



---

## **MEETING NOTICE**

There will be a meeting of the

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

on Thursday, November 19, 2020 at **7:00** p.m.

This will be a **Virtual Meeting** as allowed by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

Information to join the meeting is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2490902351>

Meeting ID: 249 090 2351

Call in information: 312.626.6799, 646.558.8656, 301.715.8592, 346.248.7799, 669.900.9128

**Meeting Material:** All written materials for the meeting are posted on BRPC's website: [www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org). Click on the Calendar of Events for the meeting and available materials will be listed.

## **Agenda**

### **I. Opening (7:00-7:05)**

A. *Call to Order*

B. *Roll Call*

C. *Approval of Minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting*

### **II. Comments from the Public (7:05-7:10)**

*Members of the public may offer comments regarding topics, which are on the agenda, or other matters which they wish to bring to the Commission's attention. Comments are limited to no more than three minutes and are to be directed to the Commission.*

### **III. Delegate and Alternate Issues (7:10-7:15)**

*Delegates and Alternates may bring up any issue not on the agenda.*

### **IV. Executive Committee Action (7:15-7:20)**

*Executive Committee actions taken on the Commission's behalf at its October 1, 2020 and November 5, 2020 meetings are presented for discussion.*

### **V. 2020 Annual Update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (7:20-7:40)**

*The Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires BRPC to submit an updated performance report annually, which the Commission needs to*

*approve, on its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to keep it certified. Senior Planner Laura Brennan will update the Commission. A draft copy is attached.*

**VI. Pittsfield Grey To Green Project (7:40 - 8:05)**

*Senior Planner Allison Egan will describe a new project called Grey to Green. This project will work in several neighborhoods in Pittsfield to engage the community and prioritize green planning in a social and racial justice context.*

**VII. Transportation and Climate Initiative (8:05 – 8:20)**

*The Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) is an initiative of 12 Northeast and mid-Atlantic States, with the District of Columbia, focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector through a regional cap and trade program. The BRPC Regional Issues Committee will meet on Wednesday November 18, 2020 to recommend comments on this initiative for the Commission's consideration. Comments, if the Regional Issues Committee deems they are ready, will be sent next Thursday.*

**VIII. East-West Rail Draft Report (8:20 – 8:45)**

*MassDOT has released its draft report on the East-West Passenger rail study with a request for comments. We will have comments for the Commission's consideration.*

**IX. Approval of Community Assessments for FY 2021 (8:45 – 8:50)**

*The Finance Committee has proposed there be no increase in community assessments for FY 2022. By law, BRPC must notify municipalities of their assessments no later than February each year so that they may be included in city/town budgets. Normally the Commission deals with it at the January meeting but since most municipalities initiate their budget processes in December we want to provide this information to municipalities as soon as possible, especially this year.*

**X. Executive Director's Report (8:50 – 8:55)**

**XI. Adjournment (8:55)**

Other interested citizens and officials are invited to attend.

All times listed are estimates of when specific agenda items may be discussed.

City and Town Clerks: Please post this notice



---

## **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FULL COMMISSION September 24, 2020 MEETING**

**Virtual Meeting** as allowed by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provision of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

### **I. Opening**

#### **A. The meeting was called to order at 7:14 PM**

Chair Kyle Hanlon reminded all that per the open meeting law, BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be provided to the chair at the meeting.

#### **Roll Call**

The following Commission members were present:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate  
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate  
Jim Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate  
Kenneth Smith – Sheffield Delegate  
Dante Birch – Williamstown Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate

#### **Staff Present:**

Thomas Matuszko – Executive Director  
Marianne Sniezek – Office Manager

Others Present: None

#### **B. Approval of Minutes of July 16, 2020 Meeting**

Jim Sullivan moved to approve; Roger Bolton seconded. Approved with a roll call vote and two abstentions

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes  
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Abstain  
Jim Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate - Abstain  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes

Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes  
Kenneth Smith – Sheffield Delegate - Yes  
Dante Birch – Williamstown Delegate - Yes  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate - Yes

**II. Comments from the Public – None**

**III. Delegate & Alternate Issues – None**

**IV. Executive Committee Actions**

There were no questions on the actions taken by the Executive Committee at their July 16, 2020 and September 3, 2020 meeting.

**V. Resilient Lands Initiative Comments**

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has developed a Vision and Strategy for the Resilient Lands Initiative, described as “Expanding Nature Across the Commonwealth to Help People.” The Commission was requested to review and approve the draft comment letter prepared by the Regional Issues Committee.

Tom gave an overview of the draft comment letter. Comments are due September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Roger Bolton moved to approve the draft Resilient Lands Initiative comment letter; Sheila Irvin seconded. Approved with a roll call vote.

Unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes  
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Yes  
Jim Sullivan – Hinsdale Delegate - Yes  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes  
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes  
Kenneth Smith – Sheffield Delegate - Yes  
Dante Birch – Williamstown Delegate – Yes

**VI. Good Deeds Recognition**

The recipients for our Good Deeds thank you and recognition in response to the COVID-19 crisis were presented.

Organizations and individuals recognized where Berkshire Health Systems, Berkshire Medical Center nurses, Berkshire County Public Health nurses, Adams Council on Aging, Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires and LP Adams

Company. BRPC will continue to recognize good deeds in response to the COVID-19 Crisis. E-mail Good Deeds to Tom Matuszko at [tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org).

## **VII. About BRPC-FY20**

In lieu of an in-person Annual Meeting this year due to the COVID-19 crisis, Tom highlighted some key projects and accomplishments over the last fiscal year by giving an overview of BRPC's new website our programs, projects and initiatives.

All were encouraged to look at the home page on the website to see hot topics, news and announcements and the calendar of events to locate BRPC committee meetings and materials.

Link to BRPC's website:  
<https://berkshireplanning.org/>

## **VIII. Modification to BRPC's Mission, Goals and Values Statement to Reinforce our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles.**

The recent protests in the wake of police shootings and the Black Lives Matter demonstrations has provided the opportunity to re-examine how we all may contribute to systemic racism and discrimination. There was a discussion on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion as relating to our Mission, Goals, and Values statements after a PowerPoint presentation to get members thinking about common words or phrases Racist or Derogatory Origins.

Tom explained over the next year or so could we add or modify the Mission, Goals and Values Statement.

The first step was the first discussion.

It was decided at the next Executive Committee meeting there would be a discussion on a strategy and at the next Full Commission meeting to have further discussions when more members are in attendance.

## **IX. Executive Director's Report**

Tom pointed out the new grants available.

### **A. Housing Choice Small Town FY 21 Capital Grant Program**

The Housing Choice Small Town FY 21 capital grant program will open in mid-September for applications that will be due in early December. This program is exclusively for communities that have an annual

population estimate of 7,000 or less from the US census. While the eligible use of funds will change, last year's program could only fund **capital** projects—construction, modernization, or major repair of physical infrastructure, acquisition of property or interests in property; long-lived equipment; or feasibility, engineering or schematic designs for capital projects. Awards will be made in early 2021 with projects needing to be completed by June 30, 2022. Maximum Grant award: \$100,000; there is up to \$1 million available for FY 21. More information about the Housing Choice Program can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/housing-choice-designation-and-grants>.

**B. CPTC Training**

CPTC's (Citizen Planner Training Collaborative) Fall workshop series will be virtual this year. Starting later this fall CPTC will offer a wide range of choices and because they will be virtual, Berkshire County Planners will be able to attend whatever course is being offered. Keep on the lookout this year's specific schedule and registration information. More information can be found at <https://masscptc.org/>.

**C. Mass Housing Partnership's MHP Western Mass Housing Conference**

Registration is now open for the Western Mass Housing Conference as sponsored by the Mass Housing Partnership. Geared towards officials, volunteers and employees in small and rural towns in Western Mass, the conference has been redesigned as a weekly virtual series that will engage participants in discussion and problem solving around the development of affordable housing in the region. The weekly sessions are designed for municipal staff, officials, and volunteers, CDCs, regional planning agencies, and local advocates. Registration is free but required. More information about these sessions can be found at <https://www.mhp.net/community/events>. Contact Katie Bosse at [kbosse@mhp.net](mailto:kbosse@mhp.net) or 857-317-8517

**D. FY 2021 State Budget Update - Status of District Local Technical Assistance and other important priorities**

As of this date there is no word about when the FY21 State Budget will be passed. An update will be provided if there is any movement at the state.

**E. Staff Update**

We are pleased to welcome Jared Latour as the newly hired Grant &

Procurement Specialist. This position works with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation and the Covid 19 Emergency Assistance to Micro Enterprise Business Owners programs, and provides staff support in the Berkshire Regional Group Purchasing Program (BRGPP).

**F. MassWorks Applications**

Eleven MassWorks applications were submitted by Berkshire County communities. All but 2 of these were STRAP grant application. The cumulative value of these was \$11 million. Statewide there were 100 applications with a total request of \$208 million.

**G. FY21 Community Compact Cabinet IT Grant Program**

The FY2021 Community Compact IT Grants application period opens on September 15, and any city or town that was not awarded an FY2020 Community Compact IT Grant is eligible to apply. Under the Community Compact IT Grant Program, grants of up to \$200,000 may be awarded to fund one-time capital needs such as technology infrastructure, upgrades, or purchases of equipment or software. Municipalities should have received a September 8 "Kick-Off" letter which featured the FY2021 Community Compact IT Grant application password and additional information.

**H. Other:**

Tom reported the following new items:

**East-West Rail** – the three options will be announced.

**Culvert & Small Bridges Work Group Report** – In the report are provisions for pre-approved designs. In the past the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met on the issues of Culvert and the cost burdens for small municipalities. The report will be posted on BRPC's website.

**X. Adjournment**

Sheila Irvin made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Jim Sullivan. Unanimously approved. Adjourned at 8:41 pm.

**Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:**

Meeting Agenda  
Draft Meeting Minutes July 16, 2020  
Executive Committee Actions Memo  
Good Deeds Recognition  
BRPC Mission Statement, Vision, Values

Executive Director's Memo  
MHP's Western Mass Housing Conference Virtual Series  
Jared J Latour Resume  
Draft Comment Letter – Resilient Lands Initiative  
Good Deeds Recognition Organizations and individuals  
PowerPoint Common Words and Phrases





# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

KYLE HANLON, Chair  
JOHN DUVAL, Vice-Chair  
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk  
MALCOLM FICK, Treasurer  
THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

---

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director

DATE: November 13, 2020

SUBJ: Executive Committee Actions for October and November

In accordance with the bylaws, actions taken by the Executive Committee on the Commission's behalf are reported and presented for discussion at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee took the following actions at its October 1, 2020 and November 3, 2020 meetings.

### **Executive Committee Actions on October 1, 2020**

#### **Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to Submit a Grant Application to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Brownfields Assessment Funding**

The Executive Committee was requested for the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Brownfields Assessment funding in the upcoming grant round and to approve any resulting contracts and agreements. Tom reported we have exhausted the funding from the previously awarded assessment grant and are currently in the process of closing that project. There are currently no funds available for site assessments; however, several potential sites have been identified that could benefit from environmental site assessments for both hazardous and petroleum contamination. The maximum grant award is \$300,000, and we anticipate requesting \$200,000 in hazardous funds and \$100,000 in petroleum funds. No local match is required, and a limited amount of administration is now allowed under Brownfields Grants.

#### **Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to Submit a Grant Application to the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General**

The Executive Committee was requested for the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General Promoting Cultural Humility in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Grant program and to approve any resulting contracts and agreements. This grant opportunity is an offering from the AG Office to fund innovative solutions to improve the ability of Opioid Use Disorder treatment providers to address the complex and specific needs of their patients. Grant applications can be for an amount up to \$100,000. The specific budget is still being determined.

**Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to Submit a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS)**

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning 3 (MassCALL3) Substance Misuse Prevention Grant and to approve any resulting contracts and agreements. This grant opportunity is a continuation of Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (SAPC) funding we currently have and provides multi-year funding (up to \$125,000/year for 9 years). Under the services described in this grant, communities will be able to build capacity, develop a strategic plan to implement existing evidence-based strategies, or design innovative approaches that adhere to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). No match is required.

**Executive Committee Actions on November 5, 2020**

**Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to Submit Grant Applications to U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)/ Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) program**

The Executive Committee (after the fact) was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit grant applications to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Association of Food and Drug Officials Program. BRPC, working with the Berkshire Public Health Alliance along with the Towns of Dalton, Egremont and Sheffield have applied for 3 small FDA/AFDO (Association of Food and Drug Officials) grants of \$2,500 each to re-assess at least 3 Alliance member Food Safety Programs in accordance with the FDA Program Standards. These are fixed price grants. If awarded, these grants will be used to support Alliance programs, including outreach, planning and training.

**Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to Submit a Grant Applications MIIA Risk Management Program**

The Executive Committee was requested to authorize the Executive Director to submit a grant application to Massachusetts MIIA Risk Management Grant program and to approve any resulting contracts and agreements. This grant opportunity was an offering from MIIA to support risk management initiatives including COVID related products and resources to assist in continued re-opening efforts. The grant budget is \$4,155. There is no local match required.

.

# 2020 Annual Update

## Berkshire County CEDS 2017-2022

Submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration on XX/XX/2020



**BRPC**

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Section 1: Performance Measures.....	5
Section 2: Existing Regional Conditions and Trends .....	6
Section 3: Goals & Objectives Performance Report .....	17
Section 4: Priority Projects & Status Report.....	23
Appendix A.....	25
24 Month Local Area Unemployment Statistics .....	25
Appendix B.....	27
Per Capita Income Statistics, Most Recent ACS 5-Year Estimates .....	27
Appendix C.....	30
Economic Distress Criteria Map .....	30
Appendix D.....	31
2020 Annual Priority Project Updates .....	31
Appendix E .....	53
2020 CEDS Committee and BRPC Rosters .....	53
Appendix F .....	59
COVID-19 Addendum – Economic Impact through September 2020 .....	59

## Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Staff

Thomas Matuszko, *Executive Director*

Laura Brennan, *Senior Planner – Community & Economic Development*

Mark Maloy, *GIS/Data Coordinator*

Alexander Valentini, *Economic Development Researcher*

## Other Participating Organizations

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Berkshire County could not have been accomplished without the willing and active participation of communities, individuals, and organizations, as well as the representatives at the United States Economic Development Administration, throughout the process.

Funding was provided for this planning effort by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development through the District Local Technical Assistance Program, and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

# Introduction

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) is the designated regional planning agency for the thirty (30) towns and two (2) cities in Berkshire County, Massachusetts. In 2017, BRPC staff under the direction and guidance of an advisory committee (CEDS Committee) developed a comprehensive economic development strategy for the Berkshire Region (2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS).

The 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS analyzes regional demographics, infrastructure, economic sectors, and economic development efforts. It also discusses Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for the region (SWOT analysis), and identifies economic development goals and objectives, priority projects deemed vital to the region, and performance measures by which to gauge implementation of the 2017-2022 CEDS. In short, it serves as a guide for establishing, implementing and tracking regional economic goals, objectives and priorities.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) regulations (13 CFR 303.6 (C)) require Planning Organizations to submit an updated CEDS performance report on an annual basis. The CEDS Committee is pleased to submit its 2020 Annual Performance Report (Report) to the EDA.

This report discusses existing regional conditions and trends, provides updates on the region's progress towards reaching its goals and objectives and provides information relevant to the performance measures set forth in the 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS. The report also includes updates for the economic development projects listed on the Priority Project List. Significant progress has been made toward a number of 2017-2022 CEDS Goals, as evidenced by the Representative Activities listed herein.

The 2020 Annual Performance Report was endorsed by the Berkshire CEDS Committee on September 10, 2020 and by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission on December XX, 2020.

# Section 1: Performance Measures

The 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS includes performance measures to enable the CEDS Committee to track progress in the region and to assess the effectiveness of 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS. Throughout this document, the performance measures identified in the CEDS are applied to track progress made in the region over the last year.

The performance measures are:

1. Change in total employment for the region  
*See Section 2, Labor Force & Unemployment*
2. Change in median household income and median family income for the region  
*See Section 2, Median Household Income*
3. Change in number of young adults in the labor force  
*See Section 2, Age Structure of the Labor Force*
4. Change in per capita income  
*See Section 2, Per Capita Income, as well as Appendix B*
5. Identify investments in the region, including amount, public or private and industry sector  
*See Appendix E, Regional Investment Database*
6. Identify investments in the region's transportation network  
*See Section 3, Goal #3 Representative Activities*
7. Identify investments in municipal infrastructure that support economic development  
*See Appendix E, Regional Investment Database*
8. Number of active business incubators, co-working spaces, and maker spaces in the region  
*See Section 3, Goal #2 Representative Activities*
9. Number of households with access to fiber optic cable  
*See Section 3, Goal #3 Representative Activities*
10. Identify instances of regional collaboration on economic development activities  
*See Section 3, Goal #4 Representative Activities*
11. Number of workforce trainings held in identified industry or occupational clusters  
*See Section 3, Goal #1 and Goal #2 Representative Activities*
12. Brief assessment of the region's economic resilience  
*See Section 2, Regional Economic Resilience*

## Section 2: Existing Regional Conditions and Trends

This section includes updated information on median household income, employment statistics, economic sector information, and a summary of the areas in Berkshire County that meet EDA's distress criteria.

### Economic Characteristics

#### Labor Force & Unemployment

The labor force in Berkshire County decreased very slightly from 65,331 to 65,320 persons between 2018 and 2019, an absolute loss of 11 persons and a relative loss of 0.02% from 2018 levels. The County's labor force remained 4,102 persons, or 5.91%, below 2000 levels of 69,423 persons, and 8,038 persons, or 10.96%, below peak 2006 levels of 73,358 persons. *See Figure 1.* This decline may be attributed to the County's aging and declining population as well as adverse economic conditions during and following the Great Recession.

Between 2018 and 2019, the average unemployment rate for Berkshire County decreased from 4.10% (originally estimated at 4.03%) to 3.50%, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points. Unemployment remained 0.6 percentage points higher than 2000 levels of 2.90%, but steadily decreased over the previous 8 years and in 2019 sat 5.30 percentage points lower than peak 2010 levels of 8.8%. *See Figure 2.* Although Berkshire County has benefitted from the greater national economic trend in recent years, it should be noted that reductions in the unemployment rate alone may overstate the health of the regional economy, as such reductions are partially a function of the decreasing labor force mentioned above. Additionally, these data do not capture the 2020 economic disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw a dramatic increase in the unemployment rate. *See Appendix F.*

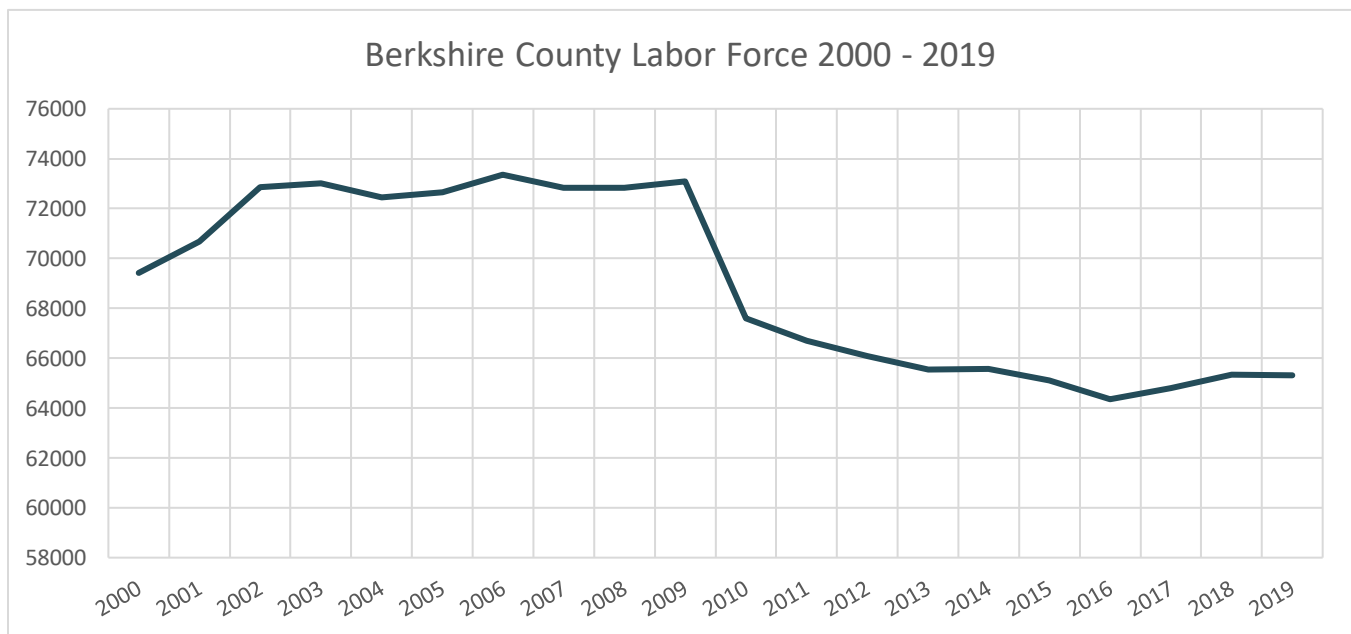


Figure 1. Berkshire County Labor Force. Source(s): MA Dept. of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force and Unemployment Data



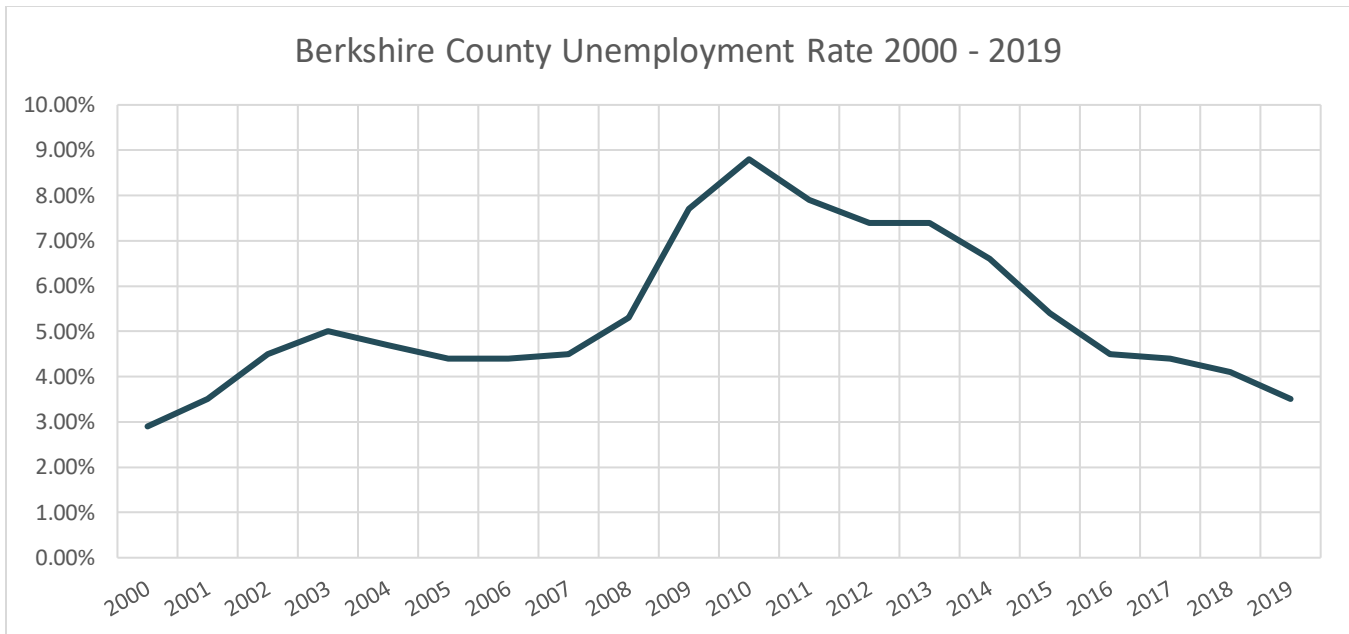


Figure 2. Berkshire County Unemployment. Source(s): MA Dept. of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force and Unemployment Data

#### Median Household Income

The median household income for Berkshire County in 2018 was \$56,674. This was a \$1,484, or 2.69%, increase over 2017 levels of \$55,190. Median household income in Berkshire County continues to lag behind both corresponding national and statewide measures, with the median American household earning \$60,293 and the median Massachusetts household earning \$77,378 in 2018, 6.19% and 30.89% higher, respectively. See Figure 3.

Median household income remained lower for Berkshire County than most neighboring counties, as well. All or most counties in northwestern Connecticut, Massachusetts' Pioneer Valley, and New York's Capital District had higher median household incomes. However, Berkshire County had a higher median household income than neighboring Hampden County in Massachusetts, Green County in New York, and Bennington and Windham counties in Vermont. See Figure 4.

