

**North Country Council
Coös Economic Development Corporation**

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Coös Economic Action Plan to be Unveiled

Listening sessions scheduled for Berlin, Colebrook and Lancaster

Over the last few months, 100 of the best and brightest minds in Coos County have been working on a county action plan to lay the groundwork for the revitalization of the area economy. Details of the Coös Economic Action Plan will be outlined at three public listening sessions scheduled in Berlin, Colebrook and Lancaster.

“With the release of this 5-year action plan, Coös County is speaking with one voice about what needs to be done to revitalize our economy,” says Peter Riviere of the Coös Economic Development Corporation, which is spearheading the project in tandem with the North Country Council.

“We’ll be working from the same playbook across the county to make it happen,” he says.

In developing the action plan, “Technical Review Committees” developed recommendations and action steps in five areas: energy, wood, creative economy, tourism, and health care.

“This plan is transformative,” says Jeff Hayes of the North Country Council. “It recognizes that the next generation of economic development in Coös County will be lead by smaller, locally grown businesses and civic organizations and fueled by creative and entrepreneurial people.”

Recommendations were prioritized and grouped into seven long-term “themes” and seven immediate action steps by the project’s 29-member steering committee.

Themes include deploying wireless broadband county-wide, developing marketing plans for all county business sectors, and uniting revitalization efforts with like-minded groups across the four-state Northern Forest Region.

Actions steps include small community-based combined heating and power production, funding more Coös County promotion, and launching a wood products technology and commercial transfer center.

The action plan will be outlined in detail by project steering committee members at the listening sessions. Feedback on the plan, and discussion of local implementation tie-ins will also be on the agenda.

The Berlin session will be held Tuesday, June 17, 4-6 p.m. at City Hall.

The Colebrook session will be held Wednesday, June 25th, 4-6 p.m. at Colebrook Town Hall.

The Lancaster session is Thursday, June 26, 4-6 p.m. at Lancaster Town Hall.

The sessions are open to all and members of the public are encouraged to attend.

“This action plan focuses on what we need to do to encourage jobs here that are high growth, high skill, high tech and high pay,” says Riviere. It’s not going to sit on a shelf. Everyone’s behind it and we’re going to be working hard to get results.”

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The Coös Economic Action Plan is a five-year plan that lays out what Coös County needs to do to encourage jobs that are high growth, high skill, high tech and high pay. It was made possible with financial support from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the N.H. Department of Resources and Economic Development, the Tillotson Foundation, the N.H. Community Development Finance Authority, and the 100 county business and community leaders who volunteered their time and expertise to serve on its steering and technical review committees. Details at www.nccouncil.org.