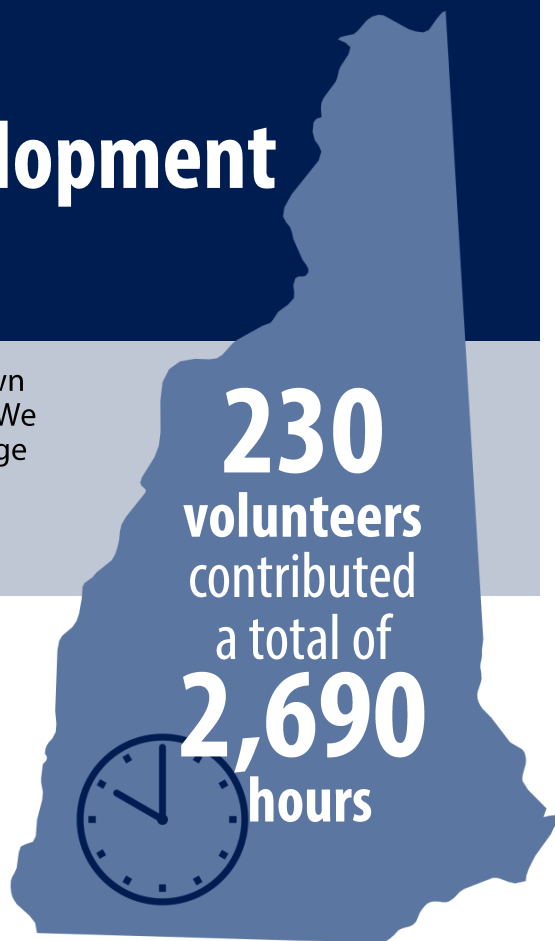




Extension

# Community & Economic Development 2020 Impacts

This year, we adapted our programs, research and initiatives to serve town leaders and volunteers as they address and recover from the pandemic. We see communities using what we have taught to engage widely, encourage entrepreneurship, revitalize main street, support tourism and better connect our natural resources with our economy. We look ahead to expanding our work to build resilience in our cities and towns.



## Where we worked:

- Alton
- Berlin
- Bethlehem
- Bristol
- Coös County
- Concord
- Derry
- Greenville
- Hillsborough
- Moultonborough
- Northfield
- Ossipee
- Peterborough
- Pittsfield
- Rochester
- Sullivan County
- Tilton
- Wolfeboro

# 1,055

 program participants increased their knowledge and skills in:

Community Engagement • Facilitation • Grant Writing • Main Street Vibrancy • Nature Economy • Online Meetings

# 29

 projects & initiatives implemented by community volunteers and leaders.  
Examples include:

- Bethlehem awarded a grant to plan co-working and innovation space
- Moultonborough conducted a survey of businesses
- Northfield trails and recreation committee raised funds to launch a trail network
- Tilton economic development committee planned outdoor art festivals

Our team reached **402** businesses via programs and technical assistance



# \$758,518

 in grants leveraged to date by communities and organization

## Catalyzing Entrepreneurs

With over \$200,000 in grants, Extension helped launch the 8,500 square foot Concord Makerspace, which offers affordable workspace for 12 businesses as well as a woodshop, metal shop, fiber arts studio, and prototyping that provides resources for emerging businesses and supports workforce development. Extension launched programming that has provided knowledge, resources, and peer support to over 150 entrepreneurs to help them succeed. These programs include 1 Million Cups Central NH and Twin State Innovation: monthly networking events that bring together entrepreneurs and the community to share their stories, discuss their visions, access resources, and find solutions to the challenges they face.

## Strengthening the Connection to Natural Amenities in Bristol

Community leaders and volunteers in Bristol implemented a wayfinding plan with new signage in the downtown and made an additional connection to a trail opposite the town center. Extension implemented the Downtowns and Trails program with community volunteers and leaders to understand the opportunities to strengthen the connection between downtown and Newfound Lake for economic vibrancy.

## Pittsfield Downtown Revitalization

Pittsfield was awarded a \$30,000 USDA grant—matching by \$35,000 in local capital—to improve the facades and storefronts of 6 local businesses to bring vibrancy to main street. Extension implemented the First Impressions Program in Pittsfield in 2018 and has spent the past two years helping the community move forward with action and recommendations to improve the downtown that were generated as a result of the program. Extension continues to work with Pittsfield to implement a range of projects to make the downtown more vibrant, welcoming and to support new and existing businesses to grow jobs and the local economy.

## Strengthening Main Street with Funding, Leadership, Creativity and Vibrancy

Seventeen community leaders and volunteers, municipal staff and business owners learned how to get started with strengthening their main street through Extension's Main Street Academy. We visited South Berwick, ME; Rochester, NH and Wolfeboro, NH where we learned from local leaders and community volunteers about ways to bring vibrancy to main street including art, entrepreneurs, craft beer, nature economy and grants and funding.

## Identifying Assets in Derry's Downtown

Extension is currently leading an engagement effort with community leaders and volunteers in Derry to make Hood Park a vibrant recreation area for all ages. Extension's First Impressions program identified a variety of assets in Derry's downtown, including Hood Park. Once a well-utilized gem, there is an opportunity to revitalize Hood Park and improve the connection between downtown and the park.

## Securing Resources and Building Leadership in Cities and Towns

In response to COVID-19, Extension offered a series of eight webinars with over 650 registrants. Topics included tools for virtual meetings, remote public hearings, community engagement, and main street vibrancy. Our COVID-19 response newsletter distributed 15 editions to over 1200 subscribers, helping to connect volunteers, leaders and businesses to resources and trainings. In addition, Extension's Gearing up for Grant Writing workshop prepared nine communities and organizations with the skills and knowledge to apply for grants during the pandemic.

**Staff:** **Statewide**—Charlie French  
Molly Donovan  
Shannon Rogers  
Casey Porter

**Grafton County**—Sue Cagle  
**Hillsborough County**—Stephen Meno  
**Merrimack County**—Jared Reynolds  
**Sullivan County**—Penelope Whitman

**More Information:** [extension.unh.edu/topics/community-economic-development](https://extension.unh.edu/topics/community-economic-development)



**Extension**

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. UNH, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and New Hampshire counties cooperating.