

# STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN (SEDAP)

## *Mission Statement: Economic Development Committee (EDC)*

*To guide, assist, and enhance economic development within the community that is synergistic with the goals and actions of the Strategic Economic Development Action Plan (SEDAP).*

**For purposes of this plan, the EDC has defined economic development in Kennebunk** as a series of concerted actions to promote a standard of living and quality of life consistent with the desires of Kennebunk citizens. Such actions will include the development of appropriate zoning standards, economic incentives, business attraction and retention efforts, and marketing programs that are sustainable and consistent with town-wide goals.

The Kennebunk Economic Development Committee exists to provide advocacy, assistance, and communications about economic development-related matters to three (3) constituencies within the town as follows:

- to **Town Management** – by providing a forum to help in the examination, formulation and implementation of the Town’s economic development policies and programs; participate in public awareness/education efforts to facilitate implementation of policies and programs; and provide help with special projects to assist Town Management
- to the **Board of Selectmen** – by providing objective, independent input and recommendations to the BOS regarding economic development policies and programs being considered by Town management; and provide recommendations regarding the utilization of TIF funds
- to **Town Businesses and the Public** – by providing advocacy to these groups about economic development-related issues and providing liaison to the Town as required; implement educational programs for town businesses; and provide communications support for Town Economic Development related issues and programs

### **Guiding Principles:**

- Our primary focus is the creation of quality, skilled jobs focused on the skill sets of our community, in particular, our youth;
- Any economic program shall be consistent with maintaining the quality of life and experience one presently enjoys here in Kennebunk;
- Economic development actions will consider the community’s stewardship of its natural resources;
- Any program or action will make use of the community’s network of citizen talents and cultural links;
- We will continue to operate a business-friendly delivery system, including the provision of important information about the community and its businesses that will further our mission;
- Every place is special, every place is part of the whole; and
- **We have a story to tell—let’s be organized and tell it.**

## STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN (SEDAP)

Staff and the Economic Development Committee worked during a six-month process in late 2013 to create a series of goal statements to provide the community with direction as it relates to economic development. After a series of meetings in which basic information about the community was shared, where the strengths and weaknesses of Kennebunk were inventoried, and where citizens were encouraged to share ideas and help the community set priorities, the EDC then constructed this Strategic Plan. The Plan is generally presented in the following format:

1. **Goals Statements:** guidance, designed to organize our vision statement around specific measurable areas of direction
  - a. **Strategies:** specific targeted statements designed to achieve each of the 7 goals of this plan.  
  
Action items: specific areas of focus or actions, including:
    - Who (Responsibility)
    - When (Timelines, Years 1-5)
    - Priority (High, Medium, Low)
    - Cost (General Cost Assessments)
2. **Benchmarks:** measures established to describe the success or failure of our business development activities

### **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

**Goal: Development of Industry Clusters-***This plan recognizes the need to create quality jobs focused on, but not limited to, the following industry clusters: Tourism, the Creative Economy, Health Care, Retail, Financial, Manufacturing, Construction, Energy, and Home Businesses.*

**Tourism:** Continue to grow and expand the tourism industry, linking it to the quality of life experienced and enjoyed by those who live here year-round and guided by the following components:

- Incorporate trails, parks and the beach into an eco-tourism program.
  - Who ED staff, Conservation Commission, GIS reps.
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$20,000
- Link the developments of the food, arts industry and non-profit cultural industry into a tourism attraction strategy.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

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- Learn to piggy back on some of our best partners and marketers who have proven to be successful in their industry area.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

Creative Economy: Establish a development program that creates affordable space, provides incentives, and enhances lifestyle improvements to support professionals in the technology, arts, engineering, and other creative economy sectors.

- Inventory and understand the level and types of creative talent in the community and develop a focused attraction strategy for specific technical and professional sectors.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0
- Ensure and market recreation activities available in the region (e.g. surfing, trails, biking, nearby skiing, etc.) as part of a creative economic attraction.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0
- Coordinate the efforts of artists and restaurants to create year-round activities.
  - Who ED staff
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0
- Examine ways to create affordable working and residential space.
  - Who KDC, EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0
- Establish a program that links youth, schools, and new companies to the creative economy.
  - Who EDC,-RSU
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0, with grants and support

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Health Care: Implement an aggressive and supportive development strategy for expanding the health care industry in Kennebunk.

