

# STURBRIDGE BUSINESS BREAKFAST

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**25 SEPTEMBER 2018**  
**STURBRIDGE TOWN HALL**  
**7:45 – 9:00**

## Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Town Updates
- Review of Licensing Process
- CEDS Discussion
- Update from Sturbridge Business Advocacy Group
- Reminders
- Question, Answer & Updates
- Adjourn

# WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

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Please tell us your:

- Name
- Title
- Business, Organization, Group, etc.

## TOWN UPDATE

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Presented By:

Kevin Filchak

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator



*Sturbridge Community Bonfire*

## Town Update

- Leadership Transition
- Tax Bills – **DUE 1 Nov.**
- Special Town Meeting – **29 Oct.**
- Farmers Market
- Rick Hoyt Sturbridge Half Marathon



Start line of the Rick Hoyt Sturbridge Half Marathon.

## Town Update continued...



*Sturbridge Community Bonfire*

- Sturbridge Community Bonfire
- First Impressions – Williamstown
- Emergency Preparedness Month
  - [town.sturbridge.ma.us/local-emergency-planning-committee](http://town.sturbridge.ma.us/local-emergency-planning-committee)

# STURBRIDGE LICENSE RENEWAL

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Presented By:

Kevin Filchak

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator

## License Renewal | Overview

- License renewal packets have been mailed out to businesses in Sturbridge within the last month.
- Your business should have received all of the pertinent renewal forms from:
  - Board of Health
  - Board of Selectmen
  - Building Department
  - Fire Inspector

## License Renewal | Overview (continued...)

- All renewals come in a packet with accompanying instructions on what you have to complete to be in compliance with the Town
- Rather than have each department send you information separately, now all of the paperwork comes together in one packet
- This process was one that we started last year to make renewals easier and less onerous on businesses

## License Renewal | Feedback

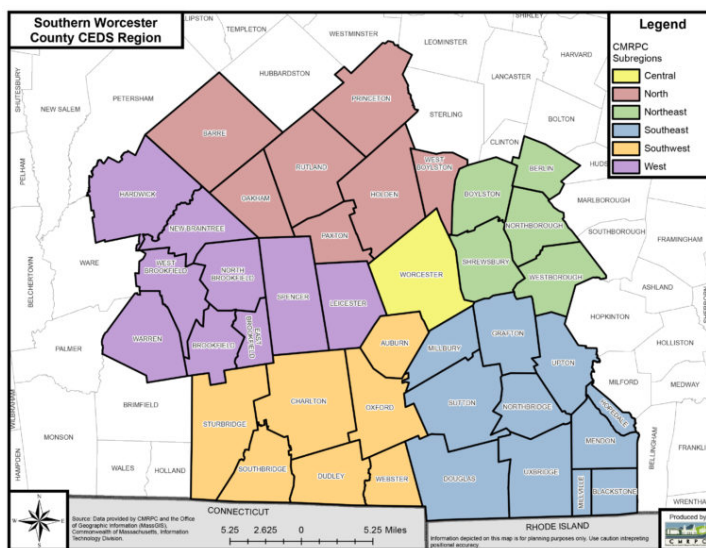
After a year in operation we want to hear from you.

- ***Do you have any feedback for us on the process of license renewals that you'd like us to consider going forward?***

Kevin Filchak

## Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator

- Comprehensive
- Economic
- Development
- Strategy



## CEDS | Quick Overview

- In short this plan is our region's vision for the next five years to help build our regional economic future.
- It also gives the region access to Federal dollars
- Project lead is the Worcester Chamber of Commerce
- Sturbridge has been an active participant in this process since first meetings in 2016 and serves on the Strategy Committee to help develop this plan.
- The plan is in its final stages now and is preparing to be formally adopted.

