



## Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire

### Community Investment Plan, Executive Summary 2019

The mission of the Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire (CDCSB) is building healthy, sustainable community in rural western Massachusetts, by creating affordable housing and economic opportunity for low and moderate income households. Based in Great Barrington, MA, CDCSB's primary service area includes the fifteen Berkshire County towns south of Pittsfield, MA, ranging in population range from 130 in Mt. Washington, to 7,000 in Great Barrington. The region is characterized by (a) a housing market driven by high demand for vacation and second homes and (b) an increasingly service-based economy. The combination of high housing costs and low wage-paying jobs is forcing working class individuals and families away from the area.

Poverty is less visible in rural areas than in urban environments, but ever present nevertheless. In the larger towns, poverty is above 12% and regionally, 26% of public school children qualify for free or reduced fees for lunch. Over the last nine years, CDCSB has leveraged over \$36 million in public and private investments in the southern Berkshire County community, creating ninety-five affordable housing units.

Included in CDCSB's pipeline of projects are 70 housing units and 40,000 square feet of commercial space for new and expanding locally-owned businesses. Recent and current projects:

- *Forest Springs*: eleven new affordable rental units in Great Barrington (CDCSB as Development Consultant for Construct, Inc.), \$3.1M, completed in 2018;
- *Bentley Apartments* (100 Bridge, Great Barrington): forty-five new rental units, \$17.6M in funding from DHCD, Federal Home Loan bank, CPA and other sources; construction start in August 2019;
- *910 Main Affordable Housing*: an eight-acre site purchased in June 2018, fully permitted in December 2018; funding applications scheduled for late 2019;
- *Sawmill Brook, Lenox* (town-owned land): CDCSB partnering with Berkshire Housing Development Corp., selected by the town Lenox to build 41 affordable rental apartments and 9 workforce rental apartments;
- *Housatonic School, Great Barrington*: The redevelopment of the town-owned Housatonic School is in early feasibility stage;
- *Gould Farm, Monterey, MA*: A new 20-unit Supportive Housing project is in early feasibility in partnership with the well-established mental health provider in the town of Monterey.

CDCSB's smart growth practices have been recognized by the State of Massachusetts as a model for rural development by concentrating housing and commercial activity in town centers while permanently preserving farmland and open space. CDCSB works closely and collaboratively with town governments, open space and conservation organizations, and other regional nonprofits in identifying community needs and building long-term solutions to address the needs of the community.

CDCSB has been especially active in supporting growth and job creation in the agricultural sector helping to bring new farmland into production and increase the number of young farmers in the service region. It is helping pioneer a new economic model for job growth called, Community Supported Industry, modeled after the successful Community Supported Agriculture movement where community members create, support and share the financial risk in new and expanding businesses.

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