

6. Economic Development

Introduction

The State of New Hampshire and Rockingham County have seen substantial economic change in the past ten years. During the early part of the decade, an economic boom resulted in significant jobs and housing growth, increased commercial building and increased individual buying power. By the end of the decade, the Seacoast experienced a serious economic downturn that saw the downsizing of businesses, a slowdown in housing construction and sales, and a high unemployment rate. More recently, the Seacoast area has experienced a mild economic recovery as demonstrated through rising employment and wages. Much of this growth has tended to be in high paying technology employment and professional/management occupations. All of these changes have affected the economy of local communities, including Seabrook.

Like the state and the Seacoast region, the Town of Seabrook has undergone numerous changes in the past decade in terms of population growth, employment and income. The unemployment rate for Seabrook crept up from a low in 2000 of 4.5% to 8.2% in 2010. During this period, the annual rate for each year was higher than for Rockingham County or the state. While the unemployment rate was relatively high, the town's full value tax rate of compared favorably with surrounding communities and other communities in Rockingham County. Furthermore, its assessed valuation has increased significantly since 2000. The town's current full value tax rate is \$12.45.

For many years, Seabrook was known for its modest scale commercial retail activity comprised primarily of local businesses along US Route 1 and a number of manufacturing and distribution operations. Since the 1970's the largest economic generator has been the nuclear generating facility known as the "Seabrook power plant". However, during the 1990's and early 2000's, the town experienced significant commercial development mostly in the form of "big box" national chain stores and numerous national chain restaurants, mostly within the US Route 1 corridor. Home Depot, Market Basket, Wal-Mart., Lowe's and Kohl's are examples. Several industrial areas also contribute to Seabrook's economic base. These are located west of I-95 in the Stard/Batchelder Road corridor.

The Town of Seabrook has not had consistent economic development program. In 2006 as part of negotiations with Public Service of New Hampshire the town was provided with a grant of \$25,000 for economic development. An Economic Development Committee was established at that time, but there was a lack of continued support from the community and the Committee has been inactive for the past several years.

Much Seabrook's economic future will in large part be shaped by the town's commitment to economic development activities. Since much of the community is built-out, such activities may include the enhancement of the major commercial areas and the development of suitable areas for new businesses or business expansion. Such efforts will have a positive impact on the town's tax base and employment, as well as its quality of life.

This chapter includes an economic base analysis of Seabrook as well as a discussion of challenges and opportunities for economic development, an action plan and an appendix with the following items:

- Partners and Resources for Economic Development
- Tools for Economic Development

Economic Goal and Objectives

Based on the results of the Visioning Forum at the end of 2008, among the challenges for Seabrook included one for the town's economic future:

- Provide for a sustainable economy with employment opportunities for Seabrook's citizens through such industries as manufacturing and automotive. Encouraging educational opportunities that lead to jobs, such as technical programs and culinary training.

A follow-up community survey identified the following attitudes:

- Respondents favored agriculture-related businesses including farm stands, as well as light industry and medical services, but were divided on expansion of home-based businesses and recreational businesses.
- Respondents also favored the following consumer services—local restaurants and small retail businesses, but not chain restaurants, retail malls, gas stations and commercial recreational businesses.

The Master Plan Steering Committee further expressed the following themes for economic development:

- Managing growth—both timing and scale—by encouraging a balance of uses that reflect Seabrook's small town character—residential, business (small retail, light manufacturing) and institutional (medical).
- Providing employment opportunities for Seabrook's citizens.

Based on these themes, the Steering Committee has established the following goal and objectives for economic development.

Goal

The Town of Seabrook encourages an economic climate that fosters small businesses and industry consistent with Seabrook's small town character and provides good quality employment opportunities for its citizens.

Objectives

1. Retain Seabrook's existing business and industrial base and economic development goal.
2. Encourage and attract development of new innovative, technology based and diversified business and industry consistent with the town's vision.
3. Initiate an economic development program to oversee economic development activity in Seabrook.
4. Ensure that Seabrook's land use policies and regulations are consistent with the economic development goal.
5. Provide a level of public infrastructure and services that enables economic development in a cost-effective manner.
6. Support and expand opportunities for cultural activities, local arts and tourism.

Economic Analysis

Population—Seabrook has been growing at a greater rate than Rockingham and Strafford Counties

As noted in the Population and Housing Chapter of this Master Plan, Seabrook has been growing steadily since 1980 and currently has a population of approximately 8,693. This growth rate is similar to Rockingham County as a whole. Seabrook's population is expected to grow to almost 10,000 by 2030 or approximately 17%.

Employment—More firms and jobs since 2000

According to 2010 data from the NH Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau (NH ELMB), Seabrook has a labor force of 4,910 and unemployment rate of 8.2 %.

Based on estimates provided by the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security, Seabrook's employment base in 2009 was approximately 6,157 jobs. **See Table 6-1.** Between 2000 and 2009, Seabrook's total employment base increased by 19%, representing 973 added jobs. This increase occurred primarily in the private sector where 723 jobs were added. The largest job gains were in retail trade (578 or 43%), administrative and waste services (227 or 17%), and accommodation and food services (151 or 30%). On the other hand, there were significant job losses in manufacturing (309 or 27%). During this same period the number of private businesses increased slightly from 294 to 310, indicating that while there may be more firms in Seabrook, the number of employees per firm generally is less.

Table 6-1: Average Annual Covered Employment in Seabrook¹

	2000	2005	2009
Number Private Businesses	288	294	301
Average Employment	4,891	5,262	5,614
Average Annual Weekly Wage	\$733	\$780	\$902
Number Public Entities	6	8	9
Number Public Employees	293	335	542
Average Annual Weekly Wage	\$622	\$831	\$1,036
Total Employment	5,184	5,597	6,157

Source: NH Employment Security, 2011

Table 6-2 provides the overall employment distribution by sector in Seabrook for 2009. The large employment sectors are retail trade (1,932 jobs or 31%), manufacturing (828 jobs or 13%) and accommodation and food services (659 jobs or approximately 11%). In spite of the loss of manufacturing jobs over the past decade, this category still represents a significant sector in Seabrook's economy.

¹ Covered employment is defined as all employment except those workers who are self-employed.

Table 6-2: Employment by Sector in Seabrook, 2009

	Employment Sector	#	%
1	Accommodations and Food Services	659	11
2	Administrative and Waste Services	354	6
3	Construction	341	6
4	Finance and Insurance	44	1
5	Health Care and Social Assistance	34	1
6	Manufacturing	828	13
7	Other Services ex. Public Administration	89	1
8	Professional and Technical Services	101	2
9	Public Administration	542	9
10	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	81	1
10	Retail Trade	1,932	31
11	Wholesale Trade	262	4
12	Other including Transportation & Warehousing, Information, Educational Services, Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	890	14

Source: NH Department of Employment Security, 2011

Major Employers

There are over 300 businesses in Seabrook. These range in size from small retail businesses on US Route 1 to moderately sized manufacturing plants mostly west of I-95. In **Table 6-3** below is a listing of the top nine major employers in Seabrook.

Table 6-3: Top Employers in Seabrook

Business	Product	Employees
Florida Power & Elec.	Electric utility services	1,000
Wal-Mart	Retail products	220
Town of Seabrook including School	Public service	240 ¹
Sam's Club	Wholesale Products	130
Loctite	Adhesive Manufacturing	116
DG O'Brien	Underwater electrical connectors	110
Poland Spring	Distribution	24
Home Depot	Home improvement	125 (includes seasonal and part-time)
Lowe's	Home improvement	140 (includes seasonal and part-time)

1. Does not include part-time or seasonal employees.

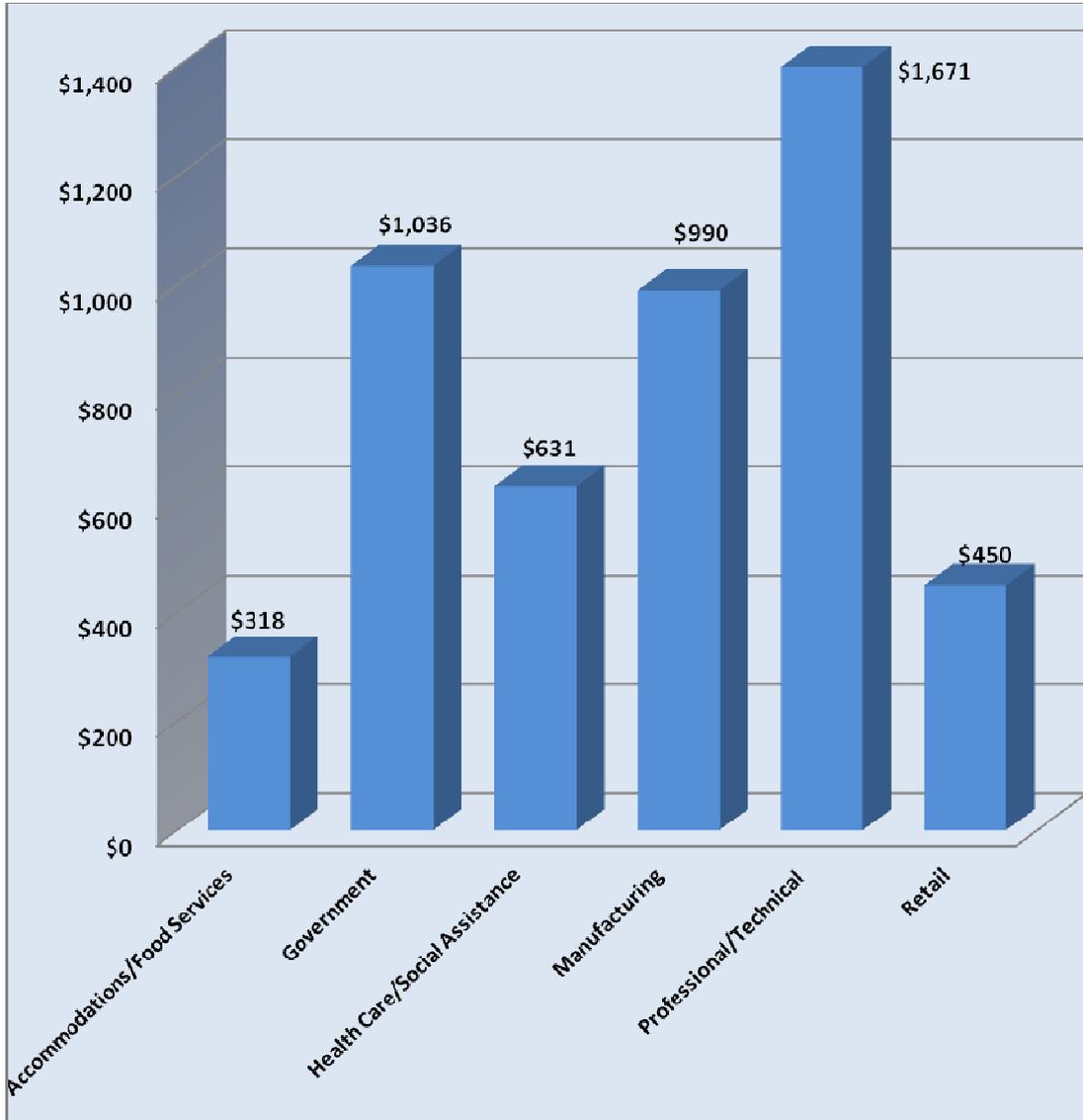
Source: Community Profile, NH Department of Employment Security, 2011

Wages—Both employment and salaries are increasing

As shown in **Table 6-1**, employment in both the public and private sector has been increasing in spite of the economic downturn. Annualized average weekly wages increased \$169 or 23% in the private sector from 2000 to 2009. Although the public sector had a lower average wage in 2009 (\$621 versus \$733 in the private sector), wage gains over this same period were substantial—increasing to an average weekly wage of \$1,036 or 67%.

Figure 6-1 shows the range of average weekly wages for selected occupations in 2009 with Professional/Technical occupations receiving over \$1600 per week while Accommodations/Food Services employees received only \$318 per week.

Figure 6-1: Average Weekly Wages – Seabrook, Selected Occupations, 2009



Source: NH Department of Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, 2011

Median Family Income—Based on HUD regional data

Another measure of Seabrook’s economic strength is median family income. In the off-census years this data is compiled by Department of Housing And Urban Development (HUD) regions or counties. Seabrook is within the Boston Cambridge-Quincy HUD Fair Market Rent Area (HFMA) for Median Family Income. However, a more accurate reflection of Seabrook’s median might be with the adjacent Portsmouth-Rochester HMFA which includes Hampton, Hampton Falls, and Kensington. In both cases the change in income between 2006 and 2010 was significant—\$7,700 or 9.2% for the Boston HMFA and \$9,700 or more than 15% for the Portsmouth HMFA.

The latter increase was much greater than the state which increased by 9.6% as shown in **Table 6-4**. The increase in median family income is similar to the increases in wages noted in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6-4: Median Family Income

	2006	2010	Change	% Change
Boston-Quincy-Cambridge HMFA	\$84,100	\$91,800	\$7,700	9.2%
Portsmouth - Dover- Rochester HMFA	\$71,900	\$81,600	\$9,700	15.1%
State of New Hampshire	\$71,200	\$78,000	\$6,800	9.6%

Source: New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, HUD Adjusted Median Family Income, 2007 - 2010

Unemployment—From 4.5% in 2000 to 8.2% in 2010

Another measure of the health of the local and regional economy is the rate of unemployment. Based on data from the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security since 2000 and shown in **Table 6-5**, Seabrook’s annualized unemployment rate has increased from 4.5% (its lowest rate in the decade) to 8.2% with significant jumps between 2000 and 2002 and between 2008 and 2010.