## CEDS | Goals

- This is a VERY detailed plan
- There are five (5) goals and accompanying objectives for the CEDS
- To review the CEDS, final report should be posted shortly here:
  - <https://www.worcesterchamber.org/economic-development/>
  - Executive Summary provided in your handouts

## CEDS | Goal 1

- Goal
  - *Create and operate a robust regional economic development program*
- Objectives
  - A. Establish a more formal Regional Economic Development Organization
  - B. Obtain recognition by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District

## CEDS | Goal 2

- Goal
  - *Site availability, development and support infrastructure*
- Objectives
  - A. Provide better coordination of available site information for the region and among communities
  - B. Create a regional clearinghouse of available commercial property to foster more collaboration among the municipalities of the region and their economic development efforts to assure that businesses within our target industry clusters and supplementary business prospects are provided with maximum information on suitable sites.
  - C. Using established lists, as well as further input from regional communities, begin the process of prioritizing existing brownfield sites for remediation.



## CEDS | Goal 3

- Goal
  - *Creation of a steady and robust talent turnpike*
- Objectives
  - A. Identify skills gaps and provide an array of workforce development initiatives (employment, education, and training) for both residents and businesses throughout the region.
  - B. Using partner organizations such as the Workforce Investment Board and the Career Center identify and recruit individuals who are seeking employment and connect them with pertinent opportunities within the regional clusters.
  - C. Collaborate with school systems and other training partners in the region to market and provide job-related training to students who are not currently contemplating postsecondary education as a career path.

## CEDS | Goal 4

- Goal
  - *Regulatory flexibility and development tools*
- Objectives
  - A. Work with local municipalities and the business community to ensure ordinances and zoning within their communities fosters the type and level of development which will attract businesses in our target industry clusters.
  - B. Establish a comprehensive list of state and municipal programs that if adopted would attract development and investment in the community.
  - C. Work with municipal leaders and stakeholders to identify state and municipal programs that communities would want to adopt.

## CEDS | Goal 5

- Goal
  - *Enhancing entrepreneurial spirit*
- Objectives
  - A. Work with regional stakeholders to identify what is existing and where the development gaps are in terms of maker-space, incubators, accelerators, co-working space, or other start-up facilities and then work collaboratively to develop them strategically throughout the region.
  - B. Establish a one-stop clearinghouse of information on programs and resources available locally that are targeted to assist start-up businesses and budding entrepreneurs. Working and collaborating with local and state partners, identify the programs currently existing that best assist start-up companies and work to fill need gaps with new programming. Strategize on creation of incentives to keep entrepreneurs within the area. Identify access to capital – venture capital programs. Mobilize the business community to support utilizing the small start-ups

## CEDS | Next Steps

- CEDS was approved by the Strategy Committee at the last meeting on 20 September
- It will now be approved by the Worcester Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors on 26 September
- Approval by Economic Development Administration (EDA) – *Pending*
- It's a five (5) year plan with yearly updates

# BUSINESS ADVOCACY GROUP

Presented By:

Cedric Daniels  
General Manager, Rapsallion Brewery  
Chair, Business Advocacy Group (BAG)

## *Sturbridge Express*

- Started 18 August 2018
- Running through 3 November (anticipated)
- Saturday's, 3pm – 12pm
- Update: 7 stops



## Sturbridge Express



### Ridership Numbers

Date	# of Riders
18 August	5
25 August	12
1 September	21
8 September	41
15 September	11
22 September	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

## REMINDERS

Presented by:

Kevin Filchak

Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator

## Reminder

- You can access different business resources by going here:
  - <https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/for-business>
- You can get monthly updates on Town projects by going here:
  - <https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/businesses/pages/business-newsletters>
- You can view monthly events in Town by going here:
  - <https://www.town.sturbridge.ma.us/visitors/pages/monthly-event-newsletters>

## QUESTION, ANSWER & UPDATES

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Please raise any questions, comments, ideas, or concerns with the Town...

...or if you'd like to share something exciting about your business with the group you can do so at this time.

## Thank you

- Our thanks to Table 3 and Cedar Street Café for providing the food for this breakfast meeting
- (Please take some with you!)

## Thank you

- Kevin Filchak, M.P.A.
  - Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator
  - 508-347-2500 ext. 1411
  - [kfilchak@town.sturbridge.ma.us](mailto:kfilchak@town.sturbridge.ma.us)

*Please contact me anytime with questions, comments, concerns, ideas, or just to chat.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CEDS Territory

This document provides a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Southeast and Southwest regions of Massachusetts. The Southern Worcester County Region is comprised of forty (40) communities with six (6) distinct sub-regions.

