CDFA's Data Initiative – New "Core Data Index"

The NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) administers the State of New Hampshire's annual federal allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds for eligible municipalities. The primary objective of the program is the development of viable communities by improving economic opportunities and meeting community revitalization needs, particularly for persons of low and moderate income. As part of our mission to support community economic development across New Hampshire, CDFA assembles and uses relevant demographic, fiscal and other data, along with public input, to help guide planning and funding priorities, particularly for the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

This commitment is articulated in CDFA's Living Strategic Plan:

> CDFA looks to meet communities' self-articulated goals, while fostering more coordinated, long-term thinking about the broader needs of communities on a statewide basis. CDFA will increasingly provide its technical and financial resources to all communities, large and small, and notwithstanding the varying capacities of communities.

In 2019, to meet this goal CDFA embarked on an initiative to update its data collection, analysis and visualization capacity. The initiative has the following components:

- Create a new "Core Data Index" to replace the CDBG "set factors" to measure community need, using more up-to-date, relevant and varied data sources;

- Align data with CDFA strategic priorities, including Basic Human Needs, Access to Opportunity, and Community Sustainability and Vibrancy; and

- Create a data-visualization platform that enables CDFA to display the 'Core Data Index,' as well as other data indicators, in a user-friendly and accessible way.

CDFA engaged NH Fiscal Policy Institute (NHFPI) and a fellow from the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire to analyze possible data sources. NHFPI's recommendations served as the basis for creating the new Core Data Index. The 13 data measures used in the Index are shown on Table 1. CDFA staff created a scoring system that used these measures to develop a maximum total score of 70 points for each municipality or county.

The final scores for each municipality and county are shown on Table 2.

Each measure within the Core Data Index will be updated annually, and the overall Index will be analyzed and refined over time.

Early in 2020, CDFA will create a visualization platform to display each of the 13 data measures on www.nhcdfa.org. This data-visualization tool will help leaders and stakeholders to see information about their town or county, and to use this information to help develop community economic development plans, initiatives, projects and activities.

Table 1: Metrics Used in CDFA 'Core Data Index' – 2020

Metric Description	Geography	Source	Statistical Reliability Weighting	Measure Relevance	Relative Weight	Data Year	Updates/ Notes	Topic to Measure
Basic Human Needs								
Food Stamp Program (SNAP) enrollment	Municipality	NH DHHS	Heavy	High	High	Jan 2017	Monthly	Poverty
Free- and reduced-price school meal program enrollment	Municipality	NH DOE	Heavy	Medium	High	2018-19	Annual (Spring)	Poverty
Percent of household median income needed for rent based on 30% of income for housing	County	NH HFA	Moderate	High	High	2019	Annual (May/June)	Housing Affordability
Access to primary care physicians (per population)	County	UW County Health Rankings	Moderate	Medium	High	2019	Annual (some data time lag)	Access to Health Care
Percent of population uninsured	County	ACS	Moderate	High	High	2013-17	Annual (Dec) (Five-year averaged data update)	Access to Health Care
Median age	Municipality	2010 Census	Heavy	Medium	High	2010	New data every 10 years	Population Composition
Percent of population over age 65 relative to statewide avg.	Municipality	2010 Census	Heavy	Medium	Medium	2010	New data every 10 years	Population Composition
Access to Opportunity								
Taxable property value per capita	Municipality	NH DRA; PEP	Moderate	High	Medium	2018	Annual (typically in Summer)	Municipal Fiscal Capacity
Weekly wage of jobs	County	CEW	Heavy	High	Medium	2018	Annual (typically end of Summer)	Local Economy
Change in annual average employment	County	CEW	Heavy	High	Medium	2017-18	Annual (typically end of Summer)	Local Economy
Median household income above/statistically indistinguishable from/below state median	Municipality	ACS	Moderate	High	Medium	2013-17	Annual (Dec) (Five-year averaged data update)	Income
Percentage of total income tax returns with >$100,000 in reported Adj. Gross Income	Municipality	US IRS	Heavy	Medium	Low	2017	Annual	Income
Community Sustainability & Vibrancy								
Percent municipal population growth, 2010 count versus most recent estimates	Municipality	2010 Census; PEP	Moderate	Medium	Low	2010, 2018	Annual (typically Summer)	Population Change

Column Header Notes:

- *Statistical reliability weighting*: Level of confidence that the data accurately reflect current conditions; "Heavy" weighting indicates higher confidence, "Light" weighting indicates lower confidence

- *Measurement relevance*: How well the data address what we are seeking to measure; "High" indicates a great degree of relevance, while "Low" indicates less relevance

- *Relative weight*: Within the core data index, how each factor is weighted to develop a final 'score' for each community (high, medium, low)

- *Updates/Notes*: Includes the frequency of data updates, based on historical releases, and the time of year when available; also includes recommendations around the amount of aggregated data to include in data updates (for example, five-year American Community Survey data releases rather than one-year data)

- *Topic to Measure*: Within each CDFA Strategic Plan category (Basic Human Needs, Access to Opportunity, Community Sustainability & Vibrancy), what the measure attempts to capture

Data Sources:

