



# Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Planning Manual





# A New Operating Model for NYS Government

*to stimulate*

# Real Regional Economic Development







*This manual provides Regional Council Members and their staff with information that may be useful in the development of the initial strategic plan for their region.*





## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
NYS Consolidated Funding Application Process.....	5
The Strategic Planning Process.....	8
A. Meeting Milestones .....	8
B. Annotated Work Plan .....	10
C. Guidance .....	27
I. Discussions, Actions & Work Group Assignments .....	28
II. Work Group Formation .....	34
III. Stakeholder and Public Engagement.....	36
IV. Regional Council Website.....	40
The Initial Strategic Plan .....	43
D. Expanded Strategic Plan Outline .....	43
E. Strategic Plan Example.....	48
I. Executive Summary .....	49
II. Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunities ....	57
III. Economic Development Vision .....	63
IV. Economic Development Strategy and Components .....	70
V. Regional Implementation Agenda.....	80
VI. Performance Measurement.....	86
Financial Resources .....	95
F. Relationship of US EDA Requirements for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs) to Regional Strategic Plans .....	95



# INTRODUCTION

The Regional Economic Development Councils represent a new operating model for economic development in New York State. Governor Andrew Cuomo has created a process to bring all economic development functions to the table in each region to collaborate on a plan for their future. The Regional Councils will help drive regional and local development across New York for years to come. This manual is intended to aid the Councils as they define the strategies that will begin to transform their regions.

Focused, cohesive economic development can only come about through thoughtful planning – that is why the Regional Councils are being asked to develop five-year strategic plans to implement their vision.

Strategic planning is a time-tested method for creating a broad vision linked to specific actions that can bring together a region for a common purpose. It focuses on the future, while learning from the past, and will guide each Regional Council’s work to transform their regions and improve the economy for all New Yorkers.

## **A Regional Approach**

Regional collaboration — stakeholders working together across geographical, industry and political boundaries — is essential for successful economic development in today’s economy. People now live and work across local, county and state borders. Regions are the scale in which housing, labor and job markets intersect, and which many infrastructure investments are made.

Today’s economy is increasingly based on the exchange of information and ideas, and is widely dependent on technology. The internet and other new technologies allow people to conduct business successfully across geographic boundaries. This enhanced connectivity promotes the seamless development of business across the State, Nation, and World.

The goal of the Regional Councils is for regional stakeholders to form effective coalitions that develop, support and achieve common economic objectives. Similar efforts have been referred to as “civic regionalism”, where a variety of partnerships and alliances among business, government and community groups advance a common vision and create opportunities regardless of existing governance structures.

Regional Councils are modeled after the federal Empowerment Zone program that began under President Bill Clinton in 1994. The Empowerment Zone program encouraged comprehensive, public-private planning and targeted investment to foster sustainable economic, physical and social development

in the neediest urban and rural areas in the United States. The Empowerment Zones, implemented by then Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo, were the centerpiece of the Clinton Administration's community revitalization strategy – a bold, hands-on approach that empowered residents to have a stake in the future prosperity of their own communities.

Like the Empowerment Zone program, the Regional Economic Development Council program will be based on three critical elements:

- A broad, community-based planning process that facilitates public-private partnerships;
- The alignment of public resources with regional plans through a competitive process; and
- Performance monitoring to maintain accountability.

## **Collaboration**

Successful strategic planning is a collaborative process that draws stakeholders together to create and implement a shared vision. The vision drives the development of specific actions and well-defined milestones needed to turn that vision into reality and effectively measure success.

Collaboration increases capacity by working together and requires a long-term investment of human and economic resources to achieve a result that is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

An effective, broad-based regional strategy requires the strengths of diverse partners to generate and maintain a healthy economy. Seldom can one locality provide all of the resources necessary to support the quickly emerging needs of the economy. By banding together in the creation of a strategic plan, regions can provide a wider network of compatible businesses for clustering and make a greater array of services available to a larger market.

A collaborative approach ensures that diverse stakeholders provide insight and perspective early in the planning process and builds broad support for the ultimate vision and plan developed. An important part of the planning process will be broader stakeholder and public engagement. Each Regional Council will develop a public participation strategy that will weave together diverse perspectives into a consensus Strategic Plan that will drive action.

## **Competition for Public Resources**

As an incentive to help ensure successful regional growth strategies, the New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) will be created. For the first time ever, applicants will be able to submit a single application to access multiple New York State funding sources. State agencies participating in the CFA process worked together to eliminate agency specific applications and develop a single consolidated application that unlocks a wide variety of economic development funding sources.

In addition to resources available through New York State, Regional Councils are encouraged to leverage commitments and contributions from the private and nonprofit sectors, as well as federal and local agencies. Regional Council members will be responsible for engaging a variety of public and private stakeholders to ensure that the Councils maximize available resources.

These regional alliances will enhance economic development capacity and advance projects and priorities that might not have been possible independently. The economies of scale created through regional collaboration and leveraging funds from a variety of sources improves the competitiveness of the regions and strengthens New York's economy in the long term.

Setting priorities among economic projects and programs will involve making hard choices about where resources should be invested. Competition for limited resources, however, can also improve the quality of proposed activities and the productivity of ongoing projects and programs.

## **Performance Monitoring**

Regions should take a targeted approach to strategies that makes the most of their resources and applies them in a coordinated manner: set priorities, identify specific actions, and define benchmarks or performance measures. The strategies will be best achieved when private, public, non-profit, local, regional and state partners make and implement commitments to advance these strategies and address the needs of the region.

By November, each Council will have developed its initial plan which identifies the strategies for addressing the most important economic issues and opportunities in the region. Following the adoption of the plan, it will begin to implement the plan, measure its effectiveness, and update the plan as necessary. Strategic planning in New York will be a constant process of learning from mistakes and successes, reporting back to the community, and seeking feedback for development of more effective strategies.

Strategic planning is a critical part of any attempt to transform a region and improve the economy for everyone. If implemented correctly and updated as conditions change and performance measures indicate as necessary, the regional strategic plan will sustain a sense of stewardship and commitment across a broad range of stakeholders integral to the decisions that directly affect their lives.



# NEW YORK STATE CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

State agencies participating in the Councils have identified resources that can be used to support regional growth strategies. To access these resources, applicants will use the New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), a single application for multiple State funding sources. This project-based process allows for a single application to access multiple funding sources associated with the CFA, eliminating the duplicative nature of the previous agency-by-agency funding application process. The largest sources of available economic development funding have been identified and participating agencies are listed in the Guidebook .

The CFA will be available to potential applicants in late August 2011.

To gain access to the funds available through the CFA program, applicants will electronically submit a CFA. CFA submissions are shared simultaneously with the Regional Councils and the relevant State agencies from which funding is available.

State agencies will review CFA submissions to determine eligibility, as well as to score projects based on established programmatic requirements and goals. The State agencies' scoring process will incorporate regional priority points which will be given to any CFA projects identified as a regional priority by its Regional Council.

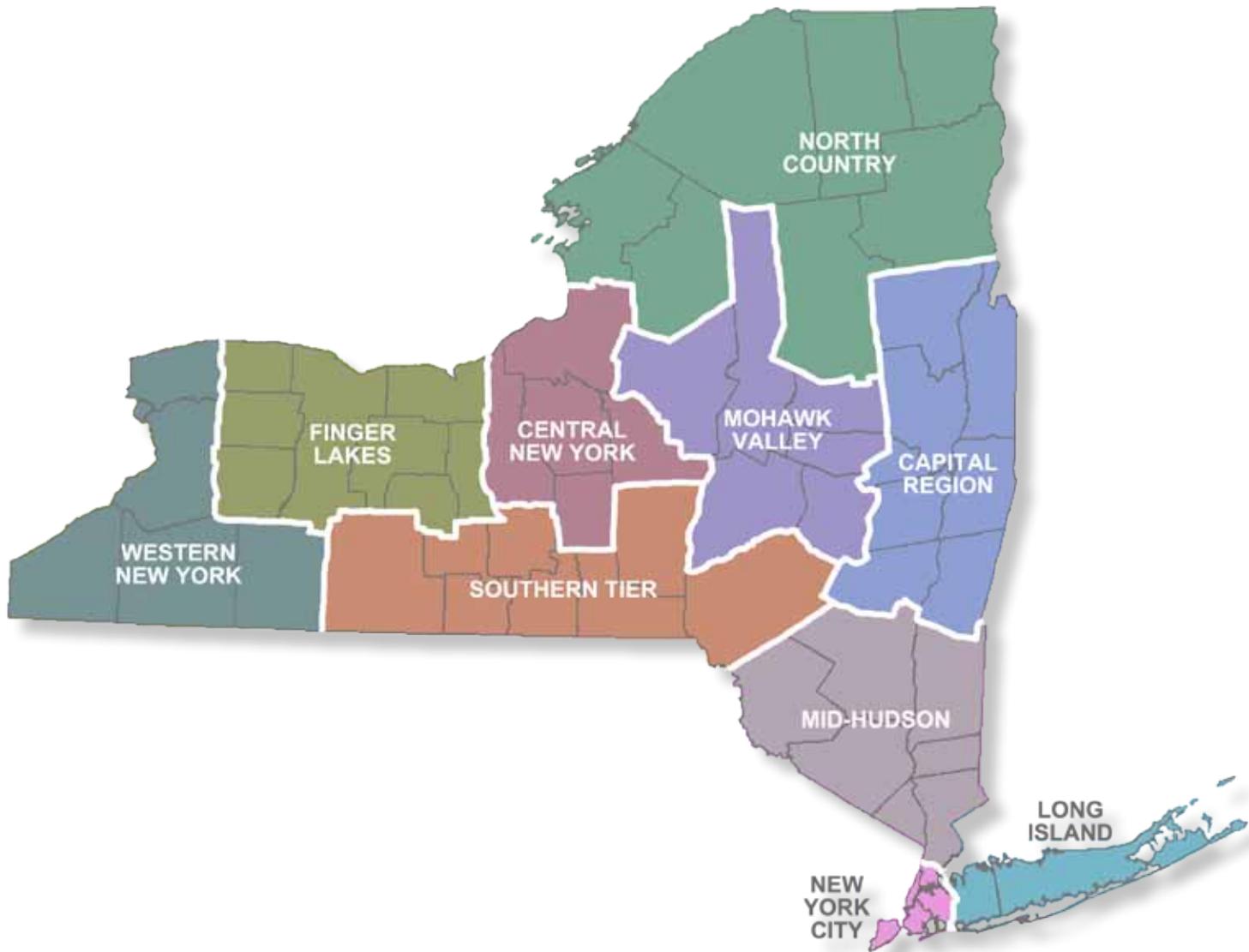
Each Regional Council will develop an endorsement standard to assist them in determining priority projects. Endorsement standards will be created based on the strategic plan scoring criteria provided on page 37 of the Guidebook, as follows:

- Regional economic development vision – 5%  
Does the proposal advance the vision?
- Process – 10%  
Is there significant community and stakeholder support for the proposal?
- Strategies - 35%  
Is the proposal identified in and/or advance a strategy that is part of the plan?
- Implementation - 15%  
Is the proposal of significant importance to advancing the implementation agenda?
- Leverage resources – 15%  
Does the proposal leverage other funding sources?
- Performance measures – 20%  
If funded, can the results of the proposal be monitored and evaluated against the Council's performance measures?

The Regional Council endorsement will provide additional scoring support in the project evaluation process. The relevant state agencies will evaluate applications taking into consideration the Regional Council endorsement and pre-established State agency eligibility, feasibility and programmatic criteria for funding, which will result in statewide rankings of projects for each program.

The initial strategic plans and Council CFA endorsements are expected to be submitted to the Strategic Plan Review Committee by November 14, 2011. The Governor and state agencies will announce Strategic Plans and CFA funding results once a final review is completed.

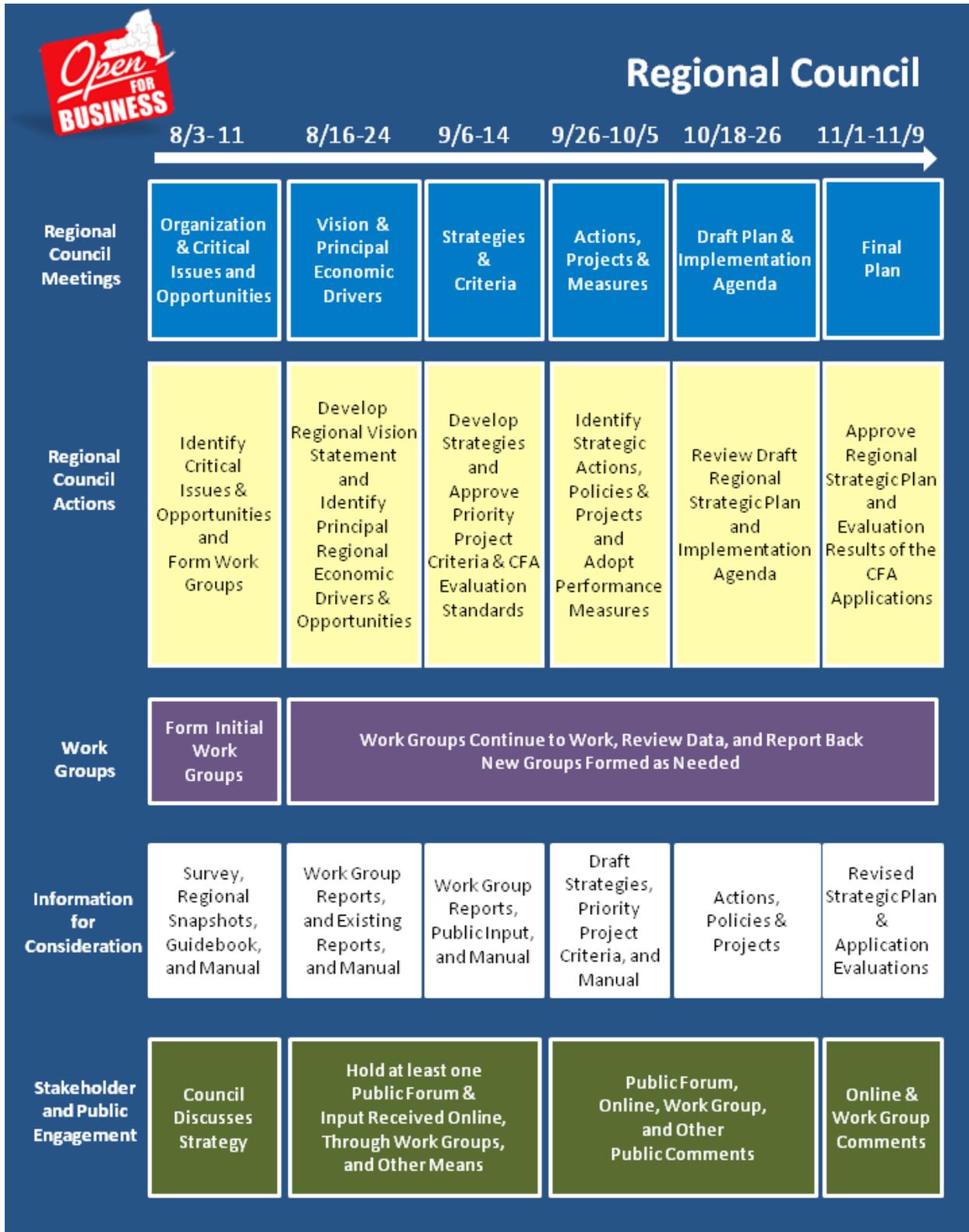




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- Western New York:** Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara
  - Finger Lakes:** Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
  - Southern Tier:** Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins
  - Central New York:** Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego
  - Mohawk Valley:** Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie
  - North Country:** Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence
  - Capital Region:** Albany, Columbia, Greene, Saratoga, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington
  - Mid-Hudson:** Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
  - New York City:** Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens
  - Long Island:** Nassau, Suffolk

# THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

## A. MEETING MILESTONES



## Meeting Milestones



## B. ANNOTATED WORK PLAN

Although Regional Councils will operate in every region for years to come, smart, thoughtful and thorough planning in the first few months is essential to long-term success. The following work plan explains the steps each Regional Council could follow to complete the vital tasks needed to create an initial five-year strategic plan by November 14, 2011.

The work plan presented here should be considered a guide, not a strict path that must be followed. Each Council may determine the actions they will take and the pace at which they take them. The end result, however, should include the products mentioned in the work plan and submission of an initial five-year strategic plan in a format consistent with the strategic plan outline.

The strategic planning process has four themes, reflected by the following questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- How are we doing?

*Strategic planning in its most basic form is a series of discussions and decisions about what is truly important to the organization's future.*

Under each theme, below, are listed the task(s) which relate to the theme, the step(s) that need to be taken to complete the task, the product that should result from the task, and the suggested timeline to complete the task. Icons are used to highlight relevant scoring criteria, guidance documents, products, and time frames.

Additional details on suggested discussions, actions, and work group assignments which assist in meeting the November 14th deadline are in Section C of this manual. Please note that many of the tasks will be undertaken concurrently — for example, the Council may be starting discussions on a possible regional economic development vision while it is still discussing critical issues and opportunities.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) are regional strategic plans required to qualify for certain federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) assistance under the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Programs. With some forethought, an initial five-year strategic plan could also serve as a region's CEDS, if one does not already exist. Additional information can be found in Section G of the manual.

This initial strategic plan will be enhanced and updated by the Council over time to ensure it continually addresses the critical issues affecting the region's economic future.

## Where are we now?

To plan for the future, each Council will first need to reach a common understanding of the region's present circumstances. To answer this question, each Council will need to complete three tasks:

- (1) Review the purpose of the Regional Councils, the suggested work plan, the recommended timelines for task completion, and the deadline for submission of the strategic plan;
- (2) Create, implement and describe the results of a public participation strategy; and
- (3) Assess the existing regional conditions and identify the economic development issues and opportunities.

The tasks are described in detail, as follows.



### **Task 1:** *Review Council purpose, work plan and timelines.*

**1** Each Council reviews the purpose of the Regional Economic Development Councils, the process by which strategic plans will be produced (work plan), the products that will result from the work plan, and the suggested time frames for completing work plan tasks and milestones to produce a plan by November 14, 2011.

Each Regional Council is responsible for providing the resources necessary to develop and complete their initial strategic plan. While state agency staff will provide support to the Council, Council members should commit necessary resources to complete the strategic plan.

This task will be fulfilled at the inaugural meetings of the Regional Councils.



**Product:** A shared understanding of Council purpose, work, and timelines.



**Suggested time frame:** Through August 11, 2011



**Task 2:** *Implement public participation strategy to aid in development of the initial strategic plan.*

**1** Develop an approach to public involvement that will efficiently and effectively engage the public and stakeholders. Prepare the initial strategic plan in consultation with a diverse set of community and economic interests in the region. Ideas and feedback from stakeholders and the public will inform the Council's work.

The public participation strategy should provide an opportunity for residents, public and private agencies, community organizations, local businesses, institutions of learning to provide direction to the Council, as well as to react to draft documents prepared by the Council.

Public involvement will include the engagement of various stakeholders in work group activities. It also includes existing and ongoing outreach efforts of various agencies, the use of local networks, surveys, interviews, and public forums. In addition, the Council will have a webpage accessible through the Governor's website for the posting of materials and receipt of public comment. One of the work groups the Council should consider forming at the Council's first meeting is a group that will draft a public participation strategy for consideration at the second Council meeting.

At least the following two public forums should be held by each Council:

(1) The first public forum should be held as early in the process as practical – likely between Council meetings two and three. The purpose of the forum is to solicit stakeholder ideas to help inform the Council of the critical issues and opportunities to be addressed in the strategic plan, the region's vision for its future, priority project selection criteria, and Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) endorsement standards.

(2) The second public forum will be held after several draft elements of the strategic plan have been developed – likely between Council meetings four and five. The purpose of the meeting is to solicit feedback on the draft products including the regional economic vision statement, associated goals (if desired), existing or emerging economic drivers, strategies to address critical issues and opportunities, and the implementation agenda. Following the forum, the Council will make necessary modifications to the documents in response to public feedback received there and through other means.

Councils are encouraged to employ innovative approaches to civic engagement, rather than relying on a series of three minute monologues given at the microphone of a public hearing. One organization which promotes public engagement describes ten core principles of public engagement:

- (1) Begin by listening
- (2) Attend to people's leading concerns
- (3) Reach beyond the "usual suspects"
- (4) Frame issues for deliberation
- (5) Provide the right type and amount of information at the right time
- (6) Help people move beyond wishful thinking
- (7) Expect obstacles
- (8) Create multiple, varied opportunities for deliberation and dialogue
- (9) Respond thoughtfully and conscientiously to the public's involvement
- (10) Build long-term capacity as you go

The public participation strategy should also consider how the Council will continue public outreach during the implementation of the strategic plan. The Council should be seeking reactions to the initial strategic plan, opinions on how the strategies are working, and suggestions about emerging critical issues or opportunities, and new strategies.

 **Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils implement their public participation strategies, they should keep a record of what worked and didn't work, and how they may adjust their initial public participation strategies. The summary Strategic Plan scoring criteria, found on page 37 of the guidebook, indicates that plans will be scored, in part, on the following:

*"To what extent were the public and stakeholders engaged in the development of the strategic plan and the identification of strategic economic development opportunities and critical issues? To what extent did members of the Regional Council contribute and participate?"*

 **Guidance:** Additional guidance on the formation of work groups and methods to engage the public are included in Section C of the Manual.

 **Product:** A public participation strategy for the Council to use to aid in the development of the initial five-year Strategic Plan. A description of the public and stakeholder engagement process that was used is included in Section III of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline. A description of how the Council intends to continue public outreach is included in Section V of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline.

 **Suggested time frame** for adopting and implementing a public involvement strategy during the development of the initial strategic plan:

Adoption of Public Participation Strategy: August 3 – August 24, 2011

Execution of Public Participation Strategy: August 3 – November 9, 2011



### **Task 3:** *Assess existing regional conditions and economic development issues and opportunities.*

- 1 Provide opportunities to receive additional local knowledge through work groups and other means (as needed) to improve descriptions of existing conditions in the region and the Council's understanding of regional assets, strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- 2 Develop a baseline description of existing economic conditions and identify critical issues and opportunities that require detailed exploration.

To identify what needs to change and how, Councils need a realistic understanding of the current conditions of the region, such as the economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources, environment, and other pertinent information. The Council can begin its examination of existing conditions with information made available by Empire State Development (ESD), Department of Labor (DOL) and various other state agencies on the region's current economic condition. The website provides access to "Regional Snapshots" for each Council. This information could be further developed, as needed, through the solicitation of input from additional stakeholders, through work groups, and other means.

To identify the *critical* assets, strengths, issues and barriers related to economic growth, the Council may also be informed by:

- Local knowledge
- Existing plans, studies, reports or strategies
- Assessment of regional profile and historic analyses

*The identification and description of critical issues will assist in identifying what is truly important to the region's economic prosperity.*

Using information from the State, as well as information from stakeholders, Council members, regional and county planning boards, and other sources, Councils should clearly identify the following:

- What are the region's strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the region's principal growth sectors and clusters?
- What is driving the economy and where is it headed?
- What are the strategic development opportunities?
- What are the strategic, critical issues and barriers related to development opportunities that must be addressed?

The identification of critical issues may be approached in at least two different ways.

One is a goals approach, which requires that goals and objectives be established, followed by the identification of critical issues and the development of strategies. This approach may be effective if agreement can readily be reached on goals and objectives and they are detailed and specific enough to guide the identification of critical issues and development of strategies. Developing and gaining agreement on detailed, specific goals and objectives may be time-consuming and, as a result, difficult to achieve for the initial strategic plan.

A second is a more direct approach that goes straight from the Council's regional economic development vision statement and the analysis of existing conditions to the identification of critical issues. This second approach may be preferred given the time frame to produce the initial strategic plan.

The analysis of existing conditions should involve a SWOT analysis, as well as a cluster analysis. A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) distinguishes a region's characteristics by negative and positive and by external control or internal control.

<b>COMPONENTS OF A SWOT ANALYSIS</b>		
	<b>Can be controlled internally</b>	<b>Controlled by external forces</b>
<b>Positive attributes</b>	STRENGTHS: Characteristics that give a region advantages over other regions	OPPORTUNITIES: prospects for enhancing growth in the region
<b>Negative attributes</b>	WEAKNESSES: Characteristics that place the region at a disadvantage over other regions	THREATS: factors that may hinder growth in the region

Cluster analysis is another technique used to analyze existing conditions. A cluster is defined as a group of businesses and industries related through buyer-supplier relationships or indirect connections, such as dependence on a common workforce. For example, clusters can be dependent on universities conducting research and supporting technology commercialization relevant to the cluster's growth.

**3** Create work groups of Council members and other stakeholders to augment Council knowledge and generate further understanding of key geographic areas, core assets, strengths and critical issues and barriers related to economic opportunities which may be the focus of the initial strategic plan. Work groups are expected to play an important role in writing the initial strategic plan and gathering stakeholder input.

The initial work groups, comprised of Council members and stakeholders, will be formed at the first meeting of the Council. Subsequent work groups may be formed to address specific tasks that occur later in the timeframe

**4** Meet in work groups to develop materials to inform and guide the Council as it develops the strategic plan. Work groups will produce recommendations and draft products for the full Regional Council to consider. Written materials from each work group will contribute to the final strategic plan.



**Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils assess existing resources and identify critical issues and opportunities, they should keep in mind that the summary scoring criteria indicates that plans will be scored, in part, on the following:

*“How effectively does the strategic plan articulate the issues and opportunities identified as critical, and the reasons why those issues and opportunities were chosen? How well did the Regional Council identify the assets and resources needed to address the strategic economic development opportunities and critical issues identified in the plan?”*



**Guidance:** Guidance on the formation of work groups is contained in Section C of the manual. Illustrations of how some strategic plans present their existing conditions and critical issues and opportunities may be found in the Section E of the manual.



**Product:** A regional assessment of existing conditions and critical economic development issues and opportunities. The formation of work groups to enhance knowledge about existing conditions and to suggest how best to address critical issues and opportunities. Work group products will be considered by the Council for incorporation into the strategic plan. A description of existing conditions and economic opportunities is included in Section II of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline. The issues and opportunities deemed most critical are included in Section III of the Strategic Plan Outline.



**Suggested time frame:** August 3 – August 24, 2011

## Where do we want to be?

Having reviewed the current economic situation and the challenges and changes which will affect the region’s future, the next task in the development of a strategic plan is to come to a consensus on what the future of the region should be.



### **Task 4:** *Develop a regional economic development vision statement.*



1 Draft a regional economic development vision statement.

Once an understanding has been established regarding current economic conditions, the Council’s work shifts to establishing a regional economic development vision statement

As soon as the Council has identified the existing conditions and critical issues and opportunities, it can create a vision statement. The statement should be forward-looking and provide guidance and direction for the actions that will be taken to make improvements.

*The Vision Statement provides the reader with a clear description of how the region sees the future, should their strategies be implemented.*

Discussion on a possible vision for the region should begin at the first meeting of the Council. It is important that stakeholders and members have an opportunity to express their ideas for the

future of the region. The Council staff facilitator can help identify common visions through a variety of exercises. A work group, using the guidance provided by the Council, could prepare a vision statement for consideration at the second Council meeting.



**Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils draft economic development vision statements, they should keep in mind that the summary scoring criteria indicates that plans will be scored, in part, on the following:

*“How well does the vision capitalize on the region’s assets? How well does the vision drive an economically sustainable future for the region? Is the vision feasible? Does the vision represent the region broadly?”*



Based on the information gained from work groups, Council members, stakeholders, the public, Council staff, and other means, refine the critical issues that must be overcome and the opportunities that may be seized. Present in summary form a description of these critical issues and opportunities which includes the principal regional economic drivers (e.g., industry clusters, higher education, agriculture, tourism, waterfronts) that must be addressed through detailed strategies.