#### CEDS Territory

CENTRAL	NORTH (7)	NORTHEAST (5)	SOUTHEAST (11)	SOUTHWEST (7)	WEST (9)
Worcester	Bare Holden Oakham Paxton Princeton Rutland W. Boylston	Berlin Boylston Northborough Shrewsbury Westborough	Blackstone Douglas Grafton Hopedale Mendon Millbury Millville Northbridge Sutton Upton Uxbridge	Auburn Charlton Dudley Oxford Southbridge Sturbridge Webster	Brookfield E. Brookfield Hardwick Leicester New Braintree N. Brookfield Spencer Warren W. Brookfield

### Public Input

To gain region-wide input and participation, a Strategy Committee comprised of a member from each of the forty (40) communities, plus employer groups, the higher education community, and other regional stakeholders, was created and engaged to help with the process of developing the CEDS. Additionally, there were four public outreach meetings, an online SWOT Survey (in which residents and/or businesspeople from all 40 communities participated), individual meetings, and group meetings where the CEDS process was discussed and feedback was solicited. The data collected during this process helped inform and provide backing for the sections developed within the CEDS report.

### Regional Overview

Southern Worcester County possesses unique assets that transcend the Industrial Revolution boom and subsequent deindustrialization of the region. Geographically, the region is comprised of nationally recognized historic sites such as the Blackstone River Valley National Historic Corridor, The Lost Village Scenic Byway repurposed mills from the Industrial Revolution era, a wide array of cultural offerings, parks, and a growing agricultural community. Worcester County has more farms than any other county in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with 1,526 farms and Worcester County was ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of all counties in the U.S. in farm to consumer sales.

The region's population has grown to 565,853 and is expected to grow by 71,591 from 2015-2035. The majority of population growth in 2035 will come from the 65+ demographic; the region must plan accordingly for an aging population. There are a number of higher education institutions which add to the vibrancy of the region. The region should continue efforts to retain students from these institutions while also attracting the population aged 18-24 to the region through relevant job opportunities, increased entrepreneurship support, and affordable living arrangements. Individuals employed in the region have been steadily increasing from 2011 to 2016, while the unemploy-

ment rate for the region has steadily decreased to 6.20% in 2016 (the most recent data for the SWC region). Despite the decrease in unemployment, the region has an opportunity to further leverage its population actively looking for employment opportunities or those who are marginally attached to the labor force or have become discouraged.

## Target Clusters

The region is focused on growing the following industry target clusters:

- Manufacturing
- Education Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Agriculture

While the region possesses infrastructure that provides industries in these clusters and other industry sectors with the ability to access markets, support their supply chains, and access a large labor pool through freight rail, active airports, highway infrastructure, commuter rail service to Boston, and regional bus service, further opportunities for economic development are present by updating existing infrastructure, including further buildout of technology infrastructure.

## Vision Statement

By the year 2038, businesses in Southern Worcester County and visitors coming to the region for business purposes will recognize it as an exemplary location for investment and development. The region's communities will be talked about as collaborative, flexible, adaptive, innovative, and connected by several transportation modes and state-of-the art telecommunications to other regions and economic hubs.

Visitors coming to the region for non-business purposes will describe the area as vibrant and cultural. The region will capitalize on and highlight the historic, cultural, and tourist resources available to attract those visitors. Those looking to relocate their family will find value in the regional housing stock, affordability of living, and school systems that cater to all students and provide all with a career pathway that meets their needs.

## Goals and Objectives

The SWC region is diverse, extending from the urban core of Worcester through the suburban neighborhoods of the nearby towns, to the rural fields and farms of the Brookfields, Hardwick, and New Braintree. Despite its diversity, the region collectively recognizes the purpose of economic development is to attract, retain, expand and create businesses that complement and are supported by the assets of the region. The businesses within our target industry clusters should be given the resources and support required to strengthen, grow, remain and succeed in the region. This CEDS identifies the following Goals and Objectives for the region that will bolster efforts in the recruitment, creation, retention, expansion and transition of businesses for the region.





## **GOAL 1: CREATE AND OPERATE A ROBUST REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.**

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Establish an Economic Development Organization (EDO) for the region, capitalizing on the ongoing collaboration between stakeholders, and assure that it has adequate staff, funding and other necessary resources to fulfill its mission of providing the region with state-of-the-art economic development services.

