

Community Development Corporation
of South Berkshire

Community Investment Plan, 2020-2022

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Submitted by

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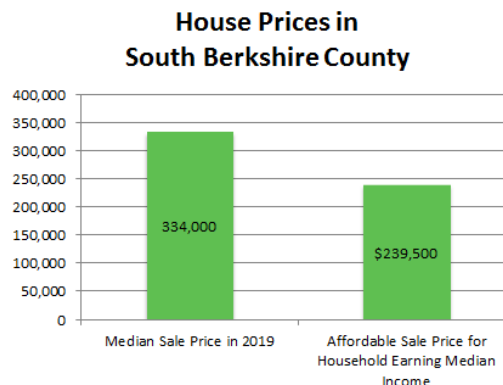
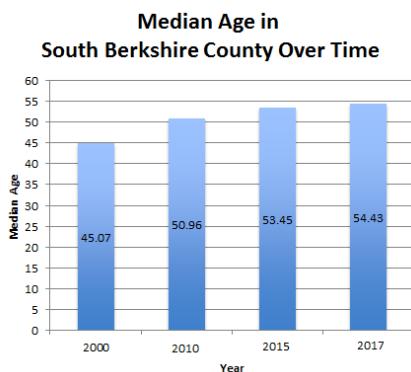
I. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUSINESS AND SERVICE AREA

The Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire, Inc. (CDCSB) is a 501(C)3 nonprofit corporation whose **mission is to provide affordable housing and economic development opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons in the southern Berkshire region.** This mission is carried out in three general areas of work: (i) developing affordable housing opportunities; (ii) creating new jobs by supporting the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing local businesses; (iii) supporting community development initiatives of other community-based nonprofit organizations. Input to this CIP has been given via several public meetings listed in Section 2 and via personal conversations with the Town Managers and Town Planners of Great Barrington and Lenox, the Executive Director of Berkshire Housing Development Corporation, the Housing and Transportation Planner at Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Economic Development Director of 1Berkshire, and the Outreach Committee of Trinity Episcopal Church, Lenox.

Service Area

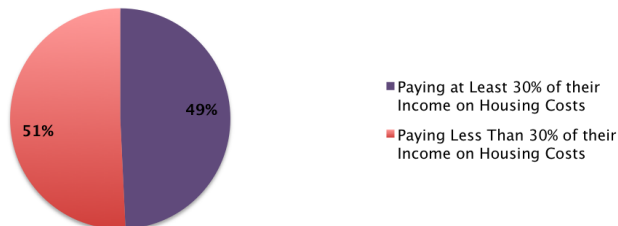
CDCSB's service area includes all of Berkshire County, with a primary focus area on the fifteen towns south of Pittsfield: Lenox, Richmond, Lee, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Great Barrington, Tyringham, Egremont, Alford, Sheffield, New Marlborough, Monterey, Otis, Mt. Washington, and Sandisfield. Within this focus area, CDCSB's work concentrates in the communities that have some level of public infrastructure (town water and sewer) and have ready access to services: Great Barrington, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, Lee, Lenox, and Sheffield. The largest of these, Great Barrington, has a population of 6915; the populations of the other towns range from 140 to 5796 (US Census ACS 2017).

The south Berkshire region is characterized by its rural setting with a predominance of open space, agricultural land with a trend for increasing "rural sprawl"; e.g. the population in the core of downtown Great Barrington has declined by 5% over the last fifteen years; in Housatonic by 36%. The economy is primarily service-based, driven by the hospitality and tourism industry. Land costs are disproportionately high, driven by the vacation, retirement, and second home markets. Land costs are rising; wages are declining. The combination of low wage-paying jobs and high housing costs has made it especially difficult to retain the area's youth; the population is declining and aging with a median age of 53. In October 2019 the unemployment rate in the larger towns ranged from 2.8% in Lenox to 1.6% in Sheffield (MA EOLWD). In 2017 the poverty rate in the larger towns ranged from 12.8% in Lenox to 8.4% in Great Barrington (US Census ACS). These statistics indicate a significant population of "working poor." The population is 94% white, with a slowly growing Latino population.

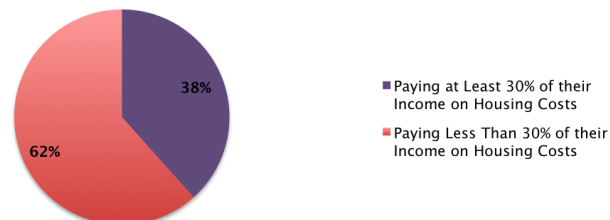


Median household income ranges from \$54,000 in Stockbridge to \$105,625 in Alford. The median household incomes in the larger towns, holding the majority of the population, average approximately \$58,000. The median sale price of homes in the south Berkshire region is \$334,000. The affordable sale price for a household earning the median income in the south Berkshire region is \$239,500.¹ Nearly half of all renters and more than one-third of homeowners with a mortgage pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Homeowner and rental vacancy rates are both less than 2%. Only Great Barrington and Stockbridge meet the 10% Subsidized Housing Unit threshold set by Chapter 40B. There is a very deep need for affordable housing throughout the area, for both rental and home ownership.

Housing Cost Burden for Renters in South Berkshire County



Housing Cost Burden for Homeowners with a Mortgage in South Berkshire County



II. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION

A. CDCSB is a Membership organization. The Membership has increased 24% over the last two years to 50 Members. Annual membership meetings have become very successful mini-strategic planning sessions and attract key stakeholders such as Town Planners and Selectmen, as well as low- and moderate-income constituents. These sessions are opportunities to re-examine the CIP as well as specific projects. There were 20 attendees at the 2019 Annual Meeting and the discussion concentrated on economic development.

The Membership elects the Board of Trustees, of which there is a minimum 20% low-/moderate-income representation, ensuring continuous input from potential end-users of CDCSB projects. The Board of Trustees meets monthly to monitor progress on projects and give input into the process and annually has a Board Retreat for strategic planning and organizational evaluation.