*How can the region build on and maximize the region’s strengths and opportunities?*

Councils may focus on a limited set of issues for this initial strategic plan. Through organized, structured discussion, the Councils can establish which issues are most pressing and most feasible to address. Work groups created by Councils can solicit input from stakeholders and the public to augment Council member knowledge and generate further understanding of key geographic areas, core assets, strengths and critical issues and barriers related to economic opportunities.



Develop goals, if desired, that are consistent with the regional economic vision statement. Goals are desirable future conditions which support and can help achieve the vision for the region’s future.



**Guidance:** Examples of vision statements are provided in Section E of the manual.



**Product:** A regional economic vision statement. A refined description of critical issues and opportunities, including the principal economic drivers that must be addressed in detailed strategies in order to achieve the regional economic vision. The vision statement is included in Section III of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline.



Suggested time frame: August 3 – October 5, 2011

## How do we get there?

The next step in developing the strategic plan is to determine how to get from where the region is presently to where it wants to be in the future. To answer this question, two tasks are to be done:

(1) Develop the strategies the region will use to advance priority economic projects and address critical issues; and

(2) Assemble and expand upon the various products developed to create a draft regional strategic plan.



### **Task 5:** *Develop strategies to advance priority economic development projects and address critical issues.*

**1** Develop criteria to identify priority, transformative projects and actions to achieve desired economic growth. It is likely that this task will be discussed and assigned to a work group at the second meeting of the Council. The work group would then make their recommendations to the Council at its third meeting.

Criteria will be applied to identify transformational projects and other priority actions that are central to achieving the region's vision, and address the needs and issues most critical for enhancing the region's economy. The benefits of good selection criteria include:

- More efficient use of limited resources
- Keeping the regional stakeholders focused on the most critical projects
- Obtaining consensus as to which projects have the highest priority

To develop selection criteria, Councils will need to determine how a project or action could be evaluated in terms of its ability to advance the strategic plan. Criteria could be either quantitative or qualitative.

Projects and actions will be evaluated based on a variety of criteria. Because some criteria may be more significant than others, the relative importance of each of the criteria should be considered. For example, a criteria relating to the project's contribution to increased long-term employment may be relatively more important than one relating to the project's contribution to employment in the construction industry during the project's construction phase.

**2** Assemble detailed strategies to capitalize on the principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities, and to address critical issues that have impeded appropriate economic growth. Include in the detailed strategies descriptions of:

- Projects that are catalytic, transformative, and community-supported
- Necessary actions
- Desired changes in policies

One strategic planning guide suggests that a framework for thinking about strategy is to create a plan that builds the capacity of the community to effectively use five types of capital, which include:

- (1) Human Capital – the skills, abilities and capacity of community residents
- (2) Social Capital – the natural networks of relationships that connect individuals and institutions of a community
- (3) Intellectual Capital – the collective ability of the stakeholders to engage in problem solving
- (4) Political Capital – the ability of stakeholders to make things happen collaboratively
- (5) Financial Capital – fiscal resources to support healthy economies, finance programs, renovate public and private infrastructure, and invest in the future

By looking to see if any forms of capital are missing, Regional Councils can make sure that the strategic plan uses the “capital” needed for success. The approach can help create long-term capacity by using smaller programs and projects to build momentum.

To turn around a region’s economy, it is essential to change the way business is done at multiple levels. Long-term change starts in different places and at different levels, involving individuals, local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and educational institutions in partnerships that allow them to draw strength from one another.

The Council needs to develop clear and explicit strategies directly tied to achieving the region’s economic vision. The projects, actions and policy changes should lead to an improved business climate, increased community vitality and quality of life, continued work force development, improved infrastructure and other factors needed to resolve critical issues impeding growth and to advance critical economic development opportunities.



**Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils develop strategies, they should keep in mind that the summary scoring criteria indicates that plans will be scored, in part, on the following:

*“How well would the proposed actions, policy changes and projects address the critical issues and opportunities identified in the strategic plan? How well is popular support for the projects demonstrated?”*

*“How well are other public, private and non-profit funds and investments leveraged? How well do those leveraged funds advance the region’s highest priorities?”*



**Guidance:** Examples of project selection criteria, as well as strategies to address economic development are provided in Section E of the manual.



**Product:** Economic development strategies to capitalize on principal regional economic drivers and other associated opportunities and to address critical issues. Criteria for identifying priority, transformative projects and actions. Detailed strategies on how to best utilize regional assets, capitalize on opportunities, and resolve critical issues are included in Section IV of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline. An explanation of the criteria for selecting such projects would also go in Section IV.



**Suggested time frame:** August 3 – October 26, 2011

## **Task 6:** *Develop draft regional strategic plan.*

**1** Assemble a draft of the initial strategic plan consistent with the strategic plan outline for public review and comment. The draft five-year plan shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- An assessment of existing conditions in the region, including the primary assets;
- The identification and description of critical issues and opportunities;
- The regional economic vision statement;
- A list of principal economic drivers that must be addressed;
- A list of goals that address the economic vision of the region (optional element);
- Criteria for the identification of priority projects and actions to achieve desired economic growth;
- Detailed strategies to capitalize on principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities, and to resolve critical issues, including a description of priority projects, actions and proposed policy changes; and
- A description of the ways the Council involved the public and other stakeholders in the creation of the draft regional strategic plan;

Consult the public involvement strategy to confirm when a public forum will be held to solicit feedback on the draft plan products — likely that it will need to be held during October.

Draft documents should be submitted to the website to give stakeholders and the public have an opportunity to view prior to public forums.



**Product:** Draft regional strategic plan for public review and comment.



**Suggested time frame:** August 16 – October 5, 2011

### **How do we get there? How are we doing?**

As the Councils continue to devise strategies, the Councils will need to determine what actions must be taken to implement those strategies. The actions may take the form of both public and private activities, projects, policy changes, and other means the Council will use to implement the plan.

Because the Councils will continue to implement and update their plans into the future, it will be necessary to develop a way of identifying whether strategies and recommended actions are on the right track – even well-thought out plans are subject to events and factors that cannot be foreseen. This makes it even more important that the strategic planning process be an ongoing and vital process of the Regional Councils. The implementation agenda the Region develops for the initial strategic plan will need to be modified over time. Checking progress by applying performance measures and mechanisms developed by the Councils will help determine the effectiveness of the plan and whether new approaches should be developed.

## ✓ **Task 7: Generate a regional implementation agenda.**

**1** Generate a regional implementation agenda. It is one thing to get agreement on a strategy, quite another to detail it and maintain the commitment and secure the required resources. The agenda needs to be “do-able” within the existing limitations of time, budgets, administrative capacity and political resources. One publication on strategic planning, describes what needs to be done to develop an implementation agenda:

- (1) Clearly understand the tasks and actions involved in the chosen strategy option;
- (2) Determine who needs to be involved and specific roles and responsibilities;
- (3) Determine time frames, resources, funding and preconditions;
- (4) Identify risks, gaps and weak links in the action plan and how they will be addressed (e.g., actions or tasks in which there is no clear leader, no funding or other key resources identified, capacity limitations);
- (5) Reconfirm commitments of each partner;
- (6) Agree on a coordination mechanism; and
- (7) Agree on a monitoring mechanism.

The implementation agenda developed by the Regional Council should, at a minimum:

- Describe the actions that are most important to undertake over the next five years, including public- and private-sector actions;
- Include timeframes to advance those actions, including transformative projects;
- Describe other actions, that may not be of as high a priority, needed to implement the strategies; and
- Specify the organizational structure and operational arrangements to ensure implementation;
- Include a project implementation matrix to track progress.

*The essence of an implementation agenda is that it clearly establishes what must be done, the date by which it will be done, and who will be responsible for doing the work.*

When preparing the implementation agenda, be sure to include recommended actions that may be external or ancillary to project development, such as:

- Modifications to government operations (zoning changes, permitting processes, consolidation of services, etc.);
- Changes to educational and workforce training programs (creation of new programs at BOCES or community colleges, securing dedicated positions in regional businesses for program graduates, etc.); and
- Re-assessment of public funding priorities and objectives (budget changes at the local and county level, expansion of county transit services, etc.).

- 2** Describe the organizational structure and operational arrangements to be put in place that will ensure strategic plan implementation and meaningful and timely public participation take place on an on-going basis. Include a project implementation matrix to track progress.

The Council will need to develop a process for acquiring commitments to action and ensuring that the strategies to advance projects are implemented by the target dates. Because the Regional Council will be a continuing and vital presence in the region, it needs to operationalize (institutionalizing) the implementation and evaluation process. This may involve the retooling of existing organizations to monitor and carry out the strategic plan. Progress on the tasks would be tracked using the project implementation matrix.

One publication on strategic planning recommends several tasks when operationalizing the strategic plan, including the following:

(1) Strengthen existing institutional structures to improve their effectiveness in planning, management and coordination among different sectors; only where necessary, create new institutions to accommodate special requirements both technical and managerial which are not covered by existing institutions.

(2) Change or adjust mandates of existing institutions to integrate new functions and roles.

(3) Identify and task “anchor” institutions to take the lead and provide a home base for local economic development activities or phases.

(4) Link to established policy instruments such as annual budgeting, human resource allocation, sectoral work programs, etc.

(5) Modify legal and administrative frameworks to enable a procedural framework for smooth and effective functioning of institutions.

(6) Maintain knowledge support and a learning process, for example, through documenting and evaluating lessons of experience and building collaboration with local research or consulting establishments.

The Council also needs to consider what mechanisms it will use to continue to solicit stakeholder and public input on the strategies it is putting in place, and on potential updates to the strategic plan.



**Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils develop the implementation agenda, they should keep in mind that the summary scoring criteria indicates that plans will be scored, in part, on the following:

*“How well does the strategic plan identify necessary steps, timeframes and allocate resources and responsibilities for implementation? How well does the plan set forth meaningful organizational structure and operational arrangements to ensure implementation?”*

**3** Include mechanisms and measurements to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan. Monitoring involves the continuous collection of information that can be used with performance measures to gauge the progress of an action or project. The information from monitoring should be examined to see if there are opportunities for changes to the strategies or if negative or unintended impacts need to be addressed. Ongoing monitoring and evaluating against performance measures are necessary activities for Regional Councils as they seek to update their initial five-year strategic plan.

Devising ways to measure the performance of the plan is part of the “How are we doing?” phase of the strategic planning process. Performance measures should be accessible, realistic and structured in a way that will drive decision-making and enhance transparency. They will be used to evaluate the progress of activities in achieving the economic development strategy.

To develop performance measures, identify:

- Data needed for each measure;
- The benchmarks that will be used to measure progress;
- How the data and performance measures will be made available for public review; and
- The process for monitoring and changing performance measures.

A performance measure should be directly related to the strategy it is measuring. It should measure the change or difference the action, project or policy change will have on the particular critical issue. When developing measures, consider the following questions:

- Is the outcome measure relevant? Is it logically and directly related to the Council’s vision and specific strategy?
- Is the outcome measure reliable? Does it produce accurate and verifiable information over the time frame established for measurement?
- Is the outcome measure valid? Does it capture what the Council intends to measure?
- Is the measure of sufficient value to justify the cost of producing the necessary data?
- If the data are not currently available, can a proxy measure be substituted until a data base is available?
- Will the outcome measure enable a decision to be made or lead to a valid conclusion concerning the Council’s action?

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURE

A method for assessing the actual impact or effectiveness of the plan’s strategies.

#### BENCHMARK

The expected, planned or intended result of a particular performance measure.

#### OUTCOME MEASURE

A quantifiable assessment of the results of a program compared to its intended purpose.

Once the initial regional strategic plans have been adopted, the state will measure and track the performance of the Regional Council initiative using metrics that are valid, reliable, and replicable. Empire State Development will produce an Annual Economic Report to the Governor

which includes a statewide business climate report as well as a progress report on the work of the Regional Councils.



**Scoring Criteria:** As the Councils develop the performance measures, they should keep in mind that the summary scoring criteria indicates that plans will be scored, in part, the following:

*“To what extent will the performance monitoring mechanisms and measurements be realistic in evaluating the effectiveness of the strategic plan?”*



**Guidance:** Examples of implementation plans and performance measures are provided in Section E of the manual.



**Product:** A Regional Implementation Agenda, which includes a description of the organizational structure and operational arrangements to ensure plan implementation and ongoing meaningful public participation. The implementation agenda, which will ensure tangible progress over the next five years, is included in Section III of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline.

Specific performance measures to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of plan implementation. Performance measures and the process for evaluating and updating the Strategic Plan are included in Section V of the Initial Strategic Plan Outline.



**Suggested time frame:** October 6 – November 9, 2011



### **Task 8:** *Complete an initial five-year regional strategic plan.*



1 Solicit stakeholder comment on the draft initial five-year regional strategic plan and the implementation agenda. As noted previously in the work plan, a public forum must be held on the draft initial five-year strategic plan and implementation agenda. Following the public forum, revise the draft strategic plan to address public comment received at the forum, online, and through other means.

A draft of the strategic plan should be posted online. The public will be able to offer comments specifically on the draft plan.



2 Revise the draft strategic plan and the implementation agenda based on the feedback that is received and complete the final strategic plan. As provided for in the strategic plan outline, the plan should include the following:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunities
- III. Economic Development Vision
- IV. Economic Development Strategy and Components
- V. Regional Implementation Agenda
- VI. Performance Measurements

The strategic plan will be reviewed and evaluated against the scoring criteria. A summary of the criteria is included in the *Open for Business* Guidebook. A more detailed description of criteria will be available later this summer.



**Guidance:** An expanded strategic plan outline is contained in Section D of the manual.



**Product:** Initial five-year regional strategic plan.



**Suggested time frame:** October 6, 2011 – November 9, 2011



## **TASK 9:** *Evaluate Consolidated Funding Applications.*

**1** At the conclusion of Task 5, each regional council will have established and applied criteria for the identification of priority projects and other significant actions central to achieving the region's vision. For any of those projects and actions in need of funding available through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process, Councils should encourage eligible applicants to apply.

