# (The following is an excerpt from the Cape Cod Chamber, 2016 REDO)

# 1. Regional Economic Assets and Strategic Planning

## Assets

## Endowed with 559.6 miles of coastline, 51,758 acres of protected conservation and recreation lands, world renown marine technology and research organizations, and a reputation as an internationally known coastal vacation choice, Cape Cod is truly a maritime centered destination in which to live, work play, and create. For the better part of a century, Cape Cod has had a tourism/retirement/entrepreneur centered economy that leverages its unique and immense natural resources, as well as its geographic position near population centers in the Northeast megalopolis – the most heavily urbanized region in the country (55.9 million), as well as Western Europe and Eastern Canada. While this strategy has been successful in establishing Cape Cod as a world-class leisure destination, it fails to embrace many other facets of the region’s economy that have grown around the Cape’s core attribute – its water related resources.

## Strategic Planning: A Blue Economy

The unintended consequences of a tourism focused economy over the past century include: the need for a peak-season workforce of 20,000 to supplement the 144,000 year round jobs, a lack of diversified industries offering a range of employment, a significant second homeowner population and traditional single family homes that increase property values, with few market rate rental opportunities for the workforce. As a result, we have witnessed a significant out-migration of young families. This current condition is unsustainable in the long term. It requires innovative and forward thinking on how to ensure a sustainable future for the region, and the partners have consistently led the way in tackling the multiple issues that can insure our success in the future.

Launched in 2015, The Blue Economy is a long term vision to promote and sustain a marine centered live-work-play economy in the region, that builds on existing sustainable tourism efforts, our world renowned marine research community, our higher educational institutions - including one of only six State Maritime Academies (SMA’s) in the U.S., a long local history of entrepreneurship that extends to the innovative work of WHOI, growth potential in the marine technology space, and integration with ongoing regional planning efforts. The Blue Economy will help to ensure that the region is a sustainable, vibrant and desirable place to live-work-play and create.

This initiative will advance the region’s maritime economy and bring increased, consistent and sustainable prosperity to the Cape and Islands by leveraging its natural coastal resources and the innovative ideas of the local community and existing marine related industries to increase the number of businesses and jobs in the Cape and Islands region which are less dependent on the seasonal tourism economy. Through strategic partnering, we will insure that the Blue Economy initiative is integrated into regional planning processes and guidance documents such as the County’s Regional Policy Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and Regional Transportation Plan by working with regional planning officials around Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound. This work has already begun with Martha’s Vineyard, Bristol & Plymouth Counties.

# 2. Regional initiatives and Strategic Partners

## Overall Goals and Anticipated Impact

We have established the following goals for our Blue Economy initiative.

1. **Leverage Existing Assets to Create New Opportunities**: We will leverage our existing water based assets to attract and capture future opportunities in the water sector and related blue industries. This will include enhancing the existing regional marine technology and innovation cluster based on Cape Cod that forms the underpinning of a Blue Economy. We can accomplish this goal in part by fostering communication and coordination of the various constituencies in the region and increasing their level of engagement and awareness.
2. **Maintain and Expand Responsible Tourism Leadership Position**: Through an examination of proven responsible tourism projects and programs, we will maintain our standing as a world class travel destination with sustainable tourism-based initiatives that promote the uniqueness of the region through our natural and cultural assets.

Our work will have a measurable economic impact and establish a strong network that will plan and produce these regional initiatives:

1. Develop specific recommendations to support and enhance the existing blue tech innovation cluster goal (above), as well as articulate the resources required to create a pipeline that brings innovative ideas from the region to market.
2. Develop recommendations to support the sustainable tourism goal (above), including addressing workforce issues critical to this sector.
3. Integrate the Blue Economy concept into regional planning processes and guidance documents such as the Regional Policy Plan (up for reauthorization in 2016), Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (annual report to Dept. of Commerce), and Regional Transportation Plan (annual update) by working with regional planning officials.
4. Serve as a basis for applications to the SBA Regional Innovation Cluster Initiative in 2016/2017, as well as the EDA Regional Innovation Strategies i6 Challenge grants program. Through these two sources, as well as in-kind and financial resources funded by the community partners, we seek to create a sustainable structure able to provide resources to create thriving businesses and, by extension, jobs within the Cape Cod and Islands region.

## Outcomes

The long-term outcomes of this initiative are:

1. Decrease the reliance on the seasonal tourism industry, thus reducing variability of revenue to local employers.
2. Increase the number of successful startups in the region.
3. Increase the number of skilled jobs in the region.
4. Create regional economic growth around an existing set of well-established industries.
5. Support a sustainable region, both economically and environmentally.

Strategic Partners

As part of our commitment to the region, we have and will continue to engage the various constituencies that make up the Blue Economy. These constituencies include towns such as the Gateway City of Barnstable, regional Barnstable County planning agencies, private businesses, interested citizens, educational institutions and research institutions. We have formed a steering committee that includes representatives from these various constituencies and expect this committee to expand.