CDCSB has initiated a film series “Dinner and a Movie” that highlights community development issues: the first was a showing of “Citizen Jane: Battle for the City,” a documentary on the epic battle for the future of downtown Manhattan in the 1960s, followed by the PBS documentary “Affordable Green Housing” and, in February 2019, “One Big Home” set in Martha’s Vineyard ([Exhibit 6](#)). The film maker was present for this last showing and the local theater filled to capacity; with a lively discussion about parallel housing issues in the Berkshires. There are plans to present two to three films/community discussions annually as input to ongoing strategic planning.

B. CDCSB is very active in local and regional community development stakeholder and practitioners organizations: 1Berkshire ([Exhibit 2](#)) bimonthly meetings of county-wide stakeholders, HousingUs monthly meetings of regional affordable housing organizations, and numerous working groups organized by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission ([Exhibit 3](#)) around economic development and housing issues. This consistent engagement with the larger community provides input and feedback on CDCSB strategic planning initiatives from virtually every social and economic sector of the county: educational

¹ Based on MHP’s mortgage affordability calculator. For a family of four in a single family home in Great Barrington, with a 30 year fixed mortgage, \$15,000 down payment, 4% interest rate, \$78/month in homeowner’s insurance, and \$600 in other monthly debts.

institutions, financing entities, large and small businesses and business associations, and community-based nonprofits. It also ensures that rural housing and development issues are well represented in regional planning initiatives.

C. Resident and stakeholder involvement in CDCSB planning through partnering with other local nonprofits on particular projects. There has been continuous communication between CDCSB and Construct, Inc. the primary regional housing and homeless services organization. Construct, Inc. manages CDCSB rental housing units; CDCSB has been the development consultant on Construct, Inc. housing projects. This relationship provides input into determining CDCSB development priorities as well as for the programmatic and physical design of individual CDCSB housing projects.

CDCSB's collaboration with Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC), the largest affordable housing developer in Berkshire County, has blossomed with their partnering on two current LIHTC projects, *Bentley Apartments* and *910 Main Street*. Their development expertise and operating management experience has been critical to the development of our projects and grounding them in the local need.

D. Community engagement with regional and national economic development nonprofits. CDCSB has a very close working relationship with the Schumacher Center for New Economics ([Exhibit 4](#)) and BerkShares, Inc., Berkshire County's regional currency. A major initiative of the Schumacher Center and BerkShares is the development of Community Supported Industry (CSI), an initiative modeled on the success of Community Supported Agriculture. Concentrating on import replacement, CSI enlists deep community involvement in both the creation and sustaining of local industry, and in sharing the financial risks involved in the business startup and expansion. CSI has significant job creation potential as well as great potential impact on the strength and long-term sustainability of the local/regional economy. This initiative is virtually community engagement personified with community input and feedback at every stage: in conceptual and programmatic design, in implementation, in accountability and evaluation. CDCSB has made supporting the development of this initiative a strategic priority.

CDCSB is also playing a supportive role in "EforAll", a three-year Berkshire County-wide entrepreneurship program spearheaded by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, ensuring rural participation and helping to provide stable of Mentors.

E. Stakeholder input from open space organizations. The Executive Director of CDCSB sits on the Board of Trustees of two open space and land conservancy organizations: the Stockbridge Land Trust and the Great Barrington Land Conservancy. Affordable housing, economic development, and open space preservation are inseparable in a rural environment. The monthly sharing of the planning and programming of these organizations with CDCSB insures symbiotic development priorities and has provided many opportunities for partnering and co-sponsorship on activities and projects.

F. Project specific community engagement. CDCSB routinely establishes venues for community input into specific development projects. Multiple neighborhood and public input meetings are held during the early design and predevelopment stages of projects, ensuring maxim possible neighborhood support. 100 Bridge, the cleanup and redevelopment of an 8-acre brownfield site in the center of Great Barrington, has provided an excellent formal process for local resident input with guidelines from Mass. Department of Environmental Protection. A Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed (with multiple public meetings for input into the PIP itself) that formally lays out the process with which the public is informed of site plans and activity, and ways in which the public has input into the actions taken on the site. The PIP email list has 60 recipients and public meetings routinely draw 20-30 residents. This process will continue with regular public meetings in the coming years until the site is fully developed.

G. Engagement with municipalities. Projects are, without exception, developed collaboratively with town Boards, Committees, and Administrations. The “Friendly 40B” and the 40R Smart Growth Overlay District are our primary zoning strategies, both collaborative permitting process with Towns (**Exhibit 5**). CDCSB has nurtured and sustained excellent working relationships with town Administrators and town Planners that has both informed town planning and also responds to town planning and priorities. CDCSB meets regularly with Town officials and participates in ongoing planning around housing, economic development and community issues. CDCSB, along with other community stake holders, is currently participating in the development of a Climate Change Municipal Vulnerability Plan. The trust earned through this level of engagement over the years has established an open and collaborative culture for the development of CDCSB projects.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

GOAL #1 Create healthy, diverse, and sustainable communities in south Berkshire County.

Strategy 1: Significantly increase the number of affordable housing units in south Berkshire County, enabling residents to work and live in the same communities (**Exhibit 7**)

Outcomes: (i) direct benefit for low- and moderate-income households; (ii) communities and the region at large benefit from a more stable and diverse population; (iii) business community, school systems, and municipalities benefit with being able to attract and retain employees.

Strategy 2: Develop projects that contribute to low-carbon footprint living

Outcomes: (i) provides low- and moderate-income households with livable/walkable community; (ii) provides low- and moderate-income households with affordable utility costs; (iii) provides a model of energy independence for the community at large; (iv) increases the vitality of town centers; (v) increases food security and quality of life for the entire region by preserving farm land and open space; (vi) provides local students with opportunities to study renewable energy creation and energy conservation; (v) contributes to the overall energy independence of the region.

Strategy 3: Redevelop Brownfield sites that meet organizational redevelopment criteria.

