



PENOBSCOT INDIAN NATION
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2024 TO 2029

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Introduction

Rich natural resources, strong community bond, innate entrepreneurial spirit, and shared cultural values provide the Penobscot Indian Nation with the assets and qualities to ensure a vibrant economic future. To exercise sovereignty and realize self-determination, the Penobscot engaged in a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning process that considered the Tribe at its best, defined core values, identified key assets of the community ecosystem, and prioritized initiatives and projects where investment is necessary to create jobs, attract capital investment, and build and sustain Native businesses that improve the quality of life for Tribal citizens.

As a sovereign nation, the Penobscot Indian Nation has the ability to place land into trust, establish a tax structure, offer business incentives to attract investment, and take advantage of various federal programs, such as 8(a), to encourage economic development in Indian Country. At the same time, the general lack of internal capacity, coupled with limited understanding by state and federal agencies of settlement agreements, Tribal tax policy, and incentive programs specifically related to Tribes, limit self-determination and sovereignty. These factors add to the complexity of pursuing economic development in Indian Country.

While the Penobscot pursue economic development, a series of inherent challenges common throughout Indian Country must be taken into consideration in the CEDS. *Growing Economies in Indian Country*, a publication from the Federal Reserve, outlined eight issues as fundamental challenges to realizing economic growth in Indian Country. The Penobscot Indian Nation, like most Tribes across Indian Country, faces these challenges as they strive to build a strong economy.

1. Insufficient access to capital
2. Capacity and capital constraints of small business
3. Insufficient workforce development; financial management training; and business education
4. Tribal governance constraints
5. Regulatory constraints on land held in trust and land designated as restricted use
6. Underdeveloped physical infrastructure
7. Insufficient research and data
8. Lack of regional collaboration

Recognizing these challenges, the Penobscot look to build internal capacity to support and sustain economic development activities, as well as strengthen partnerships with local, regional and national organizations that can assist in their effort. Four Directions Development Corporation, a Native CDFI; United South and Eastern Tribes (USET), an intertribal organization; and other agencies and

organizations have resources and expertise to break down barriers and ensure the long-term success of the Tribe's economic development activities. With a focus on asset-based development, market tested opportunities associated with the value-chains of key economic clusters, and the alignment of cultural values, the Penobscot Indian Nation can realize self-determination and exercise their sovereignty.

Overview

CEDS Creation Process

The creation of this document involved municipal government, community and business stakeholder engagement to revise the existing document. The general framework of the previous CEDS was reused, as it contains similar general cultural, societal and business goals, as well as a similar framework for development and engagement between the government of Indian Island and business and resident stakeholders. Guidelines and inspiration for much of this CEDS were taken from the Economic Development Agencies CEDS [landing page](#) and the National Association of Developmental Organizations CEDS [101 page](#), which contained specific guidelines and information on how Tribes can better construct plans that are centered around culture, values, needs and goals. Sections containing general population statistics, specific development and trade goals (divestment from pulp and paper products, development of quality of life infrastructure), cultural resilience as a result of recent natural disasters/COVID and evaluation frameworks were significantly updated from the previous CEDS.

To revise this document, a multi-layered approach was utilized. First, upon expiration of the existing 5 year period of the former CEDS, a request for consultant or advising firms to assist with the creation of a new plan, with a due date of November 5th, 2021. After the application window had closed and a firm was selected, a request for comments from residents on Indian Island was sent out that lasted a period of two weeks. As mentioned above, code 303.7 (Requirements for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies) EDA and NADO resources were utilized to ensure that the plan would be both effective for the specific needs of the Penobscot Nation while still accomplishing the federal goals and regulations for a CEDS. Following the community engagement

period, the 12 directors of the Penobscot Nation’s municipal departments were consulted and feedback solicited on goals for the updated CEDS. After including feedback from both the general public and departmental heads, the plan was sent for review to the Nation’s Economic and Community Development Committee, who examined the macro-level goals, the feasibility of implementation of the plan over the next 5 to 10 years, and its adherence to regional CEDS standards. The document then moved its way up for final municipal approval via the Council and Chief/Vice Chief of the Penobscot Nation for a final review and a feasibility study of the various included social and economic goals. Upon approval, the final draft was sent to the regional Economic Development Agency lead for the Department of Commerce for comments and revision.

Indian Island

The Penobscot Indian Nation’s reservation comprises some 200 islands in the Penobscot River, the most populated of which is Indian Island, home to approximately 550 tribal members, with an additional 1,661 tribal members living off reservation, many in close proximity to Indian Island. Although the proximity to Bangor offers more economic opportunity for the Penobscot, the Tribe has not realized those opportunities and still experiences economic distress, high unemployment, and low educational attainment.

The table below provides an overview of the Penobscot Indian Nation’s demographic and socioeconomic data compared to the region, state, and nation.

<i>Site Location Comparison to State and National</i>				
<i>Quick Facts by County/District</i>	<i>Indian Island, ME</i>	<i>Penobscot County, ME</i>	<i>Maine</i>	<i>USA</i>
Population 2022 estimate	553	153,704	1,385,340	333,287,562
Persons under 18 years %	9.2%	17.3%	17.7%	21.7%
Persons 65 years and older %	25.3%	20.2%	22.6%	17.3%
Median Age	52.3	42.7	45.1	39
High school graduate or higher, percentage of persons age 25+	95.7%	94.3%	94.6%	89.6%

Bachelor's degree or higher, percentage of persons age 25+	25.1%	27.5%	36.1%	35.7%
Households	161	64,250	582,437	126,817,580
Persons per household	3.43	2.39	2.38	2.63
Median household income	\$41,500	\$61,134	\$69,543	\$74,755
Persons below poverty level, percent	10.9%	16%	11.5%	12.8%
Unemployment Rate	5.3%*	5.2%	4.8%	5.3%
Geography Quick Facts				
Land area in square miles	22	3,397	35,385	3,531,905.4 3
Persons per square mile	25.14	45.2	39.2	94.4

* Estimate based on 2020-2022 ACS

Population – The Penobscot Indian Nation, like many Tribal communities across Indian Country, are experiencing a population growth on reservation. Tribal citizens who left home to attend school and take advantage of professional opportunities are seeking to return to their homeland and play an active role in Nation rebuilding. In addition, young families are growing throughout Indian Country as nearly one-third of the population is under the age of 18. The Penobscot Nation reflects similar trends, as a growing number of Tribal citizens seek to relocate and/or young people establish their own residence on the reservation, which has put pressure on building new housing. The Penobscot maintains a waiting list for housing and continue to plan for growth.

The public facilities and programs were created in the 1970s when the population on Indian Island was 150 persons. Since that time the population living on the reservation has increase to ~800 in 2014, but has decreased to around 550 in 2022 based on current population trends acquired form the American Community Survey. Population growth increases pressure on the capacity of facilities and programs. The Tribe has worked to increase capacity of its public infrastructure to keep pace with housing development. In order to meet continued demand for housing, the Tribe will need to expand its community beyond Indian Island.

As Tribal citizens, many who are college educated and have professional experience, return to Indian Island and the surrounding communities, the opportunity for the Tribe to engage in economic development and pursue Tribal enterprise increases. Tribal professionals help build capacity to sustain economic growth and support Native entrepreneurship.

Income and Labor Statistics – The median household income on Indian Island is \$41,500, which in nearly two thirds that of Penobscot County and Maine. The poverty rate of Indian Island is 10.9% according to the 2014 census, compared to 16% in Penobscot County, 11.5% in Maine and 12.8% in the United States.

Household income and poverty rate reflect the shifting economic climate of the region. The Bangor Metropolitan Statistic Area economy has experienced significant adjustment over the last two decades as traditional natural resource-based businesses, specifically paper manufacturing, has been replaced with service sector employment in healthcare, education, and government services. The paper industry has all but disappeared, the greatest impact on Penobscot Tribal citizens being the closure of the pulp mill in Old Town where a number of Penobscot were employed at decent wages, and it provided an outlet for the Tribe to sell timber. The reduction in timber harvesting throughout Maine has greatly impacted one of the Tribe’s primary economic opportunities, as there are drastically fewer outlets for pulp grade timber.

Traditionally, unemployment rates on Indian Island have been slightly higher than Penobscot County and Maine rates, as measured by Maine Department of Labor statistics and information

drawn from the ACS. Currently unemployment reported by the American Community Survey for Indian Island is 5.3%, which is compared to 5.2% in Penobscot County and 4.8% in Maine for the same period. For April 2016, the Maine DOL reports unemployment at 4.2% in Penobscot County and 3.6% in the Bangor LMA, while the estimated unemployment rate on Indian Island exceeds 25% when analyzing BIA data against Maine DOL data.

Indian Island, like other reservations, experiences chronic unemployment or underemployed as many Tribal citizens hold down multiple jobs to earn a livable wage. While the region's economy impacts opportunities for Tribal citizens, structural barriers to economic development introduce challenges to sustaining Tribal enterprise and Native entrepreneurship. Greater understanding of incentives, increased access to capital, and focused technical assistance will increase economic development opportunities, which will have a direct impact on employment and wages.

Education Attainment – Education attainment of adults 25 years and older is an indicator of economic opportunity. Economic adjustment in the region, a move away from low-skilled employment, has been a catalyst for Tribal citizens to pursue higher education. The Penobscot have great access to the University of Maine, Husson University, Eastern Maine Community College, and other institutions to pursue an associates, bachelors, or graduate education, as well as specialized training and professional development. Currently, 10 percent of Tribal citizens living on Indian Island (55 individuals) are enrolled and actively engaged in higher education. It is expected that this percentage will continue to grow and the number of Penobscot Tribal citizens with a college education will exceed 30 percent (with current attainment of bachelor's degrees or higher for 25+ at 25% of the 25+ population), a threshold economies strive for to sustain economic growth. By guiding young people towards those areas of study that have economic opportunity, the impact on the economy will only increase.

Penobscot Indian Nation At Its Best

When a community, organization, or individual is at its best, often desired results are realized. Unfortunately, community planning processes are focused on problems and challenges, rather than identifying the positive characteristics that support actions when we are at our best. The Penobscot Indian Nation, like any community, should strive to function at their best in order to realize the vision for the future that supports self-determination and sovereignty. By not being intentional in evaluating the community at its best, you can make assumptions and misinterpret strategic advantage, as well as overlook potential opportunities that can leverage strengths.

When the Penobscot Indian Nation is at its best, the entire community ecosystem is highly functioning as culture, the environmental, social bonds, education, and the economy are contributing to the ideal sense of place. Penobscot Tribal citizens and heads of Tribal government departments were asked to describe when the Penobscot Indian Nation was at its best. Seven key themes surfaced that are summarized below.

Penobscot Indian Nation is at its best when it ...

Cultural Heritage

The Penobscot's identity embodies its rich cultural heritage. When the Nation is at its best its culture is celebrated by Tribal citizens and shared with visitors. Annual events, such as the Native American Festival in Bar Harbor, as well as various social gatherings throughout the year serve to educate Native and non-Native people alike about the cultural traditions that shape the Penobscot and Wabanaki people. Investments are made in younger generations to ensure cultural traditions are passed down, are authentic, and are preserved. Its language is widely practiced and incorporated into daily life to strengthen pride amongst its people.

Economic opportunity is guided by cultural values. Native entrepreneurs turn to cultural heritage as a foundation for business development, creating products and services tied to Penobscot traditions as a means for economic growth and increased cultural awareness. Penobscot culture is integral to flourishing in the experience economy and plays a central role in economic development.

Community Bond

There is strength in unity as the community comes together in spirit, around priorities, in times of crisis, and to take action for the greater good of the Penobscot people. Coming together as a community that recognizes no one individual is as strong as the community as a whole. A strong community bond builds trust, fosters dignity and respect, and promotes resilience across the Tribe. Broad community engagement ensures all voices are heard and considered in the process, which leads to a culture of trust throughout the Penobscot Indian Nation. Reaching for consensus is the goal that sustains a tightly woven social fabric and motivates Tribal citizens to accomplish a shared vision.

Economic Prosperity and Jobs

There is a diversified economy based on cultural values and Tribal assets that creates employment opportunities within Tribal ventures, Native entrepreneurship, and regional businesses that extend to all Tribal citizens. An economic center exists on Indian Island that sustains business ownership for Native entrepreneurs, provides essential goods and services, and supports job creation that leads to increase household income. There is a move from scarcity to abundance as there are enough resources and opportunities that people are not in competition or conflict.

Education and Learning

Education is promoted and access provided to all Tribal citizens to pursue higher education, vocational training, and/or professional development to ensure the skills and knowledge to realize professional success. A culture of education and learning is instilled in young Tribal citizens that support Penobscot culture, life skills, vocation, and professional development. With education and learning comes a more productive, focused, and successful workforce that serves as a model for future generations.

Environmental Stewardship

The Penobscot are one with the environment as it is integral to culture, community, and commerce. The environment plays a central role in decision-making and its stewardship is critical to the Tribe's future. Natural resources are managed with the intent to provide for the next seven generations. The Penobscot are considered the trusted voice in monitoring and informing environmental policy for the region.

Strong Leadership

Strong leadership is demonstrated on Tribal Council, when the Penobscot are represented on boards and committees, and in the broader regional community, as a strong voice is necessary to preserve and protect the sovereign interests of the Tribe. **Leadership appreciates the active role it plays in economic development and recognizes the need to maintain a separation between Tribal Council and the Tribe's economic development interests.**

Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

The health, safety, and wellbeing of Penobscot Tribal citizens are of foremost concern and the Tribe strives to provide the necessary healthcare, public safety, and social services to live a productive life that contributes to the future of the Tribe.

Values

Sound economic development is informed by the core values of individuals, families, and the community. The Penobscot Indian Nation, as a people and a community, is guided by and committed to values that are embodied in the culture and contribute to the strong community bond. Alignment with these core values is key to effective economic development and leads to sustainable employment opportunities and continued economic growth. Below outlines core values identified by Tribal citizens and Tribal government department heads.

Individual

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Honesty ● Trust ● Respect ● Productive and Hardworking ● Education and Knowledge ● Positive Attitude ● Opportunity and Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cultural ● Environment ● Health ● Empathy ● Independent ● Make a difference ● Open to change
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Family

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family First ● Trust ● Respect ● Loyalty ● Empathy ● Support and Caring ● Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good Communicator/Active Listener ● Productive members of society ● Environment ● Judgment Free ● Elevate Each Other ● Opportunity and Growth ● Safety and Security
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Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pride in being Penobscot ● Strong Penobscot Identity ● Cultural Relevance ● Environmental Stewardship ● Kind, Caring, and Compassionate ● Safety and Security ● Equal Opportunity ● Ability to Live on the Reservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health ● Trust ● Respect ● Empathy ● Fairness ● Integrity ● Productive and Hardworking
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Asset-Based Community Economic Development

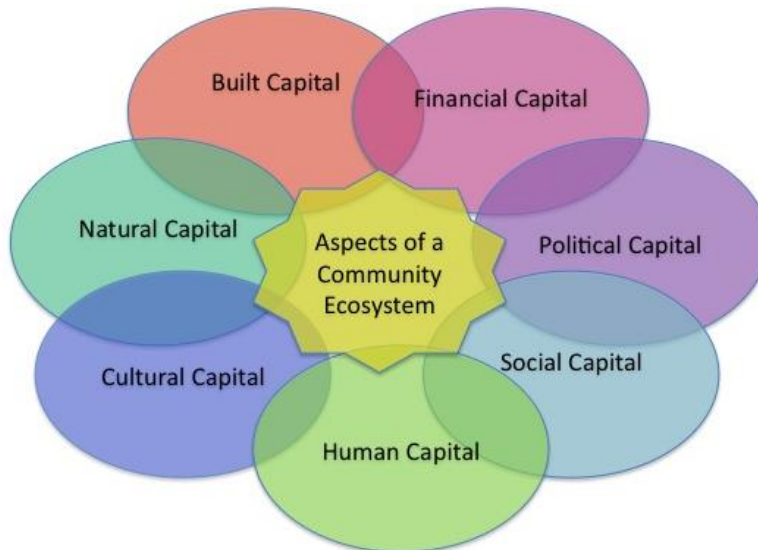
Asset-based community economic development concentrates on existing community assets to build stronger, more sustainable communities in the future. The Penobscot Indian Nation is rich in assets, which point to potential economic opportunity and growth. The assets and strengths outlined below inform the CEDS strategies and guide the Tribe’s economic development direction.

Community Capital Analysis

The concept of “community capitals” offers the Penobscot Indian Nation an overarching framework that puts in context Tribal assets associated with multiple forms of capital. The notion of “capital” is usually associated with business and investment. A fundamental definition for “capital” is a resource or asset that can be used, invested, or exchanged to create or leverage new resources. Community capital considers seven forms of capital that interact in the development process.

Taking a systems approach using the seven forms of capital as a framework allows the CEDS process to map assets, identify resources, surface opportunities, and leverage support in an integrated fashion that creates programming, partnership, funding, and policy opportunities to advance the strategic direction of the Penobscot. The figure below reflects a community ecosystem and the forms of capital that interact to create a vibrant community.

Figure 1: Community Capitals Framework



Source: Community Capitals Framework & Sustainable Communities, Cornelia Butler Flora, Rural Studies Research Seminar, July 4, 2006, University of Guelph

Table 1: CEDS Community Capitals–Overview

Natural	Cultural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>River/Water</i> ● <i>130,000 acres</i> ● <i>Native Foods</i> ● <i>Forest Products – 65 products – New Markets - Diversity</i> ● <i>Native Guides</i> ● <i>Wind – Wind Power</i> ● <i>Medicinal Plants</i> ● <i>Tree Growth</i> ● <i>Maple Sugar</i> ● <i>Tipping</i> ● <i>Tribal Timber Harvest</i> ● <i>Elver – Adult Eels</i> ● <i>Trail System</i> ● Habitat Diversity – Wetland and Uplands ● Aquifers ● Islands ● Land Use Policies ● Forest Management Plan – Sustained Yield ● Island Community ● Mining and Minerals ● Wildlife ● Destination ● Gravel Pits ● Select Harvest – Habitat Focus ● Multiuse ● Land acquisition fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Natural Landscape</i> ● <i>Cultural Trail System</i> ● Fish and Wildlife – Preservation and Conservation ● History Preservation ● Strong ties to Wabanaki Brothers/Sisters ● Sustenance Lifestyle ● Canoeist ● Athletes ● Isolation ● Authors ● Media Works ● Abbe Museum/Other Cultural Institutions ● Petroglyphs ● Strong sense of who we are ● Sense of Place ● NAGPRH ● Socials ● Food ● Drummers ● Singers ● Basketmakers ● Knives ● Artists ● Museum ● Language

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fiddleheads – Traditional foods ● Carbon Credit Trading ● Trust Land ● Land acquisition fund ● Reservation – Trust and Fee land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Songs ● Stories ● Legends ● Guides ● Sugar Island ● Elders ● LD291 – Voice and Education ● Knowledge ● History ● Ancestral territory ● Centrally located ● Unique to Tribe ● River Infrastructure
Human	Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Diverse Skill Levels/Sets (workforce development/project management)</i> ● <i>Youth</i> ● <i>Leadership</i> ● <i>Smart People</i> ● <i>Access to Education</i> ● <i>Artistic</i> ● Culturally Knowledgeable ● Loyalty/Belonging ● Positive/Contribute ● Seven Generations ● Elders ● Veterans ● Skilled Hunters ● Skilled Canoers ● Institutional Knowledge ● Grant Writers ● Scholarship Funds ● Want to work ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Activists</i> ● <i>Non-Indian Allies</i> ● <i>Consortium of Tribes</i> ● <i>Wabanaki Youth in Science - WAYS</i> ● <i>Community Support/Scaffolding</i> ● Council Meetings ● Inter-Tribal celebration ● Youth Recreation ● Senior Trips ● Cribbage ● Death in community ● Men’s Group ● Annual women’s paddle ● Whitewater Nationals ● Healthcare Clinic ● Wabanaki Confederacy ● Maine Basketmakers Alliance ● Community Day ● Community Gardens ● Housing Facilities ● Bingo ● Elder meals ● Recreational ● Wellness Court ● Socials
Built	Political

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>PINE Manufacturing Space</i> ● <i>Greenhouses</i> ● <i>Water/Sewer</i> ● <i>Road System in Forest Land</i> ● <i>Available Space</i> ● <i>Sugar Island</i> ● <i>Mahawkanau Island</i> ● <i>Kiosks – Tourism Statewide</i> ● <i>Steuben/Hampden Housing Subdivision</i> ● Bingo ● Boat Ramp ● Boardwalk ● Senior Assisted Living ● School ● Health Clinic ● Community Building ● Office Building ● Wenonah’s Place ● Housing ● Broadband ● Gym/Exercise ● Tribal Court ● Elder Housing ● LEED ● Museum ● Church – Oldest ● Wooden Shingled T-Pee ● Individual Camps ● Air Boat ● Feasibility – Hospitality ● Lot 13 ● Ability to lease land for Tribal members for economic development ● Nee for reservation housing ● Carrabassett Valley Seasonal Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Stability</i> ● <i>Reputation Nationally</i> ● <i>Strong Environmental Voice</i> ● <i>Agency Funding</i> ● <i>Private Funding</i> ● <i>USET</i> ● State and Federal Influence ● Trust Tribe to monitor water over the DEP ● Committee Representation/Leadership ● Wabanaki Confederacy ● Tribal Lawyer/Ambassador ● Tribal Court ● Lobbyist ● MITSC ● Wabanaki Public Health ● Member of various Intertribal organization ● Four Directions
<p>Financial/Economic</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Sovereign Status</i> ● <i>Ability to put land into trust</i> ● <i>PINE – Subsidiaries</i> ● <i>8(a) and Past Performance</i> ● <i>Cultural Tourism</i> ● <i>Economic Development Fund</i> ● CEDS ● Bingo 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lease Revenue ● 638 Funds ● Natural Resources ● Trust Fund ● Oxford Revenue ● Per Capital Fund ● Land Acquisition Fund ● Trade ● Chimolly Trading Post ● Museum ● Fishing Rights ● Municipal Revenue ● Big Game Hunting ● Tax Exempt ● Court Fees and Fines ● HubZone ● Tribal Member Logging Contract ● Rainy Day Fund ● Economic Diversity ● Grants 	
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Penobscot Community Capital Overview

The Penobscot enjoy an abundance of community capital and assets that enhance the Tribe’s economic development potential. Across the community ecosystem the relationship and interconnectedness of various assets create leverage points that lead to economic opportunity. Over time new assets will emerge and existing assets may diminish.

In analyzing assets, gaps surface that require investment to fully realize the potential of the larger community system. To fill gaps, capital can be leveraged through partnerships and collaborative efforts that lead to increased accumulation and impact without having to establish considerable new infrastructure and relationships. Limitations in financial capital present a challenge to the long-term sustainability of economic growth. There is a growing need for economic diversification that continues to build on the strengths of the Penobscot. Diversification should include investments in ventures both on and off-reservation. As with any asset, they must be protected to sustain their value and ensure long-term impact.

Below offers an analysis of assets associated with the seven forms of capital.

Natural Capital

Penobscot Indian Nation has over 130,000 acres of land held in trust or as fee land situated in a number of large parcels in eastern, central, and western Maine. Much of this land is in tree growth and is actively managed for production. Significant stands of rock and sugar maple present opportunity for maple syrup production. In addition, the Penobscot River and the nearly 200 islands north of Indian Island serve as the homeland for the Penobscot and provide the Tribe with a host of economic opportunities, particularly related to tourism. Because of the land base,

the Penobscot have the opportunity to pursue alternative energy from wind generation, as well as establish a carbon credit program. A host of other natural capital assets are available to the Penobscot including trail systems, a diverse habitat, and the abundance of medicinal herbs and plants that can be cultivated to support economic development.

Cultural Capital

Assets associated with cultural capital are immense given the cultural traditions that the Penobscot continue to practice. Culture serves as a foundation from which community values are based, social capital formed, and economic opportunity shaped. The natural landscape is intertwined with the cultural tradition, which are reflected in the Penobscot language, its songs and stories, recreation practices, and traditional food. Given the relationship between the natural environment of the Penobscot homelands and cultural traditions, there is a strong sense of place that adds economic value. Basketmaking, woodcarving, knife making, and guide services present great opportunity for Native entrepreneurs and are a vital component to a broader cultural tourism initiative.

Human Capital

The Penobscot hold great value in education and knowledge. The Tribe has played an active role in investing in Tribal citizens, financially supporting personal and professional development through education and training. The Penobscot people are diverse in their skill set, which creates flexibility in economic development opportunities. Cultural traditions influence human capital as the Penobscot have a strong, valued elder population that plays an integral role in community. This is juxtaposed with a growing population of young people 18 years and younger who are actively engaged in their development, assisted through programs such as the Wabanaki Youth in Science (WAYS). Tribal leadership is strong, and a growing number of young people are actively engaged in Tribal affairs. Education attainment remains below national standards but is improving considerably with 10% of the population on Indian Island pursuing higher education. With economic opportunity education is likely to continue to rise, which will further enhance human capital. A strong entrepreneurial culture has emerged across Tribal citizens including the growing number of artisans generating income through the sale of artwork, as well as other Native entrepreneurs who have established small businesses.

Social Capital

The Penobscot, like many Tribal communities, have a strong social bond that serves as scaffolding for all aspects of community life. Focused attention on supporting the development and growth of young people is a key investment in the Tribe's future. The social infrastructure is well established through the various government departments and programs, such as elder meals, annual women's paddle, men's group, and senior trips. A wide variety of events, some closed to the public, while many are open to visitors, help to extend social bonds through the celebration of Penobscot culture.

Built Capital

Considerable built capital exists to support life on Indian Island, specifically water and sewer. The PINE building, after renovation and expansion, will be the host location for the Tribe's new Salmon Brood Center project. On Indian Island there are a host of buildings that support community activities, including the school, housing, assisted living, health clinic, church, recreation center, youth activities hall, and museum. Sugar Island, boat launch, trail systems, and kiosks provide both infrastructure and programs to support tourism development. To

support timber harvesting, the Penobscot have established a road system throughout their forestlands.

The Penobscot Nation has considerably increased investment in capital improvement projects over the past five years, and is currently engaged in construction on the above mentioned \$25,000,000 Salmon Brood Center, an \$8,000,000 community center that will service as the new home of Tribal social activities and community groups, and is engaged in the planning process of constructing an upgraded cultural center. Additionally, a 1.3 megawatt solar build-out is in the process of beginning construction, which will be complemented by higher internet and communication speeds via the construction of town-wide fiber optic cables, all of which are designed to help improve the quality of life on Indian Island as well as provide additional social, employment and conservation opportunities to residents.

The Penobscot maintain a waiting list of Tribal members interested in returning to the reservation. It is not unusual for 60 individuals or families within the Tribe to wait for housing. To address demand, the Tribal Housing Department has built a 26-unit housing development and is currently planning additional residential development. Senior housing will be a focus as there is a growing need.

Political Capital

The Penobscot Indian Nation enjoys political stability and has a national reputation for its service in Indian Country. The Tribe has significant influence on public policy at the state and federal levels. Tribal citizens have been appointed to leadership positions on boards, committees, and task forces that help shape policy and legislation regionally, as well as throughout Indian Country. This leadership has strengthened the Wabanaki Confederacy and provided an influential voice in regional affairs. The Penobscot Nation's attention to the environment, specifically water quality, has positioned the Tribe as the authority on water quality in the region. As a result of their political capital, the Penobscot have attracted public and private funding to help advance the Tribe's cultural, social, and economic agenda.

Financial Capital

Financially the Penobscot have diversified their economic development interests with PINE, forest products, lease revenue, and modest income from gaming (online gaming and Oxford casino). The Tribe manages considerable federal grant monies annually including 638 funds and a number of multiyear grants. As a result of sound fiscal management, the Penobscot have established a series of funds dedicated to specific activities such as the land acquisition fund, per capital fund, economic development fund, and trust fund. The recent economic adjustment related to timber harvesting, and the graduation of 8(a) businesses from PINE show there is a need to further develop revenue streams associated with economic development activities.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT)

A SWOT analysis was conducted based on an environmental scan and two-day workshop with Tribal citizens and Tribal government department heads. The SWOT focused on economic development and those issues related specifically to generating economic activity, job creation, wealth, and capital investment.

Penobscot Economic Development SWOT

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political capital ● Stability ● 130,000 acres of land ● Rich natural resources ● National presence and recognized voice ● PINE track record ● EDA support and established CEDS ● Track record of grant funds to support economic development ● Young people pursuing higher education ● Momentum – economic development ● Cultural tourism infrastructure ● Well managed finances ● Skilled labor ● Preferential status ● Culture of entrepreneurship 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of dedicated staff ● Depth of economic diversity ● Reliance on PINE ● Limited access to capital ● Technical assistance capacity ● Lack of integration of economic development in organization culture ● Limited non-federal funds to support activity ● Trust process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expensive ○ Slow ● Ability to bond ● Due diligence process
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political influence ● Partnership and collaboration ● Four Directions Development Corp./Native CDFI ● Cultural tourism initiative ● Access to education – UMaine proximity ● Expanded technical assistance ● Expanded federal funding partners ● Preferential status – Sect. 17/8(a) ● Emerging energy cluster and niche manufacturing ● Natural resources ● Private sector experience ● Setting benchmarks and performance standards 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complacency ● Government regulations ● Competing interests ● Funding ● Access to capital ● Federal and state agencies ● Macro-economic forces ● Competition ● Technology ● Policy/Rule changes ● Setting benchmarks and performance standards ● Competing interests ● Not In My Backyard (NIMB)

Economic Development Visioning

To gain a sense of vision, Penobscot members participated in a process that explored what the Tribe should be doing more of ..., less of ..., and completely different ..., as well as were asked to share three wishes they had to advance economic development. From this process, and a series of individual and group discussions, a vision was constructed.

More of ..., Less of ..., and Complete Different ...

The Penobscot Indian Nation has established a foundation from which economic development can continue to grow. Through an appreciative inquiry process a series of themes emerged that the Tribe can do more of, to strengthen its economic development efforts and realize better results.

More of ...

Economic Diversification and Access to Markets – The Penobscot’s economic diversity can be strengthened by considering existing assets, regional value-chains associated with economic clusters, and expanding access to markets. Supporting both Tribal enterprise and Native entrepreneurs with collaborative marketing, branding, and promotion to broaden and diversify markets.

Analysis and Metrics – Expand the analysis and assessment of current Tribal enterprise to support growth and anticipate the emerging nature of business. An intentional and well-structured process to evaluate current operations beyond simply revenue generation is needed so the Tribe can make more informed decisions as to its economic development investments. This process provides a level of due diligence that informs key performance indicators. Important to the analysis process is the continued use of asset-based development and periodic surveying of Tribal citizens to gain a perspective. Power projects are being considered.

Tourism – Cultural and Eco – Tourism presents the Penobscot with great economic opportunity and establishing programs, services, and technical assistance to grow cultural and ecotourism activities for the Tribe, and Native entrepreneurs will support economic development that is aligned culturally. Expansion of guide services, cultural training, customer service training, collaborative marketing, and tourism product development and integration are opportunities to increase economic growth for the Penobscot. Larger hospitality development may be an opportunity and needs further consideration.

Business Development and Entrepreneurship Training – Attracting or developing larger scale businesses that can utilize the PINE facility creates economic impact if the enterprise is sustained. The number of Native entrepreneurs, many who work in the tourism sector, could benefit from increased capacity in business acumen. With this training an increase in business ownership of microenterprise can emerge, building a stronger Tribal economy. Facilitate internship opportunities to support training needs and provide Tribal citizens with sound experience.

Action – Moving plans to action is critical for the community to realize its vision and to build confidence amongst its people. Follow through and execution of key strategies and action plans is needed to demonstrate a commitment to continually improve the quality of life for the Penobscot people. More investment and action in the community and Penobscot culture will lead to a sense of place that empowers Tribal citizens.

Tribal Government – Greater collaboration and links across Tribal government departments can lead to organization efficiencies, enhanced programs and services, and funding opportunities that recognize innovation. More training of Tribal leadership, elected officials, and Tribal government staff is always valuable as things continually change. Developing a comprehensive orientation for Tribal leaders and committee members as they engage in Tribal government.

Less of ...

Expectation on PINE – Although PINE has realized strong revenue over the years, there is a need to further diversify and place less reliance on PINE activities.

Reduce Dependence on Timber Harvesting – Move towards higher value forest/wood products that have a greater return on investment.

Moving Beyond Silos – Given the interconnectivity of economic development there is need to move beyond Tribal government department silos and work collaboratively to make the best of scarce resources.

Underperforming Operations and Nonproductive Assets – Evaluate current operations and assets to determine performance and value. Reduce Tribal investment in those areas that are not strategic and performing.

Completely different ...

Community Engagement – Establishing new ways of community engagement to increase participation and ensure all voices are heard in the process.

Succession Planning – As Tribal leadership, staff, and committee members age or find new opportunities there is an increasing need for succession planning to ensure a smooth and competent transition. Establishing Tribal policy, raising aspirations, and provide training to build capacity supports sound succession planning.

Mentorship and Professional Development – The Tribe can take an active role in supporting workforce and professional development of Tribal citizens by building a skills database of those citizens looking for employment, as well as establish mentorship opportunities and internship/apprenticeships with area employers.

Penobscot Language School and Native Cultural Training – Establish a language school and expand cultural training to all Tribal citizens.

Economic Center – Create an economic center on Indian Island that employs Tribal citizens, provides basic goods and services, and serves as a hub for the community.

Three Wishes

A series of themes emerged when considering three wishes for the Penobscot’s economic development direction.

Sovereignty, Self-Determination and a Self-Sustaining Community Ecosystem – Exercise full sovereignty that is recognized and respected by the State of Maine so that the Penobscot Indian Nation realizes self-determination and are able to provide for and sustain a robust community ecosystem for its Tribal citizens. Full employment for all Tribal citizens in Tribal enterprise and Native owned businesses across diverse economic sectors.

Dedicated Economic Development Department – Grow the dedicated economic development department so it has capacity to bring about the goals stated in this CEDS.

Cultural Development – Grow cultural enterprise that creates relevant jobs and serves as a means to foster cultural preservation through Native entrepreneurship and Tribal ventures that advance broad economic development goals. Cultural and eco-tourism, artisan handmade, and specialty food production provides full-time employment that raises household income to the state median.

PINE, Business Development, and Capital Investment – Utilize PINE and its facilities strategically to support job creation for Tribal citizens and revenue generation to enhance Tribal programs. **A clear separation between Tribal government and business/enterprise development is key to the long-term success of the Tribe’s economic development program.** Expand industrial development outside of Indian Island through focused investment and sound business planning. Explore various capital investment strategies to further diversify revenue streams for the Tribe.

Gaming – Continue to exercise sovereignty that leads to expanded gaming operations to the Penobscot.

Quality of Life and Place – Improve the overall wellbeing of Tribal citizens through sound planning; effective execution of strategy and action plans; dedicated investment that impacts the entire community, and more efficient and effective regulations that support business development, not create barriers.

Economic Clusters

Economic clusters that present opportunity for the Penobscot Indian Nation are tied to critical assets the Tribe currently possesses and are informed by the regional economy and value-chains that can be leveraged. Given scarce resources it is important that the Penobscot target its economic development strategy on a limited number of key economic clusters to minimize dilution of both capacity and service, and to ensure impact. Economic clusters that emerged were:

- Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fishing
- Artisan – Handmade
- Contracting, 8(a), and HubZone
- Energy, including Power Projects and Renewable Community Projects
- Forest/Wood Products
- Tourism, including Eco-tourism and Cultural Tourism

Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fishing

Although the Penobscot are not actively engaged in agriculture, aquaculture and commercial fishing on a large scale, increased attention is being paid to food sovereignty across Indian Country that present opportunity. As a part of this, the Penobscot Nation has recently entered into its first larger aquaculture project, which is a salmon brood center and is currently being developed here on Indian Island. The Penobscot have both a land base in which it could cultivate for agricultural purposes, as well as an abundance of water that may be harnessed for aquaculture. The close proximity to the ocean also presents opportunity for commercial fishing. In addition to growing the raw materials, considerable opportunity exists in value-added production.

Artisan-Handmade

The Penobscot have a longstanding history of artisan-handmade activities that are marketed to travelers along the Maine coast. This rich cultural tradition fosters economic activity by artisans that support economic growth in this sector. There is a need for greater access to markets in order to build the scale that can support self-sufficiency. In addition, building capacity in business acumen, specifically financial literacy, accounting, and marketing is essential for increasing household income.

8(a) federal contracting and Native-to-Native Business Development

PINE has built considerable capacity in federal procurement and contract management. It has established a strong presence in federal 8(a) program that has generated significant economic impact for the Tribe. Because of the breadth of the 8(a) program, continued opportunity exists for the Penobscot to receive preferred contracting status with the federal government. Similar in nature is the opportunity to facilitate Native-to-Native trade and business development and international trade for Native goods and services. Creating access to markets is an essential service needed in Indian Country. There has been considerable discussion identifying the need and no entity exploring the opportunity.

Energy

The Penobscot are actively engaged in the development of alternative energy generation and distribution projects, particularly solar, wind and biomass. These projects have the opportunity to supply inexpensive energy to the Nation, its citizens, and Tribal business interests, as well as a revenue stream from the sale of energy to be distributed through the grid. Federal funds have supported project feasibility in alternative energy and now project development is being considered.

Forest Products

With nearly 100,000 acres of trust land dedicated to tree growth, the forest/wood products sector is one of the Penobscot's most important economic clusters. The Tribe currently has 65 products within the forest products sector, the majority supplying raw materials to paper mills, biomass energy, and other value-added producers. Further diversification in value-added forest/wood products is necessary.

Tourism – Cultural and Eco

The Penobscot have a long history in guiding travelers through the region with the most notable being Henry David Thoreau. Today the Penobscot are engaged in a variety of cultural and ecotourism ventures, both as Tribal enterprise and as Native entrepreneurs. With regards to economic development, tourism is accessible to small-scale Native entrepreneurs who are looking for additional income as desired, to large-scale tourism development led by the Tribal government or its economic development organization. Because of the breadth of the tourism sector, the Penobscot should consider strategic product development and diversification to provide focus so measurable impact can be realized. There is opportunity to create vertical integration of tourism products and assess gaps in the value-chain that can be filled. To achieve this a long-term strategy is necessary. A feasibility study is currently underway in this regard.

Goals and Objectives

A series of goals and objectives have been defined to advance the Penobscot Indian Nation's CEDS. The goals and objectives have been organized around four core themes – Thriving Economic Climate, Abundant Natural Resources, Rich Culture, and Human Capacity.

Thriving Economic Climate

Goal: Over the next five years the Penobscot Indian Nation will diversify its economy by making strategic investments in enterprises that are asset-based and are aligned with the Tribe's cultural values; providing access to capital and exposure to new markets; creating jobs for Tribal citizens at wages that increase household income; attracting capital investment, and generating revenue to support Tribal programs and services.

Abundant Natural Resources

Goal: Over the next five years the Penobscot Indian Nation will pursue asset-based development that utilizes the Tribe's natural resources in a sustained, well-managed practice that supports value-added production, furthers economic diversification, and expands both sectors and markets.

Rich Culture

Goal: Over the next five years the Penobscot Indian Nation will invest in cultural development activities that lead to economic growth and self-sufficiency for Tribal citizens, expands Tribal citizens' cultural knowledge, enhances experiences and raises awareness of Native and non-Native people, and fosters Native entrepreneurship by building capacity, providing technical assistance, creating access to markets, and promoting Penobscot products and services that remain authentic to Penobscot culture, without exploitation and commodification.

Human Capacity

Over the next five years the Penobscot Indian Nation will invest in its Tribal citizens to advance a culture of education and knowledge, develop sound leadership with the skills to protect the sovereign interest of all Penobscot people, mentor young people and those with aspirations so they achieve their greatest potential, inspire and support Native entrepreneurs in their quest, build a skilled workforce with the capacity to meet the evolving demands in the workplace, and effectively plan succession to ensure Tribal citizens have the capacity to lead in times of transition.

Strategies and Implementation/Action Plans

The CEDS key strategies and implementation/action plans for each of the core goals are outlined below. The implementation/action plans are designed to be implemented over the next five years.

Thriving Economic Climate – Strategies

Strategy: Strengthen economic development department with dedicated staff to support business development efforts, provide technical assistance to Native entrepreneurs, manage due diligence for Tribal investments, provide guidance on various incentives available to prospective business partners, and monitor and evaluate progress towards goals.

Staff: Michael Burgess

Costs: \$150,000 annually

Funding Sources: EDA Planning, USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG), Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Detail the mission and scope of services the economic development department will provide, develop job descriptions for staff positions, and hire qualified individuals to deliver services and fulfill the scope of work outlined for the department.

Cultivate relationships with key partners to support economic development services for the Penobscot Indian Nation, including institutional and financial stakeholders that can assist the Penobscot to build a strong economic development department.

Gain an understanding of the various incentive programs, grant sources, and technical assistance that supports economic development in Indian Country.

Establish a monitoring, evaluation, and due diligence system for Tribal business and potential investments.

Strategy: Develop programs and services to support Native entrepreneurs, artisans, and guides establish microenterprise (5 or less employees) that strengthen the local economy and advance broader economic development goals of the Penobscot Indian Nation. Study the possibility of a business incubator.

Staff: Economic Development Director

Costs: \$50,000

Funding Sources: USDA RBDG, Other Grants

Timeframe: 24-36 months

Implementation:

Assess the needs of Native entrepreneurs and build technical assistance capacity in these areas to support business development. Consider incorporating established programs and focus on the possibility of forming an incubator tailored to the needs of the Tribe.

Strategy: Launch a market development initiative that includes Native 2 Native business development, international trade, and ecommerce.

Staff: Economic Development Director and External Consultant

Costs: \$75,000 feasibility and business planning; Estimated \$50,000 annually based on feasibility

Funding Sources: Administration for Native Americans (ANA), USDA RBDG, Other Grants

Timeframe: 9-12 months after work begins.

Implementation:

Conduct feasibility and business planning study to determine the viability of a Native 2 Native business development program where the Penobscot establish a Tribal venture to facilitate and broker trade across Nations.

Work on actual venture and actual marketing material, not just study and examples.

Develop a series of collateral marketing material – print and digital – that support business development, promotes Penobscot goods and services, and outlines the advantages of doing business in Indian Country

Strategy: Engage in research and development to identify industry and sector trends that are aligned with the Tribe’s existing assets, cultural values, and investment criteria.

Staff: Economic Development Director

Costs: \$50,000

Funding Sources: EDA Planning and Technical Assistance, Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Renew application for EDA’s Planning and Technical Assistance grant, which can assist in establishing a system in which industry and sector trends in key economic clusters are researched to inform future economic development projects. Make research practical and usable to the Tribe’s needs.

Abundant Natural Resources – Strategies

Strategy: Further diversity forest/wood products sector to compensate for economic adjustment taking place in the paper industry by considering value-added manufacturing, biomass energy generation, and maple syrup production.

Staff: Chuck Loring, Michael Burgess

Costs: \$150,000

Funding Sources: ANA, USDA, Forest Department revenue, Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Evaluate current forest management plan to identify opportunities for diversification and establish an action plan that includes feasibility and market analysis for value-added production, biomass energy generation, and maple syrup production. Collaboration with external partners and trade organizations in the forestry sector (FOR/Maine) can be utilized to provide an initial boost in the target industries mentioned above, and help tie them into the greater Maine ecosystem for these industries.

Strategy: Establish a Tribal brand that positions Penobscot products in a cultural context and communicates to consumers the Penobscot's commitment to environmental stewardship.

Staff: Economic Development Director

Costs: \$100,000

Funding Sources: ANA, USDA RBDG, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Identify Tribal products and services that could benefit from a uniform Penobscot brand and work to establish a brand narrative, positioning, marketing plan, and design guidelines. The brand can extend to Native entrepreneurs and include:

- Specialty Foods
- Artisan Handmade
- Manufactured and Value-Added Goods
- Agriculture/Aquaculture/Seafood
- Power

Rich Culture – Strategies

Strategy: Establish a comprehensive cultural/eco-tourism initiative that integrates a wide range of projects that include the feasibility of large-scale Tribal ventures in hospitality, to support for Native entrepreneurs to increase access to markets, develop business acumen, and pursue product development.

Staff: James Francis, Michael Burgess

Costs: Program Dependent

Funding Sources: ANA, EDA, USDA RBDG, NEA, Private Foundations (Surdna Foundation, Ford Foundation), Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Review eco and cultural tourism possibilities in order to find a project where member services can be added.

Develop a cultural training program for Native entrepreneurs that enhance their produce, educate and raise awareness of Penobscot and Wabanaki culture, and strengthen the overall experience.

Conduct a feasibility study and needs assessment focused on Native guides and consider establishing a cooperative or other business model that builds marketing capacity, supports booking, and provides training (cultural, business, and customer service) to enhance the experience.

Expand voluntourism opportunities on Indian Island that are coordinated through the Cultural and Historic Preservation Office.

Strategy: Expand tourism infrastructure to promote Penobscot cultural/ecotourism, enhance existing cultural/ecotourism offerings, and support product development for Tribal enterprise and Native entrepreneurs.

Staff: James Francis, Michael Burgess

Costs: Program Dependent

Funding Sources: ANA, USDA RBDG, NEA, EDA, Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Economic Development and Culture will cooperate and work together on this initiative, focused on tourism and product development.

Strengthen the new museum's role in cultural tourism as a welcoming/visitors center by enhancing the visitor's experience through updated exhibitions, expanded programs, and consistent hours.

Expand and update kiosks throughout the region to promote Penobscot and Wabanaki culture and market Penobscot tourism offerings.

Strategy: Develop tourism infrastructure on Tribal land outside of the reservation, such as the Carrabessett Valley, that promotes ecotourism and recreation.

Staff: Economic Development Director

Costs: \$50,000 feasibility, Other Program Dependent

Funding Sources: EDA, ANA, USDA RBDG, SSBCI, Other Grants

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Work on rezoning Penobscot lands in CV to increase their value and make development possible.

Work on other rezoning projects where appropriate, focusing on tourism infrastructure.

Review possibilities available in CV and other locations for potential tourism projects.

Human Capital – Strategies

Strategy: Support leadership development of elected officials, Tribal staff, and Tribal citizens actively engaged in the affairs of Tribal government.

Staff: Kirk Francis, Michael Burgess

Costs: \$25,000

Funding Sources: Internal, ANA, Other Grants

Timeframe: Nine-month development; ongoing operations

Implementation:

Evaluate existing leadership training for Tribal government and adopt aspects of various programs that best meet the needs of the Tribe. USET members serve as a resource for training programs.

Strategy: Establish a Native entrepreneurship program for both adults and young people interested in pursuing their own business.

Staff: Economic Development Director

Costs: \$50,000

Funding Sources: USDA RBDG, ANA, Other Grants

Timeframe: 24-36 months

Implementation:

Evaluate various entrepreneurship programs. Focus on feasibility of developing a business incubator that can serve all citizens who wish to start their own business. One specific program may be best suited for the Penobscot depending on the interests of participants.

Strategy: Develop a workforce development program that assists Tribal citizens with the employment process, guides professional development, and assists with placement.

Staff: Economic Development Director, Candi Ewer

Costs: \$75,000

Funding Sources: Internal, Department of Labor, ANA

Timeframe: 12-24 months

Implementation:

Establish a skills assessment program that evaluates Tribal citizens' job skills and counsels them on career paths with great potential for growth. Incorporate a database that includes skill mapping of Tribal citizens and consider periodic surveys to gain additional insight.

Establish a relationship with the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board and area career center to provide programs and services to Tribal citizens such as Work Ready, resume and interview skills training, and access to Maine's Job Bank.

Work with area employers to build a mentorship/internship program so Tribal citizens can gain the necessary experience to be employable in the future.

Strategy: Develop an administrative skill-building program to training Tribal citizens in finance and basic accounting/bookkeeping, project management, proposal development, and supervision so a pipeline of talent is available for employment.

Staff: Economic Development Director, Candi Ewer
Costs: \$100,000
Funding Sources: DOL, ANA, Internal, Other Grants
Timeframe: Nine-month development; ongoing operations

Implementation:

Evaluate various options to deliver content including Eastern Maine Community College, area adult education programs, and private instructors and build a training program. Recruit participants and deliver the training program.

Strategy: Engage in succession planning for Tribal leadership, key Tribal staff, committee positions, and other positions as necessary.

Staff: Kirk Francis
Costs: \$50,000
Funding Sources: Internal
Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation:

Evaluate which positions warrant success planning and identify a pipeline of Tribal citizens with the capacity to fulfill these roles. Provide leadership development skills, mentorship and training on specific functions related to key positions.

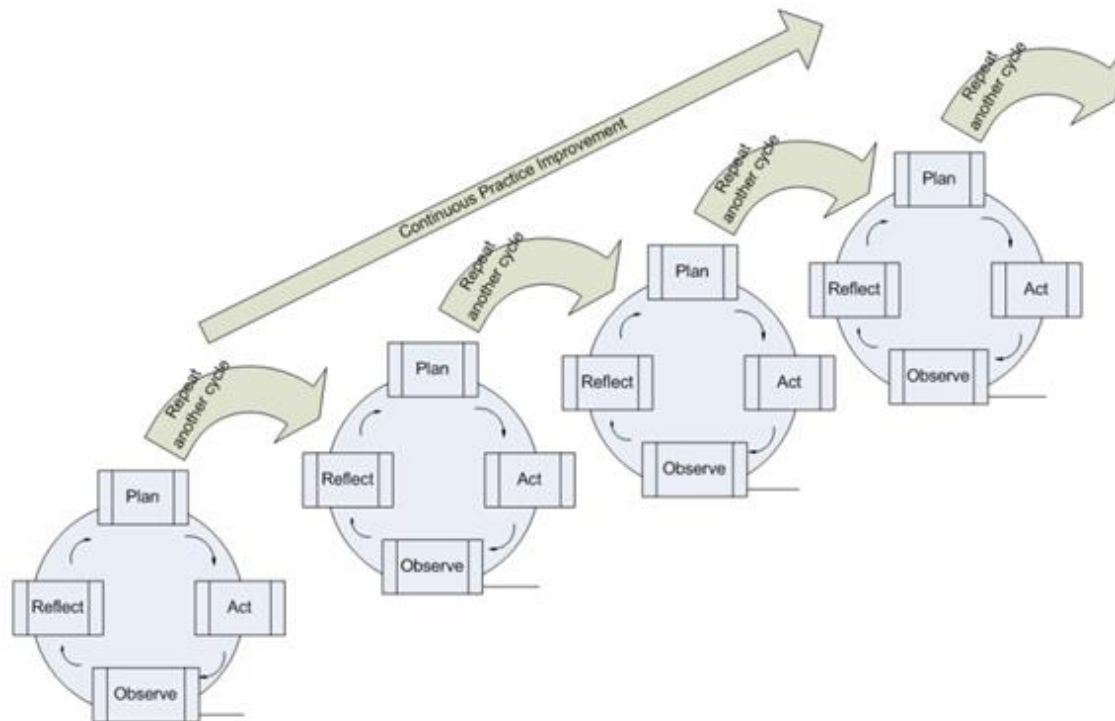
Strategy: Invest in young people's development by promoting a culture of education and knowledge, expanding the Wabanaki Youth in Science (WAYS) program, and create opportunities to gain practical experience and exposure to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math).

Staff: Candi Ewer
Costs: \$50,000 annually
Funding Sources: Internal, ANA, Private Foundations
Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation: Expand access and encourage broad participation to WAYS, USET/Vanderbilt's Aspirnault program, and other STEAM oriented programs that raise young people's aspiration and build skills for jobs in the 21st century.

Evaluation Framework

Evaluating the effectiveness of the CEDS, assessing its execution, and measuring its impact are critical to the Penobscot realizing its goal to assert Tribal sovereignty. To foster an organizational culture that embraces continuous improvement, a formal process based on a traditional action research cycle outlined below will be designed and applied to all aspects of the CEDS



In evaluating the CEDS effectiveness and measure impact on desired goals and objectives two distinct areas are defined – economic development programs and services, and organizational infrastructure and capacity. These two focuses are further subdivided into specific key performance indicators; **Ten** key metrics for economic development programs and services, and six metrics for organizational infrastructure and capacity. Upon finalization of this CEDS, a baseline of Nation resources in each of the two focus groups will be taken, and specific measurements taken according to the type of resource being measured and its baseline quantity. The inclusion of specific benchmarks, reporting requirements for staff and semi-monthly meetings with specific stakeholders will serve to ensure that the overarching goals laid out in this CEDS are accomplished.

Economic Development Programs and Services

The Penobscot's CEDS goal to advance Tribal sovereignty and realize self-determination, coupled with the purpose of its programs and services are grounded in Penobscot culture and heritage, directed by its natural resources and Tribal assets, and considers the impact to the entire

community ecosystem. Culture and heritage, natural resource conservation, and the effect on youth and future generations, provide an overarching guide to shaping and evaluating the Penobscot economic development programs and services. To evaluate the effectiveness of the CEDS and measure impact of the economic development programs and services, an evaluative process that clearly defined metrics for the following areas is essential.

- Economic Growth
- Job Creation
- Capital Investment
- Natural Resources
- Culture and Heritage
- Education, Training and Workforce Development
- Youth Initiatives
- Transportation, Water, Sewer, and Other Infrastructure

Each of these target areas has been given one to two potential ways to measure and ensure adherence to the CEDS and completion of stated goals.

- Economic Growth: A collection of personal income (within Indian Island, within the Penobscot Nation, and in comparison to Penobscot county and the rest of Maine), total municipal population, total tax income and budget of Indian Island and total sales/income of companies on Indian Island or Native owned can be compiled yearly or semi-yearly to gauge total economic growth and wealth flows on Indian Island.
- Job Creation: Compiling data on jobs created, unemployment rate and quantity of residents receiving means-tested or categorical welfare can be utilized to satisfy the requirement of number of jobs created and to create a more-full picture on contributing factors to the number of jobs created and lost during a year or multiyear timespan.
- Capital Investment: Because this category can be expanded to business and municipal investments, the value of attracted businesses and number of new businesses established are important. This category can also help to explain job creation and would likely be measured bi-yearly due to the process that occurs during business attraction often occurring over the span of a year.
- Natural Resources: Given our positioning as an island of around 22 square miles, land area and resource conservation are crucial to the wellbeing of the Penobscot Nation; Tracking changes in land use policy, biodiversity changes and adoption of sustainable practices by Penobscot businesses or residents could assist in achieving CEDS goals.
- Culture and Heritage: Incorporation of tracking metrics for the number of cultural events and participation conducted over the year on Indian Island, headway on the preservation of cultural landmarks and traditions for the Penobscot Nation and a measure of revenue generated by cultural tourism could all be combined to fully measure and ensure the vitality of culture and heritage throughout the lifecycle of the CEDS.
- Education, Training and Workforce Development: Compiling the enrollment of and graduation from technical and traditional education programs, the number of programs offered, total educational attainment amongst Nation members, employment rate 6 months-1 year after

graduation and alignment of education and training programs with workforce needs within Penobscot County will help to ensure adherence to the CEDS. Bi-yearly measurement would be most effective in gathering employment data and educational attainment rates.

- Youth Initiatives: Youth initiatives can cover both youth-targeted and youth-led programs, and hence measurement must be able to cover both of these areas. Educational attainment amongst youth, participation in youth-targeted programs and surveyed satisfaction levels for the available programs and opportunities, measured yearly, could provide a tangible system of measurement to ensure adherence to CEDS goals.
- Transportation, Water, Sewer and Other Infrastructure: This category is one of the most important economic development tasks, as it makes up the bare basic necessities to sustaining a community within a municipality. Surveying the conditions of existing infrastructure from both citizens and public works employees, paired with continued yearly investment in infrastructure (continuously renewing and applying for infrastructure-based grants) provide two solid metrics by which to measure the total composition of infrastructure. Additionally, designated goals related to construction and repair for various Nation departments that deal with infrastructure provide an efficient way to monitor the total change in condition of infrastructure.

Economic Development Organizational Infrastructure & Capacity

The Penobscot's organizational infrastructure and capacity to deliver and sustain quality economic development programs and services is critical to achieving the goal of self-determination. Metrics will be defined and a process of evaluation determined for:

- Staff Capacity
- Scope of Programs and Services
- Execution of Strategies and Action Plans
- Partnership
- External Resources
- Cross-Departmental Collaboration

Similar to before, each of the six focus groups will be provided one or more measurement or performance metrics, measured bi-yearly or yearly, to ensure adherence to the CEDS and measure progress/deviance from the plan as defined in this document.

- Staff Capacity: Measurement of yearly staff training hours, obtained certifications relevant to each employee's field, total number of employees and surveyed employee satisfaction can form a comprehensive base of total staff capacity. Additionally, a survey of department heads on completion of assigned tasks throughout a year (measuring backlog) accompanied by explanations of what caused the backlog could serve to expose greater issues within tribal government, as well as detailing total staff capacity.
- Scope of Programs and Services: Quantifying the number of programs offered, the total reach (in income/expenditures and total population engaged with) and community feedback on the effectiveness of Penobscot Nation and various government services will better explain what programs and resources are most utilized by Nation residents.
- Execution of Strategies and Action Plans: Similar to surveying backlog under staff capacity, measuring the execution of general strategies and action plans will rely heavily on surveying Nation employees. Executing monthly surveys which aim to measure adherence to timelines,

completion rate of action items and assessment of long term outcomes and effectiveness of previous projects will form the backbone of understanding the components of effective strategy, strategy implementation, and can gauge adherence to CEDD's short and long term goals.

- Partnership: We will track the number of business, municipal and personal partnerships formed from a raw total numbers perspective (how many partnerships formed) but also from a quality perspective through employee surveys (percentage of tasks completed, benefit to the tribe, et cetera). In addition, surveys gaging partner satisfaction and benefit will be included to form a more holistic view of the efficacy of current and future partnerships. Surveys should, ideally, be administered every other month or bi-yearly.
- External Resources: This category is closely tied to government investments (federal and state grant programs) government programs (means-tested and categorical welfare and transfer programs) business investment (investment in both property and people on Indian Island) and resources transferred by individuals. As such, monitoring and reporting funding sources monthly (type, quantity, destination and duration) will help to ensure an up-to-date comprehensive list of funding and resources flowing on to Indian Island, as well as examining how these resources relate to the goal of external resource management and use in CEDS.
- Cross-Departmental Collaboration: Departmental collaboration is high across the 12 functional departments on Indian Island, but no efficient program exists currently to quantify the extent of this collaboration. As such, a combination of self-reporting on total number of shared projects by each department (including scope, timeframe and extent of collaboration) and surveyed feedback from staff and departmental heads can provide Nation leadership with a better idea of how resources are being used on joint projects, and how assets from each department can be better allocated to ensure compliance with CEDs and execution of its goals.

Economic Resilience

Economic resilience is tied to the Penobscot Indian Nation's goal to further diversify its economy. As the region experiences economic adjustment that impacts natural resources and manufacturing, the Penobscot have concentrated on expanding industry sectors that are aligned with its asset base, as well as enter new markets outside of the region to further insulate the Tribe from economic downturn. The CEDS focus on value-added production in the forest products sector, as well as Native 2 Native and international trade are examples that support economic resilience.

As an export product, developing the Penobscot's cultural heritage to appeal to high value markets is another strategy that supports economic resilience. By design the Penobscot's cultural tourism offering include products that appeal across the economic spectrum, ranging from experiences families living on a modest income can enjoy, to more unique experiences targeting cultural tourist that are affluent and looking for a memorable experience.

PINE's expertise in federal contracting helped the Penobscot weather the 2009 economic downturn. Strategic investment in PINE and its activities in 8(a) and federal contracting support economic activity that demonstrated economic resilience.

In responding to economic adjustment, natural disasters, and other factors that require resilience, the Penobscot have established emergency response protocols that include strong partnership with regional, intertribal, and federal agencies and organizations. Regionally, the Penobscot are integrated into response systems and emergency management operations, as well as having relationships with the regional economic development district and workforce investment board. The United Southern and Eastern Tribes (USET) has programs and services to build capacity in economic resilience and disaster recovery. As the regional intertribal organization, USET also has the ability to marshal resources across its member Tribes to further assist.

Impact of COVID-19 and Natural Disasters

COVID-19: The Covid-19 pandemic induced community-wide changes on Indian Island due to the highly infectious nature of the virus, causing communities to partially shut down during the pandemic. These shutdowns and illness as a result of the virus heavily affected Indian Island's health, economic stability/output and community cohesion. Key impacts included:

- **Community and Personal Health:** High infection rates strained local (Indian Island) and regional (Penobscot County) health facilities, disrupting regular treatment for many members of the Tribe. Lasting effects from COVID have increased healthcare expenditures and mortality rates amongst community members.
- **Economic Stability/Output:** As a result of nationwide shutdowns, personal consumption fell drastically for many non-essential goods, affecting the sales and client base of Indian Island and Native-owned businesses. Nation members faced slightly higher rates of job loss than Penobscot County average, and faced a similarly long and challenging return to work timeline.
- **Community Cohesion:** One of the pandemic's most noticeable effects was social isolation resulting from extended quarantine periods. Community-wide school shutdowns (of all levels), movement to remote work (and job loss) and the inability to attend social gatherings contributed to a large spike in mental health crisis and deterioration, especially amongst community members with existing mental health diagnoses and school-aged children.

Natural Disasters: Situated inland in central Maine, Indian Island and the greater Penobscot County area are not as susceptible to natural disasters as other, more western or coastal Tribes may be. However, instances of flooding, winter storm damage and high winds have contributed to existing vulnerabilities, which must be addressed to create a more resilient community. Given the specific nature of these disasters, infrastructure damage, environmental degradation, and population displacement stand out as the three largest factors that must be considered.

- **Infrastructure Damage:** Maine's colder climate and more northern location predisposes it to heavy snowfall and various winter storms. The duration of winter, accompanied by severe storms, has a major impact on the vitality of crucial infrastructure such as telephone/power lines, roads, bridges, water/sewage pipes, et cetera. The cost of these yearly repairs often exceeds the Tribes budget even with assistance from federal and state grants, and thus crucial infrastructure remains in a

degraded state, hampering residents' quality of life and business across Indian Island.

- Environmental Degradation: Cultural sites and natural habitats along or close to flood-prone areas on the banks of the Penobscot River face often irreparable damage during winter storms and flooding which greatly hampers traditional Tribal practices and natural resource management.
- Displacement: Damage to crucial infrastructure (water and power lines, road networks) or personal dwellings/businesses during large-scale storms has caused some residents of Indian Island to be temporarily displaced from their homes, diverting resources to assist these residents and thus hampering repairs or long-term economic goals due to budget constraints caused by this shift in priorities.

Community Improvements

In response to challenges posed by natural disasters and COVID-19 over the period of the last CEDS, the Penobscot Nation has significantly improved their policies and toolkit to enable more efficient use of resources towards community recovery as well as prevention measures. These improvements cover the local healthcare, educational, community resilience and economic development sectors.

- Healthcare Improvements: As a result of COVID-19, both existing Tribal healthcare capacity and Penobscot County capacity have largely returned to pre-2020 levels. Tribal healthcare funding has improved, which has in turn improved access on Indian Island to better and more efficient medical care and EMS systems. Tribal resources surrounding mental health counseling, general medical care (illness screening, immunization, prenatal care et cetera)
- Educational Support: Investment in technology and hybrid learning options for students, as well as increased support for afterschool and cultural programs have ensured continuity in education, through programs such as Penobscot Fellowship Program, Kōhkāmōssənēna Scholarship and others.
- Community Resilience Building: The necessity of quality mental health services brought on by COVID-19 has helped to develop into a wide-spread, community support system. In addition, citizen-led community support initiatives that arose as a result of COVID-19 have helped to create a more cohesive, healthy community.
- Economic Recovery Initiatives: Implementation of Tribal, state and federal-led business support (MaineBusinessWorks, ONABEN, ONAA) community support (Li-HEAP, food pantry, housing assistance), job training (EAP, AVT, NEW) and industry diversification programs have assisted in revitalizing the economic health of Indian Island, as well as providing a potential safety net and framework for economic recovery in case of other mass-catastrophic events.

Preparedness for future disasters

To be better prepared for future disasters as well as mitigate the impacts of climate change, the Penobscot Nation can engage further with the following strategies:

- **Strengthening Infrastructure:** Utilize advanced building practices to construct climate resilient infrastructure, improving the ability of public infrastructure and dwellings to withstand Nor'easters, hurricanes and flooding.
 - **Green infrastructure:** Utilizing state and federal funding, increase investment in natural barriers (wetlands, forests, beaches et cetera) that can mitigate the impact of climate change related storms while simultaneously conserving natural habitats and increasing natural longevity on Indian Island.
- **Enhancing Emergency Preparedness:** Continue to update and improve disaster response plans while conducting enhanced community-wide response training, including measures such as evacuation drills, constructing emergency supply stores, first aid training et cetera.
- **Promoting Sustainable Economic Development:** Broadening investment in sustainable energy (continuation of solar build-out, examining use of hydro-power or limited scale wind on Penobscot land) and encouraging local businesses to adopt conservation-friendly/sustainable business practices provide the first step to sustainable economic development. Similarly, Tribe-wide investment in the attraction of firms that work within sustainable resource management, advanced technologies or similarly stable fields with lower environmental impacts would serve to provide workforce, economic and social opportunities to Indian Island and Penobscot residents.
- **Protecting Natural Resources:** Incorporating one of the greatest strengths of Tribal knowledge should be one of the focus points of this category; traditional ecological and conservation knowledge. Incorporation of such practices can not only revitalize Tribal culture, but also provide genuine and tangible resource conservation benefits on Indian Island.
- **Building Social Resilience:** Social resilience cannot be achieved without community buy-in and engagement. As such, fostering strong community networks and engaging community members in all aspects of the governance and planning process is crucial. In addition, creating a deep social safety net that incorporates financial welfare programs, mental and spiritual health, social networks and community advancement organizations into an umbrella of resources for social resilience would greatly assist in furthering this goal.