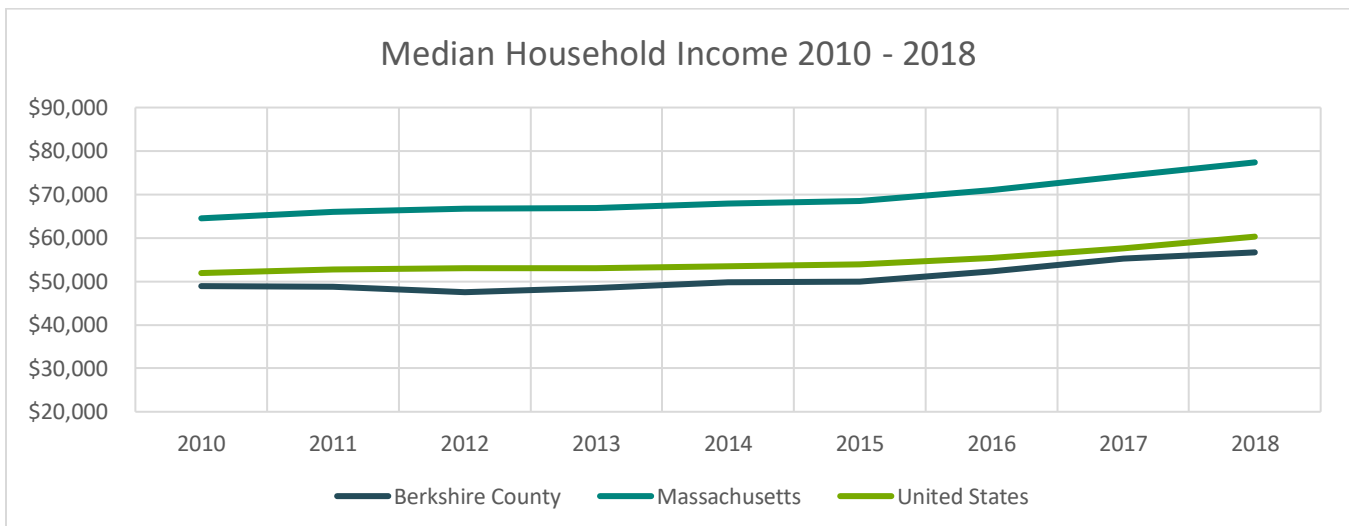


Figure 3. Berkshire County Median Household Income. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014-2018)

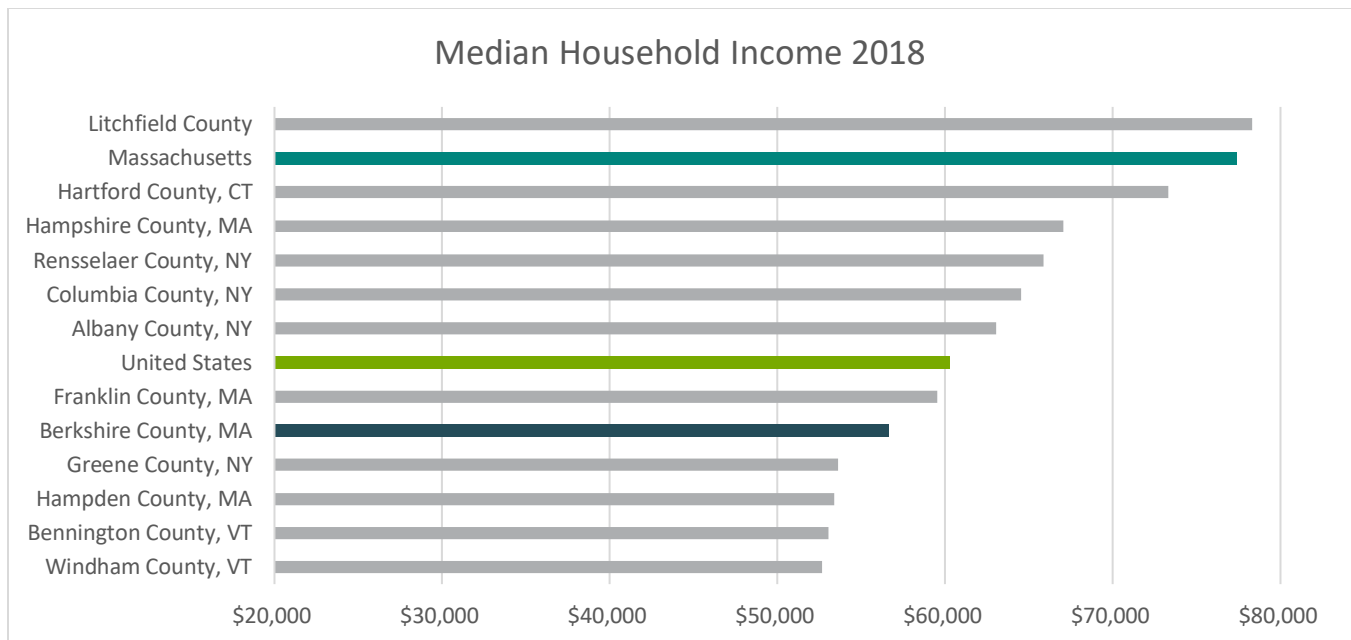


Figure 4. Median Household Income in US, MA, Berkshire County and Neighboring Counties. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014-2018)

Between 2010 and 2018, the average annual growth rate of median household income in Berkshire County was 1.86%. This was slightly lower than the national rate of 1.89% and lower than the statewide rate of 2.30%.

In this respect, Berkshire County also fared better than many neighboring counties, with only Hartford County in Connecticut and Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer counties in New York having higher growth rates over the same period. See Figure 5.

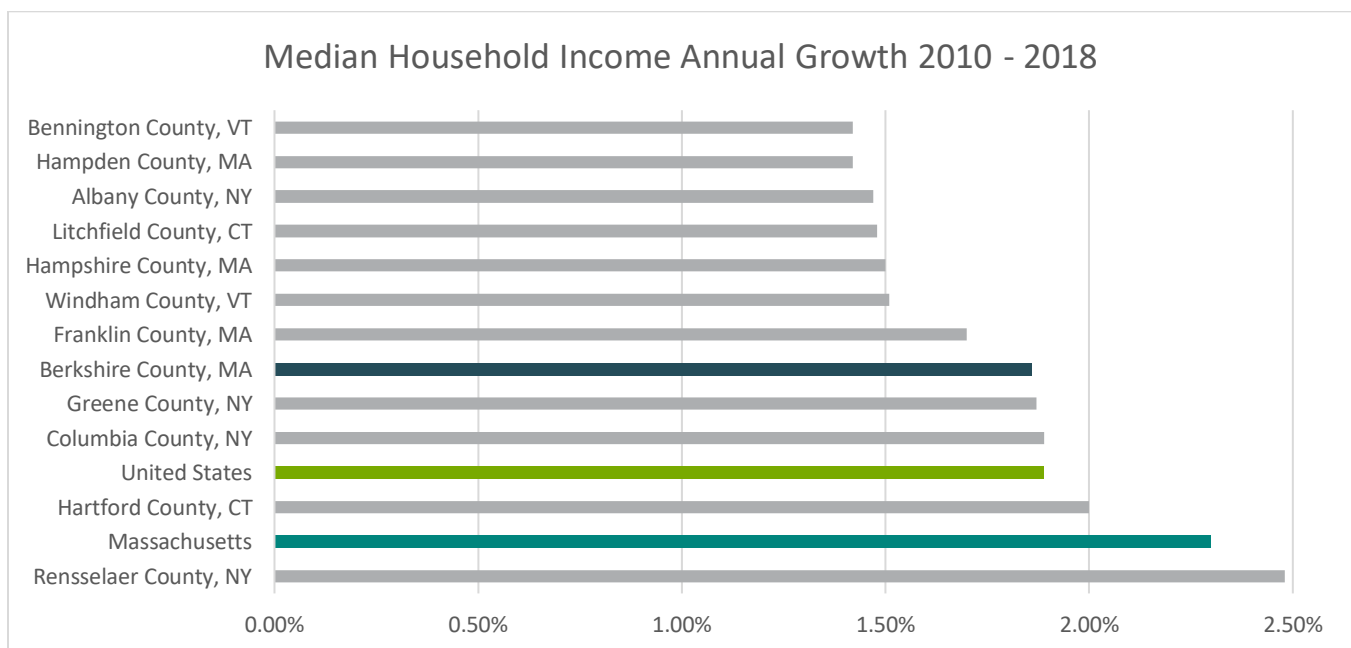


Figure 5. Median Household Income Average Annual Growth Rate in US, MA, Berkshire County and Neighboring Counties. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014-2018)

### Per Capita Income

The per capita income for Berkshire County in 2018 was \$34,287. This was a \$1,042, or 3.13% increase over 2017 levels of \$33,245. Per capita income in Berkshire County was \$456, or 1.33%, higher than that of the United States, but \$9,062, or 23.34%, lower than that of Massachusetts as a whole. These figures represented a widening in the gap between county and state per capita income since 2017, and a narrowing of the gap between

county and national per capita income over the same period. *See Figure 6.* The per capita income for Berkshire County was higher than that of slightly more than half of the surrounding counties, with Albany and Columbia counties in New York, and counties in northwestern Connecticut having higher per capita incomes than Berkshire County. *See Figure 7.*

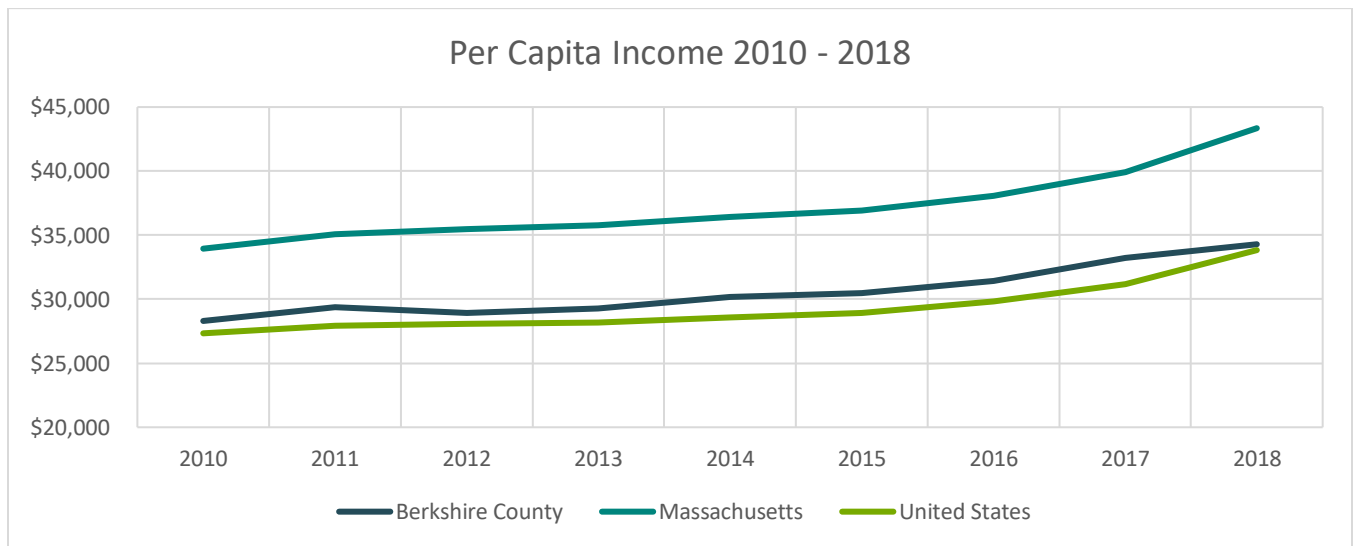


Figure 6. Per Capita Income 2010-2018. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014–2018)

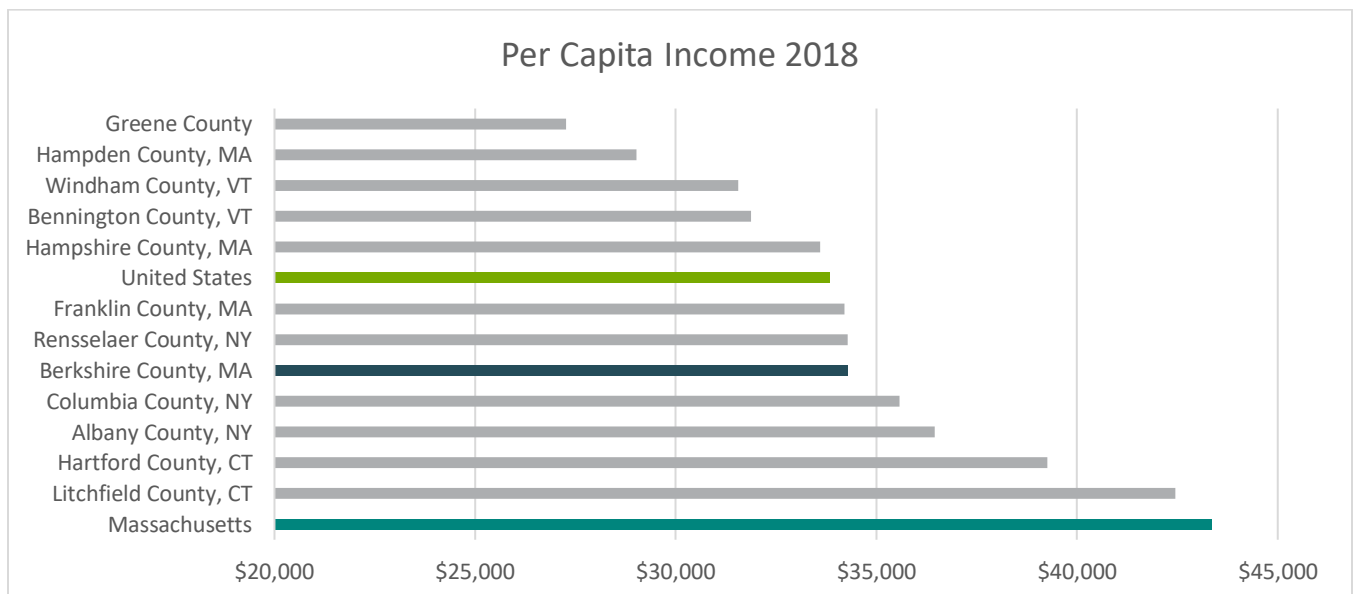


Figure 7. Per Capita Income in US, MA, Berkshire County and Neighboring Counties, 2018. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014–2018)

Between 2010 and 2018, the average annual growth rate of per capita income in Berkshire County was 2.43%. This was lower than the national rate of 2.70% and lower than the statewide rate of 3.10%. However, per capita

income growth in Berkshire County outpaced almost every neighboring county, with only Franklin County in Massachusetts and Rensselaer County in New York having higher growth rates over the same period. *See Figure 8.*

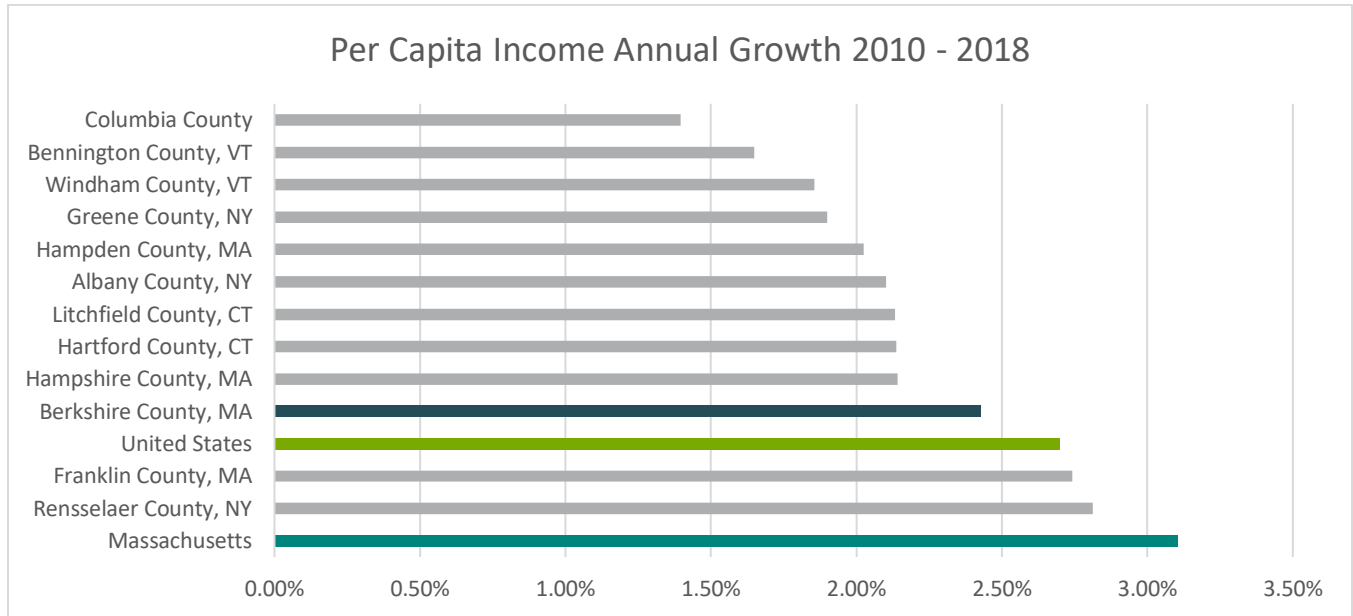


Figure 8. US, MA, Berkshire County and Neighboring Counties – Per Capita Income Average Annual Growth Rate 2010-2018. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014–2018)

### Labor Force Age Distribution

The labor force in Berkshire County continued to trend older than that of Massachusetts and the United States as a whole. In 2018, 15.2% of the labor force was between the ages of 16 and 24, 33.4% between 24 and 44, 42.2% between 45 and 64, and 9.1% over 65. This compares with corresponding shares of 14.1%, 40.9%, 38.8%, and 6.2% for Massachusetts and 14.2%, 43.2%, 37.4%, and 5.3% for the United States.

Additionally, the Berkshire County workforce has grown older in recent years, with the 25 – 44 and 45–64 age cohorts comprising a smaller portion of the labor force and the over-65 age cohort comprising a larger portion between 2010 and 2018. However, this trend was reversed for the youngest cohort, with the portion of the labor force composed of 16 to 24-year-olds increasing from 13.5% to 15.2% over the same time frame. See Table 1.

**TABLE 1: United States, Massachusetts, Berkshire County  
Labor Force Age Cohorts 2010 - 2018**

<b>Berkshire County</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
16 – 24	13.5%	13.6%	15.2%
25 – 44	36.7%	34.8%	33.4%
45 – 64	43.9%	44.4%	42.2%
Over 65	5.9%	7.2%	9.1%
<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
16 – 24	14.5%	14.3%	14.1%
25 – 44	42.3%	40.8%	40.9%
45 – 64	38.8%	39.6%	38.8%
Over 65	4.4%	5.2%	6.2%
<b>United States</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
16 – 24	15.1%	14.4%	14.2%
25 – 44	43.9%	43.0%	43.2%
45 – 64	37.2%	38.0%	37.4%
Over 65	3.9%	4.5%	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014-2018)

### Key Industry Sectors by Employment and Average Weekly Wages

The Berkshire County industries with the highest average monthly employment in 2019 were Healthcare and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Educational Services, and Accommodation and Food Services.

Together, these four industries employed 35,180 people and accounted for more than half of 58,533 people employed across all industries in the region. However, these four industries all had average weekly wages below the median average weekly wage for all industries of \$1,003. Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services had

among the lowest average weekly wages, far below the average and median weekly wage for all industries. *See Table 2.*

The four industries with the highest average weekly wages in 2019 were Utilities, Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, and Manufacturing, with average weekly wages ranging from \$1,856 to \$1,242, respectively. Together these industries employed an average of 8,866 people per month, approximately 15% of the County total. *See Table 3.*

**TABLE 2: Top Industries by Average Monthly Employment in Berkshire County, 2019**

Top Industries (Average Monthly Employment)	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Rank in Average Weekly Wage
NAICS 62 Healthcare and Social Assistance	12,878	\$986	11/19
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	7,582	\$607	16/19
NAICS 61 Educational Services	7,551	\$1,003	10/19
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	7,169	\$460	19/19

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**TABLE 3: Top Industries by Average Weekly Wages in Berkshire County, 2019**

Top Industries (Average Weekly Wages)	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wage
NAICS 22 Utilities	286	\$1,846
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	1,790	\$1,652
NAICS 54 Professional and Technical Services	2,787	\$1,553
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	4,003	\$1,242

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**Average Annual Pay by Industry**

Berkshire County workers on average earned significantly less per year relative to workers in other areas. For every single industry sector, the average annual pay per employee was less in Berkshire County than it was in Massachusetts as a whole. This relationship mostly held when Berkshire County was compared to the United States as a whole, with the only exceptions being Accommodations and Food Services, where Berkshire County employees made more than their

national counterparts, and Educational Services, where earnings are approximately equal. *See Table 4.* Thus, not only was regional employment concentrated in those sectors with comparatively lower weekly earnings, but Berkshire County employees commanded lower wages on average than those in other parts of the state and nation. Taken together, these factors contributed to Berkshire County's relatively low median household income.

**TABLE 4: Average Annual Pay by NAICS Sector: Berkshire County, MA, and US, 2019**

NAICS Sector	Average Annual Pay Berkshire County	Average Annual Pay Massachusetts	Average Annual Pay United States
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	\$31,367	\$62,570	\$37,301
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$61,129	\$75,933	\$107,956
NAICS 22 Utilities	\$95,975	\$121,839	\$101,798
NAICS 23 Construction	\$58,951	\$81,024	\$64,597
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	\$64,585	\$89,712	\$69,984
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	\$63,876	\$102,158	\$80,191
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	\$31,665	\$36,941	\$33,605
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing	\$41,507	\$57,518	\$55,867
NAICS 51 Information	\$62,352	\$122,521	\$115,639
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	\$85,911	\$165,821	\$112,531
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	\$49,877	\$83,093	\$61,143
NAICS 54 Professional and technical services	\$80,770	\$140,869	\$100,520

NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	\$56,952	\$138,999	\$126,326
NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services	\$42,690	\$52,898	\$43,095
NAICS 61 Educational services	\$52,176	\$65,508	\$52,443
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	\$51,287	\$57,919	\$53,021
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	\$29,121	\$41,567	\$39,185
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	\$23,925	\$26,895	\$22,616
NAICS 81 Other services, except public administration	\$31,672	\$40,500	\$40,009

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

### Industrial Concentration

Industrial concentration may be indicated using a location quotient, which computes how much more or less concentrated a particular industry is in one region compared to the nation when measured by the number of establishments, employment, or total wages. An LQ greater than 1.0 implies higher concentration relative to the nation, whereas an LQ below 1.0 indicates the opposite. Location Quotients over 1.0 bear review and can reveal unique aspects of a regional economy. According to this metric, Berkshire

County demonstrates high levels of establishment, employment, and wage concentration in Health Care and Social Assistance, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, Educational Services, and Accommodation and Food Services. The outsize role these industries play in Berkshire County's economy may in part be attributed to the region's reputation as a tourist destination and its aging population. Conversely, Berkshire County displays the least concentration in Management, Mining, Wholesale Trade, and Agriculture. *See Table 5.*



TABLE 5: Berkshire County vs. US NAICS Sector Location Quotients, 2019

NAICS Sector	Establishment LQ	Employment LQ	Wages LQ
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0.53	0.47	0.48
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.36	0.23	0.16
NAICS 22 Utilities	1.07	0.85	0.98
NAICS 23 Construction	1.26	1.03	1.15
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	0.84	0.75	0.85
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	0.33	0.50	0.49
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	1.10	1.16	1.34
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing	0.61	0.44	0.40
NAICS 51 Information	0.93	0.91	0.60
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	0.63	0.71	0.66
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	0.57	0.60	0.60
NAICS 54 Professional and technical services	0.60	0.69	0.68
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	0.34	0.26	0.14
NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services	0.89	0.60	0.73
NAICS 61 Educational services	0.99	1.42	1.73
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	1.71	1.39	1.65
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.46	1.68	1.53
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	1.26	1.22	1.58
NAICS 81 Other services, except public administration	0.87	1.16	1.13

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

## Regional Economic Resilience

Berkshire County continues to transition to an economy with a more diverse mix of small- to medium-sized firms and fewer large employers dominating the employment landscape. This diversity is encouraged by economic development practitioners in the region, with a focus on “home-grown” firms putting down roots in the county and connecting with a local workforce. In addition to finding and retaining qualified employees, energy costs, transportation, and broadband access remain priorities for employers. Both the Workforce Blueprint and Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 will guide regional practitioners in their next steps toward improved resilience, with Berkshire Benchmarks serving as a valuable measurement tool to track economic and other indicators of the overall wellbeing of the region and its inhabitants.

During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, Berkshire County economic development entities

have focused on immediate emergency response to individuals and families as well as short-term funding measures to prevent or slow down firm closures and layoffs, and have begun to look at longer-term measures to ensure increased resiliency to this type of economic disruption in the future. An application by BRPC to EDA submitted in June of 2020 requests funding to assist in this long-term resiliency planning and technical assistance to area businesses and municipalities. The proposed project incorporates Berkshire County’s state-designated Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) 1Berkshire in program delivery.

Further information on COVID-19 impacts in Berkshire County may be found in **Appendix F: COVID-19 Addendum – Economic Impact** through September 2020.

## Areas Meeting EDA Economic Distress Criteria

### Unemployment – 13 CFR 301.3(a)(i)

As of the most recently available data, six (6) municipalities in Berkshire County (Adams, Becket, Hinsdale, Lenox, North Adams and Pittsfield) have a 24-month average unemployment rate at least one (1) percentage point greater than the national 24-month average of 5.5%. Please see Appendix “A” for more information.

### Per Capita Income – 13 CFR 301.3(a)(ii)

As of the most recently available data, eight (8) census tracts in Berkshire County have a per capita income that is eighty (80) percent or less of the national average. Four (4) of these tracts are located in the City of Pittsfield and four (4) in the City of North Adams. Census tract 9213.00 in the City of North Adams had briefly become ineligible under this criterion at the time of the 2019 CEDS Update but is now eligible again. Please see Appendix “B” for additional information.

### Economic Distress Criteria Map

Please see Appendix “C” for a map of the eligible areas.

# Section 3: Goals & Objectives

## Performance Report

The 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS sets forth six goals and objectives for the region. This section highlights the activities undertaken over the last 12 months to help the region meet these goals and objectives.

### Goal # 1: Talent & Workforce

To stabilize and strengthen the region's workforce in order to meet the evolving needs of employers in the region.

#### Representative Activities:

- ✓ 1Berkshire continues to host "the jobs thing", the first Berkshire County exclusive jobs portal which only hosts positions that are permanent, full-time and pay \$40,000+ a year. Since its launch in July 2018 it has seen over 185,000 site visits, more than 58,000 unique users, and over 3,500,000 digital impressions.
- ✓ As part of the Berkshire Workforce Blueprint, during FY20, training grants were secured in each of its critical industries:
  - The Berkshire Workforce Board secured \$176,000 to train 55 un/underemployed residents in entry-level manufacturing. Training was provided by McCann Tech and Berkshire Community College. The job placement rate is 73%.
  - Berkshire Community College secured \$125,000 to train 62 residents in hospitality and culinary arts.
  - Berkshire Workforce Board secured \$225,000 in a healthcare grant to train 70 nursing assistants and established on-line training and day-time training programs.
- ✓ The MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board (BWB) issued an annual Berkshire Workforce Blueprint which identifies the region's critical (largest number of people employed) and emerging (signs of growth) industries.
- ✓ BWB leveraged \$2M which assisted 3,022 people and 524 companies with their workforce needs during FY20.
- ✓ BWB worked with all public middle and high schools and leveraged \$210,000 to connect K-12 youth with career readiness and career exploration activities. More than 2,500 students participated in activities and 384 in high school internships.
- ✓ Workforce pipeline expansion established at Monument Mountain Regional High School in manufacturing & healthcare; MCLA expanded their Health Sciences offerings; BCC has added a Community Health Worker certificate program, and the Berkshire Innovation Center has established new technology and manufacturing training opportunities.