Brian Braginton- Smith, Lewis Bay Research Center

Eliza Cox, Nutter McLennan & Fish

Rich Delaney, Center for Coastal Studies

Mark Forest, The Delahunt Group

Jon Hagenstein, Gillmore Marine

James Hobbs, Graylyn Associates

Bert Jackson, Cape Cod Technology Council

Stephen Johnston, OpenCape

Maria Marasco, Massachusetts Office of Business Development

Michael Murphy, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center

Richard Neitz, Neitz Realty

Wendy Northcross, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

Rob O'Leary, Massachusetts Maritime Academy

John Pappalardo, Cape Cod Commercial Fisherman's Alliance

James Penn, Puritan Clothing Company

Mahesh Ramachandran, Cape Cod Commission Environmental Economist

Sallie Riggs, Bourne Financial Development Corp.

Charles Ritch, National Graduate School

Warren Rutherford, The Executive Suite

Tobias Stapleton, UMASS-Dartmouth, Ctr. for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Jill Talladay, CARE for the Cape & Islands

Bert Talerman, Cape Cod Five

Judith Underwood, B2G Energy

Scott Vandersall, Cape Cod Five

Anne Van Vleck, Cape Cod Young Professionals

Mark Watson, Keel Asset Management

Dan Wolf, Massachusetts State Senator

## To further develop this partnership and maximize the expertise from a wide range of resources, we are expanding the work of our entrepreneur in residence, specifically focused on work with WHOI and the innovative technology, as well as adding a highly skilled program manager and intern(s) to support socioeconomic research, data collection and interpretation, and expand community engagement activities including regional informational and listening sessions with MOBD staff, ideation sessions, print and radio interactions, production and dissemination of informational materials including handouts, websites, social media outlets. We will also create and support Blue Economy themed events such as Startup Weekend as well as produce a white paper that includes an actionable plan for implementing the Blue Economy in the region.

# 3. Retain, Expand, and Attract Businesses

This will be done through supporting blue entrepreneurship, Startup Weekend Blue, and facilitating company introductions to MOBD.

## Blue Entrepreneurship

## As we have done since the summer of 2014, we will continue to partner with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) on building their entrepreneurial ecosystem. We will meet monthly with their Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) and members of the OTT advisory council. This group aligns the pipeline of discovery, transitional research and commercialization with business resources available in the region. Specifically, we have worked to provide direct support of WHOI concepts, startups and spinoffs and will continue to so, both in the form of one on one consulting regarding the validation of business models as well as pairing regional entrepreneurs with WHOI scientists. This arrangement provides a unique lens on the marine and water technology industry cluster on the Cape. Our entrepreneur in residence will be partially funded for this work through the grant.

## Startup Weekend Blue

## For a number of years, we have sponsored Entrepreneurs Weekend and more recently Startup Weekend, a program of TechStars. Startup Weekend is a 54-hour event, which helps educate, support, and empower people to become entrepreneurs.  This year Startup Weekend is a special “themed” event.  We will be focusing on Blue Economy type businesses, marine science and technology and other water related concepts.    The event is currently scheduled for April 1, 2, 3rd 2016. In addition, we plan on holding a number of community listening and engaging events leading up to the Startup Weekend Event. We held one of these sessions on November 5th 2015 and had 25 participants at the session. Our counterparts on Martha’s Vineyard have asked us to hold at least one of these sessions on Martha’s Vineyard in February of 2016. As part of this year’s REDO grant to support the event and the coordination required, we plan on being a major sponsor of the even.

With the local MOBD officer on our steering committee, we will work to ensure that she will be invited to company meetings, as well as larger forums.

# 4. Workforce Development

We are partnering with the Workforce Investment Board and Cape Cod Community College to align the needs of Blue Economy employers with the available and emerging workforce. By understanding the needs of the employers and the skills gaps that exist, we will work with the College to close the gap by designing specific programs to train the workforce.

We will also engage employers on workforce issues through an employer forum focused on sustainable wages. Our region has a high concentration of small business ownership/entrepreneurism due to our geography and the lack of large employers. Nearly one in four Cape businesses fall into the category of “self-employed.” The isolated geography here forces entrepreneurship. This necessitates educational and support services that will foster employment, and allow existing businesses to grow and pay living wages. We plan on convening business leaders from around the region to discuss strategies to close the wage gap and work to create jobs that pay a living wage. This forum will meet a dual goal of both retaining employees as well as retaining employers that want to stay in the region.

# 5. Regional Collaboration

Over the coming months we will convene our steering committee on a monthly basis to help guide our planning activities and assist us in meeting our milestones. In this, we will document regional best practices and increase partner collaboration around issues both in the Blue Economy cluster and in the larger small business arena. Our objectives for regional forums for the Blue Economy will be shaped by the steering committee, with objectives for the broader small business community informed by the Economic Development Pillar of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce.

# 6. Regional Marketing and Communication

We have launched a website that outlines the strengths of the region as it relates to new residents that are choosing to Live, Work, Play and Create on Cape Cod. The site provides a central location for available business resources, including sites and services, with a calendar of events and shared information garnered from the regional forums: <http://www.whycapecod.org/work>. We have also installed billboard style ads at Logan International Airport promoting this site, and have run continuous social media contests to promote the site. We are always willing to working with MOBD and MMP on any other marketing strategies that are available to us. In addition, this site will serve as the home to the Blue Economy initiative. We have begun to collect and organize and publish Blue Economy related information at <http://www.WhyCapeCod.org/BlueEconomy>. This page will be expanded to highlight regional events, major forums and groundbreakings and other Blue Economy events. Part of the REDO funds will be used to create and maintain the resources on this site.