**2** Each Regional Council will develop CFA endorsement standards. These endorsement standards should be developed early in the Council's strategic planning process so CFA applicants can take them into account when preparing their applications. It is suggested that these endorsement standards be adopted at the third meeting of a Regional Council.

These standards will be the basis for each Council to determine whether or not a CFA proposal receives the Council's endorsement. Regional Council endorsement of a CFA proposal will provide additional scoring support in the project proposal evaluation process.

Endorsement standards that are created by the Regional Councils will elaborate on the strategic plan scoring criteria provided on page 37 of the Guidebook, as follows:

- Regional economic development vision – 5%  
Does the proposal advance the vision?
- Process – 10%  
Is there significant community and stakeholder support for the proposal?
- Strategies - 35%  
Is the proposal identified in and/or advance a strategy that is part of the plan?
- Implementation - 15%  
Is the proposal of significant importance to advancing the implementation agenda?
- Leverage resources – 15%  
Does the proposal leverage other funding sources?
- Performance measures – 20%  
If funded, can the results of the proposal be monitored and evaluated against the Council's performance measures?

-  The Regional Councils will review CFAs against the endorsement standards..
-  **Guidance:** Refer to page 10 of the guidebook for resources available through the Consolidated Funding Application. Section F of the manual contains guidance on the CFA process.
-  **Product:** Evaluations of CFA projects.
-  **Suggested time frame:** August 16 - November 11, 2011

***Task 10: Submit the initial five-year strategic plan and CFA evaluations.***

-  Submit the completed strategic plan, including the CFA evaluations, to the Strategic Plan Review Committee. The submission package should include:
  - A letter of transmittal from the Co-Chairs to the Strategic Plan Review Committee;
  - The initial five-year strategic plan, in a format consistent with the strategic plan outline; and
  - Evaluations of Consolidated Funding Applications.

Prior to the deadline for submission, the Councils will be given further direction on where and how to send the submission package.

-  **Product:** Strategic plan submitted to the Strategic Plan Review Committee.
-  **Deadline:** November 14, 2011

## C. Guidance

This section of the manual provides guidance to Regional Councils as they implement their work plans. Guidance is provided for the following:

- I. Discussions, Actions & Work Group Assignments
- II. Work Group Formation
- III. Stakeholder and Public Engagement
- IV. Regional Council Website

The information is meant to illustrate ways certain work plan tasks could be approached, and is a resource for those who will be preparing the regional strategic plans.



## C. I. Discussions, Actions & Work Group Assignments

The Regional Council Work Plan outlines the tasks and steps each Regional Council could follow to develop the strategic plan. The following is an illustration of the working session and meeting discussions, actions, and work group assignments that a Council could follow in order to create an initial five-year strategic plan by November 14, 2011. A seventh session is shown to illustrate the ongoing nature of the Regional Councils.

<b>ORIENTATION SESSION\MEETING ONE</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Review Council purpose, work plan and timelines.	Guidebook & Manual		1.1
	Discuss existing conditions, critical issues and opportunities.	Survey & Manual	X	3.2
	Discuss potential vision.	Survey & Manual		4.1
	Discuss what work groups should be formed.	Manual	X	3.3
	Discuss an approach to public involvement.	Manual		2.1
	Discuss criteria to identify priority, transformative projects to achieve desired economic growth.	Survey & Manual		5.1
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Draft a regional economic development vision statement and (if desired) goals that are consistent with the regional economic vision statement.	Manual		4.1 4.2 4.3
	Develop an approach to public involvement.	Manual		2.1
	Develop a baseline description of existing conditions that identifies and describes the region's economic condition, and critical issues and opportunities that require detailed exploration.	Manual		3.2
	Develop a description of critical issues that must be overcome and the opportunities, including the principal regional economic drivers (e.g. industry clusters, higher education, agriculture, tourism, waterfronts) that must be addressed in detailed strategies to advance the region's economic growth and to achieve the region's vision.	Manual		4.3
	Develop priority project selection criteria.	Manual		5.1
	Develop Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) endorsement standards.	Manual		9.2

<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING TWO</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Review, modify as needed and approve draft regional economic development vision statement.	Work Group Report	X	4.1
	Review, modify as needed and approve public involvement strategy.	Work Group Report	X	2.1
	Review, modify as needed and approve the principal regional economic drivers and the associated opportunities to advance the region's strategic economic growth and to achieve the region's vision.	Work Group Report	X	4.2
	Discuss draft criteria to identify priority, transformative projects and actions.	Work Group Report		5.1
	Discuss draft CFA endorsement standards.	Work Group Report		9.1
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Develop detailed strategies to capitalize on the identified principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities and to address critical issues that have impeded appropriate economic growth. Include in the detailed strategies descriptions of catalytic, transformative, community supported projects, necessary actions and changes in policies.	Manual		5.2
	Revise as necessary criteria to identify priority projects and actions.			5.1
	Revise as necessary CFA endorsement standards.			9.2
<b>PUBLIC FORUM</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Solicit stakeholder ideas to help inform the Council of the critical issues and opportunities, and feedback on draft vision statement, priority project selection criteria and CFA endorsement standards.	Work Group Reports		2.1
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUP TO:</b>			
	Analyze comments made at public forum.			2.1

<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING THREE</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Review comments received at public forum.	Work Group Report		2.1
	Review, modify as needed and approve regional vision statement.	Work Group Report	X	4.1
	Review, modify as needed and approve CFA endorsement standards.	Work Group Report	X	9.2
	Review, modify as needed and approve criteria to identify priority, transformative projects and actions to achieve desired economic growth.	Work Group Report	X	5.1
	Begin review of detailed strategies – including potential projects, necessary actions and changes in policies – which will capitalize on the identified principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities and to address critical issues that have impeded appropriate economic growth.	Work Group Report		5.2
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Continue to develop detailed strategies.			5.1
	Identify priority projects by applying project selection criteria.			5.1
	Develop mechanisms and measurements to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan.	Manual		7.3
	Begin drafting an initial strategic plan consistent with the strategic plan outline for public review and comment.			6.1

<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING FOUR</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Continue review, modify as needed, and approve detailed strategies – including potential catalytic, transformative, community supported projects, necessary actions and changes in policies – which will capitalize on the identified principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities and to address critical issues that have impeded appropriate economic growth.	Work Group Report	X	5.2
	Review, modify as needed and approve mechanisms and measurements to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan.	Work Group Report	X	7.3
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Generate a regional implementation agenda to ensure timely progress implementing the strategies.	Manual		7.1
	Continue to develop detailed strategies.			5.2
	Assemble draft regional strategic plan.			6.1
	Develop an organizational structure and operational arrangements to be put in place that will ensure strategic plan implementation and meaningful and timely public participation continue on an on-going basis.	Manual		7.2
	Begin review of CFA applications, and evaluate using the CFA endorsement standards.			9.3
<b>PUBLIC FORUM</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Solicit stakeholder feedback on the draft strategic plan elements, including the assessment of existing conditions issues and opportunities; economic vision statement, associated goals; existing or emerging economic drivers; strategies to address critical issues and opportunities; and the implementation agenda.			2.1 6.1 8.1
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUP TO:</b>			
	Analyze comments made at public forum.			8.1

<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING FIVE</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Review comments on draft strategic plan elements received at public forum and online. Discuss possible modifications.	Work Group Report	X	2.1 8.2
	Review, modify as needed and approve a regional implementation agenda to ensure timely progress implementing the strategies.	Work Group Report	X	7.1
	Review, modify as needed and approve an organizational structure and operational arrangements to be put in place that will ensure strategic plan implementation and meaningful and timely public participation continues on an on-going basis.	Work Group Report	X	7.2
	Review, modify as needed and approve detailed strategies.	Work Group Report	X	5.2
	Review, modify and approve CFA endorsements.	Work Group Report	X	9.3
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Revise strategic plan elements to incorporate Council and public feedback and assemble the initial 5 year strategic plan for consideration by Council. The plan must conform to the strategic plan outline.			8.2
	Continue review of CFA applications, and evaluate using the CFA endorsement standards.			9.3

<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING SIX</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Review, modify as needed and adopt initial five-year strategic plan for submission to the Strategic Plan Review Committee.	Work Group Report	X	8.2 10.1
	Review, modify and approve CFA endorsement recommendations for submission to the Strategic Plan Review Committee.	Work Group Report	X	9.3 10.1
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Identify steps needed to operationalize implementation of the strategic plan.			
	Begin obtaining public and private commitments needed to accomplish actions identified in the implementation agenda.			
<b>WORKING SESSION\MEETING SEVEN</b>				
<b>DONE</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	<b>DECISION NEEDED</b>	<b>WORK PLAN TASK</b>
	Discuss feedback from the Strategic Plan Review Committee about the initial five-year strategic plan.			
	Review and initiate, as needed, the steps to operationalize implementation of the strategic plan.	Work Group Report	X	
	Discuss status of public and private commitments obtained to accomplish actions identified in the implementation agenda.	Work Group Report	X	
	Review status of Consolidated Funding Applications.			
	<b>ASSIGN WORK GROUPS TO:</b>			
	Implement organizational structure and operationalize implementation of the strategic plan.			
	Continue to obtain public and private commitments needed to accomplish actions identified in the plan.			
	Continue to identify steps necessary to advance the strategic plan.			
	Update implementation matrix through review of the status of projects and actions.			
	Recommend adjustments to strategies as needed.			

## C. II. WORK GROUP FORMATION

Work groups will play an important role in preparing and writing the strategic plan and gathering stakeholder input. With guidance from the Regional Council, the work groups will be producing recommendations for the full Regional Council to consider. Ideally, the written materials will contribute to the strategic plan.

### Membership:

- Regional Council Members, Ex Officio Members and stakeholders may serve on work groups.
- Suggestions of stakeholders to serve on a work group who are not on the Council may be offered by any number of sources, including the Chairman, Regional Co-Chairs, Members, Ex Officio Members, Council staff, and others.
- Stakeholders that have been selected to serve on the work group may be invited by the Regional Co-Chairs or ESD Regional Director.

### Administration:

- Regional Co-Chairs will appoint work group leaders.
- The work group leader identifies or provides someone to take meeting notes.
- The work group leader identifies a writer to complete a report to be used to advise the full Regional Council of its findings. The writer could also be a member of the group writing the strategic plan (see below).
- Meetings could be held at a SUNY facility (arranged by Council Staff) or any public or private facility arranged by a member. Consider whether the location of meetings accommodates different interests within the region.
- Relevant Council Staff may participate in work group meetings to provide context and guidance, if needed. This participation could occur via conference call, or if convenient, in person.

### Types of Work Groups:

Here are some examples of subjects the work groups may form around. It is not necessary for all the groups to be formed at the first meeting. Work groups can be formed at any time and may be disbanded when an assignment is complete. Examples:

- Process work groups to aid with generating the strategic plan, such as:
  - o Regional economic vision
  - o Writing the strategic plan
  - o Public participation strategy
  - o Strategic plan performance measurements

- o Priority project and action selection criteria
- o Consolidated Funding Application endorsement standards
- o Long term structure and operational arrangements for implementing the plan
  
- Critical issues and opportunities to be the focus of the initial strategic plan
- Strategic plan strategies
  - o Capitalizing on regional assets and critical opportunities
  - o Addressing critical issues impeding growth
  - o Identifying and describing projects which meet priority project criteria
- Specific geographic areas in need of special attention
- Receiving public input and informing stakeholders of council deliberations and draft recommendations



## C. III. STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Each Regional Council will develop a public engagement strategy to enable “residents, public and private agencies, community organizations, local businesses, institutions of learning – to work towards a shared vision for a stronger community.” (Quote from Open for Business: A New State Government Approach to Economic Growth)

The minimum components of a public engagement strategy are listed below. Following that list are additional details or examples of ways the public and stakeholders could be engaged by a Regional Council.

**Council Meetings and Working Sessions.** The public may attend Council meetings, which will last approximately one hour. These meetings will follow Council working sessions.

**Work Groups.** Councils will establish work groups to research and generate recommendations for the Council’s consideration on those topics and/or geographic areas which may be the focus of the strategic plan. Work groups may include Council members and should include stakeholders not on the Council. This will increase the depth of local knowledge, as well as the number of stakeholders directly involved with the Council’s deliberations.

**Website.** Draft products will be posted on Regional Council websites where members of the public will be given the opportunity to comment on them. In addition to comments on specific documents, the public will be able to offer general comments via e-mail and through the “suggestion box.”

**Existing Outreach.** Many state and county agencies have ongoing efforts to solicit ideas from select stakeholders. Ideas generated through these efforts can feed into the Council effort.

**Public Forums.** Each Council will organize and hold at least two public forums. One forum will be held early in the process to provide opportunity for the public to help identify critical issues and opportunities; and another forum will be held later as an opportunity for the public to offer comments on council proposals.

Regional Council staff will be responsible for posting to Council websites information about upcoming Council meetings, and collecting comments received online and informing Council members.

### Regional Council Meetings and Working Sessions

The first time the Councils will be convened will be for an orientation session. Opportunities for public engagement during meetings open to the public will occur at the discretion of the Regional Co-Chairs. One option could be a facilitated discussion among members and the public to brainstorm a topic.

### Work Groups

The purpose of work groups is to allow in-depth examination and discussion which cannot otherwise fit into the time constraints of Council meetings or work sessions. Members of the

public may be invited to serve on work groups because of their knowledge of the topic to be addressed. Individuals with particular knowledge of the issues may be referred to as “stakeholders” in Council documents. Further information is available in Section C of the manual.

## Website

Each Council has its own webpage on the Regional Council website accessible through the Governor’s webpage, and may post materials at varying stages of development. Councils may use this website to generate public comment on draft strategic plan products. Each Council will develop a protocol for posting items, including at a minimum Executive Director approval of all items, and Strategic Planner approval of planning documents. Additional information is in Section C of the manual.

## Existing Outreach

Council staff should consult with agency resource team members about existing agency outreach efforts which could also be used as a means to feed into the Council effort. For example, meetings can be used to gain more local government perspective on regional economic issues and opportunities.