- Define the industry and services, who is here now, where their interests are, and how they want to expand.
  - Who ED staff
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0
  
- Continue to develop appropriate housing to support the industry.
  - Who EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

Retail Industry: Continue to expand retail offerings, particularly as it relates to local needs that may also have tourist implications.

- Survey and identify the needs and desires of local citizens and businesses and relate to a general marketing strategy.
  - Who ED staff
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$20,000, in-house, or via college students—make contact
  
- Continue the build-out of Route 1 North, limiting vacancies and focus on the three area clusters: health, financial, and retail.
  - Who CD staff
  - When 1
  - Priority L
  - Cost \$0, property owners
  
- Focus implementation on locally owned retail development.
  - Who ED staff
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

Financial Industry: Recognize and coordinate the story around the financial industry in Kennebunk and what it means to various aspects of economic and community development.

- Bring together the industry in a strategy session that focuses on Kennebunk being a regional center.
  - Who KDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

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- Identify supply-side industries that could more easily serve this sector if located here.
  - Who EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0
  
- Connect the industry to the schools and training programs.
  - Who EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

Manufacturing: Manufacturing is a core employment area for the community and should be strengthened through expansion, retention, attraction, and training.

- Further coordinate the existing industries in composites, plastics, metals fabrication, and closed molding to understand the supply and demand-side industries that might locate here in Kennebunk.
  - Who EDC
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

Alternative Industries: Using our existing cluster base, work to identify other clusters that would fit our existing model and help them grow here in Kennebunk.

- Fully understand all supply chain and networking opportunities.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 2
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

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**Goal: Business Attraction and Retention**-Using identified industry clusters, develop a program to assist in expanding existing businesses or inviting new businesses to the community that are synergistic with other development goals.

Business Assistance Programs: Continue the Business-Friendly program that either links or contributes resources to the needs of new and existing companies focused on the following:

- Revolving loan program
- Linkages to assistance programs
- Local professional development programs
- Linkages to critical agencies
- Linkages to local review process and assistance
- Expand upon informal merchant support groups throughout the community
  - Who ED staff
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0, but loans and grants are a part of the strategy

Utility Cost and Fees: Work on a strategy that controls the increase of utility costs and fees to new or expanded development, particularly as it relates to changes at KLPD and the KSD.

- Inventory and project cost implications for each utility and look for cost offsets where necessary.
  - Who EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0, need to understand all alternatives

Affordable Housing: Insure that there is a variety of workforce housing across all income levels.

- Inventory and project supply and demand and work proactively with developers to meet the needs.
  - Who ED staff, EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

Space: Work the assets that already exist in Kennebunk to maximize their use as we grow new and existing businesses.

- Update current inventory of available space, by type of asset, cost, and potential for redevelopment or expansion and implement a development plan.
  - Who ED staff
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0, GIS system useful

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- While maximizing existing space, identify future property for business park development.
  - Who EDC
  - When 3
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0, GIS useful
  
- Inventory and identify developer interests to be able to make appropriate introductions and market where necessary.
  - Who EDC, KDC
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0

Schools: Develop a relationship with the school system that maximizes skill sets to meet local and regional business needs.

- Align skills training with needs and desires of students, needs of businesses and align where appropriate.
  - Who EDC
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

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**Goal: Natural Resources**-Clearly identify and celebrate the natural resources of Kennebunk and link them to economic development strategies.

Conservation Policy: Utilize conservation policy as a positive, quality of life story and incorporate into the community's marketing program.

- Describe/inventory important natural resources and tell the story.
  - Who Conservation Commission, CD staff
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0, GIS system helpful

Beaches: Maintain the quality of the beaches, including water quality, access, recreational options, linking its story with a basic marketing plan.