Table 6-5: Unemployment, 2000 -2010

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Seabrook	4.5	7.3	7.2	6.2	6.8	8.2
Rockingham County	3.0	5.5	4.7	3.9	4.2	6.3
State of New Hampshire	2.7	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.8	6.1

Source: NH Department of Employment Security, 2011

Similar increases in unemployment occurred for both the county and state. However, Seabrook has not fared as well as either Rockingham County or the state throughout the decade with its 2010 rate two percentage points higher than the state and 1.9% higher than the county.

Employment Projections—Biggest gains in the Service Sector

The NH Department of Employment Security recently completed projections of employment for each county in the state for the period between 2008 and 2016. For Rockingham County overall, employment growth is expected to be 15,655 jobs. **Table 6-6** shows the projections of employment by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industrial classification code. The businesses that are expected to provide the greatest gains in employment are the service industry, professional, scientific and technical services and health care and social assistance. Manufacturing and utilities are expected to lose jobs.

With approximately 5,614 private sector employees, Seabrook comprises just 3.7% of the county’s employment. Economic change affecting the entire region will also affect Seabrook. It is reasonable to expect that employment in Seabrook will increase at a rate at least similar to that of the region, or about 10-11% by the year 2018. The fluctuations experienced in Seabrook since 2000 have mirrored the regional and state economy, although Seabrook has experienced higher unemployment as shown in **Table 6-5**. This relative employment stability of Rockingham County is the result of a strong employment market in the Seacoast. However, with a relatively small number of local businesses, the addition or loss of only a few businesses can have a significant effect on total employment numbers.

Table 6-6: Long-Term Employment Projections for Rockingham County, 2008-2018

NAICS Code	Industry	Estimated 2008	Projected 2018	2008-2018 Change Numeric	Change Percent
	Total Employment (incl. Self-employed)	151,329	166,984	15,655	10.3%
101	Goods Producing Industries	22,409	22,829	420	1.9%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	243	252	9	3.7%
21	Mining	154	174	20	13.0%
23	Construction	6,402	7,240	838	13.1%
31-33	Manufacturing	15,610	15,163	-447	-2.9%
102	Service Providing Industries	116,646	131,009	14,363	12.3%
22	Utilities	1,062	908	-154	-14.5%
42	Wholesale Trade	6,724	7,381	657	9.8%
44-45	Retail Trade	25,075	26,453	1,378	5.5%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	4,910	5,305	395	8.0%
51	Information	2,715	3,043	328	12.1%
52	Finance and Insurance	5,451	5,760	309	5.7%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,838	2,022	184	10.0%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	7,235	8,911	1,676	23.2%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises Administrative and Waste Management Services	2,383	2,559	176	7.4%
56		8,327	9,866	1,539	18.5%
61	Educational Services	11,195	12,629	1,434	12.8%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	14,152	18,049	3,897	27.5%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,925	3,535	610	20.9%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	12,233	13,393	1,160	9.5%
81	Other Services (Except Government)	4,524	5,008	484	10.7%
	Government	5,897	6,187	290	4.9%
	Self-employed and Unpaid Family Workers	12,274	13,146	872	7.1%
NOTE:					
1 Employment for public schools and colleges is included in sector 61, <i>Educational Services</i>					

Source: New Hampshire Department of Employment Security, 2010

Educational Attainment—Seabrook citizens have relatively high educational attainment, but not as much Rockingham County

As shown in **Table 6-7**, Seabrook improved its educational attainment for high school graduates and higher and for Bachelor's degree or higher during the period of 2000 to 2009. However, Rockingham County and the state stayed ahead of Seabrook in both categories. This trend is based on the American Community Survey data for 2005-2009. Seabrook would appear to have a relatively less educated workforce than the county or state. Further discussion of Seabrook's educational attainment is also found in the Population and Housing Chapter.

Table 6-7: Educational Attainment*

Educational Level/Year	Seabrook		Rockingham County		New Hampshire	
	2000	2005-2009	2000	2005-2009	2000	2005-2009
High School graduate or higher	79%	87%	91%	93%	87%	91%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	15%	18%	32%	36%	29%	32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year Estimates 2005-2009

*For population 25 years and older.

Commuting Patterns—Over 80% of commuters drive to work

Table 6-8 displays how Seabrook, Rockingham County and state residents traveled to work in 2000. Seabrook residents used their cars less for commuting than residents in Rockingham County and the state as a whole. This may be due to the fact that many Seabrook workers work in Seabrook as shown in **Figure 6-2**. Seabrook workers also tend to use other means of commuting more than Rockingham County communities and the state, but very few residents work at home. Seabrook residents, who did commute, traveled a shorter distance than the average resident in Rockingham County and the state.