Ex Officio members, such as county executives, may also have outreach events planned which could be refocused to aid the Council’s work.

## Local Networks

Regional Council Regional Co-Chairs and Council members could identify organizations to which they belong that they could engage during the four-month planning process or beyond. Other organizations that may have an interest include:

- Community-based groups
- Social advocacy groups
- Sector-based groups
- Government groups like a Council of Governments or association of village officials
- Labor-based groups, such as local chapters
- State or National affiliates, such as the League of Women Voters

Engagement of these organizations might include submittal of newsletter articles about the strategic planning process, guest speaking at meetings, or interactive sessions seeking audience feedback.

## One-on-One Conversations

There may be key stakeholders in the regions who are not serving on Councils and who are unable to participate in work groups. They could be directly engaged by a Regional Co-Chair or one of the Council members. In addition, the ESD Regional Director, DOL Regional Representa-

tive, DOS Strategic Planner and others could reach out to stakeholders and bring the information back to a work group or Council member. A more formalized approach would entail the use of standardized questions on particular topics.

## Public Forums

A traditional method often used to engage the public is characterized by individuals speaking from a microphone for their allotted time. In general, this technique starts with a brief presentation or the release of a document and is followed by a series of monologues. While the public can air individual ideas and concerns, this meeting format is not designed to produce consensus or establish priorities in the same way as other formats. For that reason, consideration should be given to using interactive formats for the two required public forums and forums held by the work groups. Some examples are described below.

**Workshops:** Workshops are informal meetings that may include exhibits and presentations designed to be interactive. They allow group communication for the critique of draft documents or problem solving of critical issues. They may require several facilitators depending on the size of the group.

**Table discussions:** Large attendance at a public forum could be managed by setting up a number of themed tables. This would allow a dialogue between a member of the Council and a number of stakeholders.

**Open house:** This would be an informal setting using displays, handouts and other materials to expose citizens to strategic plan components and ideas to address them. It would provide the public a chance to react and express feedback about information in oral or written form.

## After Initial Five-Year Plan Submission

Public outreach and stakeholder involvement must continue during implementation and updates of the strategic plan. The public should have the opportunity to comment on how effective the plan may be, and whether the strategies appear to be working. The Council should also solicit input from the public and other stakeholders on new issues and opportunities, and strategies to address them.

## Resources

- Crafting an Effective Plan for Public Participation  
<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/Publications/PublicParticipation.pdf>
- Public Engagement: A Primer from Public Agenda [http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/public\\_engagement\\_primer.pdf](http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/public_engagement_primer.pdf)
- Using Online Tools to Engage – and be Engaged by –The Public  
<http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Using%20Online%20Tools%20to%20Engage%20The%20Public.pdf>

- Planning Public Forums: Questions to Guide Local Officials  
[http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/ilgbackup.org/files/2007\\_-\\_Planning\\_Public\\_Forum-w.pdf](http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/ilgbackup.org/files/2007_-_Planning_Public_Forum-w.pdf)
- National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) Resource Center  
<http://ncdd.org/rc/>
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs Community Participation Techniques  
<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/planningqualitygrowth/programs/SPRs/SPR.PartTechniques.pdf>
- Charleston Area Transportation Study (CHATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Involvement Plan  
[http://www.bcdcog.com/publications/CHATS\\_PPP\\_adopted%201108.pdf](http://www.bcdcog.com/publications/CHATS_PPP_adopted%201108.pdf)



## C. IV. Website

The Regional Council webpage lays out what exactly the Regional Economic Development Councils are and directs you to individual regional pages through an interactive map.

On the regional pages, we provide a wealth of information including expansive region specific data regarding everything from existing regional strategies to the economic environment to the policy environment of the region.

Our goal for this site was to design it in a way that would be informative for the public but most of all, be a resource for all of you.

### Suggestion Form

Through this form, which can be found throughout the website, people can submit suggestions regarding the council membership, strategic plans, maybe they have a project recommendation or a just a general comment.

### Posting Content to the Website

It is very important that we keep the website fresh with new and updated content. To make posting as easy as possible the Office for Technology (OFT) has setup a mailbox to which all requests can be e-mailed.

The Council Liaisons have been tasked with the role of “Web Master” for their region. This means, under the Executive Directors guidance and signoff on all posting requests, the Council Liaison will be responsible for sending approved content to the mailbox for posting.

There are a variety of items that will need to be posted on the website; they include but are not limited to: meeting dates, new and updated documents (Word Documents, PowerPoints, PDFs), press releases and media files.

The process for posting content is as follows:

- Council Liaisons obtain sign-off from the Regional Director before sending a request to OFT.
- Once approval is obtained, draft an e-mail to the OFT mailbox. Be sure to include specific directions as to what you are requesting OFT to do (post a new document, delete a document, fix an error, post a meeting notice, etc). Make sure to include any necessary attachments.
- Once OFT receives the e-mail, a notice will be sent to let you know that OFT is working on the request.
- When the request is completed, an e-mail will be sent to let you know that your request has been fulfilled.





# THE INITIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

## D. Expanded Strategic Plan Outline

The initial strategic plan must include the following six sections, but others may be added as needed or desired by a Regional Council. Sections may be presented in the manner the Council believes best articulates the substance and spirit of the region's economic development efforts.

### I. Executive Summary

This section of the initial strategic plan should consist of a concise synopsis of the plan, summarizing the sections on existing conditions and economic opportunities, the economic development vision, the economic development strategy and components, the implementation agenda, and performance measurements.

The executive summary should summarize the entire strategic plan in a way that allows readers to quickly understand the plan's key issues, strategies, and how taking the identified actions will begin to transform the region's economy.

Executive summaries typically preview the main points of a report in the same order they appear in the full report. The sentences and paragraphs are typically short and make little use of technical material and jargon.

### II. Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunities

*This section is based on work plan Tasks 1, 2 and 3 and addresses the question: "Where are we now?"*

This section of the initial strategic plan will describe primary assets, economic development opportunities and the issues impeding economic growth. The Council will may use information provided by Empire State Development (ESD) and Department of Labor (DOL) staff on the region's current economic condition. Examples of the type of information to be provided include:

- Current labor force and unemployment trends
- Fastest growing occupations
- Companies expanding, laying off or closing
- Current employment trends by industry sector
- Business inventory
- Unemployed worker inventory
- Population trends
- Business expansion and contraction

An overview of existing conditions included in the plan may be comprehensive or targeted. Whichever approach is taken, the baseline description should include information that will support subsequent discussions of the critical issues and opportunities in the region, as well as the strategies which are chosen to address those critical issues and opportunities.

An analysis of existing conditions and economic opportunities may also incorporate relevant material from other government-sponsored or supported plans.

### III. Economic Development Vision

*This section is based on work plan Task 4 and addresses the question: “Where do we want to be?”*

This section of the initial strategic plan presents several items critical to understanding the region’s intended economic future, including:

- A. The regional economic development vision statement;
- B. A list of goals (if desired);
- C. An explanation of the critical issues to be addressed and opportunities to be seized in order to achieve the vision; and
- D. The public and stakeholder engagement process that was used to inform and shape the regional vision and strategies.

#### A. Vision Statement

The vision statement provides a snapshot of the desired future for the region. The vision statement should be realistic, but challenging enough to result in the desired changes. A solid and shared vision creates commitment and understanding. It sets a clear direction based upon both the desired future of the region over the next five years and realistic opportunities for growth. Council discussion will guide the development of the vision statement, which will likely be drafted by a work group and presented for the Council’s approval.

#### B. Goals

While Regional Councils are not required to develop goals for the initial strategic plan, they may choose to do so. If goals are developed, they should be detailed and specific rather than broad or abstract. Goals can be result-oriented (e.g. increase market share by 15%), process-oriented (e.g. increase enrollment in nanotechnology programs at community colleges), or a combination of both. In all cases the goals should be measurable. The result-oriented goal focuses more on the bottom line, while the process-oriented goal focuses more on important steps that need to be achieved so as to indirectly affect the bottom line.

#### C. Critical Issues and Opportunities

In the context of this regional economic development planning effort, a critical issue is something that needs to be addressed and shouldn’t be ignored. It may be positive, negative, or neutral, but is typically thought of as an impediment to growth or a sign of a weak economy. For example:

- The population is aging, and young people are leaving, which will result in a shortage of younger workers to replace retiring employees.
- The formation of small manufacturing establishments has been possible with the highly skilled workforce, but has slowed recently because of limited capital resources.

A critical opportunity is something the region thinks is extremely important to utilize to achieve its vision. It could be a physical asset, such as water or sewer systems with excess capacity, or a favorable condition, such as a growing industry cluster related to a business already committed to locate in the region. The critical opportunity is an advantage which should be utilized.

The description of critical issues and opportunities should contain three parts:

- (1) A succinct description of the issue/opportunity, perhaps a short paragraph. When evaluating whether it should be considered critical, consider whether the Council can do something about it. If the Council decides it cannot do anything about it, it is likely not a critical issue/opportunity that should be addressed in the region's initial strategic plan. However, it may be something that should be referred to the Chairman's Committee. (See the Guidebook, p. 19.)
- (2) A list of the factors that make it critical. What is it about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats that make it critical? Is it a foundational element that you need to build up on for success? Is it an impediment that needs to be removed?
- (3) A description of the consequences if the issue is not addressed or the opportunity is not taken.

#### **D. Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

The Regional Council will develop a public participation strategy to engage stakeholders and the general public. This section of the initial strategic plan should describe to what extent the public and stakeholders were engaged in the development of the strategic plan and the identification of strategic economic development opportunities and critical issues. How the public will be engaged as the plan moves forward will be described in the implementation agenda.

## **IV. Economic Development Strategy and Components**

*This section is based on work plan Tasks 5 and 6 and addresses the question: "How do we get there?"*

This section of the initial strategic plan presents detailed strategies on how to best use regional assets, capitalize on opportunities, and address critical issues impeding growth. A strategy is an action or group of actions that, when implemented, can help achieve the Council's vision. The successful implementation of a strategic plan rests on whether the plan includes specific, discrete and detailed descriptions of the projects, actions and policy changes required to begin to transform the region's economy.

This section should also include a description of the criteria used to select catalytic priority projects and actions that are described in the strategies.

The Council strategies should be directly tied to achieving the region's economic vision. Councils may develop strategies for a variety of economic components, or may provide a more limited number of strategies targeting the critical issues and opportunities identified in the strategic plan. Examples of economic development components and elements for which detailed strategies may be developed are listed below. The list is illustrative only, as it is not an exhaustive list:

**Business Development** – Strategies to spur business development that may include elements such as:

- Targeted areas for economic development
- Business retention and expansion
- Business or industry cluster development
- Business recruitment
- Foreign investment
- Export assistance
- Minority and Women Business Enterprises development

**Business Climate** – Strategies to ensure economic competitiveness that may include elements such as:

- Taxation and regulatory policies
- Capital Financing
- Government efficiency and restructuring
- Public policies and legislation
- Economic development incentives (statewide or regional)

**Community Vitality and Quality of Life** - Strategies to strengthen urban areas and community centers that may include elements such as:

- Historic, cultural attractions and recreation
- Supporting infrastructure
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Downtowns and community centers for diverse incomes, multiple uses including retail, office, housing, and entertainment

**Workforce Development** – Strategies to enhance work force development such as:

- Targeted education (secondary, post-secondary) programs
- Workforce training

**Infrastructure** – Strategies to provide new or enhance existing infrastructure to support desired economic development that may include elements such as:

- Transportation
- Technology development
- Energy
- Telecommunications
- Environmental improvements
- Housing
- Water and sewer

## V. Regional Implementation Agenda

*This section is based on work plan Task 7 and addresses the question: “How do we get there?”*

It is one thing to get agreement on a strategy, quite another to detail it and maintain the commitment and secure the required resources. This section of the initial strategic plan presents the implementation agenda to be followed to ensure tangible progress over the next five years. An implementation agenda is simply a way to clearly establish what must be done, the date by which it will be done, and who will be responsible for doing the work. It will:

- List the activities that are most important to undertake over the next five years;
- Establish clear priorities for those projects, actions, and recommended policy changes;
- Include a schedule indicating dates or timeframes for advancing projects and other actions;
- Describe public- and private-sector resources needed to undertake those actions;
- Specify who will take each action and the organizational structure and operational arrangements to ensure implementation; and
- Include an implementation matrix to track progress.

The implementation agenda will also describe the public and stakeholder engagement process which will be used to help implement the plan and to receive suggestions on plan updates.

Examples of implementation matrices are included in Section E of the manual.

## VI. Performance Measurement

*This section is also based on work plan Task 7 and addresses the question: “How are we doing?”*

This section of the initial strategic plan presents performance measures and the process for evaluating and updating the strategic plan to respond to progress, challenges, or unanticipated circumstances. Performance measures should be accessible, realistic and structured in a way that will drive decision-making and enhance transparency. They should identify what is to be measured, the method of the measurement, and the data source and time period for the measurement.

Performance measures can evaluate both outcomes and activities. Outcomes are quantifiable results that demonstrate the amount of success in accomplishing the strategies in the plan, such as “400 new jobs which pay \$15 or more per hour” or “6 additional miles of railroad track in regional industrial parks.” Activities may include things like “develop model zoning provisions for the permitting of wind energy devices at businesses employing 25 or more people” or “complete local waterfront revitalization plans underway throughout the region.”

To aid in their evaluation, Councils should develop benchmarks, which are the expected, planned or intended result of a particular activity. Developing benchmarks tends to involve taking a largely external perspective, often comparing performance with that of competitors or other best management practices.

By continually measuring performance the Councils will be in a position to adjust the activities, projects, and policies needed to achieve the strategies.

## E. Strategic Plan Examples

This section of the manual provides examples of the following types of strategic plan elements that are part of the strategic plan outline:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunities
- III. Economic Development Vision  
Critical Issues and Opportunities
- IV. Economic Development Strategy and Components  
Project Evaluation Criteria
- V. Regional Implementation Agenda
- VI. Performance Measurement

Each set of examples has a brief description of the relationship of the element to the work plan; an explanation of why the examples were chosen; the name of the document which was excerpted; and the link to the website where the source document is posted.