Outcomes: (i) low- and moderate-income households benefit with increased housing and economic opportunity; (ii) community at large benefits with a healthier, more sustainable environment; (iii) brownfields tend to be in town centers, thus increasing the health and vitality of town centers

GOAL #2 Stimulate regional job creation for low- and moderate-income individuals and families.

Strategy 1: Support local business expansion and new business creation with commercial real estate development for locally owned businesses

Outcomes: (i) low- and moderate-income households benefit with increased job opportunities; (ii) communities and the region at large benefit with a more stable, diverse, and robust local economy.

NEW

Strategy 2: Support the regional creative economy by partnering with and supporting other nonprofits driving this economic sector.

Outcomes: (i) increased business activity and support for local businesses; (ii) increased job opportunities for low- and moderate-income households; (ii) increased access to the arts, improved quality of life.

Strategy 3: Stimulate growth in the local agricultural/food production sector

Outcomes: (i) increased job opportunities for low- and moderate-income households; (ii) increased entrepreneurial opportunities for business creation; (iii) community at large, including schools and institutions, benefit with a more secure, sustainable, and nutritious food supply.

Strategy 4: Create and support Community Supported Industry (CSI, modeled on Community Supported Agriculture)

Outcomes: (i) increased job opportunity for low- and moderate-income households; (ii) increased entrepreneurial opportunities for business creation; (iii) communities and the region at large benefit from a more locally robust and independent economy.

NEW

Strategy 5: Provide small business technical assistance and increase access to capital

Outcomes: (i) creation of new businesses; (ii) business expansions and job creation; (iii) greater tax base

GOAL #3 Strengthen the long-term sustainability of CDCSB

Strategy 1: Increase and diversify funding sources by increasing the donation base.

Outcomes: (i) low- and moderate-income households will benefit by the CDCSB being able to continue to provide affordable housing and economic opportunity; (ii) CDCSB will be more competitive in obtaining Community Development Tax Credits and effective in utilizing them; (iii) increased funding will increase staff capacity, strengthening CDCSB's ability to carry out its mission; (iv) increased staff capacity will enable CDCSB to develop multiple projects simultaneously, which will provide more continuous development income; (v) local businesses will benefit from ongoing CDCSB activities that support the local economy; (vi) the region at large will benefit with increased engagement in CDCSB's mission of continual advancement towards healthier, diverse, and sustainable community.

Strategy 2: Create new strategic relationships and nurture existing relationships

Outcomes: (i) low- and moderate-income households will benefit from continuing and increased development opportunities for CDCSB to carry out its mission; (ii) the community at large will have increased engagement with CDCSB and will benefit directly from access to additional resources; (iii) the social fabric of the southern Berkshires will be strengthened with a more interconnected network of organizations and individuals working for healthier, sustainable community.

Strategy 3: Deepen CDCSB's interconnectedness with the community

Outcomes: (i) the work of CDCSB will become more authentically integrated with the community itself; (ii) project development and fundraising will become more a part of the local/regional culture.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

GOAL 1. INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Year One Activities

- Hire a full-time project manager to run 2-3 projects in different stages of development
- Commence construction on *Bentley Apartments, 100 Bridge Street* (45 LIHTC units) funded by DHCD in 2018: (
- Advance *910 Main Affordable Housing* (49 LIHTC units): (i) with all permits in hand, local funding in place and construction drawings at 95%, make application to DHCD for funding; (ii)

- Continue working with the Town of Great Barrington for the redevelopment of *Housatonic School* (mixed-use with eight affordable rental units): (i) complete conceptual architectural and engineering plans and specifications; (ii) obtain zoning permit; prepare DHCD funding application
- Advance *Gould Farm Supportive Housing*. 20 affordable unites for clients, staff and community: (i) complete early feasibility; (ii) engage the community with public meetings and Town Board meetings; (iii) assemble the development team and advance the project through permitting; (iv) make application to DHCD for funding
- Pursue site identification and feasibility analysis on new projects
- Support other nonprofit housing organizations: (i) share financial and other resources; (ii) build working relationships with affordable home-ownership organizations, e.g. Habitat for Humanity.

Impact of Activities (i) Advancement and replenishment of CDCSB’s pipeline of projects (125 units); (ii) the strengthening of collaborative relationships in each project; (iii) expanding the public acknowledgement of the need for affordable housing; (iv) strengthening of CDCSB’s identity in regional community development; (v) more affordable units available.

Year Two Activities

- Advance Bentley Apartments: complete construction and lease up
- Advance *910 Main Affordable Housing*: (i) secure LIHTC financing; (ii) break ground on construction;
- Advance *Gould Farm Supportive Housing*: (i) secure funding; (ii) complete the design process; (iii) commence construction
- *Housatonic School*: (i) submit funding application to DHCD; (ii) secure tenants for commercial space;
- Continue support other nonprofit housing organizations: (i) share financial and other resources; (ii) build working relationships with affordable home-ownership organizations, e.g. Habitat for Humanity.
- Pursue site identification and feasibility analysis on new projects

Impact of Activities: (i) Advancement and replenishment of CDCSB’s pipeline of projects; (ii) the strengthening of collaborative relationships in each project; strengthening of CDCSB’s identity in regional community development; (iii) increased financial security of CDCSB with project development income(iv) more affordable units available.

Year Three Activities

- Advance work on *Bentley Apartments and 100 Bridge Street*: (i) establish a revolving public art park along the riverfront and open space surround the Bentley Apartment buildings; (ii) market the commercial parcel on the property.
- Advance *910 Main Affordable Housing* project: (i) complete construction and lease up.
- Continue support other nonprofit housing organizations: (i) share financial and other resources; (ii) build working relationships with affordable home-ownership organizations, e.g. Habitat for Humanity.
- Predevelopment on newly identified housing project(s)
- Pursue site identification and feasibility analysis on new projects

Impact of Activities: (i) the creation of an estimated 200 construction jobs; (ii) 200+ new individuals and families have high quality affordable rental units; (iii) local businesses will have increased revenues from the increase of residents in the town center; (iv) local businesses will more easily retain employees with the

increased availability of affordable units; (v) a contaminated, blight-ridden site in the center of Great Barrington will have been transformed into a vibrant community asset; (vi) the Town of Great Barrington will have increased tax revenues; (vii) the carbon foot print of the Town and the region will be lessened with highly efficient housing units and a livable/walkable town center; (viii) CDCSB will have created a sustainable housing units available to low- and moderate-income residents; (ix) advancement and replenishment of CDCSB's pipeline of projects; (x) the strengthening of collaborative relationships in each project; enhancement of CDCSB's identity in regional community development; (xi) increased financial security of CDCSB with project development income.