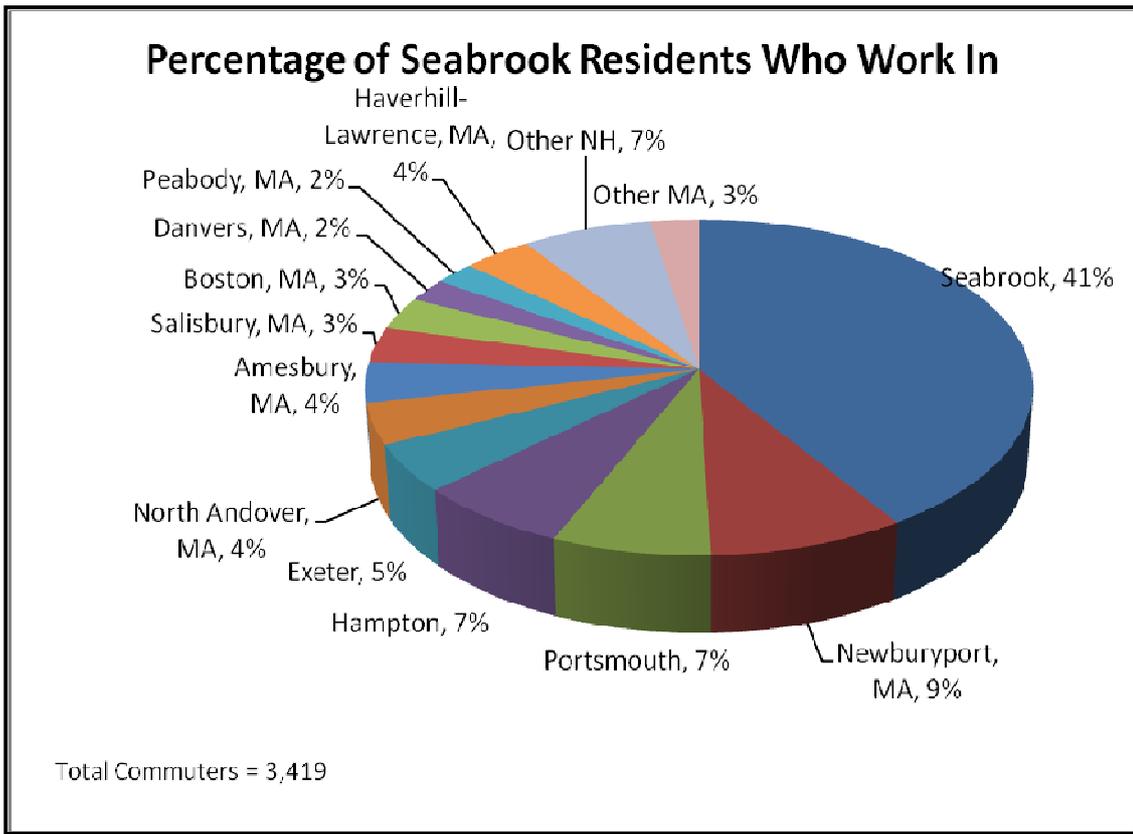
Table 6-8: Commute to Work

	Drove	Car Pool	Public Transit	Walked	Other	Work at Home	Ave. Travel Time (min)
Seabrook	81.3%	9.9%	1.8%	3.3%	0.9%	2.8%	23
Rockingham County	84.8%	7.8%	0.8%	1.7%	0.8%	4.1%	29
State of New Hampshire	91.6%		0.7%	2.9%	0.8%	4.0%	25

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Over 40% of the residents of Seabrook who are in the labor force work in Seabrook, indicating that town is a major job market. Another 9% work in nearby Newburyport while 7% work Hampton and 7% in Portsmouth. **See Figure 6-2**. Most of the remaining workers work in nearby Seacoast communities or northern Massachusetts.

Figure 6-2: Where Seabrook Residents Work



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and Rockingham Planning Commission

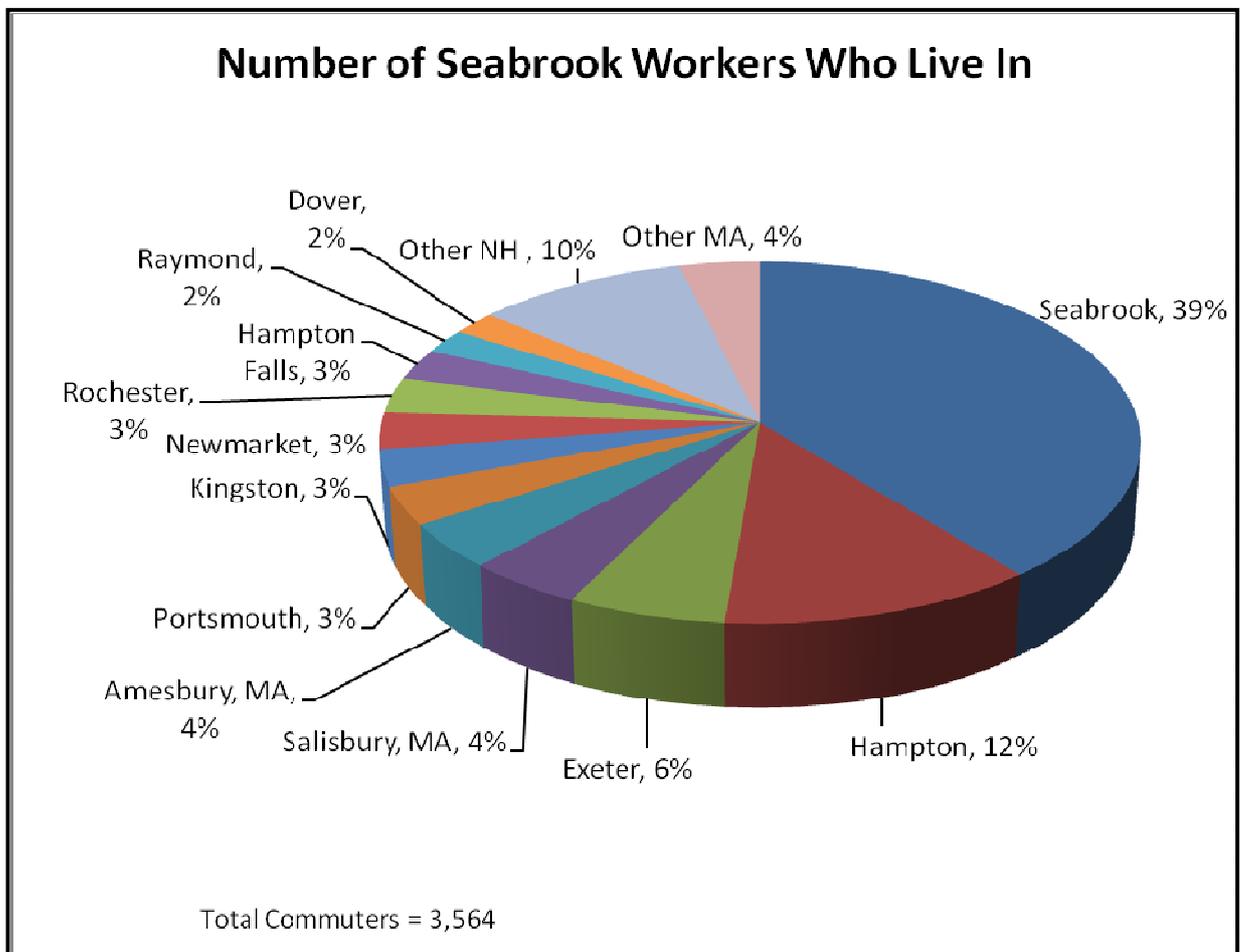
Seabrook residents working in other communities are likely to travel to specific destinations within a 50-mile radius of Seabrook. **Table 6-9** identifies regional employment centers, distance from Seabrook and possible employment type.

Table 6-9: Miles from Seabrook to:

Boston, MA	44	Major regional employment center—financial, professional and banking
Concord, NH	40	State capital; government and legal center
Exeter, NH	8	Major medical center; Philips Exeter Academy, Exeter High School
Manchester, NH	41	Largest NH city; multiple businesses
Haverhill-Lawrence-Lowell		Major employment centers in Merrimack Valley
Portsmouth, NH	15	Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, professional services and finance

Over 40% of the workforce in Seabrook comes from Seabrook as shown in **Figure 6-3**. The next highest number of commuters comes from nearby Hampton—12%. Most other workers come from Seacoast communities and northern Massachusetts mostly from Amesbury and Salisbury. These data indicate that most workers in Seabrook come from relatively short distances.

Figure 6-3: Where Workers in Seabrook Live



Source: 2000 US Bureau of Census and Rockingham Planning Commission

Primary Economic Nodes

Seabrook Power Station

This single electrical generating facility is located off US Route 1 in the northeastern portion of Seabrook. It employs 1,000 people and provides significant tax revenue to the town.

Route 1 Corridor

This area includes most of the major commercial properties in Seabrook that stretches from Salisbury, Massachusetts to Hampton Falls. These properties include Home Depot, Wal-Mart Plaza, Lowe's-Kohl's commercial area and the Market Basket Plaza. North of Route 107 there tend to be smaller retail plazas and a number of smaller stand alone businesses often locally owned.

