### Community Revitalization Takeaways

| **LEADERSHIP** (24 related comments) | Champions are a necessity. One individual can make all the difference. Energetic, visionary individuals can inspire and drive community action. |
| **ATTITUDE** (19) | A PMA (positive mental attitude) is essential to community revitalization. |
| **HUMAN CAPITAL** (9) | The Northern Forest is full of creative, energetic people who want to make a difference. Leverage this energy for community change. |
| **CONNECTIONS** (9) | Building networks both in and outside the physical boundaries of the community to address challenges. |
| **IDEAS** (8) | Being different can lead to success. Creativity is critical. |
| **COMMUNITY IDENTITY** (8) | Tap into the sense of community and place. Find out what people care about. Build the brand. |
| **THE POWER OF SMALL INVESTMENTS** (6) | A little bit of money can go a long way! |
| **PLAN FOR THE FUTURE** (6) | Don’t wait for a crisis. Think long-term. Plan ahead! |
| **IT’S A PROCESS** (5) | Patience and perseverance matter. |
| **LOCAL ASSETS** (4) | All communities have assets. Find out what they are and build on them. |
| **ROLE OF YOUTH** (4) | Find ways to engage them in the community, whether they still live there or not! |

### LINGERING QUESTIONS

- The stories of community in all of these stories (6ers, first Fridays, Jack O Lanterns, 4th of July) inspire and connect to something that so many people seek. How can this be used to bring new people?
- There is a common thread of personal commitment of time and money by a group of individuals. This is promising but also overwhelming. How do we transfer the energy of a few to galvanize a broader community?
- How can (should we) scale these strategies? Is there a limit to these strategies? Will they no longer work if there is competition? Do we need a patchwork across the region? What do you do without that strong local leader?
- What is the future of the forest products industry? Is there a positive future?
- Jobs - as communities seek to revitalize themselves, what are the type of jobs and how many of them are needed? Where do they come from?

### OTHER THOUGHTS

- In order to thrive, communities need both the jobs base and the innovative unique cultural ideas that put that community on the map – and attract visitors and residents.
- Ownership is local
- Inspired by the 6ers!
- I’m most excited about identifying how an “OK Capital” type campaign can successfully fill can “at-risk capital” void in small town rural America.
- I will be seeking out more information on the Hardwick Story: The food-coop stands at 40 years. They don’t compete. Example: They don’t sell flowers when there is a flower shop down the road. Something that my county needs to look deeply at.
**Community Revitalization Reflection: RAW RESPONSES**

**Reflection Question:** What is one Takeaway that sticks with you from today – for whatever reason?

**LEADERSHIP:** 
*Champions are a necessity. One individual can make all the difference. Energetic, visionary individuals can inspire and drive community action.*

- All of the 4 stories shared at the end of the day required local champions looking with new, optimistic eyes - and at the larger systems of what makes a healthy, vibrant community that people want to live in.
- Strong, thoughtful, energetic community leaders are the fabric of any sustainable community.
- Community engagement takes creative, enthusiastic leadership. You need to have that personality as a driver.
- Need for local leadership in the community – meaning leaders who have skills and enthusiasm for their towns.
- The importance of AUTHENTIC leadership, creativity and vision.
- The power of individual leadership and collective will continues to drive the most successful and lasting improvements in community wellbeing.
- It seems every community has the humor, financial and geographic potential for growth – but it takes clear persistent, persuasive leadership to coalesce community and galvanize change.
- There are so many different revitalization ideas that have worked – all have had a strong local leader and engaged enthusiastic community.
- Community leadership is so important.
- It only takes a few visionary dedicated people to make a change and revitalize a place.
- It takes people with a vision and willingness to take a risk that can make a difference.
- One individual can make a difference.
- The power of energetic, committed individuals to inspire and drive change is amazing. We need to encourage and support more such leaders across the region.
- Empower/encourage to be creative problem solvers
- Leadership and collaboration
- I was impressed by the “individual” leadership shown by each of the community presenters- they talked about “community,” but these individual leaders were the catalyst that was necessary to effect change!
- Leadership matters!
- Cheerleaders / tenacity
- Each community benefits from leaders who are also cheerleaders with a “can-do” attitude.
- Let do-ers be do-ers
- Enthusiastic leadership! Partnership between municipal and private sector is essential for success
- There are resources in all communities that are good potential for growth and forward movement, but it takes a catalytic agent to identify those resources and develop a team to implement them.
- Local leaders lent support It takes a community to make the change to a new identity – not necessarily young people, but people with the idea to take a risk on new.
- Need progressive thinkers to make change happen. Time for all the old guard to step down and let a new guard lead the way.

**ATTITUDE:** 
*A PMA (Positive Mental Attitude) is essential to community revitalization.*

- Positivity + time = results
- Attitude: if you champion it – it can happen.
- Attitude + persistence -> Strategy and momentum -> success
- PMA (Positive Mental Attitude) – it’s very hard to work so hard and always maintain levels of optimism.
- Our attitude toward change – which is a constant – matters. Keep it positive. Tach kids to embrace change.
- Keep morale up
- Positive, energetic local leadership is critical to community vitality
- Community revitalization → Make it fun!
- Keep it fun, positive, incremental
- Positive mental attitude + long-term view + hard work = sustainable progress
- Attitude: optimism, hope, excitement- these are the essential ingredients for community revitalization
- Patience and attitude are key plus a plan. I liked the Littleton plan in dealing with the Industrial Park over so many years
- Optimism- “small” ideas can snowball into movers and shakers for community/economic development
- Each success story had a sense of community and a positive attitude
- Every community found (or will find) its own way – with a positive attitude, energy, focus on community and “persistence”
- N Forest Brothers & Sisters → Common challenges → Positive attitude → a will to do the job is present
• Small, clear, measure-able steps... celebrate
• Stop thinking about what was and starting thinking about what will be
• Pride and passion can move a community – but it also needs a lot more.