- ✓ The Berkshire Business Interns program, developed by Lever, Inc. in partnership with the Berkshire United Way and the BWB, placed 45 interns during the summer of 2019 at 18 leading Berkshire organizations, in full-time, 10-week, paid internship positions. During the summer of 2020, they provided virtual internship opportunities.
- ✓ The MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board facilitated the Workforce Skills Cabinet consisting of economic, workforce and education partners which generated assets, opportunities and initiatives, as well as creating strategic benchmarks for further development within the regional workforce landscape.
- ✓ More than \$200K was provided in capital skills grants to improve equipment and infrastructures within our educational programs.
- ✓ During March 1 – June 30, 2020 and in response to COVID19, the workforce system assisted 1,700 job seekers and 350 employers with their immediate workforce needs and generated 10,000 unemployment claims.
- ✓ The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires (NPC) provides professional development for nonprofit staff in Berkshire County. It hosts a List Serve where anyone can post nonprofit job opportunities. Peer support meetings for Executive Directors are held every other week via Zoom. The NPC coordinates consultants to teach workshops or hold “office hours,” often resulting in paid gigs. A Business-to-Nonprofit Resource Fair was cancelled due to COVID-19. Additionally, the NPC promotes volunteerism as a healthy community initiative and potential precursor to employment. This is done via an annual publication called the Giving Back guide, a new web site called GiveBackBerkshires.org, and volunteer fairs.
- ✓ 1Berkshire, in partnership with the Berkshire Immigrant Center has launched an Immigrant Business Support program that will provide targeted support for immigrant owned and operated businesses around the Berkshires.

## Goal # 2: Entrepreneurship & Innovation

To create a diverse and robust business and entrepreneurial environment that encourages innovation and drives economic growth and opportunity.

### Representative Activities:

- ✓ Thanks to the support of the Mass Life Science Center, the City of Pittsfield, the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority, and private industry partners, the Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC) held its grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for its brand new 22,500 SF building on February 28, 2020. The BIC offers world-class R&D facilities and equipment, interactive training and conferencing facilities, and shared access to advanced technology for local small and medium sized manufacturing companies. The BIC brings together industry, higher education, and vocational training, and provides hi-tech classrooms, labs, and equipment. It also serves as home to a handful of member tenants, including young companies seeking to grow.
- ✓ The Schumacher Center for New Economics facilitates an Entry to Entrepreneurship program, an entry-level business planning course taught by members of the Berkshire business community that is focused on fostering community entrepreneurship.

- ✓ In 2019, 1Berkshire and MCLA co-presented a Business Boot Camp for entrepreneurs in the idea stage of a new business.
- ✓ In 2019, 1Berkshire conducted a Get Mentored series, pairing entrepreneurs with mentors suitable for a variety of business launch stages.
- ✓ 1Berkshire continues to hold monthly entrepreneurial meetups. These networking occasions are now conducted virtually due to COVID-19, which has allowed for individuals from outside the region to more regularly attend and participate as they seek opportunities to relocate and grow into the Berkshires.
- ✓ Lever conducted entrepreneur challenges in the manufacturing, health technology, and clean energy. In this competitive format, four entrepreneurs compete for \$25,000 in seed funding and extensive mentoring from Lever staff and affiliates.
- ✓ In Fall 2019, a group of organizations launched EforAll Berkshire County which offers mentorship, accelerator support, education workshops, pitch competitions and supportive programming for startups, entrepreneurs, and existing small businesses across the region.
- ✓ The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network office in Berkshire County served 301 unique small business clients, helped 12 startup businesses open their doors, and assisted in the creation or retention of over 385 jobs. It also worked to put the capital infusion of \$3,602,524 into the hands of local small business owners.
- ✓ The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires (NPC) is now serving as a fiscal sponsor to new nonprofit organizations. NPC continues to host statewide organizations that want to offer services to the Berkshires region including Mass Service Alliance, MA Nonprofit Network, and Philanthropy MA. NPC partners with various businesses and consultants to reach their network of nonprofits with news of services and products, and recently partnered with the HomeWorks division of MA Saves to promote virtual energy assessments.

## Goal # 3: Infrastructure, Site Readiness & Transportation

To invest in infrastructure and site improvements that support or facilitate economic growth in appropriate areas.

### Representative Activities:

- ✓ The Berkshire Brownfields Program continues to operate an Environmental Protection Agency funded brownfields assessment program and revolving loan fund to facilitate the assessment and cleanup of contaminated sites.
- ✓ 1Berkshire launched the beta version of their Site Selector tool. This interface allows for realtors and property managers to post commercial properties and development opportunities for free on a site targeted toward those seeking investment opportunities. Since launch, the Site Selector has hosted over 30 regional properties to help promote them to investors and developers.
- ✓ The Berkshire Flyer Pilot, a weekend passenger rail service connecting New York City and the Berkshires, is proposed to run between Memorial Day and Columbus Day in 2021. Funding has previously been secured through legislative appropriation to support the pilot, deemed economically viable and beneficial by the Berkshire Flyer initiative studies.

- ✓ Since June 2018, State and local stakeholders have been engaged in the East-West Passenger Rail Study, which is evaluating six alternatives for providing rail service between Pittsfield and Boston. These alternatives range from retooling existing freight and passenger rail for as low as \$27.4M to constructing a new high-speed rail corridor along I-90 for \$24.9B.
- ✓ Former Massachusetts State Senate President Stanley Rosenberg in 2019 proposed that MassDOT, in addition to the East-West Rail Study, conduct a Northern Tier Rail Study, with the goal of extending existing passenger rail service from Fitchburg to North Adams.
- ✓ MassDOT expended \$5.7 million on resurfacing the Ashuwilliticook Rail Trail from the Pittsfield town line to the Adams visitor center.
- ✓ MassDOT invested \$3.9 million for a bridge replacement on Berkshire School Road in Sheffield over Schenob Brook.
- ✓ MassDOT completed the Narragansett Avenue bridge replacement project over Pontoosuc Lake in Lanesborough at a cost of \$7.6 million.
- ✓ MassDOT completed a replacement bridge project in Pittsfield over the West Housatonic River at a cost of \$2.7 million. The 2017 5-year ACS indicates that 78.2% of homes are considered to have broadband access, an increase of over 8% since the 2016 5-year estimates.

## Goal # 4: Collaboration

To increase regional and inter-regional collaboration to better leverage economic development opportunities.

### Representative Activities:

- ✓ Berkshire Regional Planning Commission continues to operate a data clearinghouse and indicators website (Berkshire Benchmarks) focused on improving the quality, volume and access to information and statistics for the Berkshire region. Substantial expansions and improvements are planned for FY21.
- ✓ 1Berkshire continues to host the Economic Development Practitioners Group meetings in an effort to create collaborative and cooperative opportunities for programs and initiatives around economic development in the region. This group meets quarterly and includes a cross section of economic development stakeholders both regionally and at the state level.
- ✓ The Berkshire Compact is a continuing regional collaboration. The Compact is a group of regional civic, education and business leaders who seek to ensure the well-being of each individual and the strength of our economy and community by raising the educational access, aspirations and attainment, as life-long learners, of Berkshire County residents.
- ✓ A partnership between MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board and Berkshire United Way allowed a Berkshire Recruiter to assist 155 job seekers, with 70% finding employment. BWB also convened with 150 businesses and established bi-monthly human resource networking meetings which assists 46 companies with their recruitment and retention needs. Additional resources for provided by Berkshire Taconic Foundation to expand career readiness in southern Berkshire.

- ✓ The Berkshire Leadership Impact Council serves as a countywide collaborative representative of major employers, key organizations, sectors, and initiatives from throughout the region. It serves as a resource, facilitator, connector, convener and guide to advance opportunities and align efforts pertaining to economic development, quality education, workforce development and promotion of the Berkshires as a great place to live, work and play.
- ✓ The Berkshire Municipal Managers Association (BMMA), which includes every town administrator in Berkshire County and is currently led by Robert Graves, Town Administrator of Hinsdale, meets monthly to share best practices and explore shared services.

## Goal # 5: Industry & Occupational Clusters

To support and expand the region's industry and occupational clusters.

### Representative Activities:

- ✓ 1Berkshire publicly launched the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 in February of 2019. This updated strategic imperative for economic growth is a guiding, action-oriented document focused on the five top industry clusters, and the cross-cutting issues of importance that face the regional economy. This effort updates and expands upon the original Berkshire Blueprint issued in 2008, and brings a new level of facilitation, tracking, and reporting to the regional economic development activities going forward into the implementation phase.
- ✓ 1Berkshire has undertaken the development of a COVID-19 addendum to the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0. This addendum provides an updated lens for the Blueprint to pivot and maintain a vital scaffolding to our economic development, resilience, and rebound across the Berkshires.
- ✓ A database of regional investments is being maintained by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. This database catalogs priority projects identified in the Berkshire County CEDS, along with similar and emerging projects that may be incorporated into future CEDS. The database now contains over 360 entries.
- ✓ The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires is now holding Legislative Town Halls for the nonprofit sector and taking on more advocacy working with MNN, writing OP EDs, etc.
- ✓ The Berkshire Skills Cabinet continues to prioritize Healthcare/Social Assistance, Advance Manufacturing, and Hospitality/Management, and has added an emphasis on vocational trades. The 2020 Workforce Blueprint update includes expanded training in manufacturing (47 trained & 12 on-the-job training) and hospitality (38 trained) and a new pathway for healthcare/social assistance; expanded career readiness into all middle and high schools (2,800 students) and additional post-secondary pathway offerings, more than \$1.2M in industry specific capital investments, and assisting 200 job seekers find employment in these sectors. The region's immediate impact from COVID was a 8% drop in manufacturing, 51% drop in hospitality, and 15% drop in healthcare/social assistance, and now there are 1,600 job openings with all partners rallying to bridge the employment gap.
- ✓ Lever's COVID-19 Intrapreneur Challenge employs a competitive format to activate, connect and focus Massachusetts companies as they pivot production capabilities to meet the emerging demands of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Goal # 6: Economic Resiliency

To support the resiliency of individual businesses and the regional economy during future economic disruptions.

### Representative Activities:

- ✓ The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network (MSBDC) continues to serve as a mandated response agent along with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to support small business needs and help provide express access to loan funds released by the US Treasury in any state declared or nationally declared disaster. During the current pandemic, the Berkshire Office worked closely with the SBA and other partners in accessing relief funds available through the CARES Act. In a four-month period alone, the Berkshire Office assisted about 40 small businesses receive \$3.1 million in PPP and EIDL funds.
- ✓ 1Berkshire has launched a series of Virtual Town Halls. These targeted panel discussions provide a candid platform for individuals and agencies across the region to learn about responses and updates in relation to COVID-19.
- ✓ 1Berkshire launched a COVID-19 Response Portal on their website. This platform promotes resources and opportunities for individuals and businesses to take advantage of to sustain, persist, and rebound through and following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Lever, Inc. provides mentorship and access to expert advisors on topics such as market diversification and capitalization strategies.
- ✓ Investment in developing the Outdoor Recreation economy of the Berkshires continues on a number of fronts, including at Greylock Glen in Adams, Springside Park in Pittsfield, and Hanging Mountain in Sandisfield, through the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership and the "High Road" initiative of Berkshire Natural Resources Council, and throughout the region with multiple recent investments made by Mill Town Capital in outdoor recreation facilities. In 2019/2020, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission completed an Outdoor Recreation Plan for Berkshire County, which includes an inventory of assets and recommendations for a wide range of outdoor recreation activities.



## Section 4: Priority Projects & Status Report

One of the EDA requirements for a CEDS is, “A section identifying and prioritizing vital projects, programs and activities that address the region’s greatest needs or that will best enhance the region’s competitiveness, including sources of funding for past and potential future investments (13 CFR §303.7). The Berkshire County Project Priority list was prepared to meet that requirement. It is an inventory of regional economic development proposals submitted for consideration by citizens, communities, and organizations located throughout the region, including proposals submitted by CEDS Strategy Committee members. These proposals represent economic development initiatives, programs, and projects, that if implemented would help diversify, stabilize, and strengthen the region’s economy.

This section contains the 2020 Priority Project List for the Berkshire region. Updates for each Priority Project are provided in the appendix. Recognizing there are a number of ways specific projects could be viewed regarding regional significance, the prioritized projects were first grouped on a region wide basis and then, in the case of Physical Development, by subregion.

### *Projects Representing the Greatest Needs Regionally*

- Broadband for All
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Brownfields Program
- Connecting Activities High School Internship Program
- Berkshire Compact for Education & Berkshire County STEM Pipeline Network
- Berkshire Innovation Center at William Stanley Business Park
- Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 Implementation\*

### *Projects that Enhance the Region: Programs, Initiatives, Studies, Education, Other*

- Adaptive Reuse of Mills
- Adaptive reuse of “Great Estate” properties
- Creative Economy Initiatives
- Berkshire Hills Internship Program
- Growing the Future Food Economy of the Berkshires\*

### *Projects that Enhance the Region: Physical Development*

#### **North Sub-Region**

- Greylock Glen (Adams)
- Greylock Works (North Adams)
- Memorial School Redevelopment (Adams)
- Spinning Mill Redevelopment (Adams)\*
- Blackinton Infrastructure (North Adams)\*

#### **Central Sub-Region**

- Berkshire Mall Reuse (Lanesborough)
- Crane Stationery Mill Redevelopment (Dalton)
- Columbus Ave/Summer St. Garage (Pittsfield)\*
- North Mountain Park (Dalton)\*
- Police Station (Pittsfield)\*

- YMCA Renovation (Pittsfield)\*
- Tyler Street Streetscape (Pittsfield)\*
- Springside House Restoration (Pittsfield)\*
- Wright Building Renovation (Pittsfield)\*
- White Terrace Renovation (Pittsfield)\*
- 765 Tyler St. (Pittsfield)\*

#### South Sub-Region

- Element by Westin (Lenox)
- Elm Court – Front Yard/Travaasa (Stockbridge/Lenox)
- Redevelopment of Great Barrington Fairgrounds (Great Barrington)
- Housatonic School Redevelopment (Housatonic Village (Great Barrington))
- Monument Mills Area Reuse (Housatonic Village (Great Barrington))
- Niagara Mill (Lee)
- New England Log Homes (Great Barrington)
- River School Redevelopment (Great Barrington)
- Spring Lawn (Lenox)
- Columbia Mill Redevelopment (Lee)\*
- Eagle Mill Redevelopment (Lee)\*
- Greylock Mill Redevelopment (Lee)\*

\*indicates a project added to the Priority list in 2019

## Annual Priority Project Updates – 2020

Please see Appendix “D” for the annual updates to the Priority Projects.

As noted in the 2017-2022 Berkshire County CEDS, this list is part of an ongoing process of identifying and tracking regionally significant economic development proposals. In maintaining this list, the CEDS Committee stresses that annual review and update is an important way to continue identifying, refining, and improving the prioritization of projects in Berkshire County.

# Appendix A

## 24 Month Local Area Unemployment Statistics

**TABLE 6: Economic Distress Criteria – Primary Elements**

	Region	United States	Threshold Calculation
24-Month Average Unemployment Rate	6.3%	5.5%	0.8

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, data through September 2020

**TABLE 7: Economic Distress Criteria – Geographic Components**

Municipality	24-Month Average Unemployment Rate	Threshold Calculation
Adams	7.0%	1.5
Alford	2.6%	-2.9
Becket	6.6%	1.1
Cheshire	6.0%	0.5
Clarksburg	6.0%	0.5
Dalton	5.7%	0.2
Egremont	2.9%	-2.6
Florida	4.8%	-0.7
Great Barrington	5.9%	0.4
Hancock	3.7%	-1.8
Hinsdale	7.4%	1.9
Lanesborough	5.4%	-0.1
Lee	6.0%	0.5

<b>Lenox</b>	7.0%	1.5
Monterey	4.8%	-0.7
Mount Washington	4.4%	-1.1
New Ashford	5.6%	0.1
New Marlborough	4.9%	-0.6
<b>North Adams</b>	7.3%	1.8
Otis	5.0%	-0.5
Peru	5.0%	-0.5
<b>Pittsfield</b>	7.2%	1.7
Richmond	4.2%	-1.3
Sandisfield	4.3%	-1.2
Savoy	6.2%	0.7
Sheffield	4.6%	-0.9
Stockbridge	4.4%	-1.1
Tyringham	3.8%	-1.7
Washington	5.3%	-0.2
West Stockbridge	4.8%	-0.7
Williamstown	4.0%	-1.5
Windsor	4.7%	-0.8

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, data through September 2020

# Appendix B

## Per Capita Income Statistics, Most Recent ACS 5-Year Estimates

**TABLE 8: Economic Distress Criteria – Primary Elements**

	Region	United States	Threshold Calculation
2018 Per Capita Income 5-Year ACS	\$34,287	\$32,621	105.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014–2018)

**TABLE 9: Economic Distress Criteria – Geographic Components**

Census Tract	PCMI 2018 ACS	Threshold Calculation	Geographic Area
Tract 9001.00 Berkshire, MA	\$20,609	63.2%	Pittsfield
Tract 9002.00 Berkshire, MA	\$20,936	64.2%	Pittsfield
Tract 9003.00 Berkshire, MA	\$29,149	89.4%	Pittsfield
Tract 9004.00 Berkshire, MA	\$24,175	74.1%	Pittsfield
Tract 9005.00 Berkshire, MA	\$41,805	128.2%	Pittsfield
Tract 9006.00 Berkshire, MA	\$18,911	57.9%	Pittsfield
Tract 9007.00 Berkshire, MA	\$30,960	94.9%	Pittsfield
Tract 9008.00 Berkshire, MA	\$44,413	136.1%	Pittsfield
Tract 9009.00 Berkshire, MA	\$33,243	101.9%	Pittsfield
Tract 9011.00 Berkshire, MA	\$33,423	102.5%	Pittsfield
Tract 9111.00 Berkshire, MA	\$36,508	111.9%	Lanesborough
Tract 9121.00 Berkshire, MA	\$38,571	118.2%	Dalton
Tract 9131.00 Berkshire, MA	\$46,829	143.6%	Lenox

Tract 9141.00 Berkshire, MA	\$33,006	101.2%	Lee
Tract 9201.01 Berkshire, MA	\$34,969	107.2%	Williamstown
Tract 9201.02 Berkshire, MA	\$34,576	106.0%	Williamstown
<b>Tract 9213.00 Berkshire, MA</b>	<b>\$26,037</b>	<b>79.8%</b>	<b>North Adams</b>
<b>Tract 9214.00 Berkshire, MA</b>	<b>\$23,749</b>	<b>72.8%</b>	<b>North Adams</b>
<b>Tract 9215.00 Berkshire, MA</b>	<b>\$24,300</b>	<b>74.5%</b>	<b>North Adams</b>
Tract 9221.00 Berkshire, MA	\$27,632	84.7%	Adams
Tract 9222.00 Berkshire, MA	\$31,070	95.2%	Adams
Tract 9223.00 Berkshire, MA	\$31,963	98.0%	Adams
Tract 9231.00 Berkshire, MA	\$34,974	107.2%	Cheshire
Tract 9241.00 Berkshire, MA	\$46,868	143.7%	Stockbridge
Tract 9251.00 Berkshire, MA	\$33,596	103.0%	Great Barrington
Tract 9261.00 Berkshire, MA	\$45,123	138.3%	Sheffield
Tract 9311.00 Berkshire, MA	\$31,039	95.2%	Clarksburg
Tract 9313.00 Berkshire, MA	\$30,204	92.6%	Florida/Savoy
Tract 9314.00 Berkshire, MA	\$41,445	127.1%	Peru/Windsor
Tract 9322.00 Berkshire, MA	\$40,909	125.4%	Becket/Washington
Tract 9323.00 Berkshire, MA	\$38,527	118.1%	Hinsdale
Tract 9332.00 Berkshire, MA	\$56,160	172.2%	Monterey/Tyringham
Tract 9333.00 Berkshire, MA	\$46,944	143.9%	New Marlborough
Tract 9334.00 Berkshire, MA	\$40,916	125.4%	Otis/Sandisfield
Tract 9342.00 Berkshire, MA	\$45,199	138.6%	West Stockbridge
Tract 9343.00 Berkshire, MA	\$52,258	160.2%	Alford/Egremont/Mt. Washington
Tract 9351.00 Berkshire, MA	\$54,521	167.1%	Hancock/New Ashford/Richmond

Tract 9352.00 Berkshire, MA	\$31,834	97.6%	Pittsfield
Tract 9353.00 Berkshire, MA	\$24,846	76.2%	North Adams

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2014–2018)

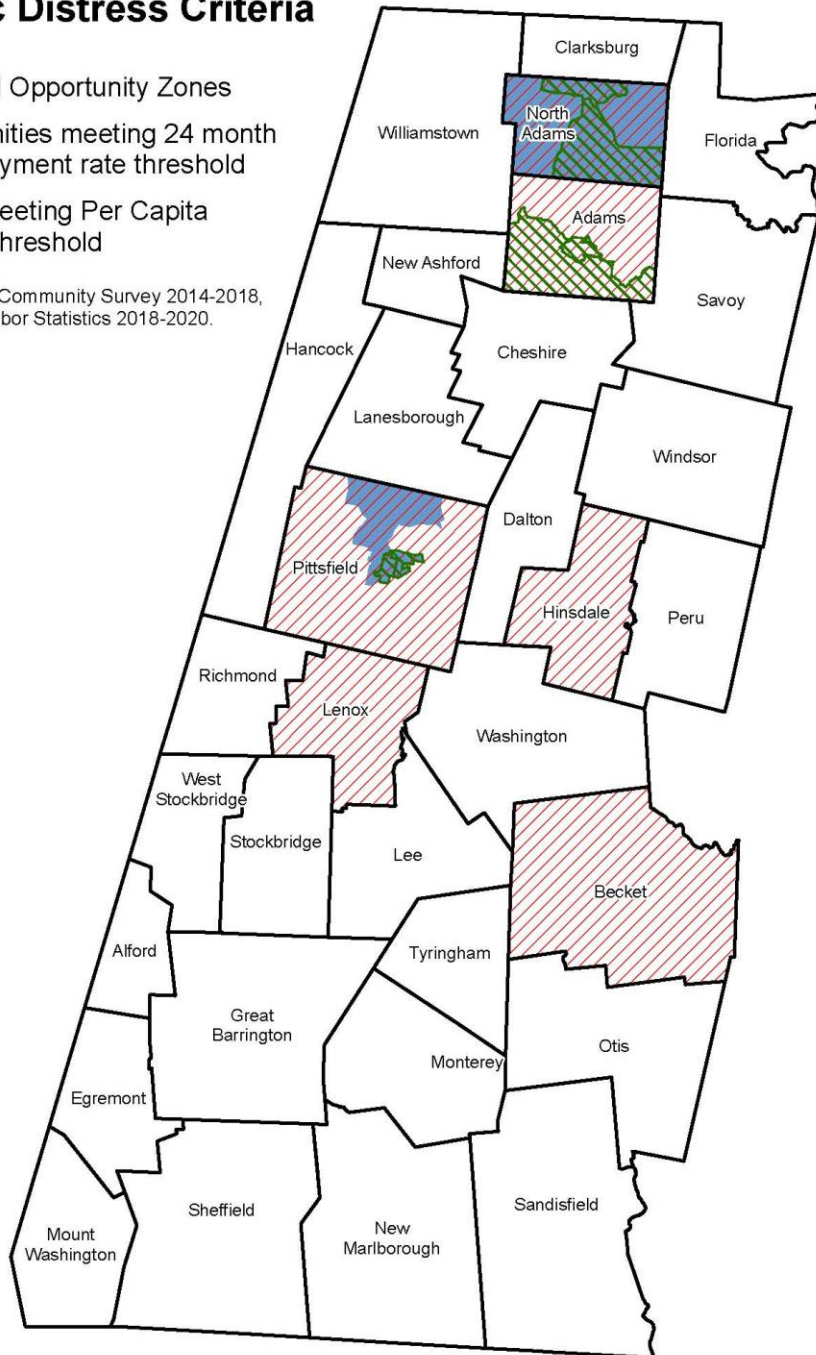
# Appendix C

## Economic Distress Criteria Map

### Economic Distress Criteria

-  Qualified Opportunity Zones
-  Communities meeting 24 month unemployment rate threshold
-  Tracts meeting Per Capita Income threshold

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018,  
Bureau of Labor Statistics 2018-2020.



October 7, 2020



# Appendix D

## 2020 Annual Priority Project Updates

### 2020 CEDS Priority Project List

*Note:* a “Special Designator” line has been added to each entry indicating if the project is tied to our regional priorities and/or is located in a Low Income Community or an Opportunity Zone.

#### Special Designator Legend:

Great Estate – *Adaptive Reuse of “Great Estates” Project*

Mill – *Adaptive Reuse of Mills Project*

Brownfield – *BRPC Brownfields Program Project*

Broadband – *Broadband for All Project*

LIC – *Low Income Community*

OZ – *Project located in a Federally-designated Opportunity Zone*

## Projects Representing the Greatest Needs Regionally

**Project Name:** Broadband for All

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** LIC, OZ (dependent upon municipality)

**Project Summary:** Berkshire County has long lagged behind the more urban areas of the state in terms of broadband internet access as the large size and low population density of the County makes the installation of high-speed internet infrastructure especially costly. The digital divide was partially addressed between 2011 and 2014 when the Massachusetts Broadband Institute constructed the *MassBroadband* 123 fiber-optic network providing many municipalities in central and western Massachusetts with broadband, but more than half of Berkshire County municipalities, especially those on the mountainous and less densely populated periphery of the County, remained without access. Since then, a new round of state funding combined with local initiatives either has provided or is soon to provide all Berkshire County municipalities with broadband access. Many have opted to construct their own municipally owned fiber-optic networks, which deliver speeds far above those provided by cable broadband, while others are installing wireless broadband networks where geography makes a wired network prohibitively expensive.

**Funding Source(s):** Public Investment, Massachusetts Broadband Institute and Municipal funds.

**Projected Job Creation:** none

**Related Linkages:** supports Goal 3 of 2017-2022 CEDS: Invest in Infrastructure.

**Timeframe:** Some municipalities still completing make-ready stage. 2020 County-wide completion at earliest.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Changes since 2019 CEDS Update: Underserved communities have continued to make progress towards obtaining internet service. Several communities have been working towards the “make-ready” stage of getting poles acceptable for broadband. Several other communities expect service in 2020, although COVID-19 has delayed drop installs to individual users. Some communities have opted for wireless internet service which does not meet FCC standards for broadband

service in many cases. Most municipalities expect to have some form of service by 2021. However, at least one community is not expected to have service until 2022. Those underserved communities are experiencing extreme hardship as K-12 education has moved to remote learning due to COVID-19. In April 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at MassTech (MBI) and KCST USA, the operator of the Commonwealth-owned *MassBroadband* 123 fiber optic network, launched public hotspots in several communities that lack high-speed internet connectivity, providing a 250 Megabit per second wireless hotspot, free of any monthly charge to towns or residents. This service will continue through December 2020. Several municipalities currently served by cable are exploring developing a municipal broadband to improve internet speeds.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by BRPC

**Project Name:** Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Brownfields Program

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** Brownfields; LIC, OZ (dependent upon site location)

**Project Summary:** Two-part assessment program and revolving loan fund (RLF) used to provide municipalities and developers with the resources to assess and cleanup brownfields sites. Through its assessment program, BRPC hires a licensed site professional to investigate potential contamination on sites. The RLF program provides flexible loans (and sub-grants) to municipalities and other entities to help pay for the removal of contamination. The purpose of this program is to promote the reuse and redevelopment of contaminated, vacant, or underutilized properties.