GOAL II. JOB CREATION

Year One Activities

- Complete the remediation of 100 Bridge, converting a contaminated, blighted property in the center of town in to a tax-generating town asset.
- *100 Bridge, Great Barrington*, advance the commercial component: (i) continue to market the non-housing portion of the site to commercial developers as co-developers;
- *Housatonic School*, Respond to an upcoming Town RFP for site control and advance the development of 12,000 sq. ft. of commercial and/or shared work space for new business incubation: (i) carry out feasibility analysis and research public funding sources; (ii) identify potential tenants
- Fiber, explore funding opportunities to extend the downtown fiber network to Housatonic School.
- *Country Curtains*, support a newly formed “cooperative” of local fine arts and tradesmen that has taken ownership of the building by exploring public private investment in the project.
- Create a Small Business Technical Support program: join a consortium of CDC's applying to DHCD for a grant to hire a half-time Technical Assistance person
- Coordinate and facilitate a local presence of Franklin County CDC's small business loan program.
- Establish partnerships with the organizations driving the creative economy with economic development grants and joint community outreach
- Agriculture Sector, continue community organizing to stimulate and support food-related entrepreneurial efforts: (i) continue to explore the feasibility of a chicken processing facility and/or a vegetable flash-freezing facility for south Berkshire County; (ii) continue efforts to connect new, young farmers to land that can be put in production; (iii) pursue land conservation projects that may include a farming component appropriate for a new farmer.
- Community Supported Industry (CSI), continue work with the Schumacher Center for New Economics and BerkShares, Inc. on the development of CSI businesses: (i) increase the number of import replacement workshops; (ii) grow the Entry to Entrepreneurship (E2E) program to include older participants; (iii) work with Salisbury and Lee Banks to support the development of the CSI BerkShare loans; (iv) do direct outreach to tenants to encourage participation in E2E;
- Support the new County-wide *EforAll* entrepreneurship project that will train up to 30 entrepreneurs per year for the next three years by (i) recruiting participants, (ii) helping to provide Mentors and (iii) soliciting support funds

Year Two Activities

- *100 Bridge, Great Barrington*, advance the commercial component: (i) secure a commercial development partner for the non-housing portion of the site; (ii) facilitate the design and permitting of the commercial development.
- Housatonic School: (i) secure tenants for the commercial space; (ii) secure construction financing for the commercial space in tandem with affordable housing development funds

- Fiber, secure funding sources to extend the downtown fiber network to Housatonic School in support of the commercial space. .
- Further develop the Small Business Technical Support program with a half-time staff position and marketing that reaches throughout south Berkshire County.
- Become a loan originator for the Franklin County CDC’s small business loan program.
- Agriculture sector: (i) advance one of the food processing facility plans by securing an appropriate site and obtaining permitting; (ii) continue “matchmaking” between new farmers and available, tillable land; (iii) identify and pursue one open space project that has the capacity to incorporate a farming component.
- CSI: Further develop the CSI model; (i) facilitate the creation of one CSI business; (ii) create a “Next Step” program for graduates of the Entry to Entrepreneurship program that provides access to startup capital and technical assistance; (iii) continue outreach to CDCSB constituents.
- Chanel graduates of the Entry to Entrepreneur program to the E4All program which is much more robust and demanding.

Year Three Activities:

- *100 Bridge, Great Barrington*, secure tenants for the commercial space that is ancillary to the anchor business and commence construction
- *Housatonic School*: (i) break ground on both the affordable housing and the commercial space; (ii) develop (or hire) ongoing management capacity
- Fiber, carry out the installation of fiber to Housatonic to coincide with the redevelopment Housatonic School.
- Further develop the Small Business Technical Support program with a full-time staff position.
- Agriculture sector: (i) break ground on one of the food processing and/or flash freezing facility plans; (ii) continue “matchmaking” between new farmers and available, tillable land; (iii) facilitate the development of one open space project with the capacity to incorporate a farming component.
- CSI: Further develop the CSI model; (i) facilitate the creation of two CSI businesses; (ii) chanel graduates of the Entry to Entrepreneur program to the E4All program which is much more robust and demanding.
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Impact of Activities: Jobs

- The development of 30,000+ s.f. of commercial space in downtown Great Barrington and 12,000 sq. ft. in the village center of Housatonic has the potential to create 110 new, locally-based permanent jobs:
- With the addition of these new employees working in the center of town, a significant economic amplifier for other downtown businesses
- Great potential for food-based entrepreneurial business start-ups and job creation
- Greater job security for local farmers with contract selling to institutions
- With more land in agricultural production, an increase in farming jobs
- Significantly better entrepreneur support for creating new or expanding businesses, expanding employment opportunity
- Revitalization of the Housatonic Village center with increased housing and commercial activity
- Significant increase in the opportunity to live and work in the same community; and to walk to work, shopping and amenities
- CSI will create new business and existing business expansions

- CSI will localize economy, making it more robust and sustainable
- CSI will begin to transform the regional business and economic culture by infusing it with a local resilience and sustainable values through community involvement and community ownership, directly connecting producers and consumers