HUMAN CAPITAL: The Northern Forest is full of creative, energetic people who want to make a difference. Leverage this energy for community change.
• Human capital in the Northern Forest is the most important resource in the Northern Forest right now, no the forest
• There are amazing individuals and organizations collaborating to find creative ways to revitalize our natural resource economics
• Champions, volunteers, “human capital”
• Throughout the region there are creative, energetic people working hard together to overcome economic challenges and finding creative solutions... one project at a time!
• Community store in Saranac Lake – perfect example of community taking care of a need – instead of whining or going without
• The state of the forest products industry seems more dire than the optimism expressed. However, the assets, diversity and people of the communities are more powerful than any decline.
• LEVERAGE LOCAL → Rural communities are really good at coming together in times of hardship and rallying around issues/projects that hit close to home. We’ve got to leverage that natural capacity for togetherness.
• “If you are just running a store, you are missing the point: You have to build a community.” – Annie Gaillard, Hardwick, VT, substitute any business for store- it fits.
• Hardwick- “If you are just a store, you are missing the boat. You are building a community.”

CONNECTIONS: Building networks both in and outside the physical boundaries of the community to address challenges.
• The importance of networking locally and regionally to meet challenges and build vibrant, resilient and constantly changing forest communities – people and place are connected deeply.
• The region is sharing the same challenges, with vision and determination, the region can rebound
• Find shared challenges
• Communities that need to revitalize themselves HAVE to collaborate and partner with all like-minded
• Rural communities throughout the Northern Forest (and as far away as Texas, I was told at the break) have similar challenges and are solving them to a greater or lesser extent. WE REALLY NEED TO SHARE IDEAS!
• Think bigger community, think outside of our immediate concern/solving bigger.
• Reaching into community for engagement and creativity and reaching out for resources.
• Use the resources available to you. Crowd-sourcing from alumni would be great.
• Opportunities change over time, but with the right attitude, some hard work and community support we build new opportunities and grow our communities for the future.
• Pull resources in – $$ and people

IDEAS: Being different can lead to success. Creativity is critical.
• Individual ideas that meet with community support = success
• Success linked to uniqueness of place (and our love it)
• Do something unusual, who knows where it can lead you.
• Be creative and innovative to use and grow your assets.
• I like hearing about examples of people or communities using NEW TOOLS and CREATIVE APPROACHES.
• Start small... good ideas will scale.
• Littleton- “One silly little event can bring a town together and draw business.” (pumpkins on the river)
• Tourism is aided and driven by creative individuals with a sense of community.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY: Tap into the sense of community and place. Find out what people care about. Build the brand.
• Trademark your assets
• Communities want a place-specific identity and will rally together around one!
• “Name the Place”
• Creating a sense of community and/or place is key to creating a successful project
• Branding and getting community buy-in can make all the difference and turn a community around.
• Bringing back a community involves more than attracting new or more industry, it means making people excited about being there.
• Engage your community to work together in redefining themselves. Highlight recreational and natural assets and identify what is unique to your area. Then promote the ideas with intent of economic action. Be positive and connect to the sense of people and place.
• Community connection and buy-in is important to successful revitalization
THE POWER OF SMALL INVESTMENTS: A little bit of money can go a long way!

- Half the stories we heard were kind of old school economic development (grants, leveraged funds, industry focused). The other half were place making stories about building a community that people want to visit and live in. The second option seems cheaper.
- Small “wins” and projects – low cost projects – not only build social capital but can have positive economic effect.
- You can get a lot done with very little money if you have the right people leading the charge.
- Teddy Roosevelt was right on – “Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” Or something like that. It still holds true – and still works.
- Start small with “little wins” but put in place the capacity (people/infrastructure) to build on it.
- Creating community ownership through crowd sourced funds, volunteers – and re-investing these assets into local businesses, not Wall Street.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE: Don’t wait for a crisis. Think long-term. Plan ahead!

- Don’t wait for a crisis!
- Crisis = coming together and action, but how do you do that without the crisis.
- Planning matters- increases likelihood of revitalization success. And also positions a community to take advantage of unexpected opportunity (i.e., funding, new volunteer energy) or crisis (fire, economic dislocation)
- Homework: vision context. Do your homework to be prepared for opportunities. Think ahead!
- Think and plan on longer time horizon – 40 years.
- Create a vision and then sell it.

IT’S A PROCESS: Patience and perseverance matter too

- For something exciting to happen it takes: idea, implementation, marketing – and it must complement not compete with current businesses.
- Perseverance of a community and ideas will bring about great results.
- The power of planning and patience.
- Keep hope and stay focused on your vision
- Persistence and patience are key!

LOCAL ASSETS: All communities have assets. Find out what they are and build on them.

- Regardless of geography, all communities have assets (some more mature, others emerging)
- Making something out of nothing... and/or making something else out of something previous
- Wellbeing and quality of life are an asset that these communities all have in common.
- Common denomination to success is finding new ways to connect to your natural strengths: land, river, mountains, people.

ROLE OF YOUTH: Find ways to engage them in the community, whether they still live there or not!

- The role of youth- all four stories teased out cultivating the next generation
- Change viewing young people moving out of rural communities as “leaving” to viewing them as “alumni.” How do you engage them as alumni... get them to add value back to the community?
- Each community is like a university with alumni!
- Young people are essential for future growth. They require flexible infrastructure and a unified narrative to empower the entrepreneurial spirit.

LINGERING QUESTIONS:

- The stories of community in all of these stories (6ers, first Fridays, Jack O Lanterns, 4th of July) inspire and connect to something that so many people seek. How can this be used to bring new people?
- What would Millinocket have to be like in order for alumni funders to move back?
- There is a common thread of personal commitment of time and money by a group of individuals. This is promising but also overwhelming. How do we transfer the energy of a few to galvanize a broader community?
- How can (should we) scale these strategies? Is there a limit to these strategies? Will they no longer work if there is competition? Do we need a patchwork across the region? What do you do without that strong local leader?
- What is the future of the forest products industry? Is there a positive future?
- Jobs- as communities seek to revitalize themselves, what are the type of jobs and how many of them are needed? Where do they come from?
- Chicken ↔ Egg
6ERS:
• Inspired by the 6ers!
• Kingdom trails – 6er concept
• Saranac Lake is the place to be! Need to learn more about their branding! I need to trademark and market logos

OUR KATAHDIN:
• I’m most excited about identifying how an “OK Capital” type campaign can successfully fill can “at-risk capital” void in small town rural America.
• Our Katahdin story sounds and seems almost identical to my hometown of Tupper Lake, NY.
• Katahdin- “They (the locals) had everything and didn’t want tourists to get in the way.”

