The 2015 CEDS Plan and 2019 Annual Report were developed by FRCOG under the guidance of the CEDS Committee and its partners, and as funded by EDA and FRCOG.

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2019 CEDS Annual Report: *Franklin County Data Snapshot*

**Key Data Points:**

- Most rural area of the Commonwealth, with 75% of its acreage in forest and open land.
- Stable population level, with projected decline.
- Older workforce now and projected in the future.
- Large increase in labor force size and the number of employed in 2018, compared to previous years.
- Lowest average earnings per job of all counties.
- Lower percent of workers employed in private for-profit sector, compared to state and nation.
- High percentage of private sector jobs are in healthcare & social assistance and manufacturing.

**Average Earnings Per Job**

- $44,635 Franklin County (lowest in state for last 15 years)
- $73,246 Massachusetts
- $60,660 United States


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**Top Five Industry Sectors by Employment**

1. Healthcare and Social Assistance (18.6%)
2. Manufacturing (18.1%) MA (6.8%) US (9.1%)
3. Retail Trade (14.6%)
4. Accommodations & Food (10.1%)
5. Education Services (7.0%)

*Note: Data only includes private-sector establishments with at least five employees.*
2019 CEDS Annual Report: Infrastructure & Clusters

Infrastructure:

- Crossroads of I-91 & Route 2.
- Two general aviation airports.
- Freight rail access at East Deerfield Railyard and passenger rail service in Greenfield.
- MassBroadband 123 “middle mile” fiber network.
- For “last mile”, only ½ of Franklin County towns have cable tv broadband. Plans underway for new last mile solutions to be deployed in these communities.
- 10 Franklin County towns have neither a public water or wastewater system in its village center, and 4 towns have one or the other.
- Six planned industrial parks in the county. To accommodate future businesses, new planned industrial land is needed.

Key Industries & Clusters

- Creative Economy
- Education & Knowledge Creation, including Independent Schools
- Forest, Farm and Food Production
- Green Economy – Building/Construction
- Healthcare
- Manufacturing, including Metal Products & Precision Machining; Advanced Materials; Paper & Packaging
- Tourism, including Outdoor/Adventure Recreation
Approach to Economic Development:

- Leverage the area’s intrinsic and emerging assets to create economic opportunity in a manner that is both sustainable and reflects its inherent character; and

- Create the capacity needed to take action through collaboration within and outside of the area.

Strategies are designed to be:

- Highly relevant to the needs and advantages of this region.
- Have a meaningful impact and regional scope.
- Achievable in a five-year time frame.
- Implemented with workforce development, business organizations, municipalities, and other regional partners.

**Strategy 1.** Respond to market opportunities by ensuring access to basic and sector-specific skills training for adults and youth.

Ensure sustainability and expansion of **Manufacturing Skills Initiative** by supporting Manufacturing Market Manager/Coach position.

*The following Strategies include select action items and projects. To view all action items and projects, and their updates download the 2019 CEDS Annual Report at www.frcog.org/publication.*
Strategy 2.
Build collaborations within the region to enhance capacity and better support economic and business development opportunities.

Engage community and economic development leaders through the CEDS Program and FREDI, the Franklin Regional Economic Development Initiative.

Coordinate a **summit for business associations and chambers** to build capacity and enhance their ability to support businesses.

Strategy 3.
Build collaborations with neighboring regions to better leverage economic development opportunities.

With the closure of Vermont Yankee, a new collaboration with VT and NH regions has formed to look at shared economic challenges and opportunities.

Participate in **Pioneer Valley-wide** economic development initiatives, and sustain the outcomes of the **Northern Tier Economic Resiliency Project**.
2019 CEDS Annual Report: Strategies & Action Items

**Strategy 4.**
Invest in infrastructure that supports business development in appropriate areas that are currently under-utilized.

Support “Last Mile” broadband services & IT intensive facilities.

Image: MassBroadband123 fiber, MBI

Expand inventory of usable industrial/commercial space

Image: Former Bendix site, Greenfield

Continue the successful FRCOG Regional Brownfields Program.

Images: 2012 & 2014 Usher Mill, Erving

**Strategy 5.**
Increase the amount of functional space available to foster the growth of small business.

Support Downtown Revitalization

*Through planning:*
Downtown market surveys and parcel studies;
Complete Streets assessments

Image: Cover of South Deerfield Study

*Through project development:*
Greenfield parking garage;
Makerspaces and collaborative workspaces

Image: New Olive Street Parking Garage
Strategy 6.
Accelerate business development and sustainability through direct support.

Ensure access to **business technical assistance** and **non-traditional financing**.

Develop programing on:
- **Business succession** planning
- **Institutional buying** and **government contracts**

Strategy 7.
Support the ability of individual establishments and the economy to be resilient in case of future economic disruptions.

Support **communication framework** for business and emergency preparedness communities

Develop programing on:
- **Emergency preparedness** for businesses & organizations, and their employees
Strategy 8.
Enhance specific industry clusters through increased market understanding and asset development.

Forest, Farm and Food Production
- Create business programs that support forestry, recreational tourism, and marketing for local wood products
- Expand use of WMFPC and institutional buying of products
- Create a shared cold storage facility
- Access to small scale poultry processing

Tourism and Creative Economy
- Address mill building at river access point in Monroe Bridge
- Promote more visitors by rail
- Conduct a study of performance venues
- Support creative economy networking events

Before and after photos of mill at Monroe Bridge
Amtrak stop in Greenfield
Bank Building, Greenfield
Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Project
FCCDC Western Mass Food Processing Center’s (WMFPC) new cold storage facility