GOAL III. SUSTAINABILITY OF CDCSB

Initial and ongoing Activities

- **Increase CDCSB donation base:** (i) build on the successful rebranding of the CDCSB as more connected with the lives of the population we serve; (ii) better communicate the organizational narrative to residents, the business community and other local and regional institutions; (iii) create a second organizational 30 second “info commercial” as part of celebrating the completion of the 100 Bridge project; (iv) capitalize on the completion of 100 bridge with a membership and fundraising drive; (v) strengthen web presence and social media communication for building relationships and direct marketing; (vi) develop a revised three-year donor outreach strategy; (vii) initiate donor outreach with one-to-one relationship building using Board Members and other Stakeholders invested in CDCSB’s work; (viii) continue outreach to high-income individuals, corporations and foundations to utilize CITCs to leverage donation income; (ix) partner with other nonprofit organization in reaching out to donors that support the parallel missions of our organizations;
- **Develop the affordable housing pipeline** to ensure that multiple projects are simultaneously in different stages of development for the foreseeable future.
- Explore opportunities for creating **income-generating CDCSB activities and businesses**
- **Strategic Relationships:** (i) seek out and explore collaboration possibilities with new and existing regional entities; (ii) explore staff and other resource sharing with other regional entities; (iii) pursue internship sponsoring with regional educational institutions; (iv) co-sponsor events that support CDCSB community development goals; (v) Strengthen ties with local financial institutions by co-sponsoring financial literacy workshops; (vi) strengthen ties with the business community via increased participation in regional Chambers of Commerce.
- **Deepening Community Interconnectedness:** (i) create a CDCSB Ambassadors network for direct outreach to the community, pairing CDCSB Board Members with tenants or clients; (ii) create a “Consumer Advisory Board” made up of tenants and clients that meets with staff quarterly and the Board of Directors semi-annually; (iii) build on the success of annual events – “Community At Bat” charity softball game (**Exhibit 9**); (iv) continue the dinner and a movie/community discussion series with two to three annual events.

Impact of Activities:

- Greater organizational stability that will result in greater and more efficient delivery of services
- Better and more efficient delivery of services will enhance relationship building with town governments and other nonprofits
- Greater staff capacity will create greater capacity to run multiple projects simultaneously, creating more housing units and jobs
- Increased technical assistance to small businesses will create deeper and long-lasting relationships with the business community and with local banks.
- More effective messaging will help create deeper public engagement and public ownership in CDCSB’s mission and activities
- Deeper ties with the community will create an organization that is more responsive to community needs and a community culture that is embedded with the CDCSB mission.

V. MEASURING SUCCESS

CDCSB carries out an internal “Project Reappraisal” at the completion of housing development projects. The Reappraisal is carried out by a subcommittee of the Board of Directors. This report includes a view of budgets and timelines (Plan to Actual) and interviews with all key individuals – architect, engineers, contractor, project manager, project consultants, owner and property management agent. It articulates areas of strengths and areas for improvement. It deconstructs the areas of needed improvement in detail and makes recommendations for application in future projects. This process will be amplified to evaluate the Community Development Plan: its goals, activities, outcomes and impact.

A. Evaluation of the Community Development Plan:

- (i) Initial evaluation when the Plan is adopted: Personal interviews with primary stakeholders who were not actively involved in its development: key personnel of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 1Berkshire, local Town Planners, local banks, Chambers of Commerce, Construct, Inc., other regional nonprofits and low- and moderate-income residents who are not Members of the Board. Many of these individuals have had direct input into the adopted CIP. Questions will concentrate on appropriateness and timeliness of Goals and Strategies, populations to be served, projected timeframes and methods of measuring impact. This input will be summarized and presented to the CDCSB Board of Directors. Estimated time: 5 hours. Following these interviews, the Plan may be modified.
- (ii) Annual follow up interviews with these stakeholders, covering the same parameters as the original interviews, noting suggested changes and modifications as well as any measurable impacts that are apparent. This information will be summarized and presented to the CDCSB Board. Estimated time: 5 hours. Following these interviews, the Plan may be modified.
- (iii) Review/discussion of the Plan at CDCSB Board strategic planning sessions and annual meeting. Following these discussions, the Plan may be modified.

B. Evaluation of Affordable Housing Goals, Activities and Impacts

- (i) Monthly evaluations by staff of project timelines, presented to the Board;
- (ii) Project Reappraisals of each project upon completion, as described above;
- (iii) Annual assessment by staff of production numbers, construction job numbers;
- (iv) Biannual assessment by staff of regional housing needs including review of town by town demographics, review of waiting lists for existing units,
- (v) interviews with housing/homeless service providers, concentrating on numbers of people in need, types and size of housing needed, demand for support services, interviews with existing residents, concentrating on quality of life issues (estimated time, 16 hours);
- (vi) at project completions, evaluate energy efficiency of units with the Center for Environmental Technology;
- (vii) track numbers of units in predevelopment, development and completed.

C. Evaluation of Job Creation Goals, Activities and Impacts

- (i) **Commercial real estate construction:** (a) monthly evaluation by staff of numbers and quality of tenant prospects until full occupancy; upon completion, semi-annual evaluation by staff of supply/demand issues for different types of commercial space; (b) semi-annual interviews with tenants re satisfaction with the space; annual tallying of number of employees;
- (ii) **Agricultural sector,** staff conducted: collect production and sales numbers from farmers participating in cooperative growing for contract selling; annually update supply and demand characteristics for contract selling; annually quantify the number of farmers and institutions participating in contract selling.
- (iii) **Business Technical Support,** staff-conducted: tracking the number of businesses participating, the number of business obtaining financing and job creation tracking.
- (iv) **Community Supported Industry,** staff conducted. (a) quantify the number of participants in the Entry to Entrepreneurship program; (b) quantify the number of new businesses created and the number of new jobs; (c) quantify the number of BerkShare loans closed and the amount of loan capital; (d) semiannually

interview loan recipients for business support needs; (e) annually interview loan participants satisfaction of loan protocols and logistics; (f) annually interview loan recipients re quality of life impacts; annually quantify sales and income data from CSI businesses. Modify the loan program as needed.