The examples used in this manual are a small sampling of the many strategic plans which exist, and stakeholders may have other examples to share. Council members and staff are encouraged to review the many plans available for concepts that may best exemplify the circumstances of their region. Viewing existing plans can be a helpful resource for people who will be developing the regional strategic plans.

The examples presented here are meant to illustrate a variety of approaches communities have taken to present the elements of a strategic plan. Regional Councils may follow an approach which is presented here, or develop its own approach and format. As the strategic plan outline states, “The plan must include the broad sections herein, but others may be added as needed.”



## E. I. Executive Summary Examples

The Strategic Plan Outline requires each initial strategic plan to have an Executive Summary, which is a concise synopsis of the plan. This section contains excerpts from the following documents:

- **An Economic Opportunity Study for the Michigan Upper Peninsula/Wisconsin Border Region (Michigan, 2009)**

Summarizes the economic challenges of the region; lists the strategies in the plan and summarizes the tactics to address those strategies; describes the implementation chapter and divides the initiatives into short range and longer range categories.
- **Bridging the Red River: A Regional Economic Strategy for the Texoma Regional Consortium (Oklahoma and Texas, 2007)**

Briefly describes the region and its economy; describes the collaboration to be used to implement the plan; identifies industry clusters offering the greatest potential for growth opportunities; briefly describes the assets and challenges; states the vision for the region; and identifies specific actions designed to help achieve its vision.

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### An Economic Opportunity Study for the Michigan Upper Peninsula/Wisconsin Border Region (excerpt)

<http://www.northstareconomics.com/UP%20WI%20Border%20Study%20FINAL.pdf>

#### Executive Summary

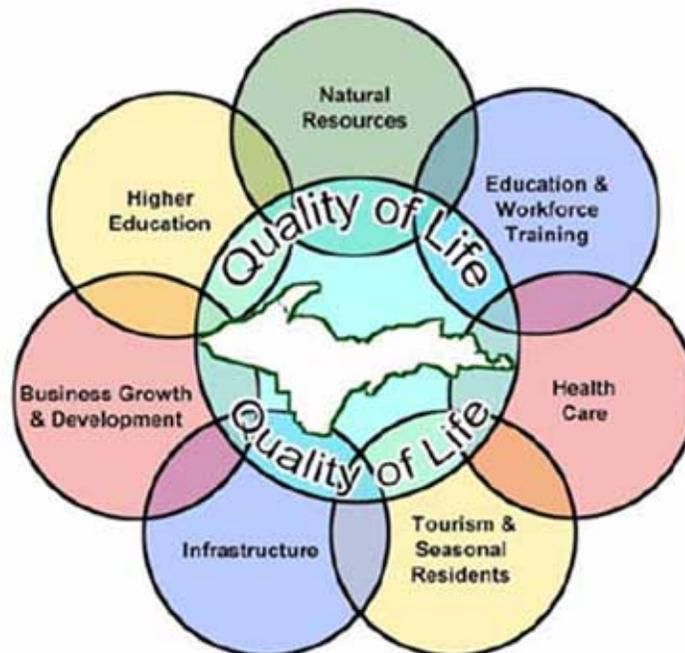
This study is a call to action to accelerate the pace of change and direction of the economy of Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP) and two adjoining Wisconsin counties. This region, the UP/Wisconsin border region, faces long term economic challenges from a rapidly shifting national and global economy.

High levels of unemployment in the region, recent plant closings, layoffs, delays in investment projects, and low levels of business start ups are clear benchmarks of economic distress. In response to the current environment, leaders in the region applied for and received a Regional Innovation Grant from the United States Department of Labor for the development of a 17-county (consisting of the entire UP, plus the adjacent Wisconsin counties of Florence and Marinette) economic impact study with actionable implementation activities critical to regional economic survival. The goal of the study was to formulate strategies for regional economic and workforce development that are specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic with a timeline.

## Strategies

The strategies developed for this plan cut across the entire UP/Wisconsin border region. Each county or sub-region has an interest and a direct economic benefit through the successful implementation of the strategies. Listed below are the key points to the following seven strategies developed for this plan: Higher Education, Education and Workforce, Business Growth & Development, Natural Resources, Tourism & Seasonal Residents, Infrastructure, and Health Care. The graph below incorporates these strategies in an overall economic vision aimed at increasing the economic prosperity of the region.

Figure E-1: Vision for Economic Prosperity in the UP/WI Border Region



### Strategies and Tactics by Category

**Higher Education – Build on the higher education cluster in the region; expand enrollment, research and entrepreneurial activity; raise educational attainment of the regions workforce;**

- Support the region’s educational institutions in building programs and enrollment
- Build on the growing higher education research base to develop additional R&D programs

**Education & Workforce Training - Increase the skill and education of the regional workforce to increase competitiveness;**

- Work to raise the overall educational attainment in the region
- Build on existing programs that increase experiential and entrepreneurial opportunities for K-12 students
- Build on existing regional workforce training programs to train or retrain workers in manufacturing, health care and specific industry clusters such as forest products, digital communications, entrepreneurship and shipbuilding

**Business Growth & Development – Work to grow existing businesses and the number of new businesses; establish a region-wide culture of collaboration and innovation to attract entrepreneurs and existing business investment;**

- Work to increase the growth of existing businesses and new businesses through the use of SmartZones and the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network;
- Establish an international business network and economic development strategy
- Establish a network of incubators and business parks
- Establish a region-wide high-tech business plan competition

**Tourism - Have the region become a major tourism destination and 2nd place of residence;**

- Develop and implement a coordinated tourism campaign for the entire region
- Determine the need for further Great Lakes port development
- Aggressively promote winter sports in the region
- Develop a region-wide recreational trail network
- Explore programs to capture and utilize the talent of seasonal and retired residents

**Infrastructure - Develop a 21st century vision for broadband/cellular service, highways, rail service and air service**

- Expand broadband and cell phone penetration across the region
- Develop a comprehensive highway plan for the region
- Develop a comprehensive rail service plan for the region
- Develop a long-term air service strategy for the region

**Natural Resources - Continue to promote use of the region's natural resources in an environmentally sound, safe, and sustainable manner and focus on proactive strategies that promote value-added economic activity within the region.**

- Establish a Northern Products cluster group
- Establish a biomass / biofuel energy consortium
- Continue to explore wind energy as an alternative energy source
- Build economic growth and job/business creation around a waste transformation cluster
- Develop a business model to support value-added manufacturing

**Health Care - Provide citizens of the region with the highest quality, affordable, convenient health care services available.**

- Explore the establishment of health care cooperatives
- Enhance and expand the use of telemedicine
- Explore how to retain more medical care spending that is lost to other regions
- Increase worker training to support the existing and growing health care industry

## Implementation

Implementing this plan will require vision, leadership, resources, and cooperation. The implementation chapter lists and explains all of the key elements required for a timely and successful implementation of this plan. The consultants recommend that a high priority be given to the issue of the organization that will carry out the implementation of the plan. There is a degree of urgency to getting this issue settled so that the region may speak with one voice as they apply for grants, discuss policy matters with public officials, and plan for economic growth and prosperity for the region.

There are numerous recommendations in the plan and it will be impossible to undertake everything recommended in the plan immediately. Priorities must be established and a limited number of initiatives should be undertaken. Based upon the current economic conditions, the opportunities currently available, ongoing efforts by other economic development organizations, and the potential economic impact, the consultants recommend that the following initiatives be undertaken in the next 1-2 years:

- Higher education focused on growing the research base, higher education enrollments, tech transfer, and spin off opportunities from research and other activities.
- Biofuels / Biomass consortium
- Workforce training in paper and forest products, shipbuilding, digital technology, and entrepreneurship
- New Economy infrastructure – broadband; cell service; region wide communication network

### **New Economy Infrastructure: U.P. Link and WiMax**

Kim Stoker of the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region (WUPPDR) and Carlton Crothers of the Michigan Tech Enterprise Corporation (MTEC) SmartZone have offered an initiative called U.P. Link, a digital telecommunications network spanning the entire region, which would facilitate implementation of the above strategies. In addition, Northern Michigan University is involved in testing a broadband wireless technology called WiMax which may offer a solution to broadband access. These ideas merit serious consideration, and ought to be viewed as top tier priorities in implementing the strategic plan.

### **Longer Range Implementation Goals**

Longer term implementation goals - years 3-4 - should include the following:

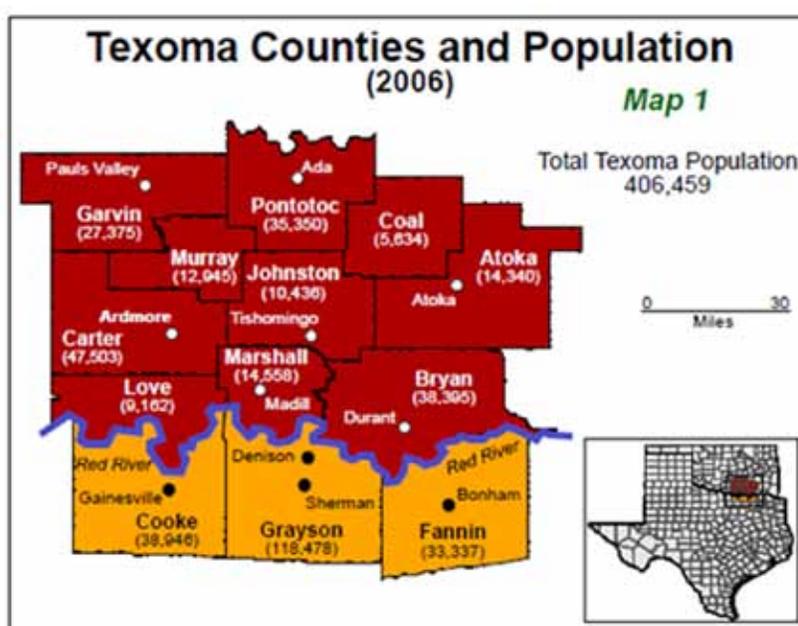
- Tourism and seasonal residents
- Infrastructure – highways and airports
- Forest products cluster
- International economic development with a focus on ship building, mining, and manufacturing.

## Bridging the Red River: A Regional Economic Strategy for the Texoma Regional Consortium (excerpt)

[http://www.workforcesolutionstexoma.com/Texoma\\_Economic\\_Strategy\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www.workforcesolutionstexoma.com/Texoma_Economic_Strategy_Report_Final.pdf)

### Executive Summary

The 13 counties located in south central Oklahoma and northern Texas make up a largely rural and small town area historically reliant on oil and gas, ranching, and manufacturing for jobs and income. The counties (shown in Figure 1) cover an area roughly the size of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. The region is bisected east and west by the Red River and its namesake, Lake Texoma, an 89,000-acre reservoir managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the Chickasaw and Choctaw Tribal Nations contribute significantly to the regional economy, not only through their highly visible tribal casinos and resorts, but also through their investments in a variety of business operations. However, the area's location along two major highway corridors—Interstate 35 and US 75—north of fast-growing Dallas-Fort Worth and south and east of Oklahoma City opens up many possibilities for a completely different future. The critical question is what that future will be and how much the region's leaders can play a role in shaping that future.



Source: US Census Bureau

A plan for the future will require a collaborative response. The Texoma Workforce Development Board and the Southern Oklahoma Workforce Board have joined forces with a number of economic development organizations and educational institutions across the 13-county Texoma region to create the Texoma Regional Consortium (TRC), an informal network of regional leaders designed to engage participating counties in defining a common vision for the region's future prosperity.

The TRC engaged the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW) and the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) to help frame key issues and facilitate the discussions among leaders toward developing a regional economic growth strategy. The resulting strategy will help the area transition from its dependence on traditional manufacturing and resource-based activities to a greater reliance on an emerging knowledge-based economy. As the Texoma region continues its economic transformation, leaders will be faced with a number of key decisions that will affect their citizens, workers, and businesses for the coming decades.

Although peripheral to two rapidly growing urban areas, the region possesses unique characteristics that suggest the need for considering this 13-county Texoma area as an economic area separate from its more populous neighbors to the north and south. The region consists of one metropolitan area and five micropolitan areas that currently constitute three labor sheds. The I-35 Corridor Sub-region includes Ardmore, and the counties that surround it (Carter, Johnston, Marshall, Love, and Cooke Counties). Commuting in this area follows I-35, but Oklahoma's Arbuckle Mountains create a natural geographic and psychological boundary from the counties northward. The US 75 Corridor Sub-region centers on the economic activity along the Sherman-Denison-Durant corridor and includes Grayson, Fannin, Bryan, and Atoka counties. The fast growing northern Dallas suburbs have a particularly strong influence on this sub-region. The South Central Oklahoma Sub-region is very rural with an important urban center in Ada and smaller centers elsewhere in Garvin, Murray, Pontotoc, and Coal counties. Leaders in this sub-region have already begun efforts to support regionalism by creating the South Central Oklahoma Regional Enterprise (SCORE) initiative, supported by Garvin, Murray and Pontotoc counties. However, over time, economic forces will most likely encourage the South Central Oklahoma Sub-region to align more closely with the counties in the I-35 Corridor Sub-region.

Overall, the Texoma regional economy has grown somewhat slower than the US economy. According to US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) employment estimates and projections provided by a University of Georgia-developed econometric forecast model, Texoma employment grew by 0.3 percent annually while the US employment grew 1.5 percent annually between 2001 and 2006. The structure of the region's economy explains much of this slower growth. Several resource extraction activities – agriculture (ranching and animal husbandry) and mining (oil and gas) – are critical sources of employment. These industries tend to be highly cyclical in their growth patterns. Furthermore, the region has lower than expected employment in fast growing sectors such as professional and business services, financial activities, and real estate. The region's largest occupational concentrations include ranchers/farmers and related occupations, representing about 7 percent of area employment and a much larger share than most other regions. Based on current projections, the area's fastest growing occupations will likely include low-skill, low-wage occupations such as retail salespersons, cashiers, wait staff, and farmhand positions. The mix of new jobs results, in part, due to national patterns of employment growth in these occupations as well as to the region's current economic structure, especially the region's large concentration of ranching, low, and moderate-wage manufacturing.

