



June 13, 2023

Adam Grinold
Executive Director
Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Dear Adam:

On behalf of the Windham Regional Commission, I am writing in strong support of the Southern Vermont Economic Development District (EDD), which includes the 27 towns within the boundary of the Windham Region. The Southern Vermont Economic EDD is a proposed multi-jurisdictional non-profit entity, which will be recognized at the local, state, and federal levels. It will lead planning and development of current and future five-year Southern Vermont Zone Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and coordinate funding and implementation for locally based and regionally driven economic development capacity and public and private sector projects within the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone, which was established by the Vermont legislature in 2015.

The WRC is a political subdivision of the state per 24 V.S.A. § 4341. We are actively engaged in the development and work of the Southern Vermont Economic Zone, and the updating of its comprehensive economic development strategy. The creation of the EDD is consistent and in conformance with the following policies of the Windham Regional Plan, readopted in June, 2021:

Economy Policies (p.23):

- *Promote activities and development that contribute to a strong and diverse economy, providing satisfying and rewarding job opportunities for citizens in all parts of the region and supporting a strong municipal tax base, while maintaining environmental standards and promoting environmental justice.*
- *Generate a variety of stable, year-round jobs with wages and other compensation that provide a livable income, and that include skills training programs and other benefits that contribute to the personal development and quality of life for all workers, particularly in areas with high unemployment or high numbers of workers earning less than a livable wage.*

- *Utilize existing financial, physical, and technical resources to facilitate economic development, including the creative use and revitalization of suitable existing space for manufacturing and industrial activities, commerce, housing, and the arts.*
- *Develop and assist the growth of small businesses including home businesses and entrepreneurial ventures that help preserve and revitalize communities.*
- *Support educational programs in technical and trade skills, as well as basic skills such as math and communications, in order to improve the value of opportunities for the region's workforce, both entry-level and advanced.*
- *Support the transition of Vermont Yankee employees into new jobs and industries through the development of specific job re-training programs, and entrepreneurial support strategies.*

The plan recommends that the, *“ WRC will collaborate with SeVEDS, BDCC, and other entities to promote the creation of meaningful, high-quality jobs and wage levels that will contribute to economic, social, and environmental health.” (p.22)*

The Windham Regional Plan supports the 2030 vision for the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone as home to a resilient, creative, and inclusive community in which businesses and people thrive and prosper, and the five CEDS priority actions to achieve that vision that were identified through the public process: increase the population, improve the physical infrastructure, enhance social infrastructure, expand business infrastructure and develop the Zone's economic development capacity. To this end we support the U.S. Economic Development Administration designating the Southern Vermont Economic Development Zone as an Economic Development District.

Sincerely,



Chris Campany,
Executive Director

Cc: Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair