

Newington's Business Visitation Program

While attracting new business to Newington is important, the Town's Economic Development Committee (EDC) recognizes the importance of existing businesses and the vital role they play in the State and regional economy. In today's world, the large majority of economic growth comes from existing companies.

The Town, through the Board of Selectmen and EDC, created a Business Visitation Program (BVP) designed to reach out to existing businesses and to identify concerns and issues before they become serious. Many New Hampshire communities engage in a similar effort. Typical issues tend to be local permitting, workforce training and housing, state and local environmental regulations and financing. In addition, the BVP provides an opportunity to discuss potential expansion plans and incentives, and to learn more about the business community. The BVP allows the Town to hear and understand what the business owners think and what they may need as they plan their growth. The process also demonstrates that Newington is interested in the prosperity of its existing businesses; this results in better communications and stronger relationships. Oftentimes, in their due diligence, a prospective business will contact existing businesses to get a "read" on the Town and its overall business climate. If your business would like to participate in a BVP, or you know of a local business which would benefit by participation in the Program, please contact Martha Roy, Town Manager at the Town office at 436 – 7640 or by email at mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com.

By design and foresight most of the business activity in Newington appropriately occurs in the industrial and commercial zones east of the Spaulding Turnpike. In the case of the maritime dependent uses off Shattuck Way sited on or adjacent to the Piscataqua River, they largely operate out of the view of the Town's residents, though their contribution to the economy and the Town's tax base is significant. Below are two brief profiles of participating companies that take advantage of Newington's unique deep-water waterfront and major highway access.

GP Gypsum, 170 Shattuck Way, Newington, NH

In April, 2019, the town conducted a BVP with GP Gypsum, its former plant manager and Jose Valdez, the company's long time reliability manager. A manufacturer of wallboard, roofing and sheathing products, GP Gypsum Newington is one the company's 200 North American facilities and has been in town for a few decades.

Regarding the state's regulatory environment, GP considers it "good" when compared to tougher environmental regulations in other states. GP is very

concerned with environmental compliance matters. Finding qualified employees who “show up for work” is the most significant workforce issue. The advantage for doing business in Newington is geography: “easy access to highway” and good neighbors. The company noted the need for additional land and space problems associated with trucks lining up for delivery or transport of its products. GP is planning an expansion.

Concerns:

1. Need to continually maintain local road roads; potholes can crack the boards;
2. Provide for a smooth transition from Shattuck Way to Wilcox Way and onward;
3. Affordable housing: employees cannot find affordable housing in the seacoast area.
4. Overall, GP is pleased with the business environment in Newington.

Regarding future expansion, GP Newington is currently working with corporate engineering to develop an overall project scope to increase the size of the plant to accommodate additional equipment and indoor storage

Little Bay Lobster, 158 Shattuck Way, Newington, NH

Little Bay Lobster, a wholesale off-shore lobster business, has been in Newington for 33 years and has 35 full time employees. Due to tariffs on the export of lobsters, sales have decreased. The company considers state and local environmental regulations to be adequate. Finding suitable employees is a significant workforce problem. The company notes that location on the waterfront area is a major advantage and factors that affect future growth include regulation, transportation and energy costs. The company’s plan to add a 6,000 square foot cold wet storage area to its facility is currently before the Planning Board