- Continue to participate in Maine Healthy Beaches program, improving water quality management throughout the community (as well as our regional neighbors) and tell the story.
  - Who Conservation Commission
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost Annual testing fees

Rivers and Fisheries: Understand the diversity of species available in our system, work to protect and develop them, and incorporate that into an eco-tourism program.

- Mousam River
  - Work with the Dam relicensing process (KLPD) and the KSD expansion/update, over the next five years, to best understand the opportunities for the fisheries, the river system, and adjacent business development. Focus on the most cost-effective improvements that add to the community's development capacity 20 years into the future.
    - Who EDC, KLPD, KSD, Board of Selectmen
    - When 3
    - Priority H
    - Cost Unknown; full analysis of all options needed
- Kennebunk River (Ward Brook)
  - Continue to develop the harbor, understanding its existing operation and future potential.
    - Who EDC, Kport
    - When 3
    - Priority H
    - Cost Unknown

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- Branch Brook
  - Understand any development activity as it impacts the Branch Brook water supply system.
    - Who ED staff; KKWWD
    - When 2
    - Priority M
    - Cost \$0

Conservation, Recreation, and Trails Systems: Develop a single coordinated map and marketing program about the value of conservation, recreation and trail systems to the community.

- Inventory all resources, create a single map and incorporate into the marketing program.
  - Who Planning, Conservation Commission, Assessing, Recreation
  - When 1
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0, GIS system
  
- Develop and implement a community-wide wetland mitigation program.
  - Who CD staff, Conservation Commission, EDC, KKWWD
  - When 2
  - Priority H
  - Cost Surveys, Assessment of in house info
  
- Finish the Eastern Trail and all possible connections; formalize connections with Eastern Trail, the bridle path, beach, and all other systems.
  - Who Planning, Conservation Commission, Chamber of Commerce, all other non-profits who need to be at table
  - When 2
  - Priority H
  - Cost DOT funds

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**Goal: Kennebunk's Location**-Take advantage of Kennebunk's location along major access routes, nearby to major natural resources (the ocean and the mountains), and within modern commuting distance of major urban areas.

Central Access to Turnpike: Take advantage of our location and central access to the turnpike.

- Expand Kennebunk's presence at the Turnpike rest area
- Ensure that all marketing materials include connection to the highway
- Monitor and make improvements to the connecting system when necessary
- Make similar connections to area airports
  - Who Events staff, CD staff, Chamber of Commerce
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$50,000

Highlight Access to Urban Markets: Take advantage in our marketing of our location within several urban markets.

- Identify key industry clusters to target in the Boston, Portland, and Southern New Hampshire markets and implement the marketing program.
  - Who CD staff
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority L
  - Cost Unknown, Website updates in-house
- Utilize the citizen network to reach out to businesses one to one.
  - Who EDC
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

Connectivity and Wayfinding: A key aspect of year-round quality of life is establishing the connectivity of all pedestrian and bikeway systems. Gateways: Improve and maintain our gateway impressions. Inventory and identify improvements, coordinate those improvements with the wayfinding and branding program.

- In coordination with all improvements necessary to complete system, develop a way finding system consistent with branding efforts that will help guide individuals to the various systems.
  - Who EDC, CD staff, Public Works, DOT
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$50,000 (for sign improvements—must follow branding exercise)

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- Expand business opportunities related to biking and ecotourism and coordinate with the marketing program.
  - Who CD staff, Chamber of Commerce, Kport
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost Unknown

Technology: Understand the existing technology backbone in the municipality, making improvements where necessary.

- Inventory providers and capacity, negotiate improvements where necessary and include in marketing program.
  - Who IT (Information Technology) staff
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost Unknown

Amtrak Downeaster Train: Formalize stop in Kennebunk with the Downeaster system.

- Work to establish a seasonal stop in 2015, participate in their studies, and then work to make formal connections to the municipal wayfinding system, associated businesses (bikes, mopeds, etc.) and incorporate into the marketing program.
  - Who Town Manager's office, Board of Selectmen
  - When 2
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$200,000 (Capital improvements)

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**Goal: Sense of Community**-Kennebunk must continue to celebrate the diversity, passion, and commitment of its people to each other and to the built environment around them, attracting industry and businesses that are consistent with our sense of place.