D. Evaluation of CDC Sustainability, by staff

(i) monthly quantify number of new CDCSB Members and the amount of donations collected; (ii) follow-up interviews with all potential CITC participants, including those that did not participate, to gauge perceived strengths and weaknesses of both the program and the presentation; (iii) quantify the number of tax credits utilized; (iv) quantify the number of participants in CDCSB events; (v) monthly compare Budget to Actual income/expense related to CITC program; (vi) annually review quantity and capacity of staff compared to work plans; (viii) annual evaluation of Profit and Loss in relation to P&L projections; (ix) semi-annually review the project pipeline; (x) quarterly evaluation of employees and employee satisfaction

VI. COLLABORATIONS

Working collaboratively with towns, local and regional housing entities and other nonprofits is one of CDCSB's strengths.

Project Collaborations with Towns (Exhibit 7)

- Town of Stockbridge: Pinewoods (30-unit LIHTC project): The Towns of Stockbridge Affordable Housing Committee identified the site, donated an abutting 1-acre and contributed close to \$450,000 in CPA funds to the project. The Stockbridge Land Trust secured the site with a Purchase and Sale Agreement. A Comprehensive Permit was issued in two meetings.
- Hillside Ave. Housing, Great Barrington: the 3-acre parcel was donated by the Town; \$80,000 was contributed by the Town from an Affordable Housing Trust Fund; a Comprehensive Permit was granted in two hearings.
- Sawmill Brook, Lenox: CDCSB has had a 13-year history of working closely with the Town of Lenox on this site – a 20-acre site that was first designed to be a 50-unit condominium complex (22 affordable units) and is now transitioning to a 50+ unit LIHTC project. Town support included purchasing the site with bonded CPA funds when CDCSB was going to lose site control and granting \$40,000 in CPA early feasibility funding. After being selected as the Developer of the site, a town vote in May 2019 failed to achieve a supermajority vote and prevented the project from advancing. Next steps with the property are being explored.
- 100 Bridge Street, the former NE Log Homes site, Great Barrington (8-acre brownfield in the center of town, with a proposed 45-unit LIHTC project, and 30,000 Sq. Ft. commercial space): The Town helped secure \$350,000 in EPA assessment funds, forgave \$300,000 in back taxes accrued by the previous owner, rezoned the area for high density mixed-use development and created an economic opportunity area to make TIFs available to new and expanding businesses, committed \$750,000 in CPA funds, granted a “friendly” 40b permit for the affordable housing component, secured a \$1.6M MassWorks grant for site infrastructure improvements.
- **NEW: Gould Farm Supportive Housing:** a 20-unit project with the oldest residentially (farm) - based mental health treatment facility in the country and the Town of Monterey. The project will create affordable client, staff and Monterey resident housing. (Exhibit 10)

Collaborations with Regional Housing Organizations

- Construct, Inc. is a regional housing and homeless services organization based in Great Barrington. CDCSB and Construct, Inc. have collaborated for 15 years in the development of new affordable

housing units; CDCSB has provided development services for Construct, Inc. Construct, Inc. provides management and tenant services for units owned by CDCSB.

- Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC): CDCSB is collaborating with BHDC as co-developers for Bentley Apartments and as Operating managers of 910 Main Affordable Housing. . This dramatically increases CDCSB’s development capacity.
- Wayfinders, Inc., Springfield: CDCSB is collaborating with Wayfinders as co-developers of 910 Main Affordable Housing, further expanding CDCSB’s development capacity.
- CDCSB co-sponsored with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Towns of Great Barrington and Lenox, and funded by the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation a day-long, county-wide Affordable Housing Workshop: How to Create Housing for Everyone. CDCSB Executive Director presented a session on financing rural, small scale projects. Other presenters included Susan Terrey, Asst. Undersecretary of DHCD, Kara Cunha, Mass. Asst. Attorney General, Mark Till, MA Office of the Inspector General and Carsten Snow, MHP.

Collaborations with Regional Open Space and Land-use Organizations

Given the rural service area, collaborations with these organizations are key to project success. They have intimate knowledge of available land and have significant political capital in communities. Fifteen years of work with open space organizations has created a culture where the interests of affordable housing advocates and open space advocates are seen as intimately connected, interests that are typically at odds: every housing unit built in a town center is a housing unit not consuming open space or farm land; most affordable housing developments provide opportunity for open space preservation.

- CDCSB is co-sponsoring ongoing events with local open space organizations such as Berkshire Natural Resource Council and Great Barrington Land Conservancy (GBLC)
- Close collaboration with the (GBLC) and the Great Barrington Historic Commission resulted in the 2012 passing of the Community Preservation Act
- Collaborations with The Great Barrington Land Conservancy: GBLC is (1) helping design and will hold the Conservation Restriction on the river-front park at 100 Bridge Street, Great Barrington, and (2) is identifying conservation land that can also have a farming and/or housing component..

Collaborations with faith-based organizations:

Faith-based organizations bring deep community ties to the table, community vision that significantly overlaps the CDCSB development priorities, and project funding via loans.

- Collaboration with area congregations resulted in the funding of a Second Mortgage for Construct, Inc. 140 East Street project (9 affordable units in Great Barrington)
- Collaboration with Trinity Episcopal Church, Lenox, has been key to maintaining project support in the community for the Sawmill Brook project. This has been critical given the project delays.
- Ongoing: collaboration with multiple Lenox churches to build community support for Sawmill Brook Warrant Articles at an early spring Town Meeting.
- The Episcopal Diocese of Western Mass. and the Stockbridge Congregational have made a \$50,000 predevelopment loan for affordable housing in Lenox.

Economic Development Collaborations

Collaboration that supports economic development opportunity for low- and moderate-income households has been established with both for-profit and nonprofit entities:

- Current collaboration with the Schumacher Center for New Economics on the creation of “Community Supported Industry” businesses modeled on the successes of Community Supported Agriculture. CDCSB’s role is in supporting program development insuring public engagement in the

process and providing technical assistance when needed. This initiative has significant potential for entrepreneurial startups and the expansion of existing businesses.