In examining the existing and projected future economic opportunities, the consultants identified several industry clusters as offering the greatest potential growth opportunities for the region. Several of these clusters typically provide high wage, high skill jobs that could enhance the Texoma region's standard of living. These clusters include:

- Finance and insurance
- Motor vehicles
- Aviation
- Plastics products
- Packaged food products
- Warehousing and distribution
- Computer and electronic equipment
- Basic health services
- Hotels and passenger transportation services
- Ranching and equine
- Petroleum and gas

To prepare the region to support these targeted clusters, the TRC identified its core assets and acknowledged its key challenges in: (1) enhancing its knowledge capacity; (2) fostering innovation; (3) creating a global image and competitive location; (4) offering appealing amenities; (5) engaging community and civic support; (6) providing connectivity; and (7) supporting regional collaboration. Texoma already has a number of key assets that support its future economic growth prospects, including strong educational institutions, economically relevant research activities at the Noble Foundation and GWERD, large metro-market access, consequential outdoor amenities, a small town character, a relatively strong existing road network, and the benefit of an emerging regional consortium. Unfortunately, the regional leaders recognize that they have many challenges to overcome in (a) ensuring that Texoma has the right kind of talent available for knowledge-driven industry clusters, (b) increasing the utilization of its research resources, (c) improving its limited local urban amenities, (d) addressing its inadequate broadband and inter-regional transportation network, and (e) addressing traditional parochialism in the outlook of the region.

To address these challenges and develop a new economic vision, leaders would like to make Texoma an economically diverse and entrepreneurial region that supports innovation and appeals to families with...

- A distinct regional identity
- Vibrant downtowns
- More highly educated citizens
- Growing companies in emerging industries
- Supportive, connected environment
- More collaborative governance

This vision is designed to provide a positive statement about where Texoma would like to go. It is designed not only to provide a framework for the priorities of the TRC action plan, but also to serve as a guide that assists other regional stakeholders in their strategic and operational planning.

The Texoma Regional Consortium identified nine specific actions designed to help the region achieve its vision in the coming months and years.

1. Develop industry-driven “just-in-time” career and technical education for the region’s targeted clusters
2. Develop an integrated entrepreneurial development initiative
3. Develop a “business” recruitment plan tied to DFW and OKC as key regional assets
4. Develop a coordinated regional “people” attraction plan for the Texoma Region
5. Develop and deliver affordable workforce housing
6. Assess and address workforce transportation needs
7. Develop “cross-border” Texoma multi-modal transportation for freight and passengers
8. Increase the region’s broadband capacity
9. Implement a sustainability plan that engages the region’s leaders and citizens in the plan’s success

Undertaking these nine actions requires the Texoma Regional Consortium to develop detailed implementation and monitoring plans. Many implementation activities will likely be accomplished most effectively through sub-regional collaboration because leaders in various parts of the 13-county area have different priorities. Each TRC action plan would have a working task force dedicated to designing and implementing relevant activities. In some cases, the task force may choose to form sub-regional committees to help the TRC achieve goals. The TRC will continue to manage the actions, encourage regional collaboration, and provide on-going support to the task forces. In this way, the TRC, with the participation of additional stakeholders, will monitor overall regional and sub-regional activities to ensure that the economic vision of its leaders is achieved and the region becomes a true “hometown hotspot” for its citizens.

## E. II. Regional Assessment of Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunities Examples

Work Plan Task 3 requires the Councils to develop a baseline description of existing economic conditions.

This section contains excerpts from the following documents:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Region (Oregon, 2005)

Gives a brief description of the region's economy and trends; describes the unique strengths of the region that they wish to protect and build on; and identifies the factors that do little to differentiate the region from other metropolitan areas and that may even discourage relocation.

- Central Florida Regional Planning Council Economic Development District VII, 2007 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Florida, 2007)

Describes the region by presenting strategic findings in nine subject areas, ranging from population trends to infrastructure. For each area, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are summed up in brief statements.

### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Region (excerpt)

<http://www.portlandregionalpartners.com/client/pdfs/CEDS%20Final%20Report.pdf>

#### What Is The Current And Likely Future Economic Context For That Strategy?

The Portland-Vancouver region's economy is robust and changing. Over the last 25 years, the aggregate size of the metropolitan economy almost doubled. In the late 1970s, the region had fewer than 500,000 workers; by 2005, it had nearly a million workers. From the early 1980s through 2000, the region enjoyed 17 years of uninterrupted employment growth. The national recession that struck the nation in 2001 hit metropolitan Portland harder than many other US metropolitan areas; after three successive years of employment declines in 2001, 2002, and 2003, employment growth has resumed in the Portland metropolitan area.

The Portland-Vancouver region is the 25th largest metropolitan economy in the United States with a gross metropolitan product of approximately \$75 billion annually. The metropolitan region's industrial structure is characterized by the presence of a number of traded sector industry clusters, particularly in durable goods manufacturing. The region's largest traded sector industry cluster is high technology and electronics manufacturing followed by metals machinery and transportation equipment manufacturing the products for processing sporting goods/ apparel, creative and professional services and other industry clusters.

Growth in high technology industry cluster, particularly in semiconductors during the 1990s, contributed to the region's export, income, and employment growth.

## **STRENGTHS**

Many factors affect the productivity of businesses and the efficiency of economic activity in the metropolitan area. The following factors differentiate Portland-Vancouver from other regions in the country, making the region an exceptional place to live and work. The action plan in this document seeks to protect and build upon these strengths.

- The region is known for its quality of place and livability. The region is rated particularly high in environmental quality, health insurance coverage, recreation, and leisure opportunities.
- The Portland-Vancouver region's existing businesses are highly innovative.
- The Tax Foundation ranks both Oregon and Washington among the top 10 states for business climate.
- Over the past decade, the region has been particularly successful in attracting well-educated young adults to move to the region from elsewhere in the United States.
- Portland-Vancouver region has an extensive transportation, communications, and public utilities infrastructure system. While the region is relatively distant from most other US metropolitan areas it is adequately served by air, rail, highway, and international shipping connections.
- The region's workforce is highly educated.
- The region's per capita income is higher than the US average, but by a smaller margin than during most of the last decade.

## **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

While some factors make the region an attractive location for new businesses or residents, the following do little to differentiate Portland-Vancouver from other metropolitan areas and may even discourage relocation.

- The local system of K-12 education is roughly average. Higher education enrollment as a fraction of the young adult population is smaller than in most U.S. metropolitan areas.
- Portland and Multnomah County have higher personal and business income taxes than the rest of the region and many other metropolitan areas.
- The region ranks above average on a per capita basis in venture capital funding, although venture capital funding has declined since its peak in 2000.

The region's cost of business is roughly similar to other US metropolitan areas; a comparison of 33 metropolitan areas with 1 to 4 million population, showed metropolitan Portland ranked 13th lowest in typical business costs.

## Central Florida Regional Planning Council Economic Development District VII 2007 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (excerpt)

<http://www.cfrpc.org/CEDS%20CFRPC%20DISTRICT%20VII%20%2027%20SEP%202007.pdf>

### A. Population Trends

Strategic Findings: The region is growing and is expected to continue to grow. The large percentage of minority population is a result of migration to agricultural type activities in the region.

- Strengths: The region has a sufficient age appropriate workforce
- Weaknesses: Parts of the region have a higher than average number of age 65+ population
- Opportunities: An increasing population will provide a larger workforce
- Threats: An increasing older population may impact the available workforce.

### B. Economy

Strategic Findings: The trends in population indicate increasing numbers of non-English speaking minorities. The population continues to age, and new retiree only developments are planned within the region.

- Strengths: Retiring baby boomers may be willing to work part time bringing their experience and expertise to the region.
- Weaknesses: Long term trend could produce a labor force shortage. English speaking workers are needed in service positions and in white collar positions.
- Opportunities: With more diversity and international economy potential, a bi-lingual work force may be a great asset.
- Threats: Without an adequate work force, there will be stagnation in economic development.

### C. Industry Overview

Strategic Findings: Agricultural employment is decreasing and is highly subject to environmental changes. Mining employment is highly variable, depending on the world economy. Construction is highly cyclical.

- Strengths: The Central Florida region has a unique set of natural resources making agriculture and mining profitable.
- Weaknesses: Unstable work force demand adds to seasonal and periodic unemployment increases and chronic low wages.
- Opportunities: As the region transitions to more non-agricultural employment, higher wage and more stable employment may replace it.
- Threats: Continued erosion of the traditional agri-business base of the region's economy.

## **D. Workforce and Workforce Development**

Strategic Findings: The regional work force has steadily grown while the unemployment rate has remained low.

- Strengths: A low unemployment rate supports a stable economy.
- Weaknesses: A low unemployment rate can discourage new businesses.
- Opportunities: Work force expansion can continue as the population continues to grow.
- Threats: Without work force expansion, the region may face a stagnant economy.

Strategic Findings: The wages in the Region continue to lag behind the State and national averages. This results in a high poverty rate throughout the region.

- Strengths: None identified
- Weaknesses: Low wages are responsible for poverty levels in the region which exceed those of the State.
- Opportunities: Low wages are attractive to potential employers and contribute to low unemployment rates.
- Threats: The region's quality of life continues to suffer from the affects of low wages.

## **E. Education**

Strategic Findings: The Region has much lower rates of high school graduation and college degrees than Florida or the nation.

- Strengths: Numbers of adults with high school diplomas and Bachelor's Degrees has shown modest progress.
- Weaknesses: Lower educational attainment discourages higher wage employers.
- Opportunities: None identified.
- Threats: The poverty cycle will continue if educational attainment levels do not increase.

## **F. Geography, Natural Resources, Climate**

Strategic Findings: The region has large amounts of developable land, and is home to unique eco-systems. The Region has a highly attractive year-round climate.

- Strengths: The large supply of available land centrally located in the region provides suitable sites for industrial and business development at competitive costs to other locations in the State.
- Weaknesses: Lack of utility and transportation infrastructure limits the ability of the counties in the rural portion of the region from competing with other locations for business recruitment.
- Opportunities: Large tracks of developable land and attraction for ecotourism. Slower development of land permits local governments to appropriately plan for land use, utility and transportation investments to meet future growth and economic recruitment.

- Threats: Environmental, regulatory and local revenue policy, whether internal or externally imposed, may inhibit the natural evolution of growth, development, and infrastructure development necessary to support future growth. Too much development may negatively impact the natural resources of the region.

## G. Housing

Strategic Findings: The region had a steady increase in housing units from 2000-2005, with some being replacement units in 2005 for those destroyed in the 2004 hurricanes within the region. The region far exceeds the national rate of increase and is slightly lower than the state. The regional rate of homeownership exceeds the State and National rates.

- Strengths: Homeownership rates are above 70% in the region.
- Weaknesses: There is still a deficit in affordable housing due to poverty rates.
- Opportunities: With an abundance of developable land and low mortgage rates there are opportunities for housing construction.
- Threats: The escalation of land prices and construction costs may erode future homeownership.

## H. Transportation

Strategic Findings: With the exception of the northern Polk County interstate highway facilities, other major multi-lane highways have sections which remain two lanes. There is limited freight rail service throughout the region. These serve as a significant impediment to expanding the movement of goods and people throughout the region.

- Strengths: The existing roadway network provides a basic means for moving goods and people throughout the region and the state.
- Weaknesses: Lack of adequate transportation network (i.e., multi-laned state and federal network; limited access state/federal system, rail and other multimodal systems) can decrease attractiveness of sites within the region for some manufacturing and distribution activities, as well as regional office locations.
- Opportunities: Future high-speed transportation corridors logically aligned within the region to connect existing metropolitan areas in the southwest coastal region of the state to the I-4 corridor and connecting new port opportunities between the west and east coasts of the state.
- Threats: Increasing congestion on U.S. routes with only two lanes may stifle economic growth and hamper hurricane evacuation. Lack of adequate funding and local community support (or NIMBY).

## I. Infrastructure

Strategic Findings: The region has very basic infrastructure and would need to upgrade in order to support certain economic development activities.

- Strengths: Traditional technological infrastructure has not been widely developed; therefore, there is no bias to maintain older systems in favor of new and emerging technologies.
- Weaknesses: Underdeveloped and unfunded utility systems are throughout the region.
- Opportunities: Expected growth as well as emerging technologies may provide sufficient incentive to expand technological investments in the region.
- Threats: Emerging technologies may be delayed, resulting in a status-quo environment for growth of infrastructure and services.

## E. III. Economic Development Vision Examples

Work Plan Task 4 requires the Councils to develop a regional economic development vision statement. The vision statement should be forward-looking and provide guidance and direction for the actions that will be taken to make improvements. Work Plan Task 3 requires the Councils to identify critical issues and opportunities that require detailed exploration.

Excerpts related to a vision statement are included from the following documents:

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southwest Michigan (Michigan, 2009)**

Provides a vision statement that addresses five inter-related categories.

- **Valley/Adams County Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan (Idaho, 2007)**

Provides context for the vision statement

- **Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint – Summary Report (British Columbia, Canada, 2004)**

An innovative way of presenting the vision for the region.

An excerpt related to the identification of critical issues and opportunities is included from the following document:

- **York County Economic Development Plan (Pennsylvania, 2008)**

Clearly states the issues, identifies the trends related to the issues, and states the need to be acted upon.

### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southwest Michigan (excerpt)

[http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/2009\\_swmiceds\\_2010\\_0630\\_reprint.pdf](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/2009_swmiceds_2010_0630_reprint.pdf)

Through an in-depth analysis of the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ... the 2009 CEDS committee was able to place regional goals and objectives into five interrelated categories ... Each category has a unique vision; when combined, these visions form a three year economic development vision for the region that recognizes the following statement.