**People:** Kennebunk is blessed with a wide variety of extremely talented and connected individuals which bring value-added propositions to each and every conversation; we must learn how to consistently use this strength. (This is a repeat but important to keep here.)

- Understand the network (year-round and seasonal), skill set, and diversity and coordinate communication.
  - Who EDC, KDC
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0

**Events:** Build on the success of community events and places designed to serve our citizens as an attraction to visitors and those interested in locating here in Kennebunk.

- Coordinate efforts, maintain quality events and include in marketing efforts.
  - Who CD staff, Chamber of Commerce, Town Manager's office
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost Annual budget

**Community Scale:** The scale and physical quality of the community and infrastructure is what attracts people to live and work here; this must be maintained and improved. Geographic areas are treated here separately, but it brings a unique user quality that can be capitalized upon. However, each must be viewed as a part of the greater whole.

- Route 1 South
  - Streetscape planning, extension of downtown work
  - Organizing around home furnishing retail
  - Design concept related to theme and appearance shall be developed with businesses in the area, as they seek to be a destination place.
    - Who CD department, Public works, Ed staff
    - When Ongoing
    - Priority H
    - Cost Annual budget

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- Route 1 North
  - Medical and health services industry coordination
  - Connections, transitions along the street and access ways
  - Redevelopment of some properties or shining the gem that is an attractive, small scale retail center!
    - Who CD staff, So. Maine HealthCare transition staff, developers
    - When 1
    - Priority H
    - Cost \$0, some physical improvements likely
  
- Downtown
  - Work on build out scenarios consistent with trends, identifying key structures
  - Further housing development
  - Redevelopment of west side of bridge, consistent with streetscape efforts
  - Changing habits
  - Fresh look at the Lafayette Center
  - Short and long-term parking solutions
  - Event center development continues with the development of the Pavilion
    - Who Downtown Committee, ED staff, CD staff, Events staff
    - When 3
    - Priority M
    - Cost Unknown, credit enhancements could be a tool
  
- Lower Village
  - Parking, particularly bus tours
  - Extending streetscape work to upper, lower village
  - Coordinating uses and activities
  - Arts focus
  - Creative economy support system
  - Understand and develop the working harbor
  - Build relationships with Kennebunkport
    - Who Lower Village Committee, CD staff, ED staff
    - When 3
    - Priority M
    - Cost \$0

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- West Kennebunk
  - Alfred Road improvements
  - Linkages, particularly Eastern Trail
  - Small scale support businesses (bike shop, hostel)
  - Lighting
  - Links across the Mousam River, back to Town
  - Marketing messages
    - Who CD staff
    - When Ongoing
    - Priority H
    - Cost \$0
  
- Design Standards
  - Implement standards in a way that is business-friendly and maintain our niche as a full service community
    - Who Site Plan Review Board, CD staff, EDC
    - When 1
    - Priority M
    - Cost \$0

Youth: Implement strategies that would diminish youth flight, or at least provide a job base for youth to return to.

- Expand the Swift Educational Center program (at RSU 21) to all ages, create a marketing profile attractive to youth workers and companies (creative economy in some cases), and strengthen the connection between the business community and the school system.
  - Who Passamaquoddy Tribe, RSU
  - When 3
  - Priority M
  - Cost \$0, private

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**Goal: Kennebunk's Identity-***To create a consistent economic message about who and what we are, while recognizing the individual strengths, talents and diversity of the community, remembering we are all part of the whole.*

**Marketing Plan:** Create a marketing plan that respects individual directions while telling a unified story about the community, its families and its role as a service center community (attractive to tourists).

- Developing this plan should include establishing the audience(s), developing the message and a brand, establishing targets for implementation, creating appropriate protocols and communication partners, and establishing a stream of funding.
  - Who ED staff, EDC, all committees
  - When 1
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$0—all local, find the talent/resources

**Community Outreach:** Recognize that our neighbors are important to us from a development strategy, with the need for good working relationships.