HARDWICK:
• I will be seeking out more information on the Hardwick Story: The food-coop stands at 40 years. They don’t compete. Example: They don’t sell flowers when there is a flower shop down the road. Something that my county needs to look deeply at.
• VT product access for consumers

OTHER THOUGHTS:
• In order to thrive, communities need both the jobs base and the innovative unique cultural ideas that put that community on the map – and attract visitors and residents.
• Ownership is local
Reflections from the Community Vitality Café

The morning of Day 2, participants engaged in a series of conversations as part of a “Community Vitality Cafe.” They talked with each other about two different revitalization questions. Report-outs from the first conversation are here, organized by theme.

**Conversation A: Which elements in the revitalization stories we heard yesterday made them “work”?**

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<th>Report-outs</th>
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<td>(12 related report-outs)</td>
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**A COUPLE OF WAYS PARTICIPANTS VISUALIZED WHAT IT TAKES TO REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES:**

We struggled with the chicken-and-egg idea. In the end, we came up with parallel tracks:
- Track 1: Small initiatives that are authentic. People who are identifying the strengths in the community, having small successes, generating ideas, developing new leaders. Things the entire community can engage in on the level of economics, skill, and whether they’re local or from away (like 6ers). Everyone can participate and it builds local energy and ability to feel that new leaders are supported.
- Track 2: The long-term view. Like in Littleton- there was a long-term visionary to help see big picture (but also a short-term person, more on track 1).
- In the middle core: The passion, the storytelling, and importance of being connected to the history of the place. Tell stories and educate and bring people along as an overall what is unique about our community. They fit between the community level and big regional picture.

We drew a picture like the Star of David:
- First triangle: Mission, vision, and optimism (all related but different).
  - Mission takes structure.
  - One person can have optimism, but if that person leaves, mission can keep it going.
  - Vision takes planning and patience.
- Second triangle based on people, diversity and youth.
  - First, people, people, people.
  - Diversity in NF may not be ethnic, but welcoming new perspectives.
  - Then youth- differing definitions- k12, then millennials, etc.
- At center of the star is place. Building on assets, accentuating what we have and not pretending to be something we’re not.
LEADERSHIP & POSITIVE ATTITUDE: Charismatic, committed leaders and a positive mental attitude make all the difference.

- Need for dedicated, passionate, positive leadership. Young and old. Generally these are not officials but volunteers, stakeholders, champions. How to encourage that.
- Nurturing a culture of shared leadership and creativity is critical.
- Leadership strong theme. Needing personally and professionally committed folks in a community.
- Need for people with a positive attitude, hope, optimism. People who can bring others along - small group that can show success to skeptics and eventually bring them along, regardless of political affiliation, new, old etc. When you have success, people will want to join.
- Having champion, leadership, successive leadership. Buy-in in small groups toward positive results.
- We talked about the critical importance of having a small group of concerned citizens, but the flip of that being lack of sustainability because it’s so dependent on a small core.
- Importance of having a positive, charismatic leader. That leader being able to engage others and transfer that energy so that others carry on.
- Authentic and real leadership.
- Importance of having individual who is dynamic and won’t take no for an answer. All bluebirds, no blackbirds.
- Heard a lot about dynamic people and energetic leader. Step beyond- people with personal and professional commitment to place is critical.
- Creativity, people who have passion and energy, faith in their community. Magnetism that draws more people to table.
- Importance of having a positive attitude. Needs to be carried out in all kinds of communication. Always be positive, and not use words “no” and “don’t.”

LOCAL ASSETS (PEOPLE INCLUDED!): Build on local assets and tap into local expertise and energy.

- Look at what had been historic assets in a community that have been ignored and celebrate them as a path forward. Instead of mills, think about trails. Instead of poverty, think about agriculture.
- Building on natural and human assets. How does your community differentiate itself? Throw a lot of spaghetti against the wall- some stick, some won’t. Use what sticks to attract businesses, visitors etc.
- Make use of the assets you have.
- Finding new organic strengths. Some might be built (like infrastructure) and some might be natural assets.
- Talked about importance of looking at the assets that exist. Very place-based. Landmarks, landscapes. Starting to change the narrative of place and building sense of pride around those assets and things that are taken for granted.
- Assets. People, place, infrastructure, location, community pride. And how people feel connected to place.
- Common denominators of revitalization- which comes first, people, jobs, investment, recreation... need to have the seed in place. A lot of times, one generation has built infrastructure, next gen builds on that to community they want to have. What is it that the community today values? Forests, recreation, etc. Defining locally what that is and then going with it.
- Important to support the young and old visionaries. Build off of the vision that they might have for the local community, that these need to be local initiatives around place-based assets.
- Younger leaders- connecting them to people who have familiarity of how to access resources but also young people talking to other young people. Less isolation and willingness to stay.
- Investing in people. Building leaders. Sense of alumni-ship in Millinocket—that resonated with people. Sense of you belong here and can invest here.

OVERCOMING CHANGE: Change is difficult. How do we facilitate a process where change is embraced rather than resisted?