- Collaboration with Iredale Mineral Cosmetics, a local international corporation, with existing businesses to develop new commercial space for a corporate headquarters expansion that resulted in \$10 million in private investment, the retention of 80 jobs, and the creation of 32 new jobs in downtown Great Barrington. CDCSB assemble the team and was key to winning the RFP process.
- Collaboration with 1Berkshire on regional economic development issues. (Ex. 2)
- Exploring a collaboration with Franklin County CDC to start a small business technical assistance program based in Great Barrington and to expand their capacity for small business lending in south Berkshire County.

VII. INTEGRATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY AND VISION

In creating healthy, sustainable community in this rural setting, activity is focused on two core components: (1) addressing the doubled-edged, interconnected trends of higher real estate costs and lower wages in order to improve the stability and quality of life of low- and moderate-income households – the simultaneous creation of affordable housing units and living wage job; (2) creating development and economic growth with low carbon footprint that respects the regional environment that so defines the character and quality of life in the region.

CDCSB's activity is keenly focused on high density, mixed-use development in town and village centers, and job creation that is grounded in localizing the economy. CDCSB does not build single family homes on ½ acre lots or support the development of national or internationally owned businesses. CDCSB's vision of healthy sustainable community is realized in its commitment to low-carbon footprint construction (Net-Zero ready units) and creating walkable living/working downtowns. Job creation activity is centered on creating new locally owned businesses or business expansions using local resources (agriculture, forestry, food), enabling people to live and work in the same community. The interconnection of economic development activity and affordable housing activity are combined at the hip, both physically and strategically. CDCSB has actively nurtured this vision for well for close to two decades and acceptance of this vision is reflected in virtually all community and regional strategic planning. CDCSB is actively involved in local and regional planning.

The Lenox, Great Barrington and Sheffield Master Plans all emphasize the critical need for affordable housing, its connection to economic development and job growth, and to creating development that resonates with the rural character of the region. CDCSB's commitment to the redevelopment of town centers and the redevelopment of brownfield sites are emphasized in these plans, naming CDCSB projects as priority projects.

Regional and county-wide planning has emphasized these same priorities: addressing the interlocking housing and jobs issue and encouraging sustainable growth. The current Berkshire County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) stresses the importance and interconnectedness of affordable housing and economic growth and names two CDCSB projects as priority sites: the former NE Log Homes and Housatonic School. Sustainable Berkshires, a county-wide development strategic plan developed by the Berkshire Regional Planning Authority, emphasizes these same priorities along with strengthening local economies for more economic independence using creative financing mechanisms and local currency, and developing the agricultural sector for both job growth and food security.

VIII. FINANCING STRATEGY

CDCSB's financing strategy has four prongs:

- Creating a steady pipeline of affordable housing projects;
- Establishing, over time, the capacity to develop LIHTC projects without reliance on Co-sponsoring organizations for financial guarantees (dramatically increasing developer Fee income);
- With independent development, establishing operations management capacity to generate income;
- Increasing its fundraising capacity.

CDCSB has made significant progress in creating a steady pipeline of affordable housing projects: one project will commence construction in January 2020; one is fully permitted with 95% construction drawings will be extremely competitive in the February 2020 Winter round of DHCD funding; a supportive housing project in predevelopment will enter the fall 2020 DHCD Supportive Housing round; a highly potential project that should be in predevelopment by mid-2020 and enter the 2021 DHCD Community Based Housing round. CDCSB will see installments of developer fee/overhead in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and highly likely in 2024-2028. There are two additional LIHTC projects in early feasibility.

The 2020 Fee income from Bentley Apartments will help finance the addition of a full-time housing development project manager, increasing our capacity to further build the pipeline. Following the first two LIHTC projects, CDCSB may have the capacity to develop LIHTC projects independently with development consultant help only. This will also enable CDCSB to build operations management capacity. The combination of these two will ensure the long-term financial viability of the organization.

The income from developer fees will also enable CDCSB to commit more funds to economic development – a zero sum game in the short run – and to explore other business income generating activities and projects.

The CITC program has been essential to sustaining the organization through this period and will be critical going forward into 2021. Please see Budgets, page 18. CITC funds will enable CDCSB to expand its staffing through 2021 to 4 FTE as pipeline projects come online.

CDCSB has a twenty year history of successfully accessing and managing affordable housing and economic development funding sources including: LIHTC, HOME, Mass. Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Facilities Consolidation Funds, Community Based Housing, Federal Home Loan Bank AHF, Community Preservation Act, US Environmental Protection Agency Cleanup Fund, US Housing and Urban Development Special Appropriations, MassDevelopment and CEDAC.

IX. HISTORY TRACK RECORD AND COMMONWEALTH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Formed in August 1984, the focus of the organization has evolved over time from being primarily a business support organization to being primarily a real estate development organization with an emphasis on affordable housing and job creation, especially in the agriculture sector. CDCSB primary activities are (i) creating new affordable housing units; (ii) developing commercial real estate for new, locally-owned businesses and the expansion of established local businesses; (iii) providing development services to municipalities, local housing agencies and other community-based nonprofit organizations; (iv) supporting new business creation with entrepreneur training and the Community Supported Industry economic development model.

CDCSB currently has site control of three development sites in different stages of development and pre-development, and is collaborating with another nonprofit that owns the project site in development. These projects represent a pipeline of 114 housing units, 30,000 square feet of commercial space, the creation of 72 new full-time jobs and the retention of 60 fulltime jobs.

CDCSB has earned a reputation for working collaboratively and effectively with local governments, other housing services nonprofits, and open space land-use organizations. This has produced a political culture of goodwill and support; it has produced a track record of successfully accessing public and private funding resources; and it has established the political and professional relationships necessary to effectively execute projects. Virtually all towns in the region demonstrate great need for affordable housing and economic development. The CDC is well positioned to meet this demand, having the fundamental development skills and expertise necessary and having established a solid foundation of local and regional relationships.

Completed Projects

140 East Street, Great Barrington, owned by Construct, Inc.

- Redevelopment of the “Old Milk Exchange” into nine affordable rental units
- Walkable to town center; two blocks to public transportation
- Development Role: secured all public and private financing, Project Management from conception through design and construction completion;
- \$660,000 Total Development Cost, completed in 2004

Pine Woods, Stockbridge, owned by Construct, Inc.