- NH DHHS – NH Department of Health and Human Services (SNAP enrollment)
- NH DOE – NH Department of Education (free- and reduced-price school meal program)
- NH HFA – NH Housing Finance Authority (% of median income needed for rent)
- ACS – American Community Survey – 5-year survey data collected by the US Census Bureau, most recent is 2013-17 (median household income, % of population uninsured, current population estimates)
- UW (University of Wisconsin) County Health Rankings – (access to primary-care physicians)
- 2010 Census – US Census Bureau data collected in 2010 (% population growth since 2010)
- PEP – US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (taxable value per capita, % municipal population growth)
- NH DRA – NH Department of Revenue Administration (taxable property value per capita)
- CEW – NH Employment Security, Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau, Census of Employment and Wages (weekly wage of jobs, change in annual average employment)
- US IRS – United States Internal Revenue Service (% of total tax returns with >$100K in reported adjusted gross income)

Table 2 - CDFA Core Data Index – CDBG Scoring by County/Municipality

County/Municipality	Score
Belknap County	36
Alton	31
Barnstead	31
Belmont	35
Center Harbor	26
Gilford	31
Gilmanton	28
Laconia	37
Meredith	34
New Hampton	31
Sanbornton	30
Tilton	38
Carroll County	36
Albany	33
Bartlett	37
Brookfield	38
Chatham	35
Conway	41
Eaton	34
Effingham	43
Freedom	39
Hale's Location	27
Hart's Location	31
Jackson	27
Madison	36
Moultonborough	36
Ossipee	43
Sandwich	35
Tamworth	41
Tuftonboro	40
Wakefield	38
Wolfeboro	37
Cheshire Country	43
Alstead	45
Chesterfield	37
Dublin	38
Fitzwilliam	44
Gilsum	44
Harrisville	39
Hinsdale	50
Jaffrey	45
Keene	44
Marlborough	46
Marlow	47
Nelson	38
Richmond	44
Rindge	35
Roxbury	42
Stoddard	41
Sullivan	43
Surry	39
Swanzey	46
Troy	47
Walpole	38
Westmoreland	40
Winchester	54
Coos County	41
Berlin	53
Cambridge	21
Carroll	46
Clarksville	53
Colebrook	50
Columbia	48
Dalton	51
Dix's Grant	22
Dixville	33
Dummer	45
Errol	46
Gorham	45
Greens Grant	19
Jefferson	42
Lancaster	52
Milan	47
Millsfield	28
Northumberland	53
Odell	27
Pinkham's Grant	19
Pittsburg	48
Randolph	42
Shelburne	43
Stark	48
Stewartstown	51
Stratford	59
Thompson & Meserves Purchase	18
Wentworth's Location	34
Whitefield	50
Grafton County	35
Alexandria	34
Ashland	39
Bath	37
Benton	41
Bethlehem	37
Bridgewater	36
Bristol	37
Campton	32
Canaan	34
Dorchester	42
Easton	31
Ellsworth	35
Enfield	31
Franconia	33
Grafton	40
Groton	41
Hanover	22
Haverhill	42
Hebron	32
Holderness	32
Landaff	36
Lebanon	31
Lincoln	32
Lisbon	42
Littleton	38
Lyman	37
Lyme	26
Monroe	32
Orange	32
Orford	30
Piermont	32
Plymouth	37
Rumney	37
Sugar Hill	30
Thornton	35
Warren	41
Waterville Valley	27
Wentworth	32
Woodstock	34
Hillsborough County	24
Amherst	17
Antrim	30
Bedford	17
Bennington	33
Brookline	14
Deering	32
Francestown	23
Goffstown	24
Greenfield	29
Greenville	35
Hancock	26
Hillsboro	32
Hollis	18
Hudson	19
Litchfield	17
Lyndeborough	25
Manchester	34
Mason	23
Merrimack	19
Milford	25
Mont Vernon	17
Nashua	28
New Boston	16
New Ipswich	23
Pelham	16
Peterborough	29
Sharon	24
Temple	26
Weare	21
Wilton	25
Windsor	26

Merrimack County	26	Northwood	25
Allenstown	34	Nottingham	19
Andover	28	Plaistow	23
Boscawen	31	Portsmouth	26
Bow	18	Raymond	32
Bradford	27	Rye	23
Canterbury	22	Salem	24
Chichester	21	Sandown	19
Concord	33	Seabrook	34
Danbury	32	South Hampton	24
Dunbarton	17	Stratham	20
Epsom	27	Windham	17
Franklin	40		
Henniker	25	**Strafford County**	31
Hill	31	Barrington	26
Hooksett	19	Dover	32
Hopkinton	22	Durham	26
Loudon	24	Farmington	41
New London	22	Lee	24
Newbury	25	Madbury	22
Northfield	31	Middleton	35
Pembroke	25	Milton	35
Pittsfield	37	New Durham	31
Salisbury	25	Rochester	40
Sutton	25	Rollinsford	31
Warner	26	Somersworth	41
Webster	19	Strafford	24
Wilmot	25		
		Sullivan County	35
Rockingham County	22	Acworth	39
Atkinson	21	Charlestown	43
Auburn	17	Claremont	46
Brentwood	21	Cornish	26
Candia	23	Croydon	35
Chester	16	Goshen	39
Danville	23	Grantham	25
Deerfield	22	Langdon	34
Derry	29	Lempster	35
East Kingston	21	Newport	46
Epping	26	Plainfield	26
Exeter	26	Springfield	27
Fremont	20	Sunapee	30
Greenland	16	Unity	40
Hampstead	22	Washington	35
Hampton	25		
Hampton Falls	21		
Kensington	23		
Kingston	22		
Londonderry	18		
New Castle	23		
Newfields	20		
Newington	21		
Newmarket	26		
Newton	22		
North Hampton	21		