- Change is hard. It requires perseverance to stay in it for the long haul.
- Change: How do you get people to feel that change isn’t happening to them but they are leading and part of the change?
- There’s a need for community to overcome resistance to change.
- Conflict between newcomers and old-timers. If there’s not an opportunity to sit down at pancake breakfast, etc., there will be disconnect.
- Resistance to change- there are some things groups can do to work toward positive attitude toward change.
- No fear of failure, letting go of past.
- To create new nostalgias, so that over 5-6 years, people are used to doing that and that’s what their new memories are.
- New nostalgia to latch onto.
CELEBRATE SMALL VICTORIES: *This work takes time. Have fun and celebrate the small successes along the way!*  
- Celebrate small wins that build credibility toward the larger vision.  
- Simplicity of ideas. A lot of small steps can turn into a significant thing.  
- Finding small common projects and celebrating small victories. The physical manifestation is critical.  
- Having fun! Small successes that can defrost stubbornness and resist to change.  
- Taking small idea, combining with passion. That can turn into something much bigger.  
- Importance of biting off small pieces- engaging, feasible, less threatening.  
- Perseverance. Creating small ways to make success and celebrating.  
- Start small, create success and celebrate.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: *Listen to and engage the community so that they feel ownership of the process.*  
- Educating and communicating your ideas to unusual suspects so they know there’s a reason for them to be involved.  
- Engaging larger stakeholders in community- large landowner, state park, etc.  
- Taking time to listen- everyone wants to feel they’re needed and has place at table.  
- Local ownership is critical (not necessarily physical ownership but ownership of the idea), but that also needs individual, catalytic leadership.  
- Ownership, empowerment

COLLABORATE: *Break down siloes and work together to create change.*  
- Breaking down siloes/ collaborative partnerships/ sharing are critical to moving the ball forward.  
- Concept of collaboration and its role in communities. Collaboration not necessarily consensus.  
- Creating community and collaboration by trying a lot of ideas and not giving up if things don’t seem successful.  
- Siloes- looking at siloes as killers. Who needs to get out of those siloes and have conversations. Meeting people where they are.

SUCCESSION PLANNING: *Foster shared leadership so that when the key, passionate person or organization leaves, the movement continues.*  
- Concern for succession planning. If key, passionate person leaves, the movement keeps moving.  
- Leadership succession. Easy to burn out.  
- Who’s nurturing the ideas? Individuals or organizations? And who is sustaining? What happens if those individuals or orgs disappear? Who will move the ideas forward?  
- Sustainability

IT TAKES TIME: *This work is long-term – keep at it and you’ll see change over time.*  
- Something that came through was time it takes to do this.  
- Need long-term views and realizing that success takes many years. “We forget the success that we see today is 10-15 years back.” Need to realize that everything we saw yesterday takes time and doesn’t happen overnight.  
- Persistence

SHARED LEARNING: *We should come together as a region to learn from each other and share what’s working.*  
- There’s a real need to share ideas and convene people with similar ideas across distances—so that they feel they’re not alone in meeting challenges in their community.  
- Learning from what isn’t working.  
- At the last table, we were remembering the Northern Forest Lands Council Report which included public policy recommendations. How do we fertilize the ground across the whole region so that more success stories like we heard will seed, germinate and grow into future generation? It would be interesting to see if all the work done to identify public policy changes had anything to do with the successes that we had. Think through what similar changes might create more fertile ground for similar success stories.

THERE’S OPPORTUNITY IN CRISIS: *Crisis can bring people together, but make sure to plan ahead so that you’re poised to turn that crisis into an opportunity.*  
- We had a conversation around persistence as well as luck. Being in the right place at the right time. There was a crisis aspect that almost helped the process (3/4 stories had crisis).  
- Crisis can end bickering and pull people together. Overall- crisis can bring people together to help community find new identity and soul.  
- Positioning Your Community to Get Lucky. Some magic stroke of luck seemed to happen in the stories... but there was a lot of hard work that led to being able to do the project. Our t-shirt catchphrase!
INVESTMENT: *Money makes things happen! Find ways to attract capital.*

- Each one of our groups stumbled on attracting private investment. Mills, grand hotels—those all took substantial private sector investment to happen.
- Creative ways to attract capital—especially to support entrepreneurial spirit and ideas.

OTHER THOUGHTS...

- How little knowledge individuals have of the role they play as consumers of the local economy. If it was all about economics, everyone would shop at Wal Mart. But you go to the co-op and see the connection to community. We talked about how important it is for local consumers to understand that the money they spend is vital to the larger local economy.
- Importance of storytelling—recognizing what’s happened in a place before. Being able to grieve, deal with that loss. Generational storytelling—helping create pride in place in younger generation who can then tell the story. And may want to stay and invest.
- Local political support was common theme.
- Leave politics out.
- Business owners aren’t just shop owners, they’re the community. As the infamous Rob Riley noted, if people don’t want to visit your community, they won’t want to live there (mills to tourism).
- The idea of tourism—making places attractive and a place people want to visit. But is that enough? Need manufacturing core to help sustain and complement. Sustainable development.
- Rural Aspirations in Schools... how they’re working to try to encourage education to meet local community needs. Maybe schools should be training students to address local health needs.
- Get to the tipping point so that it gets to be part of the culture, not a small group.

A COUPLE OF WAYS PARTICIPANTS VISUALIZED WHAT IT TAKES TO REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES:

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- We drew a picture like the Star of David
  - First triangle: Mission, vision, and optimism (all related but different).
    - Mission takes structure.
    - Optimism— one person can have optimism, but if that person disappears, the mission can keep it going.
    - Vision takes planning and patience. All know plans that have sat on shelf. In planning—develop relationships to succeed.
  - Second triangle based on people, diversity and youth.
    - First, people, people, people.
    - Diversity in NF may not be ethnic, but welcoming new perspectives.
    - Then youth—differing definitions—k12, then millennials, etc.
  - At center of the star is place. Building on assets, accentuating what we have and not pretending to be something we’re not.
**Reflections from the Community Vitality Café**

The morning of Day 2, participants engaged in a series of conversations as part of a “Community Vitality Cafe.” They talked with each other about two different revitalization questions. Report-outs from the second conversation are here, organized by theme.