- 30-unit mixed-income Low Income Housing Tax Credit project; 15 acres of permanently conserved open space.
- Town water and sewer; walkable to village center; on public transportation
- CHAPA Smart Growth Award
- Development role: Development Consultant/Project Management from conception through design and construction completion; secured all public and private financing
- \$6.9 million Total Development Costs, completed in 2006

Hillside Avenue, Great Barrington

- 10-unit affordable rental project; 2 acres of permanently preserved open space
- Downtown residential neighborhood; one block to public transportation
- Development role: Owner/Developer from conception through design and construction completion;
- \$2.3 million Total Development Costs; completed in 2009

Saint James Place, Great Barrington, owned by Saint James Place, Inc.

- The adaptive reuse of an abandoned Episcopal church in downtown Great Barrington, 15,000 sq. ft. cultural center for the performing arts and offices for local nonprofits
- Development role: Development Consultant for acquisition, concept and feasibility stage, securing state and federal historic tax credit allotments and first stage construction
- \$7.5 million estimated TDC

Forest Springs, Great Barrington

- New construction of 11 affordable rental units, \$3M TDC
- completed in 2018

Projects in Construction

Former New England Log Homes

- 8-acre brownfield in downtown Great Barrington;
- \$3MM remediation project Mixed-use: 45 LIHTC project, 30,000 sq. ft. commercial space
- 2 acres permanently preserved riverfront park to be completed by 2021
- Town center, one block from Main Street, on the Housatonic River
- Demolition completed, remediation to be complete June 2020
- LIHTC project: construction start January 2020
- Commercial parcel: potential assisted living facility in feasibility

Projects in Predevelopment

910 Main Affordable Housing, Great Barrington

- 49-unit LIHTC project, new construction
- Fully permitted with 95% construction drawings
- Entering February 2020 DHCD funding round

Gould Farm Supportive Housing, Monterey NEW

- 20-unit project with affordable apartments for clients, staff and Monterey residents, new construction
- Partnership with Gould Farm
- Expected DHCD funding round November 2020

Sawmill Brook, Lenox

- 50+ unit LIHTC project, new construction
- 20-acre site now owned by the Town of Lenox; \$140,000 in Pre-development financing secured with Town CPA and faith-based funding
- Walkable to the town center; walkable to the public schools
- \$18 million estimated Total Development Costs

Project on hold due to May 2019 town vote that failed a supermajority

Housatonic School, Great Barrington

- Mixed-use redevelopment of abandoned school in the Housatonic Village center: 11 affordable rental units; 8,000 s.f commercial and shared office space for business incubation
- Town RFP process, winter 2020

Projects in early feasibility

Scattered Site, Great Barrington

- Single family rehab: In conversation with the Great Barrington Housing Trust Fund

COMMONWEALTH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Concentrated Development and Mix Uses: CDCSB emphasizes high density, mixed-use development in village centers on existing infrastructure and with access to public transportation. All our developments demonstrate this. The two primary development projects in this Plan are the redevelopment of a blighted brownfield site and the redevelopment of an abandoned school site, both in the Great Barrington town center.

2. **Advance Equity:** Social, economic and environmental justice are reflected in the very nature of CDCSB projects building diverse and sustainable community. There is a minimum 20% low- and moderate-income residents representation on the CDCSB Board of Directors.
3. **Efficient Decision Making:** As previously described in Sections 2 and 6, neighborhood involvement in project development and early collaboration with Town Boards has made CDCSB's regulatory and permitting processes efficient and predictable. Friendly 40-B rules.
4. **Protection of Land and Ecosystems:** As describe above, given the rural character of CDCSB's service area, environmental sensitivity is the starting place for development, not an ancillary concern. Permanent conservation of open space is integral to projects.
5. **Wise Use of Natural Resources:** CDCSB projects are as "green" and energy efficient as financially feasible. Sawmill Brook Housing, Lenox, is expected to be a near carbon-neutral development. CDCSB projects typically concentrate development and maximize permanent conservation of open space. Pinewoods, Stockbridge, developed 3 acres of an 18-acre site and permanently preserved the balance. Hillside Ave., Great Barrington developed 1 acre of a 3-acre site, permanently preserving the balance. 910 Main Housing is developing 2 acres and placing 7 acres in CR. The redevelopment of the former NE Log Homes site will create public access to 2 acres of open space along the banks of the Housatonic River.
6. **Expanding Housing Opportunities.** Providing housing for all segments of the community is at the core of CDCSB activity and is reflected in virtually all projects. All projects are designed and scaled to fit the character of small towns both for the enhancement of the communities and to ensure project success. Affordable rental projects often include a percentage of market rate units to serve the community that is marginally above the statutory income limits. Pinewoods, Stockbridge is 80% affordable, 20% market rate.
7. **Provide Transportation Choice.** All CDCSB projects have direct access to public transportation and concentrate development in town centers to create livable, walkable community.
8. **Increase Job and Business Opportunity.** Job growth and creation of new businesses is at the core of CDCS's commercial real estate activity. The local agriculture economic segment is specifically targeted to CDCSB business development through its involvement in the redevelopment of the Great Barrington Fairgrounds. Development of Community Supported Industry is designed to specifically nurture sustainable, natural resource-based businesses.
9. **Promote Clean Energy.** CDCSB housing units are built as energy efficient as financially feasible. CDCSB's involvement in the redevelopment of the Great Barrington Fairgrounds includes a potential 5-10 (1-2 Megawatt) acre solar farm. CDCSB support of the local production and consumption of food has significant impact on the carbon emission typically associate with traditional food transportation. Community Supported Industry is based on import replacement, localizing the economy resulting in the lowering our carbon footprint.
10. **Plan Regionally.** CDCSB is involved in virtually all local and regional planning, either formally by sitting on regional committees or informally through organizational input. CDCSB's (and the Commonwealth's) sustainable principles are evident in all local and regional plans. The rural setting of all CDSSB projects makes them, by nature, beneficial to multiple communities.