**Funding Source(s):** Public investment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**Projected Job Creation:** Indeterminate - job creation varies by site/project.

**Related Linkages:** Several of the most significant current and past property investments in Berkshire County have received funding through the Brownfields program. This includes other CEDS priority projects such as Greylock Works, Eagle Mill, and New England Log Homes.

**Timeframe:** Program is ongoing.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** 8 active sites currently receiving assessment work through the brownfields program; 3 active sites in north and south county are currently conducting remediation utilizing RLF funds (1 less than 2018); 6 communities have received Brownfields Assessment Grants and cleanup Grants from EPA as a direct result of BRPC's Brownfields Program:

- 18 active sites currently receiving assessment work via community assessment grants
- 1 active site undergoing remediation through community cleanup grant (Adams), and 1 site newly awarded (Great Barrington)

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by BRPC

**Project Name:** Connecting Activities High School Internship Program

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** none

**Project Summary:** Operated by the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board (formerly BCREB), Connecting activities, a statewide initiative, provides career readiness programming for all students in grades K-12. It places students in an array of career awareness, exploration and immersion programs and activities to develop essential workforce skills and facilitate post-secondary education readiness. The program annually connects around 350 - 400 high school students with internships and structured work experiences, 2,900

students with career awareness and exploration activities, and 50 educators with teacher externships and career-readiness oriented professional development opportunities. Approximately 40% of student interns are paid, contributing to regional income.

**Funding Source(s):** Public Investment, Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**Projected Job Creation:** Approximately 400 high school internships annually.

**Related Linkages:** This initiative supports education and workforce development.

**Timeframe:** Program is ongoing.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** 383 high school internships and/or work-based learning experiences during FY2020, of which 135 were STEM internships (104% of annual goal; 385 total internships in FY2019 and 33 fewer STEM internships); 2,965 students in grades K-12 participated in career awareness and exploration activities within 12 school districts provided by 104 employers during FY2020 (731 more activities and 45 fewer employers than FY2019, no change in number of school districts).

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by MassHire Berkshires

**Project Name:** Berkshire Compact for Education & Berkshire County STEM Pipeline

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** none

**Project Summary:** This initiative works to improve access to post-secondary education and raise the aspirations of all Berkshire County residents to pursue 16 or more years of education and/or training in a technical field, and strives to build connections between the needs of the workplace and the local education system by providing students with knowledge of college and career readiness. The Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 is now used as the framework for the program's design.

**Funding Source(s):** Guardian Life, Adams Community Bank, MCLA Foundation, and the MA Dept. of Higher Education.

**Projected Job Creation:** none

**Related Linkages:** These initiatives and programs seek to ready the workforce for Berkshire County in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. They also seek to create interest in these fields at a young age.

**Timeframe:** This program is fully operational and ongoing annually

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** In the past year approximately 900 eighth grade students participated in the Berkshire County Career Experience at MCLA, with financial support from Guardian. Students self-selected to participate in two intensive workshops conducted by career professionals from the region. Students could choose from over 20 different workshop options including: Education, the Arts, Medical/Health, Auto & Electrical, Environmental, Law, Engineering, and Finance. In April of 2019, 100 county tenth grade students participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Expo, where cohorts of students identified their potential future career interests and spent the morning experiencing those careers first-hand at participating businesses/organizations. The MCLA MBA program has graduated over 110 students since its inception in 2010. High School/College Dual Enrollment program continues to provide access for students from the county's four most disadvantaged schools with access to college level courses. A Summer Academy program for high school students was established in partnership with Adams Community Bank for students to earn college credit and learn more about the College Search Process.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by MCLA

**Project Name:** Berkshire Innovation Center at William Stanley Business Park

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designators:** LIC

**Project Summary:** Construction of the Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC), a combined R&D laboratory, training center, and collaboration/conference center, was completed in late 2019 and a Grand Opening event was held on February 28, 2020. The 23,000-square-foot BIC provides member companies and regional partners access to facilities and equipment such as a wet lab, a rapid prototyping and advanced manufacturing suite, conference, meeting, and event spaces, training classrooms, a simulation lab and recording / broadcasting space, and training classrooms.

**Funding Source(s):** Public investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 25

**Related Linkages:** Addresses goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 in the 2017-2022 CEDS.

**Timeframe:** Construction completed in late 2019.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Partnerships are in place with Berkshire Community College, MCLA, Williams College, UMass Institute for Applied Life Sciences, RPI, UMass Lowell, Taconic High School, McCann Technical School, Monument Mountain Regional High School, and the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center, as well as over 20 small and medium size existing and new businesses in the region.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by BIC

**Project Name:** Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 Implementation

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** region-wide

**Special Designators:** Blueprint 2.0 implementation is likely to include projects and initiatives that incorporate all of the special designators listed above.

**Project Summary:** The Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 is the product of nearly five years of intensive research, interviews, and planning. This work, coordinated by 1Berkshire, aimed to develop and launch a strategic imperative with the goal of sustained economic development across the region. Launched in February 2019, the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 utilizes a cluster-based model to functionally address the needs, and help to track and benchmark intentional work, in five central industrial clusters. These clusters, each facilitated by a partner Hub, include: Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Creative Economy, Food and Agriculture, Healthcare, and Hospitality and Tourism. Along with a set of cross-cutting themes that impact everyone across the region, the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 Advisory Committee, Cluster Hub leadership, and the team at 1Berkshire continue to provide resources, implementation support, and benchmarking to activate the goals and objectives of the Blueprint over time. By design, this implementation model will allow for additional clusters, refreshed cross-cutting themes, and an agile approach to provide sustained and high-impact economic development for the entirety of Berkshire County.

**Funding Source(s):** public/private partnerships, 1Berkshire Foundation

**Projected Job Creation:** 2

**Related Linkages:** Addresses goals 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 in the 2017-2022 CEDS.

**Timeframe:** ongoing

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Going into 2020, the Blueprint 2.0 Summit Briefing drew from the first Blueprint Advisory Committee Summit held in November 2019. This iterative process identified diversity and inclusion work in all levels of the Blueprint 2.0 implementation, workforce housing, technology infrastructure, employee supports, and business transition support as elements requiring additional focus

and assistance. As COVID-19 struck, the Blueprint 2.0 has also taken into account the impacts of the pandemic. Increased focus on supporting remote work environments, supporting equitable resource allocation for underrepresented-population-owned businesses, and elevating the optics of the outdoor recreation economy have all become key aspects. Going into Fall 2020, an update similar to the Summit Briefing will be developed that focuses on pivots and changes informed by COVID-19. Furthermore, the Blueprint will continue to adapt and embrace the region's needed incremental and significant changes going forward to ensure that the scaffolding the document describes remains relevant and is implemented for high impact across the Berkshires.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by 1Berkshire

## Projects that Enhance the Region

**Project Name:** Adaptive Reuse of Mills

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** Mill, Brownfields, LIC, OZ (all dependent on-site location)

**Project Summary:** Former industrial sites such as mills and factories are some of the largest developable lots in Berkshire County by land and building area, with some containing upwards of 200,000 square feet. Given the general lack of large plots suitable for development throughout the County, the redevelopment and reuse of these sites is crucial for the regional economy. The large size and often open floorplan of these buildings make them appropriate for many uses including housing, small office and retail space, manufacturing, restaurants and hotels, and large, service-based enterprises, as well as multi-use facilities that combine these applications. Additionally, these sites are among the most iconic and historic architectural features of Berkshire County municipalities and their redevelopment helps avoid blight and reinvigorate the surrounding the community. Some past, current, and planned future adaptive reuses include the redevelopment of Sprague Electric by Mass MoCA in North Adams, the Cariddi Mill by Greylock Works in North Adams, the Norad Mill in North Adams by Moresi and Associates, the former Schweitzer-Mauduit Mills in Lee and Lenox by various parties, and the Monument Mills in Great Barrington.

**Funding Source(s):** Sources vary per project, though many redevelopments combine both public and private investment.

**Projected Job Creation:** Indeterminate - job creation varies by site/project.

**Related Linkages:** Many of the mill redevelopment projects and proposed projects have ties to affordable and workforce housing initiatives, leisure and hospitality, and the increasing demand for shared workspace that specifically serves the creative economy cluster.

**Timeframe:** The initiative is ongoing.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Most significant progress was at Greylock Works in North Adams

**Source:** updated information provided by BRPC

---

**Project Name:** Adaptive Reuse of "Great Estate" Properties

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** Great Estate

**Project Summary:** One of Berkshire County's most distinguishing factors is the presence of many "great estates" – large and architecturally significant homes and estates mostly built between 1870 and 1930.

These estates, once home to the American industrial and financial elite, are in most cases no longer inhabited and have either been redeveloped for other uses or sit vacant. The size of the structures and surrounding properties offer flexibility for redevelopment; however, many projects have followed a model of capitalizing on Berkshire County's reputation as a tourism destination and converting estates into high-end resorts and related facilities. This is the model that has been or is being followed by projects at the Elm Court, Cranwell, Eastover, Spring Lawn, Blantyre, Canyon Ranch, and Wheatleigh properties, among others. The saving and redevelopment of these properties is a regional imperative on many levels as it presents the opportunity for large-scale job creation in addition to preserving the County's unique character.

**Funding Source(s):** Sources vary per project, though many redevelopments combine both public and private investment.

**Projected Job Creation:** Indeterminate – job creation varies by site/project.

**Related Linkages:** Addresses goals 3, 5 and 6 in the 2017-2022 CEDS.

**Timeframe:** The initiative is ongoing.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Most significant progress was at Miraval Berkshires in Lenox

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by BRPC

**Project Name:** Creative Economy Initiatives (formerly "Berkshire Creative Initiatives")

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** none

**Project Summary:** The nonprofit organization Berkshire Creative formally merged into 1Berkshire on July 1st, 2016. 1Berkshire and the 1Berkshire Foundation continue the work of Berkshire Creative with their focus on the Creative Economy by organizing convenings of major cultural institutions, developing an intensive business resources awareness campaign, providing more creative resources workshop opportunities, recognizing Creative Economy Standouts in the annual Trendsetter Awards, and through programs such as their Berkshire Starts Entrepreneurial activities. In alignment with the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0, the Creative Economy has been identified as one of the five highest-impact economic clusters in the Berkshires. Berkshire County was named the second most arts-vibrant medium- sized community in the nation by the National Center for Arts Research in 2018. The Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 identifies the Creative Economy as one of the top five Industry Clusters driving the economy in the County.

**Funding Source(s):**

**Projected Job Creation:** The creative economy supports approximately 5,500 jobs or roughly 6.4% of all jobs in the county. Between 2010 and 2017, the creative sector saw a 9.5% increase in jobs. We anticipate this growth will continue and are proactively supporting expansion of this sector through action steps identified in the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0.

**Related Linkages:** The creative economy has a profound impact on the Hospitality and Tourism cluster, drawing visitors to the region for performances, art exhibitions, and hand-crafted goods of all types. Key partnerships are being developed with Assets for Artists, Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and the Berkshire Innovation Center.

**Timeframe:** these initiatives are ongoing

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** A group of leadership stakeholders from across the cluster has been engaged in regular meetings to collectively identify the mechanisms and approaches needed to achieve both short- and long-term meaningful impacts. This includes diversifying their market, improving their in-region reach, becoming increasingly accessible, and remaining highly agile to adapt to the needs and



wants of their customers, employees, and partners. In the face of COVID-19, the creative economy has faced even higher levels of adversity, with numerous institutions remaining fully or partially closed, and with much of their programming and attendance limited by capacities and other state requirements. Fortunately, this cluster in the Berkshires has worked through 1Berkshire to maintain a high level of touch with the State Administration to help inform and drive protocols and strategies for success. Additionally, the leadership across this cluster, including individuals and agencies of all sizes, have maintained strong intra-cluster communication for collaborative approaches and collective marketing. Going forward, the creative cluster will continue to work with 1Berkshire and other agencies to increase their inclusivity, access, and diversity, as well as build their market share, and adapt to a COVID-19-informed “new normal”.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by 1Berkshire

**Project Name:** Berkshire Hills Internship Program

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** County-wide

**Special Designators:** n/a

**Project Summary:** The Berkshire Hills Internship Program (B-HIP) is an intensive arts management internship program that offers students educational and career advancement opportunities through hands-on work experience at cultural sites in the Berkshires. This year-round program places MCLA students in area internships at world class institutions during the fall, spring and summer semesters. The internship is paired with an internship course that allows students to build a portfolio of their experiences and synthesize the learning they are gaining. Interns work in a multitude of administrative capacities including development, marketing, public relations and programming – as they gain hands-on experience in the field of arts management. Each internship is tailored to suit participants’ interests and talents. In 2019, MCLA has established an internship coordinator to manage the BHIP program and maintain strong relationships with area cultural organizations. MCLA has also launched the Berkshire Cultural Assets Network (BCAN) which creates a channel for information sharing between area arts and culture organizations and MCLA faculty and students as well as regionally.

**Funding Source(s):** Provided in the form of paid internships by participating arts and culture organizations, sometimes through internship funding grants.

**Projected Job Creation:** No projected new job creation, though the program helps in pipelining college students to job placement with local organizations after successful internships.

**Related Linkages:** The BHIP program places interns in positions within creative economy and hospitality and tourism organizations, both identified in the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 as key industry clusters for the county. It also directly supports two CEDS goals: stabilizing and strengthening the region’s workforce; and supporting and expanding the region’s industry and occupational clusters.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** MCLA is now working with organizations to create virtual internships.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided MCLA

**Project Name:** Growing the Future Food Economy of the Berkshires

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** region-wide

**Special Designators:** n/a

**Project Summary:** This initiative will implement priorities of The Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 relating to the Food and Agriculture cluster: 1) expand food processing and distribution capacity to grow markets; 2)

build best in class food and farm to table training centers; 3) spark the next generation of entrepreneurs and social innovation in the farm and food business; and 4) build the Berkshire brand as a destination for food, culinary and farm to table authenticity.

Implementing these priorities will involve: 1) a supply chain asset map; 2) stakeholder engagement and input in each priority area; 3) updated market research where appropriate; 4) cost estimates for necessary infrastructure and feasibility studies; 5) funding commitments from local and regional businesses, investors and organizations, and state and national agencies; and 6) building of processing capacity through construction of new facilities and/or strengthening of existing ones.

Chief among the barriers to enabling regional food and agriculture businesses to grow and thrive is a lack of access to year-round processing infrastructure and expanded marketing opportunities. Improving access to produce processing, coupled with business incubation, will help stimulate new value-added businesses and have multiple benefits in growing the economy. In addition, Berkshire Agricultural Venture's continued services to farms and food businesses, such as financing on- and off-site infrastructure, facilitating farmland preservation, and providing business consulting resources, are essential to ensuring the growth and viability of a year-round, well integrated food system in our region.

**Funding Source(s):** Berkshire Agricultural Ventures, 1Berkshire, additional private and public funding sources TBD.

**Projected Job Creation:** 270

**Related Linkages:** This initiative directly addresses all six of the 2017-2022 Goals.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing, project cost estimates are based on a 5-year timeframe, dependent on funding and grant cycles.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** This project replaces two previous entries in the Berkshire 2017-2022 CEDS and is led by Berkshire Agricultural Ventures. BAV invests in farms and food businesses, targeting capacity-building resources to individual businesses and gaps and opportunities in the regional food supply chain through investment and technical assistance. In 2019, BAV invested over \$375,000 in 19 farms and food businesses that affect over 1300 acres of farmland to help strengthen their viability and grow our region's food economy. Since March 2020, BAV has pivoted to support the adaptation of farms to the shifting landscape of COVID-19 through the establishment of the Resilience Fund for farmers, and in particular, to support aggregation and distribution hubs for local farmers to sell direct to consumers and strengthen healthy food access among diverse communities. An additional 52 regional farms have directly benefited from these investments. This includes the establishment of the county's first e-commerce platform for direct sales from farmers to consumers. BAV and partners are also moving forward feasibility studies for expanding processing infrastructure in Berkshire County to meet current and projected demand.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Berkshire Agricultural Ventures

## Physical Development in Northern Sub-Region

**Project Name:** Greylock Glen

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Adams

**Special Designators:** OZ

**Project Summary:** The Town is the designated developer for the Greylock Glen Resort, a four-season outdoor recreation and environmental education destination expected to include high quality lodging and conference facilities, a campground (tent sites and cabins), a performing arts amphitheater, an environmental education center, Nordic ski center, and a multi-use trail system. This project represents a



significant economic boost for the Town of Adams and Berkshire County as a whole. As a potential element of one of the region's identified economic clusters, *Hospitality and Tourism*, the project contributes as a major driver in an ongoing economic recovery. The project's strong outdoor recreational focus aligns with the most recent marketing research for 1Berkshire which indicates that the single most important reason the Berkshires have a strong tourism economy is the outdoor recreational opportunities available in the region. Through its educational components and programming the project will also strengthen the region's growing Educational cluster. The site is a 43D Priority Development Site.

**Funding Source(s):** State funding (Capital Budget, Supplemental Budget, MassWorks Infrastructure Program), Opportunity Zone, New Market Tax Credits, USDA Rural Development, EDA and other federal funding; Town funding.

**Projected Job Creation:** Estimated 138 full-time jobs. The labor forces expected from this project include construction, education, retail trade, and leisure and hospitality.

**Related Linkages:** Addresses goals 3, 4 and 5 in the 2017-2022 CEDS.

**Timeframe:** Planning and permitting complete, implementation ongoing.

**Changes since 2018 CEDS Update:** Full design and bid-ready construction plans and specifications are now completed for the 10,000 SF Outdoor Center; project is ready for public bidding once construction dollars are in place. Town submitted an application under the 2020 MassWorks Infrastructure Program for improvements to water delivery system to serve both Outdoor Center and Campground (anticipated cost \$3.5M). Project included in both the 2018 MA Environmental Bond (\$6.55M) and the 2018 Economic Development Bond (\$2M). Observable visitation uptick to site since Greylock Glen Resort website launched in 2018. Multi-use trail system continues to expand and be GPS mapped by DCR and volunteers, documented with support from BRPC. Trails brochure developed in 2019 will be reprinted in fall 2020.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Adams

**Project Name:** Greylock Works (former Cariddi Mill)

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** City of North Adams

**Special Designators:** Mill; Brownfield; LIC

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment of 240,000-square-foot former Cariddi textile mill into mixed-use complex. Project includes 26,000-square-foot event space, commercial kitchen, collaborative office workspace, food and beverage production spaces, restaurant, food market, and 51 condominium units. Other improvements will include landscaping, parking, and connection with the existing Greylock Park and Alcombright Athletic Field Complex.

**Funding Source(s):** Public/Private partnership

**Projected Job Creation:** 100

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox. Also, one of the most successful brownfield redevelopments in the region.

**Timeframe:** Much brownfield assessment, remediation and abatement completed. Event space and commercial kitchen completed and operating. Select exterior landscape improvements complete. Expected 2025 completion.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Completed Phase 2 site improvements, which includes over 100 additional parking spaces, permeable paving, pedestrian paths, exterior lighting, extensive landscaping, and stormwater management. A new restaurant has opened, and a bakery is operating out of the Culinary

LAB's incubator kitchen. The Berkshire Cider Project is operational next to the existing Distillery. The East Studio's co-work space is fully occupied with a waitlist for additional space. Expansion of the co-work concept has been designed and received approval from the Planning Board. The first phase of residential lofts are under construction, which is comprised of 15 apartments.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by City of North Adams and Latent Productions

---

**Project Name:** Memorial School Redevelopment

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Adams

**Special Designators:** Brownfields; LIC

**Project Summary:** The size and prominent location of the Memorial School building on Route 8 in downtown Adams creates opportunities for innovative reuse of the building and its grounds. Redevelopment of the 69,786 square foot building has the potential to have a regional impact by providing new workforce housing, as well as nonprofit and public spaces. New uses could provide a catalyst to additional investment in Adams and the region.

**Funding Source(s):** Several sources of funding are being investigated, including Berkshire Brownfields; CDBG, LIHTC, Chapter 40R, USDA Rural Services, EDA, HUD, and MassDevelopment.

**Projected Job Creation:** undetermined, dependent upon reuse scenario.

**Related Linkages:** The site is well positioned on the Route 8 Corridor in the northern gateway of downtown Adams, potential to spur spin-off investment in this area. Redevelopment will promote the reuse of the historic property and facilitate job growth.

**Timeframe:**

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** With FY2018 CDBG grant funding and Town funds, construction of the new HVAC system to serve the "community use" portion of the former school building (approx. 25,000 SF) is essentially complete. The Town issued an Invitation for Bids in fall 2019 and entered into a construction contract with Kurtz, Inc. of Westfield in January 2020. In addition to the HVAC system, the \$570,000 project also performed other code-related work including new interior doors, fire-rated wall installation, and rest room facilities. In mid-February 2020, the Town issued a Request for Proposals to interested private developers for the redevelopment of a portion of the town-owned building – to either purchase the portion of the property in fee simple or enter into a long-term lease of the property and develop it for housing (multi-family condominiums or rental), assisted living, professional offices, a combination of these uses, or other uses compatible with the Town's goals and objectives. A site visit was conducted on March 5 for interested developers at which time, developers requested an extension of the proposal process until the Adams Town Meeting to consider 40R. Developers indicated that the funding offered by 40R was likely significant and hence the delay could be helpful in crafting a response to the Town's RFP. Due to COVID-19, the Town terminated the proposal process altogether and Town Meeting has been delayed until September 2020. The Town anticipates re-issuing the RFP shortly thereafter a Town Meeting is conducted.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Adams

---

**Project Name:** Spinning Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** Town of Adams

**Special Designators:** Brownfields; OZ

**Project Summary:** Project involves the redevelopment of over 265,000 SF of vacant mill space at 5-7 Hoosac Street (Spinning Mill Redevelopment Project) into 185 units new affordable, workforce rental housing. Project involves two buildings: 5 Hoosac Street consists of 40,000 SF and is planned to create 26 new, affordable and market rate rental units (27,000 SF) in addition to 13,000 SF of renovated office space on the first floor. The larger, 1899 mill building at 7 Hoosac Street, comprising 225,000 SF, is planned to create 160 affordable/market rate rental units. There will be various unit sizes, 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units featuring modern amenities, including a fitness center, multi-purpose rooms, and spaces for recreational uses (i.e., arts, music, etc.). Location is along the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail and proximate to the Adams Visitors Center and the Hoosac Valley Service (tourist train service offered by Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum).

Hazardous materials inspection report and technical specifications for abatement of asbestos, lead-based paint, and other hazardous materials present inside the weave shed at the 7 Hoosac Street site in Adams were completed in September 2019 (Town EPA Brownfields Assessment grant). The owner of 7 Hoosac Street (developer) anticipates demolishing a portion of the weave shed that was added in the 1950s. Assessment studies were also conducted (Berkshire Brownfields Program) in 2010 for 5 Hoosac Street and the 7-acre shared parking site. Project proponent, Jeff Cohen, is working with Durkee-Brown Architects and has developed schematic plans for the redevelopment project. The Town anticipates submitting a future MassWorks funding application (parking and drainage improvements) to improve the proposed paved parking facility, which will provide 277 spaces with additional lawn parking to accommodate overflow parking during peak weekends and special events. The Town will have a public easement from the owner to use the facility for these purposes. The proposed parking lot is needed not only to serve the housing development but importantly will result in the appropriate and cost-effective remediation for contamination found at the site. The site is a 43D Priority Development Site and is eligible for both New Market Tax Credits and Opportunity Zone tax incentives.

**Funding Source(s):** Several sources of funding are being investigated, including Berkshire Brownfields, State funds (MassWorks Infrastructure program, Historic Tax Credits, Chapter 40R) and federal funds (Opp. Zone, New Market Tax Credits, LIHTC, USDA Rural Services, EPA Brownfields); private funds.

**Projected Job Creation:** Preliminary estimates for 185 housing units: 198 construction positions (direct and indirect); 78 FTE positions supported by induced effect of spending, and 59 new jobs created that support ongoing consumer activity of new residents.

**Related Linkages:** The site is well positioned just off the Route 8 Corridor and closely connected to attractions such as the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail, the Hoosac Valley Service, the Adams Visitors Center, and the Adams CBD. This generates pedestrian and bike traffic that can conveniently utilize park space created on site and creates the need for better connectivity with these and Park Street, the Town's "Main Street."

**Timeframe:** ongoing

**Changes since 2018 update:** The property is proposed for 40R designation by the Town; the Town recently approved a 40R Bylaw (September 2020).

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Adams

**Project Name:** Blackinton Infrastructure/Blackinton Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of North Adams

**Special Designators:** Brownfield; Mill; LIC

**Project Summary:** Infrastructure improvements to the historic Blackinton neighborhood in North Adams to address long-standing flooding and drainage issues caused by the 19<sup>th</sup> century waterways once used to

feed Blackinton Mill and the adjacent former tannery property. The project will also restore the tannery site to a landscaped greenspace and new parking area, a public canoe launch, trailhead for a publicly accessible trail system. This project will lay the groundwork for mixed use redevelopment of the Blackinton Mill site by developers of the nearby TOURISTS Hotel and significantly advance the long-awaited North Adams bike path project.

**Funding Source(s):** Public/Private partnership. MassWorks funding awarded in early 2020.

**Projected Job Creation:** 27 Full-time positions

**Related Linkages:** One many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects in include the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox. This project is particularly similar to the Eagle Mill Redevelopment in Lee, where early public and private investment in infrastructure improvements permitted the project to proceed. Additionally, this project is a key accelerator for the long pondered North Adams bike path project, connecting the funded and about-to-be-constructed Williamstown path to the west and the existing Ashuwilliticook trail to the south,

**Timeframe:** Much pre-construction work completed.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Design, engineering, and permitting was slowed by the pandemic, but is underway in preparation for Spring 2021 construction. MassWorks funding awarded in early 2020.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by City of North Adams

## Physical Development in Central Sub-Region

**Project Name:** Berkshire Mall Reuse

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Lanesborough

**Special Designators:** none

**Project Summary:** While the Regal Cinema and the Target store remained in operation with seemingly good viability, the remainder of the Berkshire Mall closed in mid-2019. The mall was purchased by Durga Property Holdings in July of 2019. BRPC completed a re-use study in June of 2019 which identified five potential reuse concepts and detailed related demolition, construction, zoning and regulatory considerations for each. This study is available on the Town of Lanesborough website and is intended to benefit current or future ownership as well as serve as a marketing tool to attract redevelopment investment.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investments, state and federal grants if appropriate to the proposed development.