**OBJECTIVE A:** Establish a more formal Regional Economic Development Organization

**OBJECTIVE B:** Obtain recognition by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District

## **GOAL 2: SITE AVAILABILITY, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.**

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Regularly identify all available and/or underutilized sites and/or buildings within the region. This inventory will provide information including, but not limited to: access to transportation, utility and telecommunications infrastructure capacities, and potential incentives.

**OBJECTIVE A:** Provide better coordination of available site information for the region and among communities

**OBJECTIVE B:** Create a regional clearinghouse of available commercial property to foster more collaboration among the municipalities of the region and their economic development efforts to assure that businesses within our target industry clusters and supplementary business prospects are provided with maximum information on suitable sites.

**OBJECTIVE C:** Using established lists, as well as further input from regional communities, begin the process of prioritizing existing brownfield sites for remediation.

## **GOAL 3: CREATION OF A STEADY AND ROBUST TALENT TURNPIKE.**

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Using the Central MA Regional Workforce Blueprint as a guide, ensure there is collaboration and coordination among all educational and training organizations and private industry to identify and align workforce training and skills development to address the current and future needs of the target clusters and other industry sectors within the region.

**OBJECTIVE A:** Identify skills gaps and provide an array of workforce development initiatives (employment, education, and training) for both residents and businesses throughout the region.

**OBJECTIVE B:** Using partner organizations such as the Workforce Investment Board and the Career Center identify and recruit individuals who are seeking employment and connect them with pertinent opportunities within the regional clusters.

**OBJECTIVE C:** Collaborate with school systems and other training partners in the region to market and provide job-related training to students who are not currently contemplating postsecondary education as a career path.

## **GOAL 4: REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY AND DEVELOPMENT TOOLS.**

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Support the region's business development efforts by creating a "business friendly" environment focusing efforts on business attraction and retention.

**OBJECTIVE A:** Work with local municipalities and the business community to ensure ordinances and zoning within their communities fosters the type and level of development which will attract businesses in our target industry clusters.

**OBJECTIVE B:** Establish a comprehensive list of state and municipal programs that if adopted would attract development and investment in the community.

**OBJECTIVE C:** Work with municipal leaders and stakeholders to identify state and municipal programs that communities would want to adopt.

## GOAL 5: ENHANCING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT.

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Foster a robust environment that promotes an entrepreneurial spirit and supports business start-ups throughout the region.

**OBJECTIVE A:** Work with regional stakeholders to identify what is existing and where the development gaps are in terms of maker-space, incubators, accelerators, co-working space, or other start-up facilities and then work collaboratively to develop them strategically throughout the region.

**OBJECTIVE B:** Establish a one-stop clearinghouse of information on programs and resources available locally that are targeted to assist start-up businesses and budding entrepreneurs. Working and collaborating with local and state partners, identify the programs currently existing that best assist start-up companies and work to fill need gaps with new programming. Strategize on creation of incentives to keep entrepreneurs within the area. Identify access to capital – venture capital programs. Mobilize the business community to support utilizing the small start-ups

### Performance Metrics

The CEDS provides the following performance metrics to evaluate the progress made towards implementing the Goals and Objectives:

- The establishment of an Economic Development Organization for the region recognized by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District (EDD).
- The number of businesses recruited and amount of private investment realized by the region.
- The level of cross-municipal collaboration, particularly with regard to sharing development site information and inquiries.
- The level of participation by the business community in training programs and the number of trainees hired into full-time jobs.
- Development of a regional Infrastructure Master Plan and Capital Improvement Program.
- Development of a strategy to reduce the region's inventory of brownfields.
- Improvements in the region's perceived development regulatory climate.

### Resilience

This CEDS concludes with an analysis of the resilience of the region to prevent and/or recover from a major disruption – both weather or naturally created and economically created. It is recognized that communication plays a large role in the ability to anticipate, withstand, and recuperate from a disruptive event. The following regional strengths were identified as advantages in the resiliency of the SWC area:

- Diversity of Industries
- Partnerships & Collaboration
- Adaptability
- All communities have adopted Hazard Migration Plans
- Fifteen (15) communities are in the process of creating and adopting Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plans