There are very few undeveloped parcels along this corridor and future development is likely to be in renovation or rehabilitation of existing commercial enterprises.

Seabrook Industrial Area

Seabrook has a major industrial area west of I-95 along the Stard Road-Batchelder Road corridor. North of NH Route 107 there are such business as D.G. O'Brien and Coca Cola Distribution. South of Route 107 there numerous relatively small businesses including I & D Valve and Instrument, New England Printing Machinery, Aero Dynamics, Henkel and Communication Component Filters. Along Ledge Road there are also a number of businesses including Tyler Machine Tool and Poland Spring Distribution. Located west of I-95 on Route 107, is the Seabrook Greyhound Park which now supports a "simulcasting" operation and a charitable gaming operation including a poker room. Should future state laws or policies provide opportunity for expanded gaming or gambling, this location could provide a suitable venue.

Waterfront Business

Within Seabrook Harbor there are number of smaller marine businesses including Eastman's, Littlefield's and the Yankee Fisherman's Cooperative, which operates a cooperative fish facility for the sale of fresh fish for approximately sixty fishermen. This facility is owned by the Town of Seabrook and leased to the cooperative. Originally the docking/barge facility was owned by Public Service for receiving and storing large equipment during the construction of Seabrook Station. The facility was then sold to the state of NH as facility for the fishing industry which was subsequently given to the town. Due to federal catch limitations, the fishing industry faces a challenging future.

Historically, Seabrook's fishing industry has been a major economic driver for the town. At present, the industry has been limited by catch limitations and rising costs. The town supports a vital fishing industry to ensure that it will be a significant economic sector in the community and region.

The Yankee Fisherman's Cooperative is proposing to put in a processing facility in order to help market the fish that is brought for resale.

Assessed Valuation—*Power plant and residential property account for over 90% of Seabrook's valuation*

A town's assessed valuation is not only an indicator of its land use patterns and relative prosperity compared to other communities but also a gauge of the zoning regulatory choices that it has made regarding the mix of residential, commercial and industrial property in the town. It is also an indicator of its economic sector strength.

Table 6-10 provides a breakdown of the major Town and Beach Precinct assessor land use categories and the total assessed value of each including both buildings and land for the period between 2001 and 2010. The total assessed value of all property in Seabrook now stands at over \$3.5 billion. On a town-wide basis, almost half that value is based on the Seabrook Station facility. Another approximately 40% is in residential property, including manufactured homes. . The commercial category also includes multi-family homes and buildings.

From 2001 to 2010, the residential property value increased by nearly by 96%, while the commercial and industrial portion increased by 71% percent.

Table 6-10: Town Assessor Land Use by Value—Town and Precinct

Land Use/Year	2001	2010	% Increase 2001-2010
Land - Current Use	\$29,350.00	\$28,850.00	-2%
Town	\$29,350	\$28,850	
Precinct	\$0	\$0	
Land - Conservation Restriction	\$5,500.00	\$6,100.00	11%
Town	\$5,500	\$6,100	
Precinct	\$0	\$0	
Residential	\$722,097,250.00	\$1,418,505,900.00	96%
Town	\$488,228,450	\$1,000,208,900	
Precinct	\$233,868,800	\$418,297,000	
Commercial/Industrial	\$220,984,900.00	\$377,937,000.00	71%
Town	\$217,730,800	\$369,955,900	
Precinct	\$3,254,100	\$7,981,100	
Utilities	\$1,714,873,200.00	\$1,761,370,100.00	3%
Town	\$1,714,873,200	\$1,761,370,100	
Precinct	\$0	\$0	
Total	\$2,589,458,201.00	\$3,557,849,960.00	37%

Source: Seabrook Assessor, 2011

Local Taxes and Tax Rates—2009 rate lowest of nearby communities

Table 6-11 presents the changes in the local equalized property tax rate over the last decade. According to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration, Seabrook’s full value tax rate in 2000 was \$15.67. Compared to surrounding communities, only South Hampton had a slightly lower rate.

**Table 6-11:
Seabrook Property Tax Rate History, 2000-2009**

	2000	2009	2009 State Rank
Seabrook	\$15.67	\$12.45	140
South Hampton	\$15.39	\$15.54	211
Kensington	\$16.04	\$19.95	214
Hampton Falls	\$17.86	\$19.93	159
Hampton	\$17.84	\$16.75	149

Source: NH Department of Revenue Administration, 2011

By 2009 Seabrook’s full value or equalized tax rate² of \$12.45 was lower than that of the surrounding communities and ranks relatively low in comparison to all communities in the state. By comparison Berlin, ranked at 220 out of 234 communities, has a tax rate of \$41.40 while New Castle is ranked 6th with a rate of \$5.50. Over the past ten years, Seabrook has managed to reduce its rate by 25 % while in surrounding communities the rates have increased except for Hampton.

² Equalized Tax Rate or Full Value Tax Rate is based on having all communities at 100% valuation. This technique allows communities to be compared in terms of tax burden.

The tax rate of one community, compared to that of others in the region, can influence the marketability of property in a town. Relatively low taxes may positively influence the value of homes or businesses in a community, especially if nearby towns have appreciably higher taxes and tax rates. Lower property tax rates are also one of the elements that are advantageous when attracting new commercial, retail, and light industrial firms as well as retaining existing business establishments which may be looking to relocate to other communities. Based on the quantity, variety, and quality of municipal services provided, the town has been successful in providing added value to residents and businesses for their tax dollar, relative to other cities and towns in the region.

Opportunities and Challenges

Challenges are both Physical and Institutional

While Seabrook has a number of opportunities for continued economic growth and development, there are several challenges. With much of the town built-out, Seabrook could benefit from having readily available business and industrial sites that are easily accessible and provide the type of building and sites for today's marketplace.

Another challenge for the town is the lack of an organizational structure for economic development with resources to establish a visible and consistent economic development program to work with existing businesses and attract new ones.

Seabrook Provides Numerous Opportunities for Business

Seabrook has numerous existing opportunities for business retention and growth including:

- Areas zoned for business growth,
- Water and sewer infrastructure,
- Educational opportunity,
- Reasonable tax rates and
- Locational advantages due to immediate access to the interstate system

Existing Areas for Business and Commercial Growth

Currently, there are almost 1500 acres in Seabrook zoned for business and industrial use. These zones include:

- 2 - Commercial
- 3 – Industrial
- 5 – Harbor Commercial
- B2 – Beach Commercial

The Residential District does allow professional offices and manufacturing if it is incidental to a residential use.

2 - Commercial

This district is located along arterial roadways such as US Route 1, NH Route 286 and NH Route 107. Along US Route 1 it extends 500 feet on each side of the roadway; along Route 286 it extends 300 feet on each side of the roadway and along the north side of Route 107 west of I-95 it extends 500 feet. In total this district comprises 410 acres. It is primarily a district for retail and business services, wholesale businesses, restaurants, auto-related services, hotels, motels, guest houses, offices, and banks and multi-family residential.