**Projected Job Creation:** undetermined, dependent upon reuse scenario.

**Related Linkages:** Depending upon the reuse scenario, efforts to redevelop this property are likely linked to most if not all of the 2017-2022 CEDS Goals.

**Timeframe:** undetermined.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** The current mall ownership as well as businesses within that area of Lanesborough were granted temporary tax relief due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, specific to payments due to Baker Hill Road District. Ownership is also pursuing the dissolution of the Baker Hill Road District in favor of MassDOT taking over maintenance of the Routes 7 and 8 connector road.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Lanesborough and BRPC

**Project Name:** Stationery Factory (formerly referred to as Crane Stationery Mill)

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Dalton

**Special Designators:** Mill; LIC

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment of 100,000-square-foot multi-story former Crane & Co. paper mill into office, retail, restaurant, and event hosting space. Currently houses 18 operating businesses including a distillery, pub, and furniture manufacturer. The event hosting space comprises 4 rooms and can accommodate up to 700 people. Project includes upgrade to accessibility on all floors including installation of passenger elevators and accessible restroom facilities.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 100+ (has already created 25 full-time and 44 part-time positions)

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox. Ties to multiple CEDS Goals especially #2 and #3.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing. Installation of elevator, new building front and more tenants expected over next 4 years

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Obtained MassDevelopment funding of \$100k.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Dalton

---

**Project Name:** Columbus Avenue/Summer Street Parking Garage

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designator:** OZ

**Project Summary:** Construction of a new three-story parking garage between Columbus Ave. and Summer St. in downtown Pittsfield. The garage will be adjacent to the Berkshire Intermodal Transportation Center, the primary rail and public transit hub in the County. All pre-construction work has been completed and project is shovel-ready. Old garage has been demolished and surface lot constructed.

**Funding Source(s):** Public investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 120 construction positions

**Related Linkages:** Part of the greater effort to revitalize downtown Pittsfield, expand downtown market rate housing, and expand transit options in the City and County. Construction of the garage will coincide with the Berkshire Flyer, a pilot program providing seasonal rail service from Pittsfield to New York City.

**Timeframe:** Construction to begin 2020, pending funding. Expected 2021 completion date.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Significant and growing need for a parking garage, particularly as Wright Building is redeveloped and the Berkshire Flyer pilot becomes a reality.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** North Mountain Park

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** Town of Dalton

**Special Designators:** Brownfield; LIC

**Project Summary:** Repurposing of 9 ½ acre lot as municipal playing fields. Lot is a brownfield that previously housed Old Dalton Hardwood sawmill and requires remediation.

**Funding Source(s):** Public investment, Town appropriations, PARC grant funds

**Projected Job Creation:** 15 construction positions, 3 FTE positions  
**Related Linkages:** Addresses goal 3 of the 2017-2022 CEDS.  
**Timeframe:** Some pre-construction work including Brownfields assessment completed.  
**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** None  
**Source:** 2020 information provided by Town of Dalton

---

**Project Name:** Pittsfield Police Station  
**Status:** Added in 2019  
**Location:** City of Pittsfield  
**Special Designators:** undetermined until location finalized  
**Project Summary:** Construction of new police headquarters facility for the Pittsfield Police Department to replace the current aging and failing facility. New facility will improve safety standards, expand storage, and accommodate entire authorized and funded police force.  
**Funding Source(s):** Public investment  
**Projected Job Creation:** 300 construction positions.  
**Related Linkages:** Part of city's overall program to enhance public safety and modernize government services.  
**Timeframe:** Limited pre-construction work completed. No estimated completion date.  
**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** no changes  
**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** Pittsfield YMCA Renovation  
**Status:** Added in 2019  
**Location:** City of Pittsfield  
**Special Designators:** OZ  
**Project Summary:** Renovation of Pittsfield YMCA's original historic building and entire 1980s-era addition on North Street in downtown Pittsfield. Exterior improvements include repointing of the brick façade and reopening of bricked-over windows. Interior improvements include the installation of an elevated track, a new basketball court, an overhaul of the fitness and aquatics area, and an expansion of the childcare section.  
**Funding Source(s):** Private, Mass Historic (tax credits), NMTC, MA DHCD, City of Pittsfield  
**Projected Job Creation:** 5+ full time positions related to expanded childcare services  
**Related Linkages:** Part of the greater effort to revitalize downtown Pittsfield, which has seen the renovation and reuse of many significant buildings in recent years. Other projects include the completed Hotel on North, Onota Building redevelopment, and Howard Building redevelopment and the proposed Wright Building renovation and White Terrace renovation.  
**Timeframe:** Much pre-construction work completed. Construction to begin 2020. Expected 2020 completion.  
**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** first phase is moving into construction  
**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** Tyler Street Streetscape  
**Status:** Added in 2019  
**Location:** City of Pittsfield



**Special Designators:** OZ

**Project Summary:** Overhaul of Tyler Street right-of-way in downtown Pittsfield to accommodate all modes of transportation. Includes addition of bicycle lanes, pedestrian amenities, bus stops, and construction of traffic circle at intersection of Tyler Street, and Dalton and Woodlawn Avenues.

**Funding Source(s):** City of Pittsfield, MassWorks application to be submitted in 2020

**Projected Job Creation:** 0 FTE permanent positions, 120 FTE construction positions

**Related Linkages:** Part of Pittsfield's effort to provide residents of the City and nearby communities with various transportation options including walking, bicycling, and public transportation to increase ease and safety of movement; also part of city's efforts to transform a key corridor connecting major employers Berkshire Health Systems on the west end and General Dynamics on the eastern end, enhancing the attraction of the corridor as a place to live and play as well as work.

**Timeframe:** Concept design completed and survey work in progress. Estimated 2021 and 2022 construction.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Design phase is complete, estimated total cost including roundabout at Woodlawn and Tyler St. is \$5M

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** Springside House Restoration

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designators:** LIC, Great Estates

**Project Summary:** Renovation of historic Springside House in Pittsfield's Springside Park into "natural park center" with space for visitor center, natural and historical exhibits, park offices, classrooms, and public gatherings. Potential space for anchor commercial tenant as well as opportunity to house other environmental and/or historic preservation-based non-profits.

**Funding Source(s):** Public investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 5

**Related Linkages:** One of several renovations and redevelopments of historic estates throughout the region. Other projects include Elm Court and Cranwell. CEDS Goal #3 – Infrastructure and Site Improvements.

**Timeframe:** Much building stabilization and exterior work completed. Expected September 2021 completion.

**Changes Since 2019 CEDS Update:** Feasibility, preliminary engineering, cost estimates completed, Permitting underway. Approximately 12% of funding committed.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** Wright Building

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designators:** OZ

**Project Summary:** Renovation of historic Wright Building on North Street in downtown Pittsfield. Completed project will create 21 market-rate residential units on upper two stories and 12,000 square feet of modern commercial space on ground floor.

**Funding Source(s):** Private, Mass Historic (tax credits), DHCD, City of Pittsfield

**Projected Job Creation:** 15-18 FTE, 90 construction positions

**Related Linkages:** Part of the greater effort to revitalize downtown Pittsfield, which has seen the renovation and reuse of many significant buildings in recent years. Other projects include the completed Hotel on North, Onota Building redevelopment, and Howard Building redevelopment and the proposed YMCA renovation and White Terrace renovation.

**Timeframe:** Some pre-construction work completed. Expected 2021 completion.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Stalled due to COVID-19; developer has reinitiated financing efforts and initial exploratory demolition.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** White Terrace

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designators:** OZ

**Project Summary:** Proposed renovation of historic White Terrace building trio on North Street in downtown Pittsfield into 41 market-rate apartments and ground floor commercial space.

**Funding Source(s):** Private, Mass Historic (tax credits), DHCD, City of Pittsfield

**Projected Job Creation:** 12-15 FTE, 150 construction positions

**Related Linkages:** Part of the greater effort to revitalize downtown Pittsfield, which has seen the renovation and reuse of many significant buildings in recent years. Other projects include the completed Hotel on North, Onota Building redevelopment, and Howard Building redevelopment and the proposed Wright Building renovation and YMCA renovation.

**Timeframe:** No pre-construction work completed. Expected 2021 completion.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** No change, owners have put property on the market for \$1.2M.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield

---

**Project Name:** 765 Tyler Street

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** City of Pittsfield

**Special Designators:** OZ

**Project Summary:** The project includes the restoration of a three-story mixed-use building located at 765 Tyler Street. The building was recently acquired by Mill Town Capital as part of an effort of strategic acquisitions on Tyler Street. As proposed, the building will bolster efforts being made at the former St. Mary's campus in creating new market rate housing in the neighborhood, as well as code-compliant ground floor commercial space.

**Funding Source(s):** Private funds, DHCD, City of Pittsfield.

**Projected Job Creation:** 5-7 FTE, 48 construction positions

**Related Linkages:** housing, historic redevelopment

**Timeframe:** Permitting is complete, preliminary engineering and planning studies are underway. Estimated completion date is June of 2021.

**Changes since 2019 Update:** Project has received all required land use permits and construction will begin in fall of 2020. In addition, same developer is moving forward with a new construction in-fill development across the street at 730-748 Tyler St. The City of Pittsfield is in the process of obtaining City Council approval for TIEs for both projects, as well as a project at 235 East St.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by City of Pittsfield



## Physical Development in Southern Sub-Region

**Project Name:** Element by Westin (formerly referred to as Lenox Manor)

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Lenox

**Project Summary:** Proposed 100-suite extended-stay hotel and event center built on the site of the dilapidated Magnuson hotel. The site was acquired in 2015 by local property developers and hoteliers Vijay and Parvin Mahida, and in 2016, plans for the \$24,000,000 project were approved and special permits extended by the Lenox Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Except for a few “studio suites”, each one of the 100 units will consist of a living room, bedroom, bathroom, and kitchenette, making it attractive to extended stay travelers and eventgoers. Additionally, the project includes an indoor pool fitness center, catering facility, bar, and limited dining options, as well as a 7,500-square-foot event center suitable for up to 500 guests. Work began in 2017, and in November the property was sold for \$1,550,000 to Albany, N.Y.-based BBL Hospitality Group. Asbestos abatement and demolition of the Magnuson was mostly completed by Spring 2018, but there has since been little activity at the site.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 25-30 full- and part-time jobs.

**Related Linkages:** Addresses goal 5 of the 2017-2022 CEDS.

**Timeframe:** currently delayed, additional site readiness and construction pending.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Demolition completed, pending construction. No other updates or progress.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Lenox

---

**Project Name:** Elm Court

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Towns of Lenox and Stockbridge

**Special Designators:** Great Estate

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment and expansion of 106-room, 90-acres, 1886 Elm Court estate by Travaasa Experiential Resorts. Travaasa intends on transforming the mansion and surrounding property into a 112-unit destination resort and event center complete with a 60-room restaurant and 15,550-square-foot spa. The project would include both renovation of the existing structure and addition of a new wing, nearly doubling the current 53,000 square feet. Progress has been minimal, as the project has experienced significant legal, financial, and logistical delays. Project has experienced difficulty securing financing.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 100

**Related Linkages:** One of several recent investments in the accommodation sector in Berkshire County. Greylock Glen, the River School Redevelopment, Miraval-Cranwell, Spring Lawn, and Eastover.

**Timeframe:** Construction expected to begin 2020. Completion unknown.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Stockbridge and Lenox have provided multiple permit extensions; representatives indicate they are still seeking financing and challenged by pandemic economy.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Lenox

---

**Project Name:** Redevelopment of Great Barrington Fairgrounds

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Great Barrington

**Project Summary:** Proposed revitalization of 57-acre historic fairgrounds site by racetrack operator Sterling Suffolk Racecourse LLC (SSR). Project would include major improvements to the racetrack, grandstand, and accessory buildings. 2019 saw the abandonment of former mixed-use redevelopment proposal and entrance of SSR's revitalization proposal.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 150 construction positions, 25 permanent FTE positions

**Related Linkages:** Revitalization of an open space and recreational resource. Intended to draw significant tourism interest/dollars. May have linkages to agricultural and food production sectors.

**Timeframe:** Pre-construction work underway. No estimated completion date.

**Change from 2018 CEDS Update:** no changes.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Great Barrington

---

**Project Name:** Housatonic School Redevelopment

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Great Barrington, Village of Housatonic

**Special Designators:** Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Planned redevelopment of 1909 former Housatonic Elementary School into a mixed-use complex designed to serve as an anchor building for the Housatonic Village Center. In 2019, the Town cancelled partnership agreement with local developer, ongoing public discussion of next steps.

**Funding Source(s):** Public/Private partnership

**Projected Job Creation:** Unknown

**Related Linkages:** One of several infrastructure/redevelopment projects critical to the revitalization of the village of Housatonic.

**Timeframe:** As of August 2019, the Town cancelled a partnership agreement with a local developer and will be re-issuing an RFP. No estimated completion date.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** no changes.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Great Barrington

---

**Project Name:** Monument Mills Area Reuse

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Great Barrington, Village of Housatonic

**Special Designators:** Mill

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment of Monument Mills, a National Historic Register listed mill complex, into approximately 100 mixed-income residential units, 12,000 square feet for office and retail use, a restaurant/café space, a river walk reconnecting the village to the adjacent Housatonic River, and integrated on-site parking.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment, historic tax credits

**Projected Job Creation:** Unknown

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include Greylock Works and the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox. Also, one of several infrastructure/redevelopment projects critical to the revitalization of the village of Housatonic.

**Timeframe:** Little pre-construction work has been completed. No estimated completion date.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** No changes.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Great Barrington

---

**Project Name:** Niagara Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Lenox

**Special Designators:** Mill; Brownfield; Historic Preservation

**Project Summary:** Niagara Mill is a 27,000-square-foot former paper mill that was built in the 1860s and most recently operated by Schweitzer-Mauduit until the facility's closure in 2008. In 2014, the mill was purchased along with former Schweitzer-Mauduit properties, Columbia and Greylock mills, by St. Louis and Niagara, WI-based developer Niagara Worldwide for \$1,500,000. The mill is now listed for sale or lease by Lenox Development LLC, a subsidiary of Niagara Worldwide.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** Unknown

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include Greylock Works and the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the other former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox.

**Timeframe:** Unknown

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Has been subject of area-wide brownfields assessment funds; no development progress or other updates.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Lenox

---

**Project Name:** New England Log Homes

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Great Barrington

**Special Designators:** Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Remediation and redevelopment of the former New England Log Homes site, and 8-acre brownfield in the center of Great Barrington. The redevelopment plan includes remediating 100% of the site, 45 units of affordable rental housing, senior independent and assisted living, commercial space, and 1.2 acres of public park along the Housatonic River. In 2019, zoning and environmental permitting were entirely complete; funding for remediation and affordable housing component fully secured.

**Funding Source(s):** Public/Private partnership

**Projected Job Creation:** 25-30 fulltime; 30-35 part-time

**Related Linkages:** One of several projects revitalizing the Bridge Street corridor in Great Barrington. Other projects include the Iredale Cosmetics headquarters, Powerhouse Square mixed-use development, and the River School redevelopment.

**Timeframe:** Pre-construction work completed. Expected late 2019 ground-breaking. No estimated completion date.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** The site is 75% remediated, the 45 units of housing is at 50% completion as of August 2020, and the balance of the site development is not yet finalized.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by CDCSB and Town of Great Barrington.

---

**Project Name:** River School Redevelopment

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Great Barrington

**Special Designators:** Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment and reuse of the former Searles and Bryant Schools in downtown Great Barrington. In 2014, renovations on the former Bryant School were completed and the building reopened as the world headquarters for Iredale Cosmetics. In 2016, the former Searles School was sold to 79 Bridge Street Realty LLC, owned by local hotel developer Vijay Mahida. Mahida intends on converting the building into a 60,000-square-foot luxury hotel with 88 rooms. In 2019, expected completion changed to 2021.

**Funding Source(s):** Private investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 30 permanent FTE positions

**Related Linkages:** One of several projects revitalizing the Bridge Street corridor in Great Barrington. Other projects include the Iredale Cosmetics headquarters, Powerhouse Square mixed-use development, and New England Log Homes mixed-use development.

**Timeframe:** All permitting and most pre-construction work completed. Expected 2021 completion.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** no changes.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Great Barrington

---

**Project Name:** Spring Lawn

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS

**Location:** Town of Lenox

**Special Designators:** Great Estate

**Project Summary:** Redevelopment of 29-acre parcel in center of Lenox consisting of a 30,000-square-foot, 1902 mansion, carriage house, and several outbuildings into a high-end resort. The proposal includes renovating the mansion to have 18 guest suites and a 75-seat restaurant, renovation of the carriage house for a spa and indoor swimming pool, and construction of 14 guest cottages with 77 rooms across the property. In 2014, the property developer, Spring Lawn Partners LLC, launched a financing campaign and in 2016 began some exploratory demolition and construction. Since then, however, little work has been completed on the project.

**Funding Source(s):** Private Investment, Spring Lawn Partners LLC, \$20,000,000

**Projected Job Creation:** 25-50 FTEs

**Related Linkages:** One of several recent investments in the accommodation sector in Berkshire County. Greylock Glen, the River School Redevelopment, Miraval-Cranwell, Elm Court, and Eastover.

**Timeframe:** Unknown

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Development team indicated they were ready to move pre-pandemic, but no updates or progress since winter 2019.

**Source:** 2020 updated information provided by Town of Lenox

---

**Project Name:** Columbia Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** Town of Lee

**Special Designators:** Mill; Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Columbia Mill is a 230,000-square-foot former paper mill that was originally built in 1826 and most recently operated by Schweitzer-Mauduit until the facility's closure in 2008. In 2014, the mill was purchased along with former Schweitzer-Mauduit properties, Columbia and Greylock mills, by St. Louis and Niagara, WI-based developer Niagara Worldwide for \$1,500,000. Niagara Worldwide initially expressed an interest in redeveloping the property, but the mill is now listed for sale or lease by Lenox

Development LLC, a subsidiary of Niagara Worldwide. Columbia Growth Inc. applied for a special permit as a marijuana cultivator in October of 2019, continued to November.

**Funding Source(s):** Private Investment, Niagara Worldwide

**Projected Job Creation:** Unknown

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include Greylock Works and the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the other former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox.

**Timeframe:** Unknown

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Owner has been granted a special permit for marijuana cultivation.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by Town of Lee

---

**Project Name:** Eagle Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** Town of Lee

**Special Designators:** Mill; Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Eagle Mill is a former paper mill that was originally built in 1808 and most recently operated by Schweitzer-Mauduit until the facility's closure in 2008. In 2017, Eagle Mill Redevelopment LLC purchased the site, and has since acquired several abutting and nearby properties. The firm intends on completing a \$60 million redevelopment of the mill and surrounding properties into a mixed-use complex that will include 78 units of affordable and market rate housing, commercial office space, a food market, a microbrewery, restaurant space, a 30-unit micro-apartment building, retail space, a riverfront park, and a 100-room hotel.

**Funding Source(s):** Public/private partnership

**Projected Job Creation:** Unknown

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include Greylock Works and the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the other former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox. Also, one of the most successful brownfield redevelopments in the region.

**Timeframe:** Much pre-construction work completed. Construction expected to begin in late 2020 and be completed within 2 years.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Work began in June of 2020 on water line on Greylock Street, progressing at about 150 feet per day. Received MassWorks grant of \$4.9 Million. The food market and hotel elements of the project are being considered for downsizing or elimination as a result of COVID circumstances.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by Eagle Mill Redevelopment LLC

---

**Project Name:** Greylock Mill Redevelopment

**Status:** Added in 2019

**Location:** Town of Lee

**Special Designators:** Mill; Brownfield

**Project Summary:** Greylock Mill is a 160,000-square-foot former paper mill that was built in the 1960s and most recently operated by Schweitzer-Mauduit until the facility's closure in 2008. In 2014, the mill was purchased along with former Schweitzer properties, Columbia and Niagara mills, by St. Louis and Niagara, WI-based developer Niagara Worldwide for \$1,500,000. After remaining for sale for several years, the

property was purchased in March 2018 for \$3,800,000 by Lee Town Development, a subsidiary of West Coast-based developer.

**Funding Source(s):** Private Investment

**Projected Job Creation:** 100

**Related Linkages:** One of many former mills in the region that have been redeveloped, are being redeveloped, or are being considered for redevelopment. Other projects include Greylock Works and the NORAD Mill in North Adams, and the other former Schweitzer-Mauduit mills in Lee and Lenox.

**Timeframe:** Pending.

**Changes since 2019 CEDS Update:** Signed host community agreement with Town of Lee in July of 2020 for a marijuana cultivation facility.

**Source:** 2020 information provided by Town of Lee

## Projects Removed in 2020

**Project Name:** Washington Broadband Fiber-Optic Network Construction

**Status:** added in 2019, removed in 2020

**Timeframe:** Completed in 2020

**Project Name:** Miraval-Lenox Expansion at Cranwell Lenox

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2020

**Timeframe:** Completed in 2020

## Projects Removed in 2019

**Project Name:** Keep Berkshires Farming

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2019

**Timeframe:** Discontinued, funding source expired

**Project Name:** Linde Center of Music and Learning at Tanglewood

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2019

**Timeframe:** Completed in 2019

**Project Name:** Walker House Apartments

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2019

**Timeframe:** Completed in 2017

**Project Name:** Eastover

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2019

**Timeframe:** Completed in 2017

**Project Name:** Targeting Procurement Dollars to Strengthen Regional Food Economy

**Status:** included in 2017-2022 CEDS, removed in 2019

**Timeframe:** discontinued by LEVER

# Appendix E

## 2020 CEDS Committee and BRPC Rosters

### Acknowledgements

The 2020 Berkshire County CEDS Progress Report was developed in consultation with members of the CEDS Committee. The Committee roster is shown below along with brief bios indicating the members' area of expertise and their representation rolls on the committee. Following that is a listing of our communities' delegates and alternates that serve on the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

**TABLE 10: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee**

Contact Information	Description
<b>George Ambriz</b> <i>Berkshire Community College/Public</i> 1350 West Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	Mr. Ambriz serves as the Director of Academic and Career Advising at Berkshire Community College, contributing to the committee both as a representative of higher education and workforce development.
<b>Roger Bolton</b> <i>Berkshire Regional Planning Commission</i> 1 Fenn Street, Suite 201 Pittsfield, MA 01201	Mr. Bolton is a retired professor of Economics at Williams College, as a community leader and public official he serves on the CEDS Committee and the BRPC Executive Committee and has a special interest in regional economics.
<b>Heather Boulger</b> <i>MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board</i> 66 Allen Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	Ms. Boulger is the Executive Director of the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board and serves as the Workforce Development Board representative on the CEDS Committee.
<b>Michael Ferry</b> <i>Berkshire Bank (retired)</i> 66 West Street Pittsfield MA 01201	Mr. Ferry was the Senior Vice President, Commercial Regional President at Berkshire Bank, and served as the private sector representative for financial services.
<b>Keith Girouard</b> <i>MA Small Business Development Center - Berkshire Regional Office</i> 33 Dunham Mall, Suite 103 Pittsfield MA 01201	Mr. Girouard is the Regional Director with the Berkshire Regional Office of the MA Small Business Development Center. He is the private sector representative for small business assistance.
<b>Kyle Hanlon</b> <i>Plimpton &amp; Hills Corporation</i> 28 Yorkshire Avenue Pittsfield, MA 01201	Mr. Hanlon is the Chair of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, as well as the Chair of the Berkshire CEDS Committee



<p><b>Lesley Herzberg</b>  <i>Berkshire Historical Society</i>  780 Holmes Road  Pittsfield, MA 01201</p>	<p>Ms. Herzberg is the Executive Director of Berkshire Historical Society at Arrowhead, representing the non-profit cultural sector on the CEDS committee.</p>
<p><b>Benjamin Lamb</b>  <i>1Berkshire</i>  66 Allen Street  Pittsfield, MA 01201</p>	<p>Mr. Lamb is the Economic Development Specialist who leads the Economic Development team at 1Berkshire, the Region's Economic Development and Marketing organization.</p>
<p><b>Jim Lovejoy</b>  <i>Town of Mount Washington</i>  118 East Street  Mount Washington, MA 01258</p>	<p>Mr. Lovejoy is the Chair of the Mt. Washington Select Board, and as the Chair of the MMA Transportation Policy Committee.</p>
<p><b>Laurie Mick</b>  <i>City of Pittsfield</i>  City Hall - 70 Allen Street  Pittsfield MA 01201</p>	<p>Ms. Mick serves on the CEDS Committee as the representative from the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC).</p>
<p><b>Michael Nuvalle</b>  <i>City of North Adams</i>  City Hall - 10 Main Street  North Adams MA 01247</p>	<p>Mr. Nuvalle is the Community Development Director for the City of North Adams and serves on the Berkshire Brownfields Committee. He is the Public Official representing Northern Berkshire County.</p>
<p><b>Cynthia Pansing</b>  <i>Berkshire Agricultural Ventures</i>  314 Main Street, Office #23  Great Barrington, MA 01230</p>	<p>Ms. Pansing is the Executive Director of Berkshire Agricultural Ventures, a nonprofit that focuses on growing the regional food economy through loans, grants, and technical assistance to farms and food businesses. She is the representative of the food and agriculture sector.</p>
<p><b>Ian Rasch</b>  <i>Alander Construction</i>  40 Railroad Street  Great Barrington, MA, 01230</p>	<p>Mr. Rasch is one of the principals with Alander Construction and has more than 17 years of experience in real estate development and construction management. He is the private sector representative for this industry.</p>
<p><b>Christopher Rembold</b>  <i>Town of Great Barrington</i>  Town Hall - 334 Main Street  Great Barrington MA 01201</p>	<p>Mr. Rembold is the Assistant Town Manager/Director of Planning &amp; Community Development in Great Barrington and is the Public Official representing Southern Berkshire County.</p>
<p><b>Deanna Ruffer</b>  <i>City of Pittsfield</i>  City Hall - 70 Allen Street  Pittsfield MA 01201</p>	<p>Ms. Ruffer is the Director of Community Development for the City of Pittsfield and is the Public Official representing Central Berkshire County.</p>



<b>Ben Sosne</b> <i>Berkshire Innovation Center</i> Pittsfield, MA 01201	Mr. Sosne is the Executive Director of the Berkshire Innovation Center, recognized as a Priority Project in the 2017-2022 Berkshire CEDS.
<b>Christina Wynn</b> <i>Berkshire Community College/Public</i> 1350 West Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	Ms. Wynn is the Interim Dean of Business and Outreach at Berkshire Community College and serves as the CEDS Committee's Higher Education representative with keen interest in workforce development.
<b>Alternate Members</b>	
<b>Jonathan Butler</b> <i>1Berkshire</i> 66 Allen Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	Mr. Butler is the CEO of 1Berkshire, the Region's Economic Development and Marketing organization.
<b>Michael Coakley</b> <i>City of Pittsfield</i> City Hall - 70 Allen Street Pittsfield MA 01201	Mr. Coakley serves as the Business Development Director for the City of Pittsfield and is a liaison to the Western Mass Economic Development Partners.
<b>Zachary Feury</b> <i>City of North Adams</i> City Hall - 10 Main Street North Adams MA 01247	Mr. Feury works within the Office of Community Development in North Adams and has prior experience as a planner with BRPC.
<b>Michael Hoffman</b> <i>TD Bank (retired)</i> 99 West Street Pittsfield MA 01201	Mr. Hoffman is the alternate private sector representative for financial services.
<b>Shannon Zayac</b> <i>MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board</i> 66 Allen Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	Ms. Zayac is the manager of industry relations with MassHire Berkshires, engaging employers throughout the county to define their workforce needs and assist with recruitment and retention.

**Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Partnering Communities**

Adams, Alford, Becket, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Egremont, Florida, Great Barrington, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mount Washington, North Adams, New Ashford, New Marlborough, Otis, Peru, Pittsfield, Richmond, Sandisfield, Savoy, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Tyringham, Washington, West Stockbridge, Williamstown, and Windsor

**TABLE 11: FY2021 Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternates**

Community	Name	Representing
Adams	Lisa Gazaille, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	John Duval, Alternate	Select Board (PO)
Alford	Alex Glover, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Shirley Mueller, Alternate	
Becket	Robert Ronzio, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Alvin Blake, Alternate	
Cheshire	Peter Traub, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	<i>vacant</i> , Alternate	
Clarksburg	Ron Boucher, Delegate	
	<i>vacant</i> , Alternate	
Dalton	Zack McCain, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	John Boyle, Alternate	
Egremont	Ed Regendahl, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Nick Keene, Alternate	
Florida	Jon Oleson, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Cynthia Bosely, Alternate	
Great Barrington	Pedro Pachano, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Malcolm Fick, Alternate	Planning Board (PO)
Hancock	Christie Moran, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)

	<i>vacant</i> , Alternate	
Hinsdale	James Sullivan, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Dan Brown, Alternate	
Lanesborough	Gwen Miller, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Barbara Hassan, Alternate	Planning Board (PO), ED Committee
Lee	Buck Donovan, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Matthew Carlino, Alternate	Select Board (PO)
Lenox	James Harwood, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Pam Kueber, Alternate	Planning Board (PO)
Monterey	Ken Basler, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Nancy Richards, Alternate	
Mount Washington	Bill Short, Delegate	
	James Lovejoy, Alternate	Select Board, Finance Committee (PO)
New Ashford	Mark Phelps, Delegate	Planning Board, Select Board (PO)
	Kevin Flicker, Alternate	
New Marlborough	Robert Hartt, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Mark Carson, Alternate	Planning Board (PO)
North Adams	Kyle Hanlon, Delegate	Planning Board, Redevelopment Auth. (PO)
	Lisa Blackmer, Alternate	Planning Board (PO)
Otis	Harold Kobrin, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Larry Southard, Alternate	
Peru	Sam Haupt, Delegate	Planning Board, Berkshire MPO Alt. (PO)
	<i>vacant</i> , Alternate	
Pittsfield	Sheila Irvin, Delegate	Community Development Board (PO)

	CJ Hoss, Alternate	City Planner (PO)
Richmond	Pete Lopez, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Fred Schubert, Alternate	
Sandisfield	John Field, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	<i>vacant</i> , Alternate	
Savoy	John Tynan, Delegate	Planning Board, Select Board (PO)
	Bill Drosehn, Alternate	
Sheffield	Kenneth Smith, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Rene Wood, Alternate	
Stockbridge	Kate Fletcher, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Nina Ryan, Alternate	
Tyringham	Mark Curtin, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Sarah Hudson, Alternate	
Washington	Don Gagnon, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Lisa Peltier, Alternate	
West Stockbridge	Dana Bixby, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Eric Shimelonis, Alternate	
Williamstown	Dante Birch, Delegate	Planning Board (PO)
	Roger Bolton, Alternate	
Windsor	John Garcia, Delegate	Planning Board, Board of Appeals (PO)
	Doug McNally, Alternate	Select Board (PO)

# Appendix F

## COVID-19 Addendum – Economic Impact through Sept. 2020

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues and the economic impact cannot at this time be fully or accurately measured, this addendum serves to summarize some impact, response, and recovery efforts within Berkshire County to date.

### Official (Nominal) Unemployment

The COVID-19 pandemic has been deleterious to the Berkshire County economy. The most recently available data show that the official unemployment rate for the County has not been lower than 9% since April 2020 and has averaged 14.2% over this period. Additionally, Berkshire County's official unemployment rate has consistently remained above that of the United States throughout this period, although it has been slightly lower than that of Massachusetts. See *Table 12*.

Furthermore, the economies of individual municipalities in the County have been vulnerable to the downsizing by or closure of dominant employers in the area as well as reliance on particularly affected industries such as Accommodation and Food Services and Arts, Recreation and Entertainment. As a result, the municipalities of Adams, Becket, Hinsdale, Lenox, Pittsfield, and North Adams all had April-September average official unemployment rates greater than the Massachusetts average over same period of 14.6%. See *Table 13*.

**TABLE 12: Nominal Unemployment Rate, 2020 Months**

Month	Berkshire County	Massachusetts	United States
September	9.2%	9.6%	7.9%
August	11.0%	11.4%	8.4%
July	16.0%	16.2%	10.2%
June	16.5%	17.7%	11.1%
May	15.8%	16.6%	13.3%
April	16.7%	16.2%	14.7%
March	3.9%	2.8%	4.4%
February	4.3%	2.8%	3.5%
January	4.4%	2.8%	3.6%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; US Census Bureau

TABLE 13: April – September Average Unemployment Rates in Berkshire County

Municipality	Unemployment Rate
Adams	<b>15.6%</b>
Alford	5.9%
Becket	<b>15.5%</b>
Cheshire	11.6%
Clarksburg	12.0%
Dalton	12.9%
Egremont	6.3%
Florida	10.2%
Great Barrington	14.2%
Hancock	7.1%
Hinsdale	<b>15.2%</b>
Lanesborough	11.6%
Lee	14.2%
Lenox	<b>17.9%</b>
Monterey	9.2%
Mount Washington	9.2%
New Ashford	10.4%
New Marlborough	10.6%

North Adams	15.9%
Otis	11.0%
Peru	9.2%
Pittsfield	16.9%
Richmond	9.4%
Sandisfield	8.3%
Savoy	11.3%
Sheffield	10.4%
Stockbridge	9.4%
Tyringham	7.3%
Washington	10.4%
West Stockbridge	10.6%
Williamstown	8.4%
Windsor	10.6%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

### Labor Force

In addition to an increase in the nominal unemployment rate, Berkshire County experienced a sizable decline in the labor force. The change in the labor force is calculated by comparing monthly labor force totals in 2020 and the 2018-2019 averages for the corresponding months. The labor force began declining in March and continued to

remain well below pre-pandemic levels until September, when it showed signs of recovery. *See Table 14.*

During this time, the monthly labor force was on average 5.9% lower than the corresponding 2018-2019 figures. This compared with average declines of 4.8% for Massachusetts and 1.8% for the United States. *See Figure 9.*

TABLE 14: Percent Change in Labor Force, 2020 Months vs. 2018-2019 Months Average

Month	Berkshire County	Massachusetts	United States
September	0.03%	-0.7%	-1.8%
August	-9.1%	-7.4%	-1.2%
July	-5.6%	-3.6%	-1.8%
June	-4.9%	-3.1%	-1.7%
May	-8.1%	-7.1%	-2.6%
April	-10.5%	-11.2%	-3.6%
March	-2.8%	-0.3%	0.4%
February	-0.6%	1.5%	1.3%
January	-0.6%	1.7%	1.5%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; US Census Bureau.

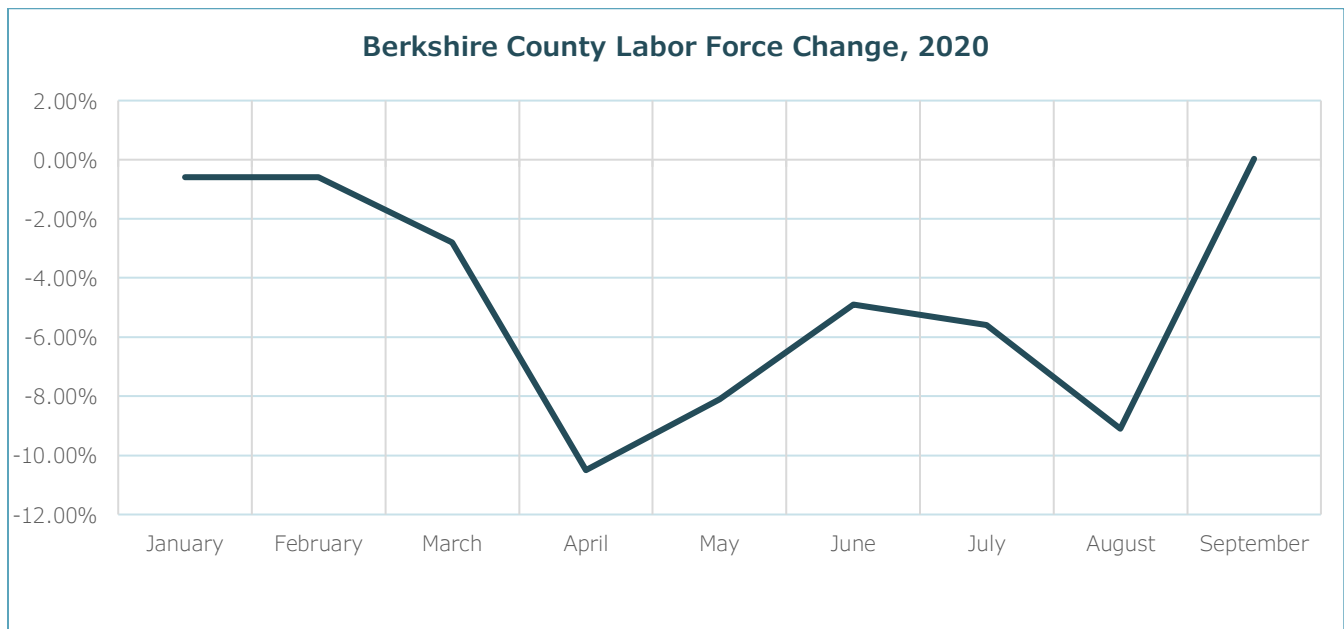


Figure 9. Berkshire County Labor Force Change. Source(s): MA Dept. of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force and Unemployment Data



### Adjusted Unemployment Rate

Combining labor force and unemployment data, we compute a more accurate representation of the employment situation in Berkshire County. This is achieved by adding the absolute change in labor force between 2020 months and the 2018-2019 averages for the corresponding months to the absolute unemployment level for the month and using this summed figure as the numerator in the unemployment calculation. The resulting rate is referred to as the *adjusted unemployment rate*.

The adjusted unemployment rate displays a more drastic picture of Berkshire County

employment than that which is captured by the official unemployment rate. As with the official unemployment rate, the adjusted unemployment rate for Berkshire County has been above 9% since April; however, the average adjusted unemployment rate over this period was 21.7%, compared to only 14.2% for the official unemployment rate. The adjusted unemployment rate shows also how Berkshire County has fared worse in terms of employment than Massachusetts and the United States, which had average adjusted unemployment rates over this period of 20.7% and 13.1%. See Figure 10 and Table 15.

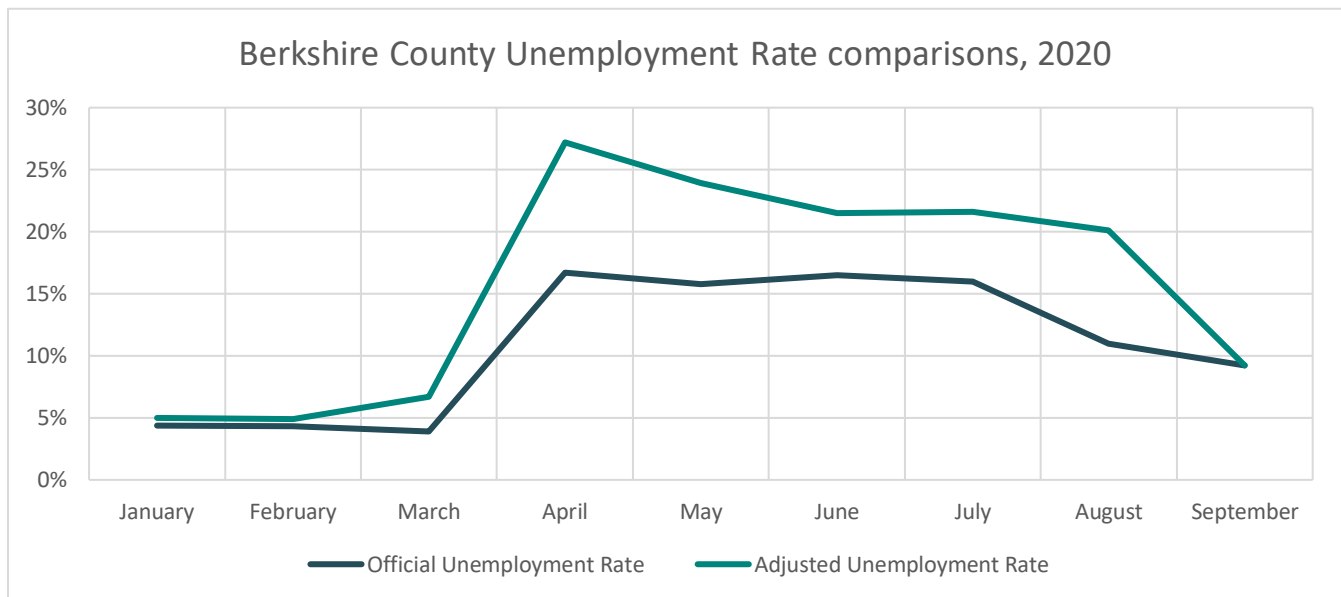


Figure 10. Berkshire County Unemployment Rates, nominal vs. adjusted. Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; US Census Bureau

**TABLE 15: Adjusted Unemployment Rate, 2020 Months**

Month	Berkshire County	Massachusetts	United States
September	9.2%	10.4%	9.7%
August	20.1%	18.8%	9.7%
July	21.6%	19.8%	12.0%

June	21.5%	20.8%	12.8%
May	23.9%	23.7%	15.9%
April	27.2%	27.4%	18.4%
March	6.7%	3.1%	4.0%
February	4.9%	1.3%	2.2%
January	5.0%	1.1%	2.1%

Sources: MA Dept. of Unemployment Assistance, Labor Force and Unemployment Data, US Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Unemployment Insurance Claims

Berkshire County WDA Unemployment Insurance Claims increased dramatically beginning in April of 2020. Earlier months were either on par with corresponding months in 2019 (January and

February), or saw appreciable but not dramatic increases when compared with the previous year (March). Claims slowly but steadily decreased from May through September of 2020 but remained well above typical numbers. *See Figure 11.*

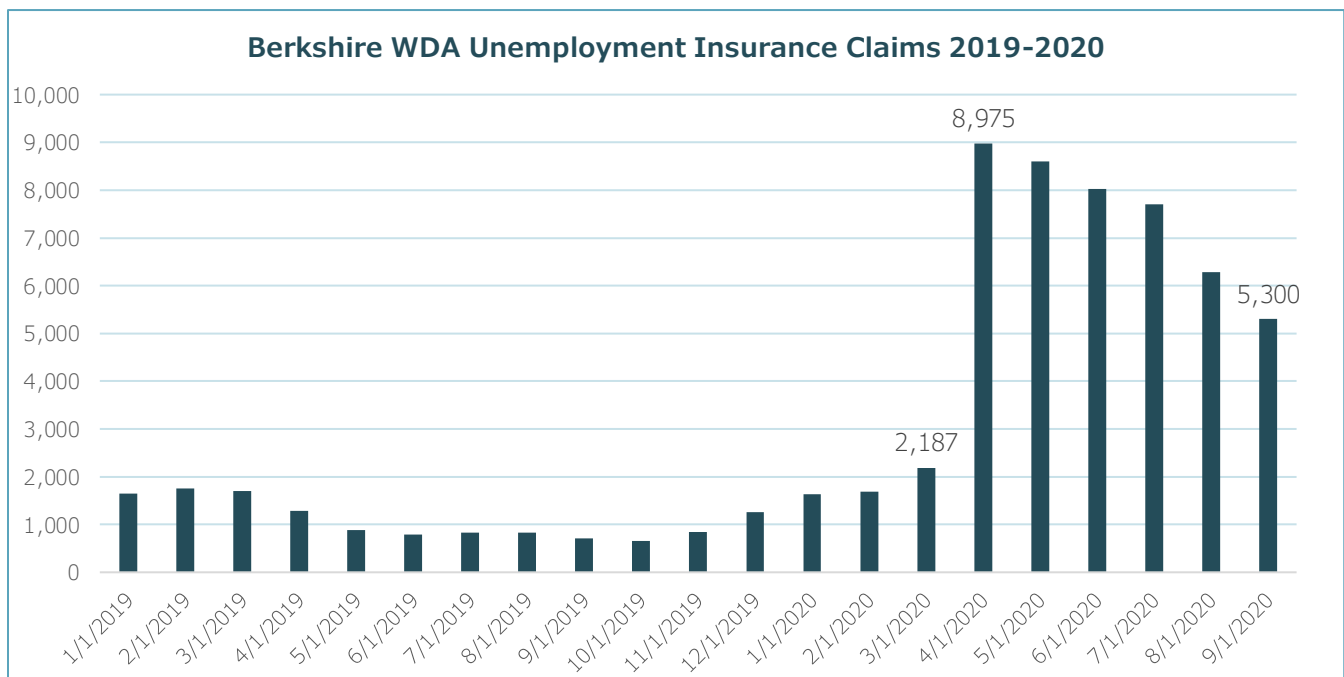


Figure 11. Berkshire WDA Unemployment Insurance Claims 2019-2020. Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

### Federal Assistance – Small Business Administration (SBA) Loans in Berkshire County

As of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020, a total of 2,304 loans have been provided to Berkshire County businesses through the Small Business Administration's paycheck protection loan program (PPP). According to the SBA website, this resulted in a total of 25,865 jobs retained, with an average job retention figure of 11.5 per loan.

To date, 2,004 loans under \$150,000 have been made to Berkshire County organizations totaling \$73,352,628. The average number of jobs retained per loan was 5.5 and the average loan was \$36,603.

To date, 300 loans of \$150,000 or more were made to Berkshire County organizations. Through loans over \$150,000, a total of 15,050 jobs were retained by way of 300 loans. Precise dollar amounts are not available for these loans, but the loan amount ranges provided by SBA indicate the total lending amount was between \$101,300,000 and \$320,702,628. The average number of jobs retained per loan was 50.8.

Treating loans less than \$150,000 and loans greater than or equal to \$150,000 together, the total lending amount was between \$174,652,629 and \$320,702,628 and the average loan was between \$75,804 and \$139,194.

The industry with the highest number of loans awarded to date is Construction, followed by Accommodation and Food Services, Professional and Technical Services, Retail Trade, and Health Care and Social Assistance. *See Table 16.* When assessed by number of jobs retained, four of these five industries remain in the top five. *See Table 17.*

TABLE 16: Number of PPP Loans by Industry in Berkshire County as of November 2020

NAICS Code	Industry	Number of Loans	Percentage
23	Construction	316	14.1%
72	Accommodation and food services	296	13.2%
54	Professional and technical services	267	11.9%
44-45	Retail Trade	249	11.1%
62	Health care and social assistance	233	10.4%
81	Other services, except public administration	224	10.0%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	106	4.7%
56	Administrative and waste services	100	4.5%
31-33	Manufacturing	100	4.5%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	85	3.8%
42	Wholesale Trade	55	2.5%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	44	2.0%
61	Educational services	44	2.0%
52	Finance and insurance	41	1.8%
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	37	1.7%
51	Information	35	1.6%
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	3	0.1%
22	Utilities	3	0.1%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	1	0.0%

Source: US Small Business Administration, November 10, 2020.

TABLE 17: Jobs Retained by PPP Loans by Industry in Berkshire County as of November 2020

NAICS Code	Industry	Jobs Retained	Percentage
62	Health care and social assistance	4,755	19.0%
72	Accommodation and food services	4,193	16.8%
44-45	Retail Trade	2,520	10.1%
23	Construction	2,207	8.8%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	1,911	7.6%
31-33	Manufacturing	1,848	7.4%
81	Other services, except public administration	1,600	6.4%
54	Professional and technical services	1,370	5.5%
56	Administrative and waste services	1,013	4.0%
42	Wholesale Trade	862	3.4%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	803	3.2%
61	Educational services	652	2.6%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	475	1.9%
51	Information	380	1.5%
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	190	0.8%
52	Finance and insurance	173	0.7%
22	Utilities	39	0.2%
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	25	0.1%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	1	0.0%

Source: US Small Business Administration, November 10, 2020.

## Community Development Block Grant COVID (CDBG-CV) Funding

Berkshire County contains one Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement community: Pittsfield, and one mini-entitlement: North Adams. These communities have received additional funding through either HUD or Massachusetts DHCD to support microenterprises through forgivable loans/grant programs.

In addition, two regional applications were awarded funds for multi-municipality programs, one for northern Berkshire County, including Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Dalton, Florida, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, New Ashford, Peru, Savoy, Williamstown and Windsor, and one for southern Berkshire County, including Alford, Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mt. Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Richmond, Sandisfield, Sheffield,

Stockbridge, Tyringham, Washington and West Stockbridge. Through these and the regularly established programs receiving supplemental funds, every municipality in the county has access to some CDBG-CV funds. In all cases, businesses must be for-profit, have five or fewer employees including the owner, and business owners and their families are required to qualify as low-to-moderate income under HUD standards.

The Northern Berkshire Program, led by the Town of Adams, was awarded \$850,000, and is currently accepting applications for up to \$10,000 per business. The Southern Berkshire Program, led by the Town of Lenox, was awarded \$765,000 and is currently accepting applications for the same maximum award of \$10,000 for eligible business expenses.

## Massachusetts Attorney General's Office Small Business Relief Partnership

Through a grant award from the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO), Berkshire Regional Planning Commission established the Berkshire County Small Business Recovery Fund in July of 2020. On a first-come, first-served basis, the total award of \$45,000 was distributed to for-profit small business in the form of sixteen grants to firms no larger than ten employees.

Funds were restricted to reimbursement only of incurred business expenses including rent or lease payments, utilities, marketing, supplies, inventory or documented lost sales. The maximum award per business was \$3,000, with the majority of applicants receiving the maximum amount. Businesses in ten municipalities were impacted by this grant fund.

## Additional Non-Federal Assistance Programs

A range of other local, state and private funding sources have been accessed by Berkshire County entities since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Berkshire County, co-administered by the Berkshire United Way and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, as well as a variety of programs for non-profit cultural entities and individual artists made available by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. In the fall of 2020,

the Commonwealth announced two programs administered through Mass Growth Capital Corporation to support businesses, with a category for micro-enterprises with five or fewer employees, and a category for fifty or fewer employees. In some cases, employees in specific industries such as hospitality and restaurants, were able to apply for micro-grants as a stopgap measure during layoffs and furloughs.

## EDA Cares Act Recovery Assistance

Due to the pending status of Berkshire County's Economic Development District Application, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission was ineligible for non-competitive funds through the Economic Development Administration's Cares Act Recovery Assistance in 2020. An application entitled "Agility and Resilience in Berkshire County" was submitted through the competitive program in June of 2020. A summary of this proposed project, encompassing coordination of short- and long-term economic recovery efforts, is included below.

### Scope of Work

Through a 24-month project, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) will respond to economic injury in Berkshire County as a result of COVID-19, coordinating a comprehensive range of capacity building opportunities directly related to improving the functions and policies of member organizations and local businesses.

On a regional scale, this project will include substantial updates to the 2017-2022 Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in the area of economic resiliency, in order to include pandemic resiliency and recovery as well as more thorough planning for other types of economic disruption.

Staff will identify potential recovery projects within the region, including those previously listed as CEDS Priority Projects, and connect community leaders, project managers, and investors in order to foster recovery efforts and direct resources to eligible projects. Additionally, BRPC staff will pursue projects and initiatives which align with CEDS goals 5 (to support and expand the region's industry and occupational clusters) and 6 (to support the resiliency of individual businesses and the regional economy during future economic disruptions).

The region's online data clearinghouse, Berkshire Benchmarks, will be improved and expanded to include economic indicators which will be used to track recovery from a range of perspectives, including but not limited to income levels, employment numbers in key sectors and industry clusters, unemployment and poverty rates,

utilization of public assistance, tax revenue related to the region's prominent tourism and hospitality economy, cost of living and housing, along with a range of social determinants of health.

BRPC will enlist the county's state-designated Regional Economic Development Organization, 1Berkshire, to provide technical assistance for municipalities as well as for- and non-profit businesses, using a model of direct business consultations, broad access to professional training providers and content experts, assessment of program effectiveness, and careful tracking of participant progress toward improved agility and resiliency. The program will be marketed through direct consultations, in coordination with regional chambers of commerce, through the Berkshire Immigrant Center and Black Economic Council of Berkshire County, and via a multitude of print and digital mediums.

A range of additional community organizations and businesses will be engaged during the course of the project, due to the important services they provide for employers or employees, the technical assistance they offer, or their role in workforce education and retraining, which will be incorporated into the overall support efforts of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. These include but are not limited to:

- Berkshire Innovation Center
- Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire (CDCSB)
- EforAll Berkshire County
- Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network
- MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board
- Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC)

The overall goal of technical assistance work will be to facilitate operational adjustments and provide practical guidance to minimize vulnerability and maximize resiliency in the face of future emergency situations. These adjustments may include revisions to business plans, creation of resiliency plans or municipal-level economic development plans, adoption of regulations and policies to encourage small business growth, and increased connections to peer networks and industry best practices. Technical assistance will also provide

assessment of and/or assistance in adoption of technologies allowing for remote operation, including but not limited to: electronic record-keeping, audio or video conferencing, in-house website management, e-commerce operations, electronic payments/ACH, social media communications, e-newsletter communications, digital contracting and online permitting.