**Conversation B: What will it take for more leaders and residents in the region to change their thinking or approaches so that more communities get on a revitalization path?**

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Find ways to nurture and invest in local leaders, especially “non-traditional” and young leaders.
- Creating networks by identifying those who get stuff done in the community and figuring out ways to support them. May not be traditional leaders, may be the soccer mom.
- Leadership development, particularly on skills – like leadership institutes. Forums where existing or potential leaders can learn. And more transparency and inclusiveness. Get organizations to feel they’ve been heard and are valued.
- Importance of identifying, training, empowering and rewarding local leaders. Giving back to those who are working hard.
- Providing leadership training through locally-based Leadership Institutes or programs. Inviting people to participate. A lot of people don’t necessarily think of themselves as leaders but if they’re asked, they can embrace the concept of being a leader.
- Mentorship came up over and over. At local level, nurturing local leaders and making taking part in the community very clear and easy so new people in town feel there’s a place for them.
- Engagement and involvement can come simply from asking someone in an open and inviting environment.
- Leadership training, mentorship, feel-good celebrations, we think we can make a change.
- Help people learn how to run good, effective meetings. This is important for residents that give up time to go to meetings.
- Start the leadership process early with innovative education. K-12 Community Asset Day, which could be field trips, after-school program, etc. whatever it takes to get kids exploring community assets. At the adult-level: developing a culture of continuous reinvention and problem-solving which would be important to remove barriers to power. One thing we take for granted is how much access we have to power- local, state regional. And how easy it is to become a person with power. Results: 1) Reducing isolation on community level and 2) Plant seeds that may or may not bear fruit.
- Capacity-building. Gathering tools for folks to be able to have successful meetings in order to move forward.
- Invest not just in projects but the things it takes to make projects happen. Tools, knowledge, skills.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING: Create spaces for people to work and play together. It takes trust to make things happen.
- Need for cross-sector conversations. When people know and trust each other, things happen.
- Ways to provide all different kinds of opportunities to truly listen to each other. Listen with empathy. Workshops, story collecting, fun activities.
- Hosting forums, getting schools involved and having community visioning projects. A lot of beer and pizza came up in second conversation.
- Tiki bars- in Burke VT, a guy put a tiki bar outside his place next to a mountain bike trail. 200 people gather there nightly. What that says to me—building social capital. Need to build social capital among leaders in the community. Who you know and who you trust. Not just pumpkins on river, but people working together and building trust to do other things together.
- Facilitate the opportunity for discussions and networking, exposing people to new ideas. Sharing and communicating inspirational stories that have occurred. Investing in and empowering local volunteers.
- Sharing the credit. When there is a small win, even if naysayers show up, share the credit so they feel part of the success. Asking, thanking, celebrating new leaders. Funder proactivity and curiosity and flexibility to support these efforts.

PEER-TO-PEER SHARING: Build cross-region relationships and networks where communities can share ideas and learn from one another.
- Creating something like “twin cities” /”sister cities,” but “quad” cities across the Northern Forest to share ideas and resources with. We’d need money for some of these. Norther Border Regional Commission is well-positioned to support some of these activities.
- Community mentorship- pairing peer to peer across communities. Don’t sell, share what’s really happening.
- Emerging theme about mentoring and sharing- Share the Pride. Mentors who could go from town to town to share their stories and inspire other communities.
- Finding the elusive balance between showing and telling. Leaders should be exposed to models and take what works without the assumption that all models work everywhere.
- Sister mentor communities- good model in Vermont call VT Council of Rural Development. Competitive process for communities getting their places un-stuck and learn from process.
- Need to know and respect and listen to the culture of the different communities. What works in Berlin may not work in Gorham.

COMMUNITY VISIONING: Help communities develop a vision for their future and the tangible steps that will get them there.
- Comprehensive roadmap process- helping communities move forward.
- Balance between strategic big picture and on the ground tactical steps.
- Working with high schools and other students. Important to engage students in civic processes. Like the programs for community
service that high schoolers are required to do. Use that to ask them how they want to see their communities change. And help them learn how to facilitate.

- Collective vision and plan in place for people to latch onto.

**STORYTELLING:** *Use storytelling to move people to action.*

- Storytelling- there’s brain science that shows stories connect with us in a deeper way.
- Storytelling in all steps of planning, which leads to vision which leads to citizen action.
- Storytelling- rather than inviting people to meeting or forum, we talked about getting on agenda that meet regularly. Young Professionals Network, Rotary, etc. Target message on their agenda. Take advantage of informal conversations. Patience, perseverance.

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:** *Acknowledge that sometimes there will be disagreement. If something is highly controversial, temporarily step away from it and come back to it later.*

- Getting people to the table but leaving off of the table any controversial topics.
- We work from the premise that people will step up and lead. How to create conditions that allow for that: Avoid divisiveness. If something is really controversial, take it off the table for a while. Avoid dichotomy (e.g., young/old, new/old). Stop, slow down and listen. Be attentive to language and culture of place. Find things that unite people- small wins, small projects. Build trust and credibility. This may also come around crisis like fire, natural disaster, etc.
- Acknowledge that there are differences. The 80% group agreed on 80%.

**COMMUNITY GRIEVING:** *Communities in transition must grieve before they can accept change. Once that happens, they may be more open to new ideas.*

- Northern Forest Center roadshow: NFC would go to different communities and first, especially in communities in transition, hold space for actual grieving to happen. People who are resistant to change are having their whole life change. So finding space for them to grieve. Art, stories, etc. And then sharing stories of success along the roadshow. What’s working in other places in the region. People can imagine what’s possible after they’ve mourned.
- Grieving process- succession process for business. In these processes, important that change not equal failure. This is change, not reflection on current, older leadership.
- How do you enable an atmosphere that brings leaders forward? There has to be a grieving process. Enabling of new leadership by creating safe environment for new ideas to come out. We see resistance by people who haven’t had their history validated. Very rational and reasonable process that a lot of communities need to go through. Use art to help with this... that can have meaningful effect and bring new leadership to come forward.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS:** *Exposing people to new ideas and experiences can help change their perspective.*

- Helping people connect to the local land-base, democratizing outdoor recreation, getting people to try things they haven’t. E.g., we invested in connecting people to cross-country skiing and now we’re seeing growth. Ski jump. Etc.
- Help influence people to change- show how it’s effective in their pocketbook. Monetize the difference it will make.

**PATIENT CAPITAL:** *Invest in new ideas.*

- Slow money... patient capital for ideas that need to be capitalized.
### Working Landscape=Working Economy Takeaways

At the end of Day 2, after hearing multiple stories of how initiatives across the region in different sectors have addressed how to balance working economy with working landscape, participants were asked to respond to two reflection questions. Responses to the first question are below, organized by theme.