3 - Industrial

The Industrial District is broken into two distinct sub-areas. One is west of I-95 south of NH Route 107 to the Massachusetts border and north between Stard Road and I-95 to the Hampton Falls line. The other is located between US Route 1 and the salt marsh and north of Route 107 to the Hampton Falls line. These two areas total 1028 acres. However, because of the Seabrook Station exclusion zone much of the latter area is not open for industrial activity.

5 – Harbor Commercial

This district is limited to a 9-acre area just west of US Route 1 A at the intersection with River Street. Permitted uses include marine and waterfront related activities such as boat charter operations and excursions, marine supplies and services, and restaurants.

B2 – Beach Commercial

This district comprises two relatively small areas—one near the intersection of NH Route 286 and US Route 1A and the other near the intersection of US Route 1A and River Street as shown on the Zoning Map. In total this district comprises 52 acres. It is primarily a district for retail and business services, restaurants, hotels, motels, offices, banks, commercial recreation and single family and two-family residential housing.

Water and Sewer

Seabrook is serviced by a water and sewer system that covers almost the entire town. Well-functioning water and sewer systems are a critical to economic growth and development in Seabrook.

Sewer

The Town of Seabrook is fully sewered with approximately 50 miles of sewer mains. During the 1990's, the town constructed 3 major pump stations, 15 minor pump stations and an advanced secondary treatment plant on Wright's Island. This facility has a 24" outfall that extends approximately 1800 feet into the Atlantic Ocean. The treatment plant has a design flow of 1.8 million gallons per day (MGD). At present, the flow is approximately 1.0 MGD. The plant has been designed to allow for expansion that could take the capacity to 5.2 MGD.

Water

Seabrook's water supply is drawn exclusively from groundwater. Over time there have been up to nine wells in three major well fields all in western Seabrook. These wells have the capacity to pump up to 2.8 million gallons per day (GPD). There are two storage tanks—a 750,000 gallon standpipe near the intersection of Batchelder and New Zealand Road and a 1,000,000 gallon elevated tower off Route 286.

Both the water and sewer systems would appear to have the capacity to meet current and future needs for any additional economic development activity.

Educational Opportunity

Seabrook and the Seacoast area offer a broad range of educational opportunities that provide education and training for students and workers entering the workforce and for re-training work-

ers. Locally, Winnacunnet High School not only provides core skill training in math, science and English, but also has a Career and Technical Program that offers a variety of programs including graphic design, basic business skills and engineering. For other career programs students may attend the Career and Technology Center in Exeter that provides programs in health occupations, auto technology, culinary arts and early childhood education. These programs are continually evaluated by local committees made up of educators and business people to ensure that the programs are current with today's business needs.

Finally, the University of New Hampshire provides a variety of programs aimed at students wishing to pursue various careers—the 2-year Thompson School, the Whittemore Business School and professional programs in engineering, science, education and health care.

Good Access and Roadway System

Seabrook has direct access to a regional roadway network. It is serviced by a major state highway—NH Route 1—that runs north-south from the Massachusetts border north to Hampton Falls and then Maine state border. This roadway is linked to I-95 by NH Route 107 via the Exit 1 interchange. These roadways provided access to markets in Portland, Maine (60 miles) and Boston, Massachusetts (58 miles) as well as other markets via the interstate system

Other Opportunities for Economic Growth

In addition to the existing opportunities for economic growth, there are a number of potential opportunities for such growth including:

- home-based businesses,
- high speed communications,
- entrepreneurship/technology, and
- working with existing economic development institutions.

Home-Based Businesses

There are many people who work out of their homes either as a home-based business or as an employee who telecommutes. Numerous studies indicate the number who telecommute is steadily increasing. Working from home has many favorable impacts on the economy including reducing the need for certain types of services, such as increasing road capacity and day care and increasing the need for others (such as high speed internet connections, fax and mailing services). Home-based business should be recognized and encouraged as part of Seabrook's economic development program. Micro-Credit New Hampshire is one example of an excellent resource for small start-up businesses.

Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi access is viewed by the merchants as a way to bring people to their businesses and to allow businesses, citizens and town employees direct access to the Internet at various locations throughout the town. For a relatively small investment wireless routers can be placed in strategic locations around Seabrook such as the Town Hall and the Recreation Center. The New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (NH DRED) have provided matching grants for this service to other Rockingham County communities.

Entrepreneurship and Technology

Seabrook is relatively close to the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and other colleges and universities in northern Massachusetts. In particular, UNH has programs and services that might directly benefit Seabrook from student projects to technology and research programs that

might be suitable for local businesses. Among these include:

- New Hampshire Innovation Research Center (NH IRC) – a matching grant program funded by the New Hampshire Legislature that connects New Hampshire companies with expertise at research universities (primarily UNH and Dartmouth) to solve scientific or technical problems. It has awarded more than \$6 million to 129 companies.
- New Hampshire Innovation Commercialization Center (NH ICC) – a partnership with the University of New Hampshire located at the Pease International Tradeport dedicated to accelerating the development of early stage high technology startups. This center provides expert advice, business services and seed money to new companies including those that are using UNH-patented technology.
- Enterprise Integration Research Center – conducts research focused on emerging technologies management, innovative IT applications and global enterprise management and engages in teaching initiatives and educational outreach
- UNH InterOperability Laboratory (UNH-IOL) – Acting as a non-profit, independent test lab, works with vendors of computer communication devices to resolve complex networking issues and to foster multi-vendor interoperability and/or conformance to standards while educating students for future employment.

One of the offshoots of such research and technology transfer is the opportunity to establish small businesses that have identified a particular market niche and need space and support to get the business “off the ground”. Seabrook’s proximity to UNH and its vacant mill space provide great opportunities for such businesses. By providing “incubator” space, such business may have the support necessary to establish a viable business.

Working with Organizations Involved in Economic Development

There are a number of organizations that provide direct and indirect assistance to Seabrook for economic development. Several organizations in and around Seabrook promote economic growth and development.

Seabrook Economic Development Committee

Although relatively inactive at this point, the Economic Development Committee was formed in 2006 to attract new businesses to Seabrook. Since Seabrook offered excellent access and low taxes many businesses were attracted to the town without significant effort by the Committee. Consequently, it does not play a significant role in promoting new economic development.

Since Seabrook tends to “sell itself”, perhaps the Committee could play more of role in encouraging high quality businesses for the future, retaining existing businesses and working with other town boards to ensure codes and regulations affecting businesses are consistent with the Master Plan Vision and the goal of this chapter.

Coastal Economic Development Center (CEDC)

The CEDC is a regional non-profit economic development corporation based in North Hampton that assists businesses within 11 Seacoast communities, including Seabrook, with business planning, lending and financing. The CEDC can also assist communities to access revolving loan funds for economic development activities as well as other economic development funding programs.

For purposes of regional economic development project planning within the CEDC and Rockingham County area, the Rockingham Economic Development Corporation (REDC) has the responsibility for preparing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that is intended to guide the economic growth of the Rockingham County area. The CEDS provides a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments, and private industries concerned with economic development. Seabrook has two projects that have been included in the CEDS— the NH Route 107/I-95 bridge expansion project and the second is the Route 1 widening south of the Route 107 signal on US Route 1, both of which are in the Rockingham Planning Commission Long Range Transportation Plan. These are further discussed in the Transportation Chapter of this Master Plan.

Rockingham Planning Commission

The Rockingham Planning Commission is a non-profit local government organization that serves in an advisory role to local governments in Rockingham County in order to promote coordinated planning, orderly growth, efficient land use, transportation access, economic opportunity and environmental protection.

Federal and State Partners for Economic Development

There are also a number of state and federal level organizations that can provide economic development and business assistance programs.

US Small Business Development Administration (SBA)—provides loan guarantee programs to local business through area banks. Also funds Small Business Development Centers.

Small Business Development Centers—The SBA also funds local Small Business Development Centers that provided direct assistance to small business. The main office is located at the Whitmore Business School at UNH which serves Seabrook. It has a certified full time business adviser to provide long-term management advice to small businesses

US Economic Development Administration (EDA)—matching funds to communities with high unemployment rates.

US Rural Development Administration (RDA)—formerly the Farmers Home Administration, it provides grants and loans for water, sewer and wastewater. The RDA also provides loan guarantees to local businesses.

NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)--This department sponsors various grant programs such as Community Economic Development Planning Grants, the Economic Development Match Grants, and Telecom and Technology Grants.

NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)—manages the Community Development Block Grant Program that provides funding for infrastructure and economic development. The CDFa also operates a small business revolving loan program and provides loans to housing trusts to construct and improve affordable housing.

NH Business Finance Authority (BFA)—can sell tax exempt bonds to large companies that might relocate to NH and can guarantee bank loans to small businesses in cooperation with the SBA.

For further information on these agencies see both **Appendix A, Partners and Resources for Economic Development**, and **Appendix B, Tools for Economic Development**

Marketing

Coordinated efforts need to be made to market the available commercial, industrial, space in the town. Desirable aspects of Seabrook such as good access, recreational opportunism and low taxes can be marketed for businesses

Other communities in the region have successfully marketed their communities for economic development. For example, one local community sponsored a downtown “Open House” for real estate brokers, agents, expanding businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors.

Ambassador Program

This is a local business outreach program sponsored by economic development programs or other local business associations to encourage new business and retain existing businesses. Local business volunteers or “Ambassadors” representing business and local government regularly visit existing businesses in an effort to improve the local business climate or promote new businesses within a community.

This process can be expanded to reach out and invite businesses outside of the community to expand or start a new business. The goal is to stimulate interest in the community and promote the community as business friendly. The program usually involves the education of the ambassadors and providing promotional materials to share information with prospective individuals or businesses. After the local ambassador pays a visit, there may be follow-up by the community’s economic development professional who invites the prospective business for a tour of the community.

Action Plan

Goal

The Town of Seabrook encourages an economic climate that fosters the growth of small businesses and industry consistent with Seabrook's small town character and provides good quality employment opportunities for its citizens.*

Objective 1: Retain Seabrook's existing business and industrial base.

Actions

ED 1.1: Establish an Ambassador Program to work with business volunteers to encourage new business and retain existing businesses through a business visitation program.

This is a local business outreach program sponsored by economic development programs or other local business associations to encourage new business and retain existing businesses. Local business volunteers or "Ambassadors" representing business and local government regularly visit existing businesses in an effort to improve the local business climate or promote new businesses within a community.

This process can be expanded to invite businesses outside of the community to expand or start a new business. The goal is to stimulate interest in the community and promote the community as business friendly. The program usually involves the education of the ambassadors and providing promotional materials to share information with prospective individuals or businesses. After the local ambassador pays a visit, there may be follow-up by a community contact or economic development individual for a tour of the community.

ED 1.2: Develop an entrepreneurial assistance program, which provides small business owners with networking opportunities, technical assistance, and practical education in business management. Businesses can be made aware of available resources such as:

Technical Assistance

- International Trade Resource Center
- Vendor Matching Program, Office of Business and Industrial Development
- Procurement Technical Assistance Program, NH Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)
- NH Industrial Research Center

Business Planning and Management Workshops and Counseling

- UNH Small Business Development Center
- Service Corps of Retires Executives (SCORE)
- Great Bay Community College at Pease International Tradeport

See also Actions ED 7.1 and ED 7.2.

ED 1.3: Develop links with graduate and undergraduate business and technical programs at the University of New Hampshire MBA programs, the New Hampshire College MBA Program and the NH Community College System to facilitate

*It is understood that the implementation of this Action Plan is to be a joint effort of municipal officials, the business community and Seabrook citizens.

technology and information transfer. Such relationships facilitate the matching of student academic and community service projects with local business needs.

ED 1.4: Continue to encourage and support Seabrook's marine and fishing businesses including the Yankee Fishermen Cooperative expansion. Such support involves the comprehensive integration of the industry, including the catching, processing, selling and shipping of this resource.

ED 1.5: Establish a committee to undertake a comprehensive study and assessment of the potential for gambling within Seabrook with particular consideration given to the use of the former Seabrook Greyhound Park as a prime location for such activity.

Objective 2: Encourage and attract development of new innovative, technology based and diversified business and industry consistent with the town's vision.

Actions

ED 2.1: Establish an economic development function within town's government, provide funding within the budget to support economic development and assign a single point of contact for economic development.

ED 2.2: Continue efforts to facilitate the development of the town's industrial areas west of I-95.

ED 2.3: Conduct an inventory of underutilized and vacant commercial and industrial parcels and buildings within the town.

ED 2.4 Undertake a marketing program to attract new businesses to Seabrook and retain existing businesses. This program should include:

- Updating the economic development brochure and consider a flash drive format, as an alternative for providing information about the economic development assets of the town.
- Developing, and keeping current, a website for economic development on the town's web site. The website should include the town's point of contact for economic development, a community profile, Seabrook's current economic conditions, setting, trends, and factors affecting economic development as well as a current listing of available business space.

ED 2.5: Define the type of commercial/industrial development that is suitable for Seabrook, assess the market potential for this type of development, and prepare a marketing strategy to attract the desired business development that offers high skilled jobs. For example, examine the possibility of attracting professional businesses, such as from the medical and health care fields. Other opportunities might include providing outlets for local or regionally based agricultural or forestry products through such organizations as through the Seacoast Regional Food Hub.

The Seacoast Regional Food Hub is in the initial stages to provide an opportunity for the processing, distribution and storing of local food for the Seacoast Region. It is a business resource center for farmers, fishermen, producers, and citizens. Information can be found at: www.NHLocalFood.com

ED 2.6: Identify and evaluate large tracts of land which could be available for economic development and assess the feasibility and desirability of development from environmental and development capability standpoint.