**Specific tasks to be undertaken will include:**

#### ***Regional Resiliency Planning***

- Expand and revise the current Berkshire County CEDS to include an updated and significantly expanded economic resiliency section, taking into account a wide range of potential emergency situations including natural disasters and pandemics along with drastic market downturns.
- Work with regional partners to develop new protocols for coordination of business support during emergency situations.

#### ***Recovery Project Support***

- Identify and foster grant-eligible projects and assist municipal leaders, project managers and investors in bringing beneficial and sustainable projects to fruition.
- Facilitate the implementation of CEDS Priority Projects which will have a positive impact on the region's economy and workforce.

#### ***Economic Indicator Tracking***

- Expand and improve the region's online data clearinghouse, "Berkshire Benchmarks", to include additional metrics for tracking economic recovery, including Median Household Income, Unemployment Rate, County GDP, Employment by industry and occupation sectors, Poverty Rates, SNAP utilization, and local tax receipts for meals, rooms, and AirBnB rentals.

#### ***Technical Assistance and Capacity Building***

- Work with Berkshire County municipalities to establish and improve their policies and operations for increased responsiveness and resiliency during economic disruptions. This will be accomplished through our existing Shared Economic Development Planner program, which allows municipalities in the county to access economic development technical assistance on a part-time basis.
- Provide tools and guidance to small businesses in Berkshire County to better operate virtually

and communicate with employees, customers and other stakeholders during economic disruptions, as well as be better prepared to access state and federal assistance if needed.

#### ***Workforce and Industry Support***

- Work with 1Berkshire as they facilitate working groups and industry task force activities aligned with CEDS, the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board Blueprint, and their own Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 as a means to facilitate meaningful industry, cluster, and ecosystem work toward growth and resiliency.
- Support management and coordination of the Berkshire Site Selector online tool to increase the reach of priority properties for development and growth of taxable real estate.
- Support the 1Berkshire jobs board to promote high quality employment to both local and outside markets of potential workforce participants as businesses build new resiliency strategies for best fit and function.
- Coordinate Economic Development Practitioners meetings, Entrepreneurial Meetups and other networking functions that bring together new small business owners, entrepreneurs, and existing businesses to help them pivot appropriately to meet new market demands and opportunities.
- Facilitate industry-specific leadership groups to collectively work on identified and emergent issues within their clusters, including Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Creative Economy, Food & Agriculture, Healthcare, Hospitality and Tourism, as well as Startups and Entrepreneurs.
- Assessment of emergent industries will be conducted to facilitate resources needed to improve the level of diversification of the regional economic industry portfolio. This will include targeted support for start-up businesses, entrepreneurial guidance and network building, accelerator program support, and other tactics to help bring new businesses on-line, and to help new businesses build their market and resilience.
- Additionally, cross-cutting issues for all clusters will be monitored including transportation, workforce skill development, affordable housing, and accessibility of remote work resources (i.e. Broadband).



# THE TRANSPORTATION & CLIMATE INITIATIVE (TCI)

## *2019 REGIONAL POLICY PROPOSAL DESIGN PROCESS*

The Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) is a regional collaboration of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia that seeks to reduce carbon emissions from the transportation sector and develop the clean energy economy while improving transportation systems.

### **THE OPPORTUNITY: Regional challenges call for regional action**

Pollution from transportation accounts for the largest portion of climate-changing carbon emissions in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region (more than 40% region wide). A recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that ambitious reductions are needed within the next decade to avoid dangerous impacts to public health, infrastructure, and the environment. At the same time, people and businesses across the region are calling for cleaner, more efficient, more equitable, and more resilient transportation options.

Transportation and climate issues don't stop at state borders, and regional challenges call for regional action, in addition to efforts undertaken by individual states. Recognizing an opportunity to address two of our greatest challenges together -- the growing need to improve the way people and goods move from place to place, and the clear and present threat posed by climate change -- TCI was formed in 2010 by the leaders of environment, transportation, and energy agencies for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia. TCI has two overarching goals:

- Making significant reductions in greenhouse gases and other harmful air pollution from transportation across the region; and
- Delivering modern cleaner, more resilient transportation systems that benefit all our communities, particularly those underserved by current transportation options and disproportionately burdened by pollution.

TCI now has 13 participating jurisdictions: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. With facilitation from the Georgetown Climate Center, the states have participated in working groups focused on clean vehicles and fuels, including electric vehicle infrastructure planning, sustainable communities, freight efficiency, and other regional approaches to accelerate the transition to a clean and modern low-carbon transportation future.

### **LISTENING SESSIONS: Gathering public input across states on a clean transportation future**

In 2018, the TCI states hosted a series of listening sessions across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region to actively seek stakeholder input on potential additional regional policy approaches to bring about a cleaner and more resilient transportation future. The six regional listening sessions brought together 100 state officials from across the region and a total of 500 community members, business leaders, municipal officials, a variety of advocates, state and local policy leaders, and other stakeholders representing diverse perspectives and experiences. Through facilitated conversations about their priorities, goals, and policy ideas for a low-carbon transportation future, stakeholders were asked to describe what a low-carbon transportation system of the future might look like. In addition to the regional events organized through TCI, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York held state listening sessions to directly engage stakeholders and communities within their own states.

Three key points emerged through these conversations:

- 1) Participants discussed various potential policies to address emissions from transportation. Pricing emissions from the transportation sector and reinvesting the proceeds was the most frequently discussed policy.
- 2) Participants shared a wide variety of ideas for tangible programs, actions, and incentives to advance a low-carbon transportation system; putting those ideas into action will require substantial new funding and investment; and
- 3) Participants emphasized that policies to accelerate the transition to lower carbon transportation must be designed and implemented equitably and address the needs of communities underserved by transportation and disproportionately affected by pollution.

Informed by what they heard at the listening sessions, by research and analysis, and by the experiences of other state and regional efforts, TCI jurisdictions recognized that a cap-and-invest approach that requires progressively deeper reductions in pollution and generates proceeds that can be invested in safe, clean and affordable transportation options could be well suited to accomplishing these goals.

#### **REGIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: Working together to design a clean transportation policy**

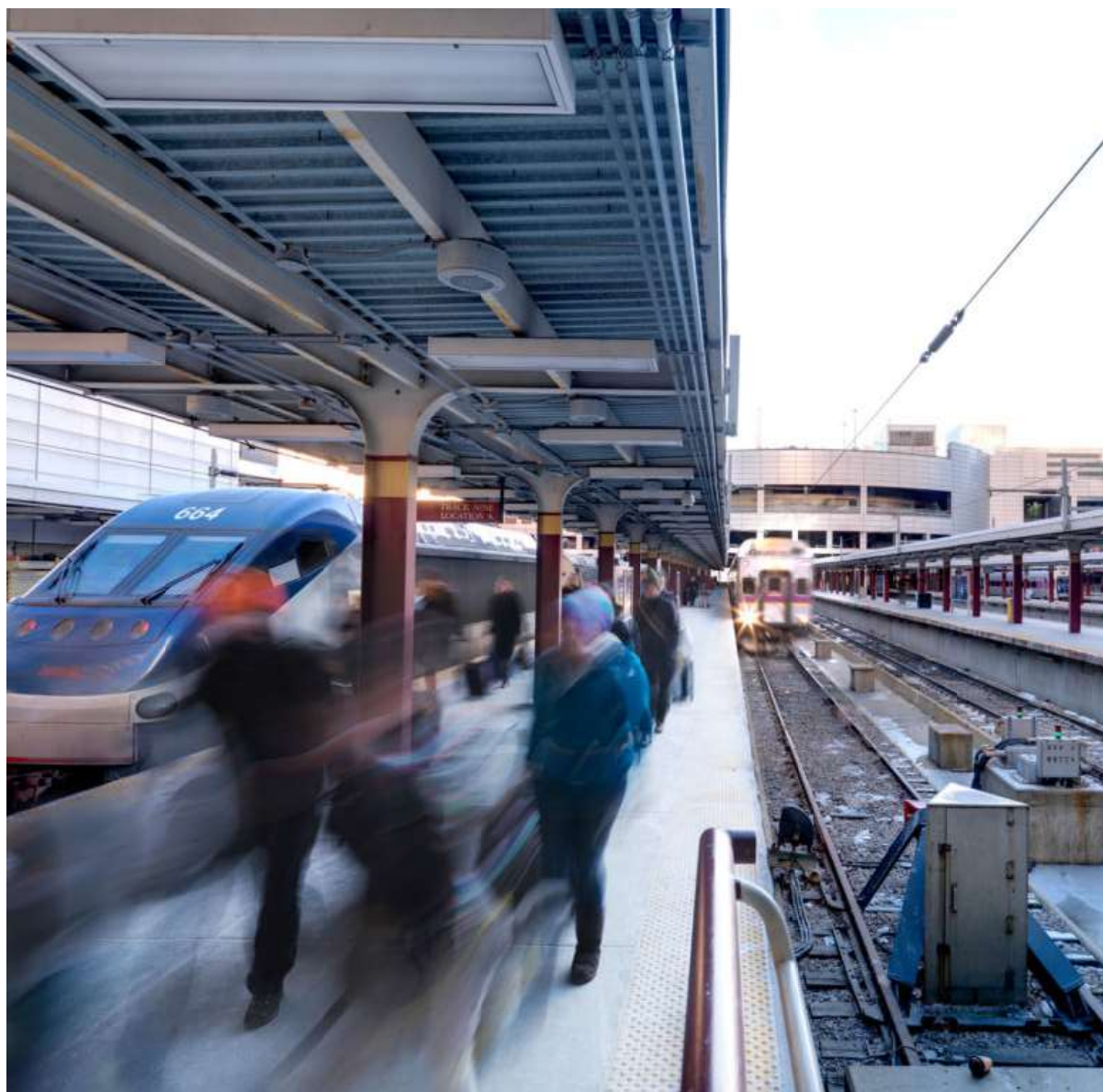
In December 2018, nine TCI states and the District of Columbia announced their joint commitment to design, within one year, a regional low-carbon transportation policy proposal that would cap and reduce carbon emissions from the combustion of transportation fuels through a cap-and-invest program or other pricing mechanism, and would allow each TCI jurisdiction to invest proceeds from the program into cleaner and more resilient transportation infrastructure. After the policy development process has been completed, each jurisdiction will decide whether to adopt and implement the proposed policy.

This announcement emphasized the states' shared commitment to work with stakeholders and communities at every step of the policy design process. TCI states continue to provide opportunities for public input and engagement, through regional stakeholder workshops, online webinars, and a public input form accessible on the TCI website. Individual TCI jurisdictions are also providing state-specific opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the policy design process. With help from Georgetown Climate Center, states are carrying out detailed technical analysis to evaluate the potential environmental, economic, and social benefits of a regional low-carbon transportation program to inform decisions about:

- **Program Design** – Designing the specific policy provisions, including an emissions cap that guarantees real reductions in pollution consistent with the ambitious carbon-reduction goals states have set for themselves; ensuring polluters pay for the pollution they are responsible for; and sharing costs and benefits equitably in ways that benefit communities and boost the economy.
- **Investments** -- Using the proceeds collected from the auctioning of allowances will enable programs and investments in each state that further reduce pollution, address equity and environmental justice concerns, improve transportation resilience, and respond to other related community needs.
- **Complementary policies** – Considering other programs, rules, or approaches that aren't directly part of the cap-and-invest policy, but which increase, accelerate, or bring down the cost of reductions in greenhouse gas pollution, reduce other pollution and improve air quality, improve transportation systems, or address other community needs.

By working together to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon transportation future, TCI jurisdictions aim to deliver better, cleaner, more resilient transportation systems that benefit all our communities, particularly those underserved by current transportation options and disproportionately burdened by pollution.

Additional information on the TCI Regional Policy Design process can be found on the TCI website: [TransportationAndClimate.org](https://TransportationAndClimate.org)



# [DRAFT] East – West Passenger Rail Study Final Report

MassDOT Office of Transportation

Planning

October 2020



## 1. Executive Summary

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) launched the East – West Passenger Rail Study to examine the potential benefits, costs, and investments necessary to implement new passenger rail service connecting western Massachusetts communities with central and eastern Massachusetts (Figure 1-1). The 2018 *Massachusetts State Rail Plan* included a recommendation to evaluate a “Western Massachusetts to Boston Passenger Rail Service Study,” and community leaders, stakeholders, and residents have expressed a desire for such a passenger rail link to enhance multi-modal transportation options available for Massachusetts communities west of Worcester.

*Figure 1-1 – Study's Central Question*

The East – West Passenger Rail Study is intended to answer the central question:

How can we connect people in western Massachusetts with central and eastern Massachusetts using a passenger rail service that provides fast, frequent, attractive service in a cost-effective and achievable manner?

The East-West Passenger Rail Study:

- Identifies transportation corridors that provide new passenger rail connections between Pittsfield, Springfield, Worcester, Boston, and intermediate communities.
- Assesses the geographic, infrastructure, and demographic conditions in the East – West rail corridor.
- Evaluates potential improvement alternatives for enhancing passenger rail connections among the corridor communities.
- Summarizes the projected benefits, costs, impacts, and trade-offs of the improvement alternatives.

Critically, the study has entailed a comprehensive civic engagement process involving residents, businesses, elected officials, and other stakeholders in a series of meetings and through online interaction. This included cooperative development of the following goals for the project:

- Provide better **transportation options** to and from Western Massachusetts
- Support **economic development** throughout the East – West rail corridor
- Improve the attractiveness of Western Massachusetts as **an affordable place to live**
- Reduce the number of **automobile trips** along the corridor
- Reduce **greenhouse gas emissions** and **air quality impacts** from transportation

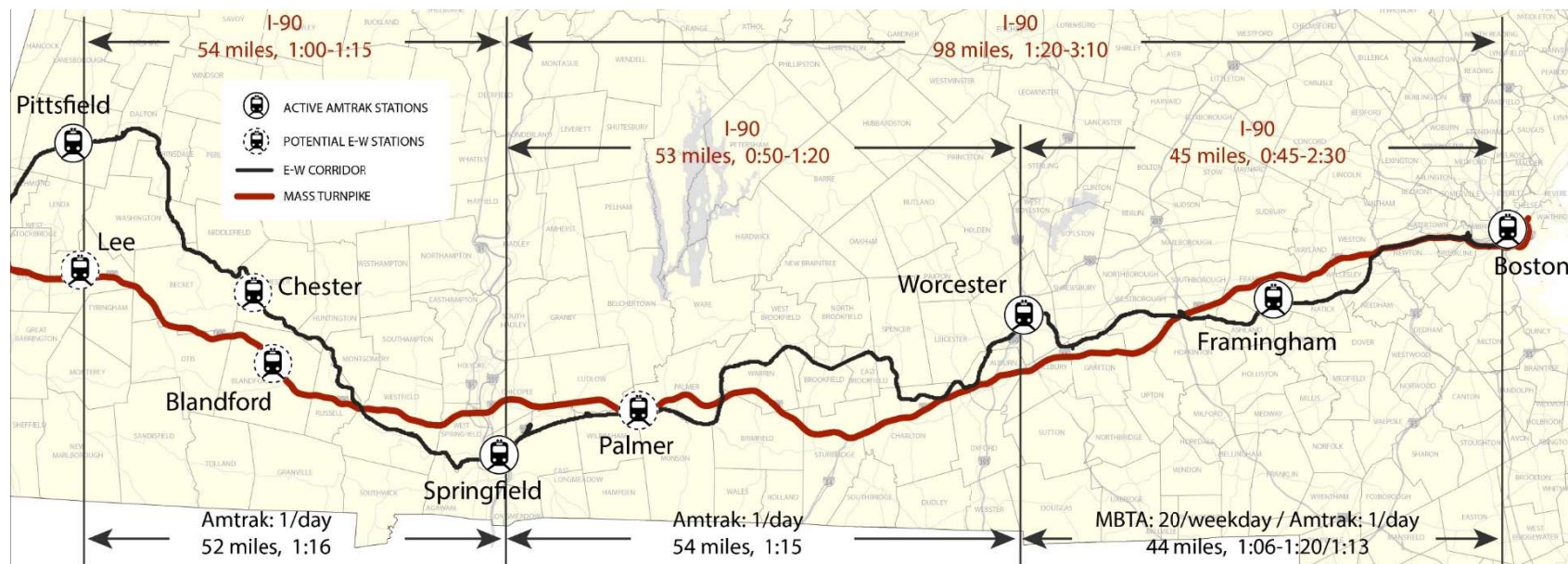


MassDOT recognizes that a robust transportation system is essential to providing residents, businesses, and visitors with mobility to satisfy their economic, personal, and recreational needs. Passenger rail transportation can be an important component of a multi-modal transportation system that increases travel options and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Fast and frequent passenger rail service in the East-West Rail Corridor would enhance mobility and connectivity for Corridor communities, provide residents and stakeholders with additional travel options, and catalyze new economic opportunities, such as development around stations. Improved connectivity among job centers and better mobility for potential workers could increase employment opportunities for workers and expand the talent pool available to employers by better linking the western, central, and eastern regions of the Commonwealth with each other and with a broader travel market.

### 1.1. East – West Study Corridor

Providing an East – West Passenger Rail service requires a continuous transportation corridor that connects the Corridor communities to be served, including existing or new stations; an alignment that is straight enough to support passenger rail speeds that will offer riders attractive travel times; wide enough for necessary railroad infrastructure (existing, upgraded, or new); and a service provider. The study reviewed the potential for such corridors throughout Massachusetts, and identified two feasible study corridors, the Boston – Albany railroad mainline and the Interstate 90/Massachusetts Turnpike corridor. Figure 1-2 shows these two corridors, along with the distances and travel time for the three main corridor segments: Pittsfield – Springfield, Springfield – Worcester, and Worcester – Boston. The following is a summary of these corridors and some of their key issues and opportunities.

Figure 1-2 – Boston – Albany Rail Line and I-90 Corridor – Corridor Length and Travel Time



## Boston – Albany Rail Mainline

The Boston – Albany rail mainline connects existing railroad stations in Pittsfield, Springfield, Worcester, and Boston. The corridor currently serves both freight and passenger rail operations, and has existing railroad track, signal, and other ancillary infrastructure.

- **Corridor Ownership, Control, and Operations.** West of Worcester, this rail line is owned and operated by CSX Transportation, the third largest freight railroad in North America. CSX operates freight service to major terminals in West Springfield and Worcester, along with smaller railyards and freight customers. Between Worcester and Boston, the rail line is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and used principally for frequent commuter rail service on the MBTA Framingham/Worcester Line, which provides 20 weekday round trips between Worcester and Boston. Amtrak generally operates one daily round trip passenger train on the *Lake Shore Limited* between Boston and Chicago with service to the East – West corridor communities; however, decreased travel demand during the COVID-19 pandemic has led Amtrak to reduce frequency to three round trips per week on all long-distance routes, including the *Lake Shore Limited*.
- **Physical Characteristics.** The Boston – Albany rail mainline spans 151 miles between Pittsfield and Boston, with a corridor width that goes from as much as 150 feet near the western end to as narrow as 50 feet in the heavily-developed eastern end toward Boston. At one time, the line had two or more main tracks for the entire length, but sections west of Worcester were reduced to a single track to reduce operations and maintenance costs. The maximum speeds increase as one moves west to east, with steeper grades and tighter curves predominating along the western end of the corridor.

## Interstate 90/Massachusetts Turnpike

The second potential corridor for East – West passenger rail service is the Interstate 90/Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) corridor.

- **Corridor Ownership, Control, and Operations.** The I-90 corridor is owned and operated by MassDOT as an express interstate highway. I-90 is the principal means of passenger travel among the communities of the East – West corridor; it carries large volumes of automobile and truck traffic, and it has high levels of congestion, especially in the eastern segment of the corridor between Worcester and Boston.
- **Physical Characteristics.** The I-90 corridor is generally wider and straighter than the Boston – Albany rail mainline, which could enable the creation of a lower-curvature, higher-speed rail line.

## 1.2. Preliminary Alternatives Analysis

The East – West Passenger Rail Study conducted an alternatives analysis in order to identify the best solution to the study “problem” – How to connect people in western Massachusetts with central and eastern Massachusetts using a passenger rail service that provides fast, frequent, attractive service in a cost-effective and achievable manner?

To answer this question, the alternatives analysis process developed a set of potential solutions, and evaluated how well each one balances these key considerations:

- Benefits: Maximize travel speeds, frequency, and service quality to attract the most riders
- Costs: Minimize capital, operations & maintenance costs
- Impacts: Minimize impacts to property, buildings, open space, and wetlands

To enable MassDOT, the Advisory Committee, residents, and other stakeholders to understand the full range of potential solutions and their trade-offs, six Preliminary Alternatives were developed from a broad set of potential concepts. These Preliminary Alternatives took different approaches to providing improvements, and achieved different levels of speed increase, travel time, frequency, service quality, cost, and impacts. The following are the key factors that were considered in assembling the Preliminary Alternatives.

- **Infrastructure Investments and Speed Improvements.** These investments correspond to the general approach to providing a new or improved rail line, the type and degree of physical improvements to the rail infrastructure, and the degree to which passenger and freight traffic can be separated. It is these investments that determine one of the most important characteristics of the East – West passenger rail service, the travel speed. The greater the level of infrastructure improvement and separation of passenger and freight operations, the higher the speed of service.
  - Shared Track in Existing Rail Corridor – Passenger rail service on the existing rail line, with restoration of full double-track railroad and upgrades to rail and signal infrastructure, but no separation of passenger and freight operations. The steep terrain of the Pittsfield – Springfield segment of the railroad line means that this segment is limited to this level of improvements.
  - Separate Track in Existing Rail Corridor – Passenger rail service on new railroad tracks separated from the existing freight tracks, but mostly within the existing corridor property. This approach can be implemented in the Springfield – Worcester segment of the railroad line, which has flatter, more open terrain than the Pittsfield – Springfield segment.
  - New Track in a Separate Corridor. Passenger rail service on a new, double-track high-speed rail line. Implementing this fully-separated, high-speed passenger rail line requires the use of the I-90 corridor.
- **Service Elements.** The following are service quality characteristics that were assigned to the Preliminary Alternatives to enable a full assessment of their benefits and impacts.
  - Frequency – The frequency of East – West passenger rail service varies across the Preliminary Alternatives, and generally increases with the degree of infrastructure investment.
  - Extent of Rail Service – Some of the Preliminary Alternatives entail passenger rail service to Pittsfield, while some extend rail service to Springfield, with a bus connection to Pittsfield.
  - Stations Served – All Preliminary Alternatives serve the major corridor cities of Pittsfield, Springfield, Worcester, and Boston, while some also serve intermediate towns.

Table 1-1 provides a summary of the six Preliminary Alternatives and their key characteristics:

- The maximum speed increases steadily across the alternatives, and the travel time steadily decreases.
  - Compared to the existing Lake Shore Limited service, Alternative 3, which provides a one-seat ride between Pittsfield and Boston, cuts roughly 30 – 45 minutes off the trip between Pittsfield and Boston, and roughly 25 – 40 minutes off the trip between Springfield and Boston.

- NOTE: These 15 minute ranges represent the travel times calculated for the different “runs” of each alternative in a detailed service plan that reflects maximum speeds for the track geometry and the coordination of the East-West “runs” with other passenger and freight trains operating within the corridor. For example, a detailed service schedule was developed for Alternative 3, and all 16 trips (8 round trips) fit into this range: 3:05 to 3:20 for Pittsfield – Boston and 1:50 to 2:05 for Springfield – Boston. The range provides a means of describing variations in travel times for each alternative, depending upon the specific level of infrastructure improvements.
  - By providing a dedicated passenger-only track parallel to the existing CSX rail line between Springfield and Worcester, Alternative 4 saves an additional 10 minutes compared to Alternative 3.
  - Several “shortcut” realignments in Alternative 5 between Springfield and Worcester save an additional 10 minutes versus Alternative 4.
  - By building a completely new, separated rail alignment in the straighter I-90 corridor, Alternative 6 provides the fastest travel time of all the alternatives: 2:15 to 2:30 for Pittsfield – Boston travel, and 1:15 to 1:30 for Springfield – Boston travel. However, the cost of implementing a totally new railroad line is much higher than the other alternatives.
- Alternatives 1, 2, and 5 would provide bus service between Pittsfield and Springfield, and would require a transfer to the rail service. This has significant negative impacts on travel time and attractiveness of the service.

*Table 1-1 – Passenger Rail Service Characteristics – Preliminary Alternatives*

METRIC /	ALTERNATIVE	NO-BUILD	1	2	3	4	5	6
CORRIDOR TYPE +	ALIGNMENT	SHARED + EXISTING	SHARED + EXISTING	SHARED + EXISTING	SHARED + EXISTING	SHARED + SEPARATE	SHARED + SEPARATE	SEPARATE + NEW
FREQUENCY	RAIL ROUND TRIPS	1	5	7	8	10	10	18
SPEEDS	MAX. PERMITTED (MPH)	80	80	80	90	110	110	150
TRAVEL TIMES RANGE	PITTSFIELD – BOSTON	3:50	3:55 – 4:10	3:35 – 3:50	3:05 – 3:20	2:55 – 3:10	2:55 – 3:10	2:15 – 2:30
TRAVEL TIMES RANGE	SPRINGFIELD – BOSTON	2:28	2:40 – 2:55	2:10 – 2:25	1:50 – 2:05	1:40 – 1:55	1:30 – 1:45	1:15 – 1:30
EAST-WEST STATIONS	PITTSFIELD	✓	(Bus)	(Bus)	✓	✓	(Bus)	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	LEE	-	(Bus)	(Bus)	-	-	(Bus)	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	CHESTER	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-
EAST-WEST STATIONS	BLANDFORD	-	(Bus)	(Bus)	-	-	(Bus)	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	SPRINGFIELD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	PALMER	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	WORCESTER	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	LANSDOWNE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	BACK BAY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EAST-WEST STATIONS	SOUTH STATION	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



### 1.3. Final Alternatives Analysis

Based on the results of the Preliminary Alternatives analysis and feedback from the Advisory Committee, stakeholders, and members of the public, the alternatives were narrowed to a set of three Final Alternatives that all include the following preferred characteristics:

- Rail operations for the full East – West Corridor, from Pittsfield to Boston, via the Boston – Albany railroad mainline.
- Service to all stations in the Corridor, including in smaller intermediate communities: Pittsfield, Chester, Springfield, Palmer, Worcester, Lansdowne, Back Bay, and South Station.
- Passenger rail service in the existing rail corridor; the cost of building a new railroad line in the I-90 corridor (in Alternative 6) was judged to be not worth the incremental travel time savings.

Therefore, the three Final Alternatives comprise the following:

- **Alternative 3** (same as Preliminary Alternative 3) would provide direct passenger rail service between Pittsfield and Boston along a shared track / shared CSX and MBTA corridor. Up to 8 round trips would be provided, with an average travel time of 3:09 between Pittsfield and Boston, and 1:57 between Springfield and Boston. Shown in Figure 1-3. The figures for the Final Alternatives show the alignment of the alternative; the stations served; and the improvements proposed for the alignment (e.g. double-tracking, new rail alignment, etc.). The figures also show a diagram of the rail line with the “Speed Operated.” this is the calculated speed for each segment of the corridor, based on the detailed train performance calculations and resultant service schedule.
- **Alternative 4** (same as Preliminary Alternative 4) would provide direct passenger rail service between Pittsfield and Springfield along a shared track / shared CSX corridor, along an independent passenger track between Springfield and Worcester, and along a shared track/shared MBTA corridor between Worcester and Boston. Up to 10 round trips would be provided, with an average travel time of 2:59 between Pittsfield and Boston, and 1:47 between Springfield and Boston. Shown in Figure 1-4.
- **Hybrid Alternative 4/5** (combines elements of Preliminary Alternatives 4 and 5) would provide direct passenger rail service between Pittsfield and Springfield along a shared track / shared CSX corridor, along an independent passenger track with high-speed shortcuts between Springfield and Worcester, and along a shared track/shared MBTA corridor between Worcester and Boston. Up to 10 round trips would be provided, with an average travel time of 2:49 between Pittsfield and Boston, and 1:37 between Springfield and Boston. Shown in Figure 1-5.

Table 1-2 shows the key metrics that have been evaluated for the alternatives analysis:

- **Ridership.** The ridership forecasts for the alternatives are a critical metric of the overall attractiveness of the proposed alternatives for travelers; it is determined by a combination of demographics (residents and jobs) surrounding the stations and the service quality (travel time and frequency to the traveler’s destination). Ridership is the basis for determining project benefits relative to travel time savings, motor vehicles taken off the highways, air quality improvements, and other measures of project benefit. The total annual trips shown in Table 1-2 are the trips that are projected on the East – West passenger trains for a mature service in the year 2040. These numbers represent “boardings,” i.e. each time a

passenger gets onto a train is a boarding (so a round trip, e.g. Springfield to Boston and the return trip, would count as two). The ridership range was produced by two independent forecasts, with different assumptions, that used two different rail corridors as the starting point.

- Alternative 3 is projected to be used by 922 to 1,188 passengers per weekday.
- Alternative 4 is projected to be used by 1,157 to 1,379 passengers per weekday.
- Hybrid Alternative 4/5 is projected to be used by 1,296 to 1,554 passengers per weekday.
- **Capital Costs.** The capital cost estimate is a key determinant of the challenge of implementation for a given alternative. The capital cost estimates reflect one-time investments in new infrastructure, e.g. new/upgraded stations, track, bridges, yards, utility relocation, signals, property acquisition, vehicle procurement, and professional services. The total also includes a series of contingencies in accordance with standard practices for a cost estimate developed during the planning phase. These capital costs, expressed in 2020 dollars, range from \$2.4 billion for Alternative 3 to \$3.9 billion for Alternative 4 and \$4.6 billion for Hybrid Alternative 4/5.
- **Operations & Maintenance Costs.** These are the annual costs associated with operating and maintaining the service, including labor, fuel, upkeep of facilities and vehicles, and administration.
- **Environmental and Community Impacts.** These include impacts to public and private property, open space, and environmental resources such as open water and wetlands. Grade crossings are included as a safety-related impact.

Figure 1-3 – Final Alternative 3 – Passenger Rail, Pittsfield – Boston, on Upgraded Existing Railroad Tracks

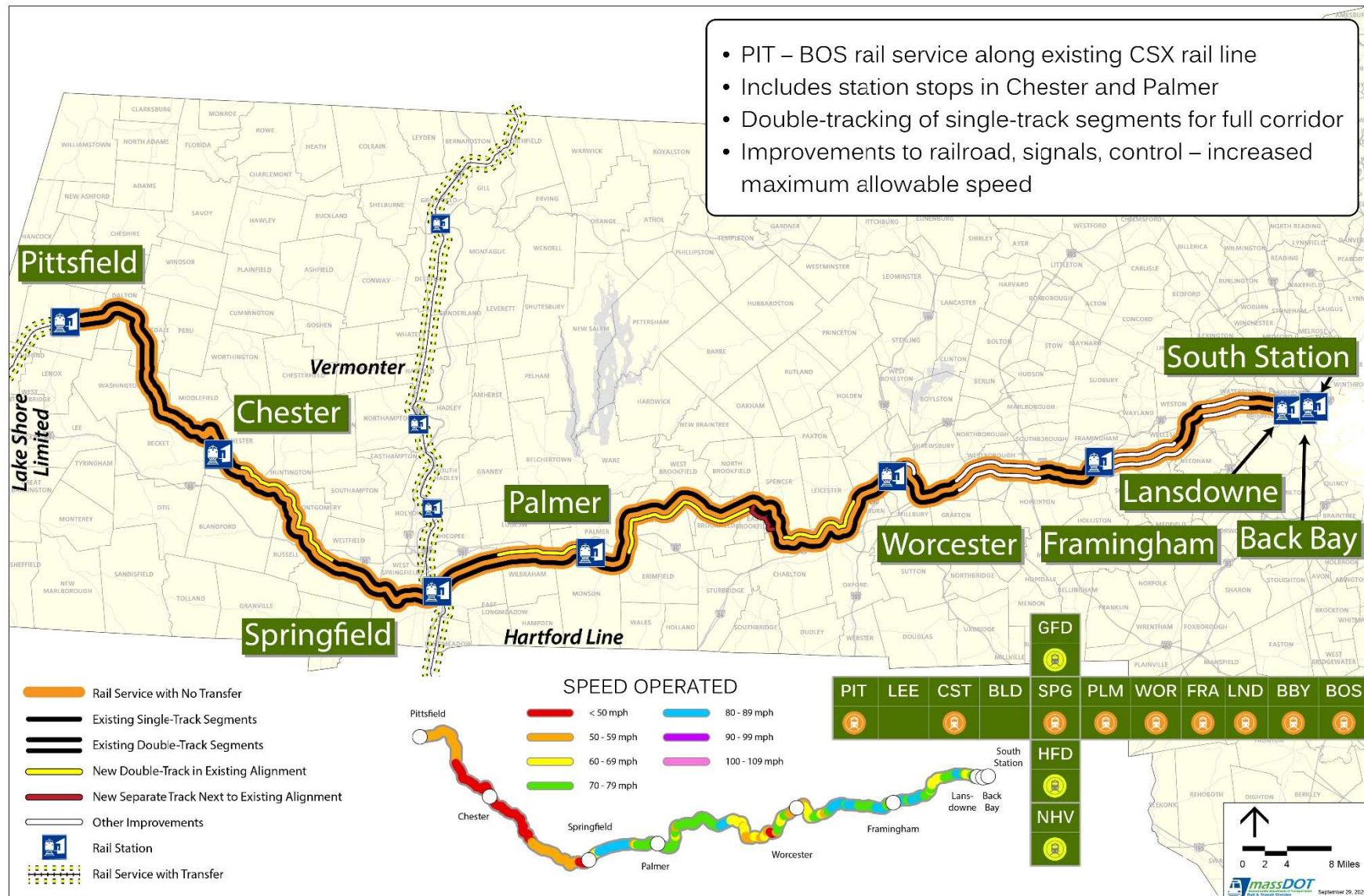




Figure 1-4 – Final Alternative 4 – Passenger Rail, Pittsfield – Boston: Upgraded Existing Rail (PIT – SPG), New Rail in CSX Corridor (SPG – WOR)



Figure 1-5 – Final Alternative 4/5 Hybrid – Passenger Rail, Pittsfield – Boston: Upgraded Existing Rail (PIT – SPG), New Rail with Priority Realignments (SPG – WOR)

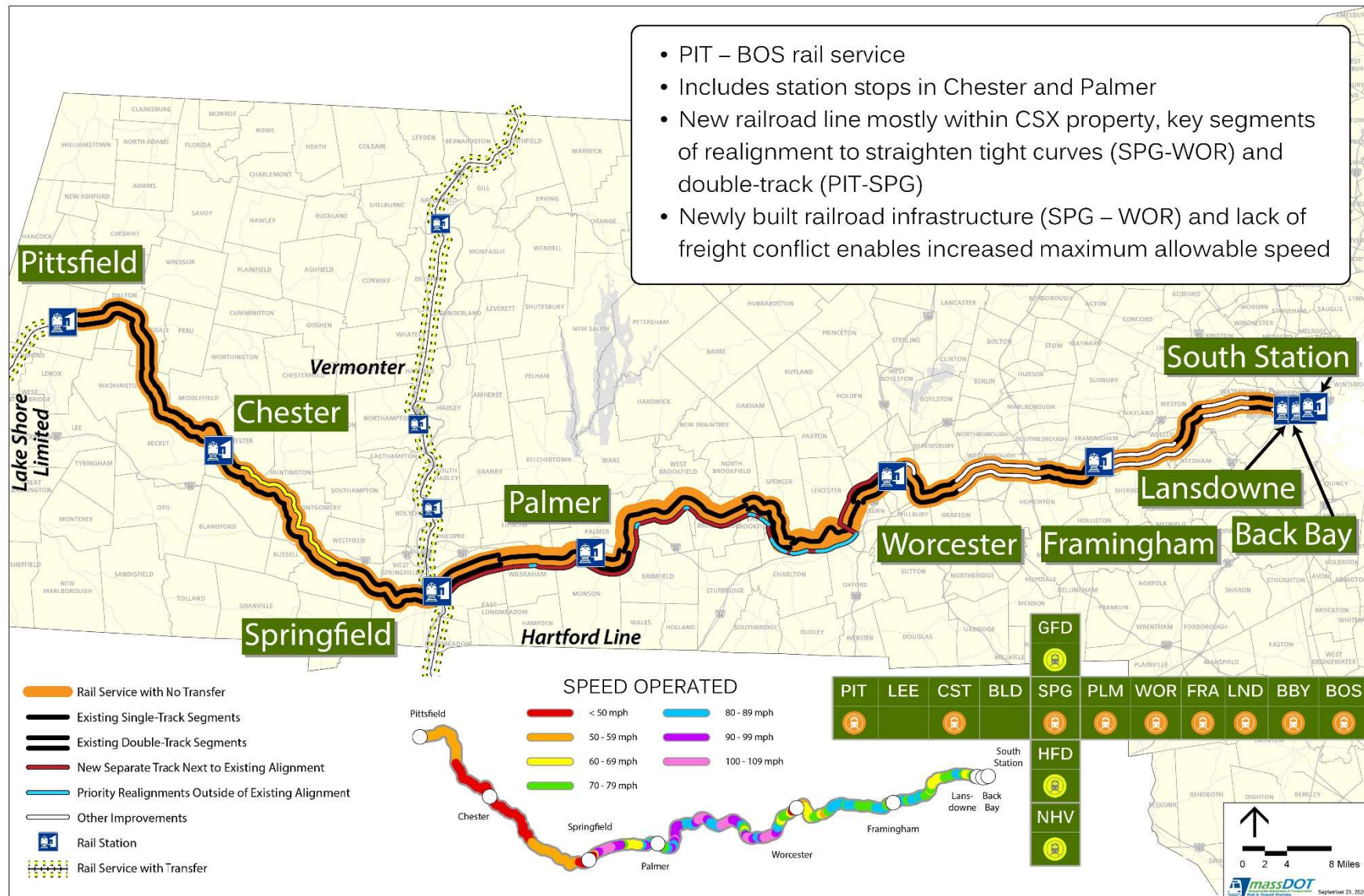




Table 1-2 – Alternatives Analysis Results for Final Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE	3	3	4	4	4/5 HYBRID	4/5 HYBRID
<b>RIDERSHIP FORECASTS</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
STATION / FORECAST SCENARIO	“ENHANCED” HARTFORD LINE	DOWNEASTER	“ENHANCED” HARTFORD LINE	DOWNEASTER	“ENHANCED” HARTFORD LINE	DOWNEASTER
PITTSFIELD	11,400	27,650	13,650	31,500	14,650	33,400
CHESTER	1,400	4,200	1,700	4,700	1,850	5,000
SPRINGFIELD	105,700	116,750	135,700	140,600	152,400	159,500
SPRINGFIELD (Transfers)	10,250	22,200	10,500	21,150	11,250	23,600
PALMER	4,950	6,550	6,050	7,100	6,500	8,000
WORCESTER	19,300	35,250	23,250	39,500	25,500	43,250
WORCESTER (Transfers)	6,400	9,450	7,250	9,550	8,100	11,350
FRAMINGHAM	1,550	650	1,550	450	1,750	800
BOSTON (South Station, Back Bay, Lansdowne)	117,350	135,550	149,700	161,500	169,200	184,100
TOTAL BOARDINGS	278,300	358,250	349,350	416,050	391,200	469,000
<b>COSTS</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
CAPITAL COSTS (2020 \$million)	\$2,414	\$2,414	\$3,860	\$3,860	\$4,625	\$4,625
OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (2020 \$million)	\$27.9	\$27.9	\$34.1	\$34.1	\$33.9	\$33.9
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; COMMUNITY IMPACTS</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
WETLANDS IMPACTS (Acres)	0.45	0.45	7.73	7.73	8.87	8.87
OPEN WATER IMPACTS (Acres)	0.93	0.93	4.02	4.02	4.91	4.91
FLOODPLAINS IMPACTS (Acres)	19.32	19.32	35.63	35.63	37.74	37.74
PRIORITY HABITAT (Acres)	35.79	35.79	58.57	58.57	59.01	59.01
HISTORIC PROPERTIES (Acres)	4.01	4.01	6.77	6.77	6.62	6.62
ARTICLE 97 LANDS (Acres)	3.03	3.03	9.87	9.87	14.57	14.57
NET CO <sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS (METRIC TONS)	8,433	7,023	14,497	13,273	13,544	12,147
IMPROVED AT-GRADE CROSSINGS	30	30	30	30	27	27
BUILDINGS IMPACTED	0	0	92	92	98	98

## Key Findings

Key findings from the Final Alternatives analysis include:

- A substantial reduction in travel times by as much as one hour over current times would be possible with significant new investment in rail corridor infrastructure.
- Passenger rail and CSX operations between Worcester and Pittsfield within an enhanced shared-track environment would require careful coordination of services and clear operational criteria.
- Passenger rail service operated between Worcester and Springfield over an independent alignment adjacent to CSX track(s) eliminates most of the interference between the two operations in this segment.
- Total forecasted ridership for the Final Alternatives indicates commuter, business and recreational travel markets are present to varying degrees along the East-West Corridor, including a pattern of very strong ridership between Springfield and Boston: roughly two-thirds of boardings for each alternative were attributable to Boston-bound trips from Springfield, or the corresponding return trip. Long term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on commuting patterns were not examined as part of this study.
- None of the alternatives achieve all identified objectives. Each contains a set of positive (Pro) and negative (Con) attributes that must be considered with respect to each other to make an informed decision on the overall benefits provided by the alternative.

Key tradeoffs among the Final Alternatives are shown in Table 1-3.

*Table 1-3 – Pros and Cons of Final Alternatives*

ALTERNATIVE	ALTERNATIVE 3	ALTERNATIVE 4	4/5 HYBRID
PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowest capital cost</li> <li>• Fewest land impacts</li> <li>• Fewer grade-crossing impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced travel times / faster speeds</li> <li>• Higher ridership</li> <li>• Reduced passenger / freight interference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowest travel times / fastest speeds</li> <li>• Highest ridership</li> <li>• Reduced passenger / freight interference</li> <li>• Fewer grade-crossing impacts</li> </ul>
CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longest travel times / slowest speeds</li> <li>• Lowest ridership</li> <li>• Greatest passenger / freight interference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher capital cost</li> <li>• Higher land impacts</li> <li>• Higher grade-crossing impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest capital cost</li> <li>• Greatest land impacts</li> </ul>

## Recommendations

Based on the study's Key Findings and Trade-Offs, there is additional study that is needed to fully complete the Conceptual Planning stage for East-West rail, additional evaluation needed for certain physical/operational elements, and strategic decisions that need to be made in order to advance opportunities for turning East-West Passenger rail from a subject of study to a viable project that can be designed, permitted, funded, built, and operated.

While MassDOT acknowledges the preference of many Advisory Committee members to prioritize the 4/5 hybrid alternative, at this stage MassDOT recommends keeping Alternatives 3 and 4 under consideration until additional information becomes known. As such, MassDOT recommends deferring consideration of phasing until more is known about the project's elements.

The following four areas are recommended in order to continue advancing the project during the remaining conceptual planning phase for East West Passenger Rail.

#### **More Detailed Study of Economic and Community Benefits and Impacts**

- Conducting surveys of both businesses and residents to understand market conditions, e.g., likely riders and demographics, fare sensitivity, and other market conditions
- Working with the business community across the Commonwealth and conduct additional analysis to better understand and articulate the full range of potential economic benefits, including anticipating the benefits of how the combination of a post-COVID “new normal” and focused policies to promote affordable living in western Massachusetts affect residential locational choices and work-from-home policies and trends
- Working with local and regional governments and community members to facilitate land use decisions and new development that supports and is supported by rail transportation, and that can make travel without automobiles more viable
- Conducting neighborhood workshops on community impacts and service expectations
- Reviewing and updating cost and ridership estimates periodically to reflect significant new data
- Considering how a price on carbon and VMT fees could impact rail service

#### **Explore opportunities with rail partners**

CSX policy regarding accommodation of passenger rail service along its routes favors complete separation of the passenger operations from its own tracks whenever possible. Separation is required for any passenger rail operation where train speeds exceed 90 mph. Where shared track operations occur, CSX requires new and upgraded construction to meet its latest engineering-related policies concerning weight and clearance requirements as well as design standards. Track restoration elements found in the East-West Study assumed wider track centers (distance between two tracks) than historically found along the route as well as replacement of undergrade bridges to comply with the guidance.

Therefore, MassDOT should:

- Continue discussions with CSX to ascertain whether their support for an East-West passenger service is possible and, if not, what other options exist
- Undertake additional analysis such as rail capacity modeling and right-of-way condition
- Conduct a life-cycle cost analysis, if possible, to determine the full spectrum of costs associated with greater control over the right-of-way.
- Work with Amtrak to determine terms for increased right-of-way usage and the feasibility of service to Albany
- Secure independent appraisal of the current and prospective freight market



## **Understand governance options for expanded passenger rail in western Massachusetts**

MassDOT is not currently set up to operate as a railroad and the MBTA is limited to operations within its service areas. Therefore, state legislative changes will be needed to create a governance structure for passenger rail in the Commonwealth outside of the current MBTA service area. Such a governance structure would not only benefit an eventual East-West Passenger rail, but other services such as the Valley Flyer.

Therefore, MassDOT should develop a white paper to establish governance structure options for passenger rail outside the MBTA service district, considering:

- Structure of a public entity to provide management and oversight
  - Powers and authority
  - Eligibility to receive federal funds
  - Liability
  - Need for balance between operating independence and public control
  - Legal/regulatory, operational, and financial characteristics of intercity and commuter rail service
- Passenger rail operator
- Life cycle costs of acquiring and supporting public interest in the right-of-way and related infrastructure
- Funding sources
  - Development through construction
  - Operations (including any subsidy required for selected fare policy)
  - Maintenance and capital renewal

## **Evaluate funding opportunities and obstacles**

The East – West Passenger Rail project is a large and complex project that would require large capital investments to develop as well as ongoing operations and maintenance funding, likely necessitating a combination of many different funding sources and strategies. MassDOT will need to work with in coordination with state and federal elected officials and other key stakeholders to evaluate and identify funding obstacles and opportunities.

Therefore, MassDOT should:

- Continue to refine capital and operating cost estimates to set the parameters for future funding needs
- Develop a proposal for legislative changes to the federal benefit-cost analysis method based on outcomes from further study of economic and community impacts
- Based on findings from the governance white paper, catalogue existing funding sources and eligible recipients and possible future funding structures.

## BRPC FY22 Assessment Recommendation

11/19/2020

Note: Actual census Population for 2010 used

Recommendation for FY22 - No Increase

		Recommended	Recommended	Option B	Option B	Option C	Option C
		No increase in total assessment over FY21	No Change from FY21 to FY22	1% increase over FY21 Total	Change from FY21 to FY22 with 1% increase	2.5% increase over FY21 Total	Change from FY21 to FY22 with 2.5% increase
	Per Capita Assessment Rate	0.0080	-	0.0081	0.0001	0.0082	0.00020
	Assessment \$	\$ 104,551.32	\$ -	\$ 105,596.83	\$ 1,045.51	\$ 107,165.10	\$ 2,613.78
<b>Community</b>	<b>2010 Population</b>						
Adams	8485	\$ 6,760.55	-	\$ 6,828.16	\$ 67.61	\$ 6,929.56	\$ 169.01
Alford	494	\$ 393.61	-	\$ 397.55	\$ 3.94	\$ 403.46	\$ 9.85
Becket	1779	\$ 1,417.45	-	\$ 1,431.62	\$ 14.17	\$ 1,452.89	\$ 35.44
Cheshire	3235	\$ 2,577.55	-	\$ 2,603.33	\$ 25.78	\$ 2,641.99	\$ 64.44
Clarksburg	1702	\$ 1,356.11	-	\$ 1,369.67	\$ 13.56	\$ 1,390.01	\$ 33.90
Dalton	6756	\$ 5,382.98	-	\$ 5,436.81	\$ 53.83	\$ 5,517.55	\$ 134.57
Egremont	1225	\$ 976.06	-	\$ 985.82	\$ 9.76	\$ 1,000.46	\$ 24.40
Florida	752	\$ 599.17	-	\$ 605.16	\$ 5.99	\$ 614.15	\$ 14.98
Great Barrington	7104	\$ 5,660.26	-	\$ 5,716.86	\$ 56.60	\$ 5,801.77	\$ 141.51
Hancock	717	\$ 571.27	-	\$ 576.98	\$ 5.71	\$ 585.55	\$ 14.28
Hinsdale	2032	\$ 1,619.04	-	\$ 1,635.23	\$ 16.19	\$ 1,659.52	\$ 40.48
Lanesborough	3091	\$ 2,462.81	-	\$ 2,487.44	\$ 24.63	\$ 2,524.38	\$ 61.57
Lee	5943	\$ 4,735.21	-	\$ 4,782.56	\$ 47.35	\$ 4,853.59	\$ 118.38
Lenox	5025	\$ 4,003.77	-	\$ 4,043.81	\$ 40.04	\$ 4,103.86	\$ 100.09
Monterey	961	\$ 765.70	-	\$ 773.36	\$ 7.66	\$ 784.84	\$ 19.14
Mt. Washington	167	\$ 133.07	-	\$ 134.40	\$ 1.33	\$ 136.40	\$ 3.33
New Ashford	228	\$ 181.65	-	\$ 183.47	\$ 1.82	\$ 186.19	\$ 4.54
New Marlborough	1509	\$ 1,202.33	-	\$ 1,214.35	\$ 12.02	\$ 1,232.39	\$ 30.06
North Adams	13708	\$ 10,922.12	-	\$ 11,031.34	\$ 109.22	\$ 11,195.17	\$ 273.05
Otis	1612	\$ 1,284.40	-	\$ 1,297.24	\$ 12.84	\$ 1,316.51	\$ 32.11
Peru	847	\$ 674.86	-	\$ 681.61	\$ 6.75	\$ 691.73	\$ 16.87
Pittsfield	44737	\$ 35,645.09	-	\$ 36,001.54	\$ 356.45	\$ 36,536.22	\$ 891.13
Richmond	1475	\$ 1,175.24	-	\$ 1,186.99	\$ 11.75	\$ 1,204.62	\$ 29.38
Sandisfield	915	\$ 729.04	-	\$ 736.33	\$ 7.29	\$ 747.27	\$ 18.23
Savoy	692	\$ 551.37	-	\$ 556.88	\$ 5.51	\$ 565.15	\$ 13.78
Sheffield	3257	\$ 2,595.07	-	\$ 2,621.02	\$ 25.95	\$ 2,659.95	\$ 64.88
Stockbridge	1947	\$ 1,551.31	-	\$ 1,566.82	\$ 15.51	\$ 1,590.09	\$ 38.78
Tyringham	327	\$ 260.54	-	\$ 263.15	\$ 2.61	\$ 267.05	\$ 6.51
Washington	538	\$ 428.66	-	\$ 432.95	\$ 4.29	\$ 439.38	\$ 10.72
West Stockbridge	1306	\$ 1,040.58	-	\$ 1,050.99	\$ 10.41	\$ 1,066.59	\$ 26.01
Williamstown	7754	\$ 6,178.16	-	\$ 6,239.94	\$ 61.78	\$ 6,332.61	\$ 154.45
Windsor	899	\$ 716.29	-	\$ 723.45	\$ 7.16	\$ 734.20	\$ 17.91
Overall total	131219	\$ 104,551.32	\$ -	\$ 105,596.83	\$ 1,045.51	\$ 107,165.10	\$ 2,613.78



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Delegates & Alternates, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Thomas Matuszko, AICP, Executive Director  
**DATE:** November 13, 2020  
**SUBJ:** Executive Director's Report

### **A. FY 2021 State Budget Update - Status of District Local Technical Assistance and other important priorities**

Funding for the District Local Technical Assistance Program was included in the Governor's version of the FY 21 budget as well as the House's version. It was not included in the version of the budget released by the Senate Ways and Means. As I write this memo, there is an effort by some Senators to have it included in the Senate version as an amendment. I hope that I can update the Commission at the meeting.

### **B. CPTC Training**

The Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) is a collaborative made up of the Massachusetts Dept. Housing & Community Development, UMass Center for Agriculture, Mass Association of Regional Planning Agencies, Mass Chapter American Planning Association, Mass Audubon, Mass Association of Planning Directors, citizen and professional planners. It's mission is to empower land use officials to make effective and judicious decisions in the areas of development, transportation, natural resources and the environment by providing educational opportunities, access to information and resources, and by enhancing cooperation among and integration of land use boards within local government. CPTC provides training designed for Massachusetts Planners, Boards of Appeal, Zoning Enforcement Officers and others interested in land use in Massachusetts. This Fall's training sessions will be virtual. The full schedule of trainings can be accessed here, <https://masscptc.org/training/autumn/fall-workshops-20.html>

### **C. Office Update**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRPC Office is still closed to the public. Since we could partially re-open in the summer, up to 10 staff have been allowed to be in the office on any single day. Most days there have been significantly fewer staff. With the recent surge in COVID cases, I have requested that staff not go into the office unless it is necessary for them to do so to conduct their work responsibilities. When staff are in the office they need to keep their face covering on, except when they are in a private office with the door closed.