#### Reflection Question 1: What is one approach you heard in the “Balance” stories that you think could serve as a guide for others in our region?

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<td>Do the research, identify local assets (including people!), organize, and find ways to message your effort in ways that resonate with the community.</td>
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<td><strong>KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE</strong></td>
<td>Keep a positive attitude, frame crises as opportunities, and keep on keepin’ on.</td>
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<td><strong>ENSURE COMMUNITY BENEFIT</strong></td>
<td>Use decision-making processes and ownership structures that ensure the local community benefits from economic development activity. (The Community Forest was cited a number of times as a great example of this.)</td>
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<td>The Northern Forest landscape is used for many purposes, e.g., forestry, agriculture, tourism, recreation. We have to work together to find the right balance of uses.</td>
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Reflection Question 1: What is one approach you heard in the “Balance” stories that you think could serve as a guide for others in our region?

CONVENE & COMPROMISE: Bring together divergent interests early in the process and work with those stakeholders to determine the best path forward.
- Balance – cross-pollinate/convene the stakeholders early on. Find the common concern.
- The balance between external development and local economy in resorts → local economy should have a voice
- Connect/consult with stakeholders and potential opponents before launching a development project...
- Negotiation/compromise. People came to the table and arrived at a solution.
- Anticipate that there will be different points of view before doing ANYTHING new. Try to convene individuals that represent the points of view prior to action.
- Bringing all stakeholders into the conversation to create a consensus (or at least close to one)
- LISTEN to all parties involved in the community
- Bring everyone to the table; educate both sides on multi-use issues
- Engage all interested parties
- Intentional thought and community engagement early in resort/real estate development proposals to ID ways that development will benefit local communities and existing businesses
- Include all interested parties from the beginning and understand changing culture is difficult
- Engage with all the community, but don’t require complete consensus
- Although this approach was not taken in the story presented about the Resort in Tupper Lake, having the stakeholders involved in the visioning and development of the project would have been beneficial.
- Hire or bring on board the opposition to create a plan that works for all
- You need to have all vested interest at the table and be willing to compromise

COLLABORATE: If we work together, we can get things done.
- Collaboration works!
- Persistent collaboration in order to address potential conflicts
- Collaboration of many parties and agencies for the Community Forest project
- You can collaborate without consensus
- Finding the common ground through which to form collaboration → also, technical assistance (not enough to have passion, you need to know how)
- Collaboration and compromise
- Building collaboration across sectors is a must
- Integrated approach across private sector industries
- Organized, collaborative discussions between stakeholders
- Cross-sector collaboration and communication- the things that worked AND the tensions were tied directly to the collaboration or the lack thereof
- Collaboration/private sectors

BE STRATEGIC: Do the research, identify local assets (including people!), organize, and find ways to message your effort in ways that resonate with the community.
- Research/identify needs and how best to respond to them – VT Working Lands Enterprise Initiative
- “Boots on the ground” with really good, well presented data to support community change – i.e., energy – and supported by networks across the Northern Forest
- Leveraging existing natural resources
- Utilizing the experience and assets while creating a good story
- If a community organizes around a goal (trail, town forest, etc.), it will happen. Organization and leadership are key!
- Exploration/development of opportunities through organized efforts
- Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Initiative – Create more public and private partnerships to work on community/economic development issues
- Emphasis on “heat poverty” messaging in promoting community-based energy independence
- Using environmental, social and economic data to document success of all “3 bottom lines” when possible
- Use multi-generational networks (because they will also hold projects accountable in a healthy way)
- Kingdom Trails – get the 80-year-old to go get the buy-in
Choose your messenger carefully – too much enthusiasm hurts

Find new ways to talk about/think about “wealth” and prosperity – not just $$

KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE: Keep a positive attitude, frame crises as opportunities, and keep on keepin’ on.
- Framing – crisis or opportunity
- Focus on what can be done, not what can’t be done
- Striking moment – a crisis or opportunity that can catalyze action
- Keep an open mind and recognize land of many uses approach
- Allow time – and patience – to hear both sides of a proposal and don’t be impatient
- Persistence
- Positivity
- Persistence
- While crisis may lead to action, be prepared to be patient. The 5-year project will take 10 years. The 10-year project will take 20. Patience must be accompanied with persistence.
- Real change takes time and consensus
- Willingness to step up and undertake a project and keep at it
- Persistence
- Positivity

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY: Listen deeply and work closely with the community to find the best way forward.
- Community-driven approach that incorporates many voices in decision-making
- Don’t parachute in (for-profit, non-profit, public)... meet, listen, incorporate local input in ideas from “away”
- Working with your community and your government to establish the best way to move forward with revitalization. Not be stuck in the past.
- Hire a local to manage the: project, planning, mediation, compromise
- Create facilitation without dictation, negotiator, local champion
- Community buy-in is key
- Query the community and try to meet their needs, but don’t waste too much time on the naysayers – you can’t please them all
- Watch what you say! The butt you kick today may be the butt you need to kiss tomorrow!
- Pay attention to what “bubbles up” in your community. What possibilities* get people excited? Build on those. (*e.g., we can have tourists and farmers/foresters at the same time.)

FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE: The Northern Forest landscape is used for many purposes, e.g., forestry, agriculture, tourism, recreation. We have to work together to find the right balance of uses.
- It’s about the survival of the community (ex, Moosehead Lake Concept Plan). Strikes the balance between conservation and development.
- Maintaining the historical use of large tracts of land without too many rules. Loggers and treehuggers need to walk hand in hand 20 years later.
- Ensuring that activities meet multiple criteria and are available to large public (economic $; Ages skills needed; locals tourists)
- Breaking down the barriers between and creating connections in the forestry and agricultural sectors. Begin by leading from the top, i.e., state agencies
- Developing ATV OHRV trails without stepping on or ruining the current non-motorized use of recreational lands
- Intense long-term land-use planning ala Moosehead Region
- Remember Goldilocks: Too little planning = ☹; Too much planning= ☹; Just right planning= ☺

ENSURE COMMUNITY BENEFIT: Use decision-making processes and ownership structures that ensure the local community benefits from economic development activity.
- Community management of its resources (forest, trails) for the benefit of the entire community – working together to bring everyone up
- The host community must benefit financially and retain control of a project
- Local assets new ownership models
- Local community idea partnership/supported by nonprofit groups
- Giving the community or landowners ownership and a say in a proposed project that is happening in their region
- Community ownership (of resources) instead of private, state, or federal
- Equity must be a consideration in any local solution
- Community forests as an option for revenue for municipalities and/or local control of land area. Support local control
Community Forest story cited as a good example of ensuring community benefit...
- Community Forests – beautiful idea in so many ways
- Community Forests as a viable community development option
- Community Forest – a town got behind it. They saw it was a good investment. They got outside help and made it happen.
- Use community-owned forests as a local “social capital” building opportunity
- Small-town taking a potential risk on a revenue-generating conservation project

DON’T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF: This is hard work. Focus on what’s working and don’t let the naysayers get you down.
- Do not sweat the small stuff (naysayers); move on, don’t waste money or energy
- Focus your energy on things/issues that are reasonably something you can control. Don’t let the things you can’t control eat up all your energy.
- Don’t spend too much time listening to the naysayers
- Organic approaches to development from within seem to grow on their own, get good traction and over some local resistance and nay-sayers. Kingdom Trails, Hardwick Ag Community

CONNECT WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES: Find out what’s working across the region and apply those ideas in your own place.
- Talk! Between areas – share stories, heal grief/loss
- Learn about what has worked for others in the region and build upon it in your community
- Deeper understanding of cross-sector regional initiatives
- Thinking regionally before unanticipated consequences impact neighboring communities

SUPPORT NEW FARMERS AND FORESTERS: Use lease-to-own programs to increase access to land for new farmers and foresters and increase their chances of success through mentorship.
- Lease-to-own approach to help new land-based enterprises in early stages of development
- Open Space Institute- love the project of purchasing land and “leasing it for sale” to young farmers while coordinating mentorship for the farmers in all phases of the business
- Access to land for young farmers and foresters
- Mentorship of older (or experienced) farmers with younger farmers to set them up for success

FIND THE FUNDS: Money makes things happen. Use grant and institutional funds to leverage more dollars.
- Using grant and institutional funding to leverage funding and entrepreneurial gumption for private ag and forestry
- Money talks, investment capital (private/public) makes things happen. And this does not mean that they are necessarily executed well, but capital mobilizes change.
- CAPITAL INVESTMENT grants to traditional “for-profits” (as well as nonprofits)
### Reflection Question 2: What one most critical tension or conflict surfaced in the stories that you think the region would most benefit by explicitly addressing as a region?

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<td>How do we develop strong community leaders who can navigate complex economic development processes?</td>
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<td><strong>INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
<td>How do we find the funds and support for infrastructure development?</td>
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<td><strong>YOUTH</strong></td>
<td>How do we engage youth so that they become leaders and contribute to our communities in the long-term?</td>
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<td>How do we build trust in the forestry sector so that business-owners are more willing to work with government?</td>
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### Reflection Question 2: What one most critical tension or conflict surfaced in the stories that you think the region would most benefit by explicitly addressing as a region?

**RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:** *How do we address the ongoing tension between “long-term” residents and “new” residents, “locals” and “tourists,” and the “old way” of doing versus the “new way” of doing?*

- Resisting change (tension/conflict) to embracing change
- Embracing a new economy
- Conflicting views between old-timey locals and the new generation for a common goal across the region
- Common regional tension between “insiders/outiders” from here/away, old/new, etc...
- Cultural conflict between people traditionally connected to working landscape and people from “away” not understanding what that means on the ground (loved Maine’s brochure for tourists idea)
- Demonization of outsiders
- In Maine, sort of chronic hostility to those not born and raised in Maine
- Greenville/Moosehead: Most issues arose from people outside the area – perhaps the region could band together to ensure those outside the region have a better understanding of the project and a better understanding of the region’s wants and needs
- A difference in cultural needs
- Tensions between “traditional” or existing landowners vs “new” users, e.g. recreational users
- Maine culture (+) and (-) = natural resource jobs, poverty, education (or lack thereof), “old way of life” vs “new thinking” (does this get balanced out of the equation?)
- Tension between local history/cultural survival, non-local needs/perceptions/preservation goals
- Keeping our old soul while building a new future
- Breakdown of tension between those that want everything to stay the same
- Addressing the issue of the difficulty of change
- Fear of change
- The “old” vs the “new”
- Challenge of getting new ideas, new people, into the “old boy” leadership that resists or is suspicious of change
- Strategies for rural communities to create and manage change. Change does not equal failure! (of past ideas- past ideas are building blocks to the future)
- Embrace racial and ethnic diversity to combat declining aging populations
- Generation gap and impact on new idea acceptance
- New opportunities vs old. During “Ride the Wild” someone mentioned how ATVs might upset hikers and other quite nature enjoyers. How do we make opportunities available without losing what made people come here traditionally?
- The need to accommodate a diversity of interests
- I sensed a “blame” or judgement of the wealthy/successful. As if that was not Ok. Also some clear philosophical disagreement. Potentially tough to mediate.
- The need to listen. The need to experiment. We need to be willing to fail and feed those failures back.