Objective 3: Initiate an economic development program to oversee economic development activity in Seabrook.

Actions

- ED 3.1: Re-establish the town Economic Development Committee to provide policy direction and oversee the implementation of the town's economic development program,
- ED 3.2: Become a member of an organization such as the Northeast Economic Development Association. This would allow the town an opportunity to find out what others are doing and to work collaboratively with industrial developers and federal, regional and state agencies engaged in economic development.
- ED 3.3: Assist local businesses and prospective developers by providing information on grants, loans, tax credits, guarantees, equity and tax incentives and other resource information.
- ED 3.4: Work cooperatively with regional, state and federal economic development entities and agencies to:
- Retain existing and attract new businesses and
 - Seek grant funds and financing.
- ED 3.5: Prepare a listing and inventory of businesses and industries and the type and skill level of jobs provided in Seabrook.

Objective 4: Ensure that Seabrook's land use policies and regulations are consistent with the economic development goal.

Actions

- ED 4.1: Evaluate commercial, industrial and business zoning regulations to ensure that they are designed to encourage the type and quality of development that the town determines it wants. Consider adopting architectural design guidelines.
- ED 4.2: Examine and update the Table of Permitted Uses in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that future business activity is consistent with the Master Plan Vision and Goal of this chapter.
- ED 4.3: Promote opportunities for diverse workforce housing, assuring housing availability for workers of expanding businesses and new firms.

Objective 5: Provide a level of public infrastructure and services that enables economic development in a cost-effective manner.

Actions

- ED 5.1: Advocate for funding from the NH Department of Transportation (NH DOT) through the regional transportation planning process to ensure that access to and from Seabrook as well as within the town can accommodate traffic flows that will allow proper access to Seabrook's businesses.
- ED 5.2: Continue to invest in public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sewer and water facilities, mass transit and multi-modal transportation systems to ensure that the town's infrastructure can support current and future business activity.

Objective 6: Support opportunities for cultural activities, local arts and tourism.

Actions

- ED 6.1: Initiate a program to focus on the celebration of Seabrook's historical and cultural qualities including town's maritime and manufacturing history. Cultural events, programs and protection of Seabrook's historical and cultural assets should be undertaken.
- ED 6.2: Establish information and outreach programs to market the town's cultural and historical attractions, recreation facilities, and trails not only to its residents, but also visitors to Seabrook as a way of promoting the town as a potential outdoor recreation and cultural heritage tourism destination. Such activities could include:
- Development of a visitor's kiosk on the town land at the intersection of Route 107 and US Route 1 to provide visitors with information about key points of interest in the town and ongoing events and activities. Seek funding through the state's joint promotional program to prepare a visitor's guide to Seabrook.
 - Preparation of a self-guided riding/walking tour with interpretative plaques should be developed to promote Seabrook's history and culture
- ED 6.3: Work with the NH Office of Travel and Tourism to ensure that Seabrook is included in its state promotional activities including recognition of Seabrook as an historic community and tourist destination.
- ED 6.4: Work with the Rockingham Planning Commission and the NH DOT to establish a Seabrook link for the East Coast Greenway.

Objective 7: Update and enhance Seabrook's entrepreneurial and technology assets.

Actions

- ED 7.1: Encourage installation of Wi-Fi and broadband technology town-wide consistent with federal regulations.
- ED 7.2: Promote entrepreneurial and technological opportunities by taking advantage of the proximity of the University of New Hampshire including the possibility of establishing a business incubator.

See also Actions ED 1.2 and 1.3.

Objective 8: Establish a regional approach to economic development activities.

Actions

- ED 8.1: Consider a regional approach to economic development working in partnership with the regional planning commission, the regional development corporation, and adjacent communities which may have mutual economic development goals.
- ED 8.2: Participate in the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Planning Strategy) process.

Appendix 5A

Partners and Resources for Economic Development

Federal

Northeastern Developer's Association
US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration
US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Small Business Administration
Workforce Opportunity Council
US Department of Agriculture (Rural Development Program)
US Department of Housing and Urban Development (Community Development Block Grant Program)

State

NH Department of Resources and Economic Development
NH Office of Energy and Planning
NH Department Employment Security
NH Business Finance Authority
New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
New Hampshire Community Loan Fund
New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority

Regional

Rockingham Economic Development Center
Rockingham Regional Planning Commission
Coastal Economic Development Corporation
Granite State Economic Development Corporation
Exeter Chamber of Commerce
Hampton Chamber of Commerce

Local

Seabrook Economic Development Committee

Appendix 5B Tools for Economic Development

Below is a brief summary of information of programs for communities for purposes of supporting economic development.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) DISTRICT: This program allows the city/town to finance infrastructure improvements through bonds that are paid back from the dedicated new taxes that the improvements support. Once the bond is paid back, the taxes then become part of the general revenue fund. For more specifics and examples, see: <http://www.nh.gov/oep/resourcelibrary/referencelibrary/t/taxincrementfinancing/index.htm>.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS: Administered by the N.H. Community Development Finance Authority, this program allocates federal funds for approved projects that meet certain guidelines. One of the most significant aspects of these projects is that each must promise to create a certain number of jobs to people from low- to moderate-income households. Communities typically participate in the application process along with the regional economic development corporation. For further specifics, see: http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdbg/cdbg_grants.html#Economic%20Development%20anchor.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: The federal US Department of Agriculture sponsors many programs to support rural areas by funds targeted to improving their infrastructure, businesses, and resource availability. For assistance for "Rural business and cooperative programs", see: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtbuscoop.htm>. For the information about the "Community facilities program", see: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtnhcf.htm>.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE-79E PROGRAM: This program allows communities to grant property tax relief for projects/renovations that improve designated areas of their downtown or town center. See: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-V-79-E.htm>.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM: This program accepts applications for community projects to receive NH tax credits which are then sold to raise money to fund the projects. Tax credits are sold to businesses which use seventy-five percent of the value of the credit purchase price to offset their business taxes. Federal business tax deductions may further increase the value of the tax credits. See: http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdip/cdip_overview.html.

TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM: This matching grant program, the Joint Promotional Program, is sponsored by the N.H. Division of Tourism to encourage development of events and resources to bring tourists to New Hampshire. This web-link provides more details: <http://www.resourcenh.org/page.php?page=jppinstate>.

NH DIVISION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS: Various grant programs exist, subject to availability of funds. For information about the Community Economic Development Planning Grants, the Economic Development Match Grants, and Telecom and Technology, contact your Regional Resource Specialist at the Business Resource Center

NH BROWNFIELDS REVOLVING LOAN In 2010, the Regional Economic Development Center (REDC) of Southern New Hampshire was awarded a \$1 million grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency to capitalize a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). With these funds, the REDC will provide loans and sub-grants to support clean-up activities and re-development planning for sites contaminated with hazardous substances.