assistance.
5. The Mass Small Business Development Center Network's Southeast Regional Office provides free and confidential business advice to existing and prospective small businesses and holding training seminars on various topics.
6. Entrepreneurship For All (EforAll) increases economic development and social awareness by supporting entrepreneurs in economically distressed cities who better understand local problems and have ideas and solutions to improve local condition and create their own opportunity.

GOAL C. SUPPORT AND PROMOTE EXPANSION OF REGIONAL INDUSTRY CLUSTERS. PROMOTE GROWTH IN EMERGING SECTORS AND ENCOURAGE DIVERSIFICATION.

Strategies and Activities:

1. Support and promote expansion of regions innovation industry clusters. U.S. BLS and the Purdue Center for Regional Development identified the region's leading innovation clusters including biomedical and biotechnical (Life Sciences); advanced materials; manufacturing supercluster; agribusiness, food processing and technology; apparel and textiles; and, forest and wood products (See Chapter II, Table 4. Innovation-Related Industry Clusters for additional details).

Several manufacturing supercluster sectors are identified within the region including electrical equipment, appliance and component manufacturing; fabricated metal product manufacturing; machine manufacturing; and, primary metal manufacturing. The biomedical and biotechnical clusters for the region is traceable to some of the research laboratory institutions in the area. Furthermore, a correlation exist with the manufacturing cluster for specialized surgical and medical device and other instruments See Chapter II, Figures R and S for additional details).

2. Promote growth in emerging industry sectors. Among some the regions emerging industry sectors are defense and security; information technology and telecommunication; transportation and logistics; energy-renewables, and business and services.
3. Continue to promote growth throughout the district in primary industry sectors and encourage diversification among sub and ancillary industry sectors. EOLWFD 2015 data identified the regions primary industry sectors including health care and social assistance (19.1%), retail (15.2%), manufacturing (11.2%), and accommodate and food services (9.6%). Collectively these industry sectors comprise about 55% of the regions labor force (See Chapter II: Analysis - State of Region for more detail).

GOAL D. PROMOTE AND SUPPORT WORKSHOPS, TRAININGS AND SEMINARS, TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON CLIMATE CHANGE, SEA LEVEL RISE AND RESILIENCY PLANNING

Strategies and Activities:

1. Advocate for inclusion of Resiliency Element in all master plans for regions cities and towns, specifically coastal communities. SRPEDD has begun to initiate this effort in a few coastal communities including Marion and Wareham. Additional resiliency planning was conducted in Carver under Carver 2017 Master.
2. Support and promote forums and workshops to educate and provide information on climate change, sea level rise and impacts.
3. Identify and prioritize most venerable areas, provide economic impacts (property losses for both residential and business, taxes revenues, jobs, and other impacts) and offer tools, strategies, and funding to mitigate impacts from events.

GOAL E. SUPPORT, PROMOTE AND PROVIDE PLANNING FOR HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS. IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND INCOPORATE EFFORTS WITH HOMELAND SECURITY AND OTHER PLANNING INCLUDING REGIONAL RESILIENCY PLANNING FOR LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT.

Strategies and Activities:

1. Support and promote ongoing local hazard mitigation planning efforts.

2. SRPEDD has provided hazard mitigation planning assistance in Carver, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Marion, Mattapoisett and Westport. Currently planning assistance is underway in Fairhaven, Lakeville and Wareham.
3. SRPEDD developed the first Mass Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan covering all 27 cities and towns in the district. Communities have used this document to develop local mitigation plans.

Communities that develop local hazard mitigation plans are eligible to apply for grants designed to mitigate against a variety of natural hazards. Funding resources include Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Flood Mitigation Assistance and Repetitive Loss Claims (RLC) Grant Program.

GOAL F. ENCOURAGE HOMELAND SECURITY TO WORK WITH REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES, LOCAL, STATE (DEM & EOPS) AND FEDERAL (FEMA) PARTNERS TO COORDINATE OTHER PLANNING, REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCY PLANNING EFFORTS.

SRPEDD's Homeland Security Department offers administrative and fiduciary support to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council (SRAC). The SRAC assists the region, which is comprised of 96 municipalities and the Wampanoag Nation contained within six (6) counties including Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Nantucket, Norfolk, and Plymouth in meeting the core capabilities of homeland security and emergency preparedness set forth by the U.S. Department of Homeland security (DHS).

Strategies and Activities:

1. Continue with planning, interoperability, training and exercise, mass care medical surge, sheltering and cache development.
2. Continue with ongoing planning efforts under FY 15, 16 and 17 SRAC Plans including technical rescue and training, evacuation drills and development of cache sites with emergency response equipment – message boards, light towers, generators and trash pumps that can be ready for deployment in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.
3. Communicate and work with other agencies on HLS planning and integrate with other regional plans in an effort to develop a Regional Resiliency Plan including homeland security, land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, environment and housing.

4. Develop a resiliency element in Homeland Security Plans