**COMPETING LAND USES:** *How do we strike the right balance between land uses —maintaining the Region’s assets while building a thriving regional economy? Tensions include conservation vs. development, farm vs. forestry, non-motorized activities vs. motorized, etc. Is there a way to make room for all?*

- Addressing competing uses for land
- Development vs conservation
- Land use policy, master plan for asset identification and best use of entire region
- Conservation and economic development – how do we create vitality and jobs without destroying the assets that bring people here (i.e., energy/rails to trails)
- How to keep the working landscape working – rather than allowing the region to become trophy properties or a façade of the place we once were
- Tensions between farm and forestry and how to use the land
- Environmentalists vs developers and/or extractive industry. There is a huge need to educate about the fact that we can have both.
- Conflict out of land use issues ➔ be transparent
- There can be tension when traditional land uses that are/were key to a region’s identity are replaced by new ones
- Balancing need for growth with maintaining the reason many of us live where we do. Quality jobs supporting quality of life
- Recreational use planning
- Use/overuse of recreational lands
• To me it’s still that conservation of special places and promoting healthy economies
• Further defining our outdoor recreation experience as diverse but also need for balance between different uses (i.e. motorized and non) and what is developed for recreation and what isn’t
• Development of multi-state/multi-region trail networks
• Motorized vs non-motorized vehicles (impacts, limits, enforcements, limits on manufacturers ➔ bigger, faster, needs a ceiling)
• Including forestry in the working landscape/grant/economic “help” (marketing) (not just ag.).
• Learning from and coordinating large development projects
• Embracing ways to balance tourism and WORKING (often private) lands and conservation for long-term public good ➔ educating tourists and locals about need for both and what working lands means and how this can be best for sustainable future
• Tourism- for whom and where? And who decides?
• Opportunity for coordinated rural destination development – coordinated with private landowners and forest industry
• Working with resort developers to positively impact the community (and surrounding area) they are in for the long-term
• Tourism developments vs forest industry cultures/ ecology
• Differences in town’s policies, which make it challenging for tourists to utilize land (e.g., ATVs, etc.)
• Tourism is a focus in many places, I worry/wonder if so many rural places can attract finite visitors and dollars
• Economic benefits vs environmental factors. Which carries more weight?

REGIONAL COLLABORATION: How do communities across the region find ways to collaborate and complement one another rather than compete so that everyone benefits?
• Balance between unique local identity and buy-in AND regional coherence and collaboration. Promote complementary vs competitive relationships between different locales
• Listen to the regional community and determine the common challenge and resulting goals
• Neighboring communities need to stop trying to operate in a vacuum! Sense of competition between communities ➔ they are stronger together and need to form co-op groups to think about collective regional marketing as opposed to single community marketing/development
• Hold up success stories in compromise and collaboration
• Finding the common ground or influencing the potential
• How does one move toward compromise when advocacy groups see compromise as losing? The staff is not rewarded for compromise?
• Regional pride often ends at the borders – create a NE brand for promotion outside of region – similar to Discover New England
• Marketing the Region as a world-class destination

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE: How do we transition the region to renewable energy sources? And how do we change energy policies and practices so that low-income people benefit rather than suffer?
• Transitioning the region away from fossil fuel to modern wood heat
• Transition from fossil fuel based energy to renewables
• Energy-residential and commercial
• Energy/heating/alternative energy/choice around energy and heating fuel sources!
• Addressing use of LIHEAP funding to make efficiency improvements in housing stock instead of band-aid approach to buying fuel – federal congressional issue
• Poor energy policy=those with the least being affected most
• Wood and water will be globally more precious in the future and we should have a lot of both unless we really screw up
• Our addiction to heating oil is a disaster

EQUITY: How do we ensure that low-income people are part of economic development action and benefit?
• People who can afford ($) to change are; people who can’t afford ($) to change are not
• The inequity embedded in outdoor recreation tourism industry. People who have $ can recreate. People who don’t have $ or time can’t play. Let’s face into this.
• (Un)heating Eastport- when a “pwp” (person with passion) embarks on a mission of helping less fortunate folks, he needs to work through trusted locals to make his message resonate
• “heat poverty”
• Struggle between “household economic satisfaction” and quality of life. How do you actually create high-wage jobs without overloading rural community

LONG-TERM PLANNING: How do we plan for the future and make sure that development activities are connected to a larger vision?
• The tendency to grasp at the first economic development opportunity that shows any promise, as opposed to openly and objectively discussing whether this opportunity is truly in the best long-term strategic interest of the region
• Tension between community-scale work and larger-scale ecological needs. Didn’t see an explicitly consideration of how these community examples were part of a larger vision.
• Not all stories will be success stories – we need to create viable de-development plans that are equitable, consensus-driven and passionate. “Hospice”
• Our own personal/professional investments and how they shape our visions

LAND OWNERSHIP: How do we address the tension between private land ownership and other uses for that land?
• Conflicts with private land ownership, control, use and risk
• Rights of landowners vs use/conservation of land
• Private landowners vs business and recreation land
• Strategies for dealing with changing landowners and identifying the suite of partners/tools that can assist when communities want to do a conservation project

LEADERSHIP: How do we develop strong community leaders who can navigate complex economic development processes?
• Develop consistent and positive leadership development in the same vision as economic development
• Providing the skills for community leaders to be able to deal with different opinions in a constructive and positive way
• Lack of leadership/mentoring in communities
• Getting good, reliable advice; mentors, cohorts, Sherpas… to pool (hard-won) insights

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT: How do we find the funds and support for infrastructure development?
• Coalitions for infrastructure development
• Funding for infrastructure

YOUTH: How do we engage youth so that they become leaders and contribute to our communities in the long-term?
• Outmigration of youth. Work together to develop tactics (or success stories) that might be shared to help us market the Northern Forest to a young, diverse constituency
• Address youth leadership and engagement

DISTRUST IN FORESTRY SECTOR: How do we build trust in the forestry sector so that business-owners are more willing to work with government?
• Forestry sectors distrust or reluctant to accept/seek out government guidance or help
• Taking a traditionally distrustful group and getting them to work with the state for branding forestry products.

OTHER THOUGHTS...
• Food-based education!
• Law- if everyone was sued- what group could most economically “defend” the Northern Forest? Lobby – legislation
• Engage with town officials with personal one-on-one experiences and at official meetings
• Finding a way to clearly get economic analyses to hopefully support your endeavor
• Scaling up and replication. Massive funding needed?
• It didn’t surface but we need to talk regionally about forest fragmentation and the impact of climate change on all that we are trying to balance
• Risk is something worth taking.
• “liability”- communicate the laws/protections for landowners or risk-takers early in your project
• A push for hospitality-based educational programs and entrepreneurial incentives for hospitality-based restaurants, services, lodging, guide services