- Kennebunkport: recognize the importance of Kennebunkport to Kennebunk's development strategy, Kennebunkport's role as a tourist-only focus, and seek to cooperate.
  - Create formal channels of communication, including the role of the Chamber of Commerce, establish areas of common interest (Christmas Prelude, trail systems) and provide a focus for shared marketing.
    - Who ED staff, Events staff, Chamber of Commerce
    - When 4
    - Priority L
    - Cost \$0
- Arundel: Recognize Arundel as an area for future residential and commercial development and seek to cooperate.
  - Create formal channels of communication, including the role of the Chamber of Commerce, establish areas of common interest (e.g. Route 1 corridor, Eastern Trail) and provide a focus for shared marketing.
    - Who Town Managers, EDC
    - When 3
    - Priority L
    - Cost \$0

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**Goal: The Provision of Key Infrastructure and Town Services-***To maintain and develop the necessary service and infrastructure to serve a diverse and growing economy (the following are organized into specific action steps).*

- Trolley System. Create a trolley or bus system that is year-round and connect with the future development of the Train station.
  - Who Town Manager, York County Community Action Program, Chamber of Commerce
  - When 4
  - Priority L
  - Cost Unknown, extending it the full season, DOT

- Kennebunk Light and Power District. Work to understand the implications of dam removal and various power take-off agreements as KLPD works through the relicensing process, with particular attention spent on the future of the Mousam River; ensure that any data analysis of the river be coordinated with the KSD.

### **AND**

- Kennebunk Sewer District. Coordinate all business development strategies, including future growth with the upgrade and replacement of the existing treatment plant and ensure that there is adequate capacity for the next twenty years; ensure that any data analysis of the river be coordinated with KLP

- Who Town Manager, Board of Selectmen, EDC
- When 1-2
- Priority H
- Cost Unknown

- Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District. Coordinate KKWWD replacement and capacity needs with the protection of water supply systems with business development strategies

- Who EDC, KKWWD
- When 5
- Priority L
- Cost Unknown

- Recreation Facilities. Coordinate marketing efforts about the community with the ongoing efforts of the Recreation Committee.

- Who Events staff, Recreation, Chamber of Commerce
- When Ongoing
- Priority M
- Cost \$15,000, annual

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- Parking. Conduct and maintain an analysis of parking in the downtown and Lower Village that considers growth projections, supply and demand, and proximity to demand.
  - Who CD staff
  - When Update, GIS system
  - Priority L
  - Cost \$0
  
- Working Harbor. Develop an understanding of the working harbor, its growth and potential and incorporate that assessment into the community's development strategy.
  - Who ED staff, Harbormaster
  - When 3
  - Priority L
  - Cost \$0
  
- Community Event/Areas. Incorporate and maintain community events as part of the brand and marketing efforts for the community.
  - Who Events staff
  - When Ongoing
  - Priority H
  - Cost \$20,000 per annum

# STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN (SEDAP)

## **BENCHMARKS**

Annually, the EDC will provide a report to the Board of Selectmen, as part of the community's annual economic development report. The report will describe how the community has done in implementing the SEDAP. As part of that report, the EDC has selected the following benchmarks to track, as we seek to understand just how we are doing as a community. Staff will monitor these benchmarks and make them available to the EDC, prior to the report being presented to the Board of Selectmen.

1. Maintain an annual average commercial permits=126
2. Maintain a ROI of \$20,000 per job created
3. Maintain a ROI of \$10,000 of new value for every \$1,000 invested
4. Maintain an annual average commercial value increase of \$5 million
5. Maintain family income at \$90,000
6. Increase residents with bachelors degree to 55%
7. Increase total retail sales by 5% per year
8. Increase retail growth by 10% in the following areas:
  - a. General Merchandise
  - b. Home and Personal Care
  - c. Building Materials
9. Expand shoulder season visitors by 10%
10. Maintain the present tax rate
11. Do not let commercial vacancy rates exceed 10%
12. Maintain safe water quality on the beach
13. Establish a year-round farmers' market
14. Provide housing that matches house price with median income or low, medium and high categories (establish affordability index)
15. Extend tourist season:
  - a. ↑ beds available in offseason
  - b. ↑boat and kayak launch areas

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