*A holistic approach to regional economic development includes addressing the natural and built environments; social, physical and cultural health; education and workforce development; and collaboration within southwest Michigan as integral facets affecting the overall health of the regional economy.*

*Valley/Adams County Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan (excerpt)*

<http://irp.idaho.gov/Documents%20and%20Settings/14/Site%20Documents/Site%20Media/Community%20Review/Valley%20Adams%20Update.pdf>

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## Valley/Adams County Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan (excerpt)

<http://irp.idaho.gov/Documents%20and%20Settings/14/Site%20Documents/Site%20Media/Community%20Review/Valley%20Adams%20Update.pdf>

*The region encourages orderly, well managed growth that blends the old with the new, and the rural with small community development.*

*The region's diversified economy attracts manufacturing, service, recreation tourism and retail establishments that are successful.*

*The Region supports a range of housing types, prices and neighborhoods.*

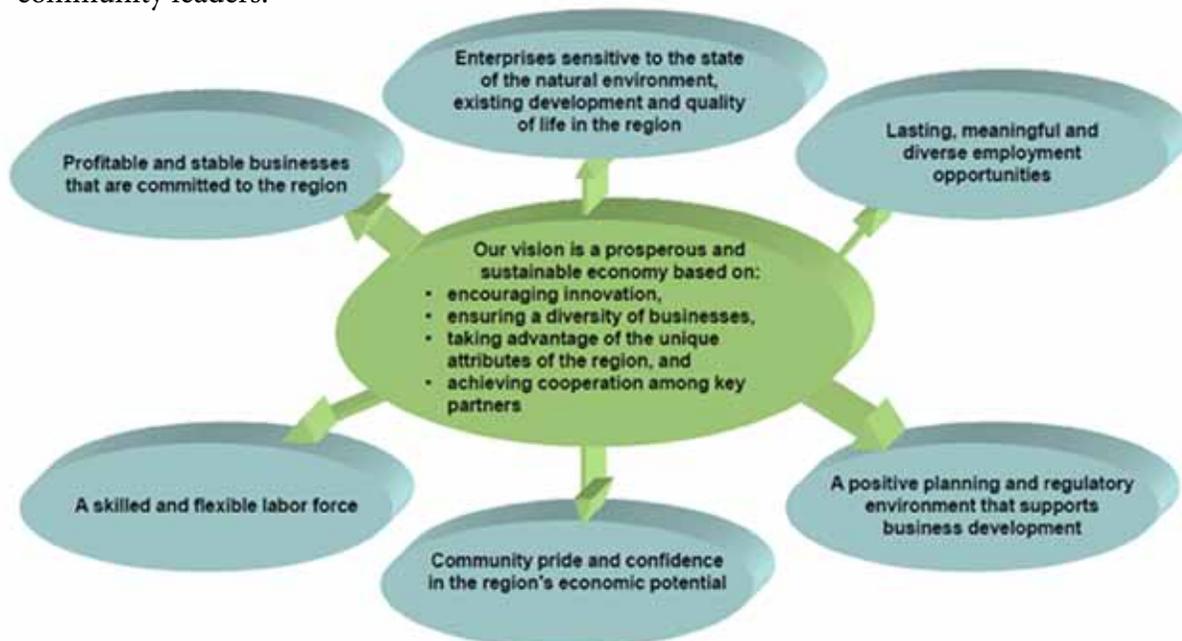
*The Region serves as a model for its partnerships of local, state, federal and private individuals and organizations to address growth issues on a regional basis.*

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## Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint – Summary Report (excerpt)

[http://www.crd.bc.ca/reports/regionalplanning\\_/generalreports\\_/economicdevelopment\\_/greatervictoriaecono/greatervictoriaecono.pdf](http://www.crd.bc.ca/reports/regionalplanning_/generalreports_/economicdevelopment_/greatervictoriaecono/greatervictoriaecono.pdf)

A vision statement describes a desired future state – in the case of this Blueprint or strategy, the state and characteristics of the future economy. A solid and shared vision creates commitment and understanding. A well-formulated strategy also identifies specific goals (i.e., intended results or outcomes of economic development) associated with achieving the vision. The following figure presents a vision for the region that was developed based on a review of past economic development strategies and the RGS, a review of municipal Official Community Plans, interview and steering committee input, and feedback received during a workshop with civic, business and community leaders.



## Excerpt Related to Critical Issues and Opportunities

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### York County Economic Development Plan (excerpt)

<http://www.ycedc.org/index.cfm?pg=york-economic-development-plan>

#### Critical Issues Assessment

##### 6.1 Overview

York County offers many assets that position it for economic growth. At the same time, the County faces a number of issues it must contend with in order to attract the types of growth envisioned. Potential methods for addressing these issues and needs are provided in subsequent sections of the Plan.

##### 6.2 Workforce Development

York County faces three broad workforce development issues: 1) aging of the population; 2) need for a diverse and educated workforce; and 3) need to enhance and market quality of life to attract and retain a skilled workforce.

**Issue 1: The population is aging, and young people are leaving, creating a need to recruit younger workers to replace retiring employees.**

*York County's residents in prime working years are dwindling as more of the population enters retirement age.*

Young workers, which will be of critical need to employers as many members of the existing workforce reach retirement age over the next ten years, are decreasing in number. The proportion of workers of prime working age (e.g. 20 to 54), could fall from 48 percent to 45 percent in 2018. At the same time, the population of retirees and seniors is expected to increase, from roughly 27 percent to 32 percent.

Exhibit 6-1: Current Estimated and Potential Future Population by Age York County, 2008-2018 [Table omitted]

These trends indicate that the County is losing its young workers, which will be needed to work in the innovative and creative fields of science and technology that are emerging across the nation and in York County. The loss of educated young workers could reduce York County's competitiveness to attract knowledge-oriented firms and industries.

*There is a need to attract and retain young workers.*

This issue presents a need to further cultivate a high quality of life in York County, and to broaden the supply of amenities. Efforts to revitalize downtowns, instill agritourism and other agricultural diversions, to attract lively retail and restaurant offerings, and to provide high-quality mixed-use living and working environments will go far to strengthen York County's pull to these young workers.

**Issue 2: York’s potential to attract a diversified set of industries depends on the cultivation of a well-trained, high-quality and diverse workforce.**

*Industries with high growth potential all require scientific and technical skills.*

Analysis of target industries in York County suggests that scientific and technology-oriented fields, including renewable energy, bio-medical, and health care, will have strong opportunities for expansion over the next ten years (and are more resilient to recession than other industries). Further, defense contracting opportunities that arise as a result of BRAC at Aberdeen Proving Ground will likely require firms in scientific and technology fields. The growth of these industries presents an enhanced need for young workers with strong science and math skills – which indicates that York County will have to focus on improving the aptitude of high school students in these critical fields.

*There is a need to focus on expanding trades and science and technology training.*

Altogether, the opportunities of these high-growth industries and those related to BRAC present a need for enhanced attention on expanding trades and technology training to be oriented to these fields. Such training would include skills training to fill gaps in manufacturing, which comprises much of York County’s existing employment base. In particular, there is a need to increase the labor force’s readiness for positions that are not on the production lines (e.g. engineers, tool-makers) and that should be in increasing demand over the next ten years. There is also a major need to expand the pool of nurses in order to attract and expand the health care industry.

**Issue 3: Recruitment of a highly-skilled and creative workforce will require an enhanced image and appeal throughout York County.**

*Highly educated and creative workers choose regions with high quality of life.*

Households that move to York County as a result of BRAC come from a highly-cultured environment in the New York/New Jersey region, and seek areas with cultural offerings and shopping and dining choices. In addition to these residents, creative workers as a whole seek vibrant downtowns, scenic and recreational areas, and areas with unique character.

*There is a need to highlight and enhance York County’s amenities.*

York County offers many desirable qualities, including charming historic towns and scenic agricultural and recreational areas, which function as amenity infrastructure that should be promoted and preserved. The revitalization of the County’s historic downtowns and small towns, including attraction and expansion of unique shops and restaurants, will help to attract a skilled workforce, as will expansion of recreational attractions and agritourism (including wineries, bed and breakfasts, and farmers markets).

### **6.3 Availability and Suitability of Sites**

With respect to land for office, retail and industrial expansion, York County has adequate room to grow, but still faces several challenges related to growth management. These issues include: 1) balancing residential growth with office, retail and industrial growth; 2) focusing growth into downtowns, underused building and sites, and corridors rather than greenfield sites; and 3) targeting growth to areas served by infrastructure.

**Issue 1: York County has experienced growth contrary to population declines in other parts of Pennsylvania, but residential development has dominated recent growth out of balance with office, retail and industrial development.**

*Residential development has outpaced office, retail and industrial development in recent years.*

With its affordability and access to the broader mega-region that spans Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC, York County has been a strong choice for new residents and residential development over the past several years. Such recent demand, coupled with relatively less rapid office, retail and industrial development, has led to an imbalance between residential and office, retail and industrial development. Some municipalities have experienced more rapid residential growth than others, and some have experienced relatively higher levels of residential growth than office, retail and industrial, leading to growth disparities across municipalities.

Residential development without a mix of office, retail and industrial development to offset the tax burden created from residential growth can put pressure on municipalities' fiscal health, which can strain local school systems and health care facilities. At the same time, new residents can also expand the labor pool and add disposable income to an area, thereby making the area more attractive for employers and retail and service establishments. [Exhibits omitted]

*There is a need to manage growth and to consider innovative growth management techniques to address imbalances.*

The mismatch between residential and office, retail and industrial growth presents a need to enhance office, retail and industrial growth and to manage residential development to achieve a stronger balance between households and jobs. Planning experts recommend a jobs-to-housing balance of 1.3-1.7:1 (for every household, it is recommended that a community offer 1.3 to 1.7 jobs) for healthy and sustainable communities.

Regionalization of government presents one avenue through which to address the impacts of imbalanced growth across municipalities; such regionalization would afford municipalities the opportunity to share revenues or develop joint municipal land use plans to better manage growth.

**Issue 2: New growth is occurring in more rural areas, though urban and downtown revitalization and adaptive reuse is desired, as well as corridor development.**

*Greenfield sites are being developed despite strong interest in agricultural preservation, and in revitalizing existing downtowns and focusing growth in existing industrial parks and along main transportation corridors.*

Non-agricultural development in agricultural areas has accelerated over the past few decades. In 1940, York County offered 468,058 acres of farmland (approximately 80 percent of all land in the County); by 1992, that number had dropped to 252,052 (approximately 43 percent of all land in the County). In response to these changes, a number of agricultural preservation initiatives were put into place, including an agricultural conservation easement program and agricultural zoning.

There will be a need to continue to preserve agriculture and steer growth away from rural areas over the next decade, as growth will likely continue fueled by industry expansion and BRAC. Over the next ten years, there should be strong opportunities to expand office, retail and

industrial establishments in York County. Growth prospects are high for many of the County's targeted industry clusters, and the renewable energy, bio-medical, and health care fields in particular should be resilient to the current economic downturn. Firms in these fields may also be positioned to take part in contracting opportunities with Aberdeen Proving Ground. As a result of BRAC, the incoming units will include:

- Team C4ISR: command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance
- Chemical/biological research and development organizations
- US army test and evaluation command
- Army research institute
- US Army research laboratory

*There is a need to focus office, retail and industrial growth to areas targeted for reuse and to steer such growth away from rural areas.*

Overall, the growth of new establishments – whether related to BRAC or not – will offer opportunities to focus office, retail and industrial development into targeted redevelopment areas, into buildings targeted for adaptive reuse, into downtowns, into brownfield sites, into existing industrial parks, and along major transportation corridors.

**Issue 3: Growth should occur where infrastructure can support new development.**

*Infrastructure – including transportation and utilities – is an important criterion for most new and expanding businesses in selecting sites for expansion.*

For many established manufacturers, the availability, reliability and cost (in terms of price and time travel) of local utility and transportation infrastructure is a major criterion in site selection decisions. In York County, stakeholders and community members have expressed a strong desire for new office, retail and industrial development to be focused first where infrastructure is readily available and has capacity to service new growth. They have indicated that while transportation corridors in the County are attractive for growth, the impacts of growth on capacity and levels of service are of concern.

*There is a need to ensure that areas targeted for future growth offer sufficient capacity from an infrastructure standpoint.*

The desire for growth to occur in areas already served by infrastructure presents a need to broadly assess the capacity of the existing transportation network and local utilities to take on new customers.

As part of the market and land assessment conducted to inform the York County Economic Development Plan, an assessment was conducted of sites' access to transportation facilities (i.e. access to an uncongested major arterial highway, defined as those with a volume/capacity ratio of less than 1 in the County's Transportation Plan) and general availability of water and sewer service (i.e. no systemic constraints as identified through the subjective assistance of water and sewer providers). The assessment concluded that the County appears to have adequate infrastruc-

ture capacity to support the level of economic growth (i.e. office, retail and industrial) projected to occur over the next ten years. However, if the market demand for space in the County exceeds the projections in the plan and such sites are developed more rapidly than projected, the need to reassess infrastructure capacity for other sites could emerge. The development of such sites should therefore be tracked and monitored over time in order to anticipate potential need to re-evaluate infrastructure over time.

...

### 6.5 Summary

While York County offers many strengths that position it for economic growth, there are critical issues in the workforce, land/sites, and economic development arenas that require strategic action to enhance York County’s competitiveness. These strengths, issues, and preliminary opportunities to address issues are summarized in Exhibit 6-6.

Exhibit 6-6: York County Market and Land Assessment Summary		
Strengths	Issues	Needs
1. Growing labor force and disposable income	1. An aging population, coupled with flight of younger workers is creating a shortage of workers in prime working years	1. Attract and retain younger workers
2. BRAC could expand the local labor force and add to local disposable income	2. The attraction of a diversified set of industries will require a highly educated, well-trained and diverse workforce	2. Focus on expanding trades and science and technology training
3. Labor costs are lower than in Maryland and some Pennsylvania communities, offering a cost advantage for employers	3. York County has strong quality of life attributes, but these offerings will need to be expanded and marketed to attract highly educated and creative workers to live in the County	3. Highlight and enhance York County’s amenities
4. Improving educational attainment levels	4. Residential development in recent years has occurred disproportionate to office, retail and industrial development, and continuation of such trends could lead to a shortage of office, retail and industrial space if sites are rezoned for residential	4. Manage residential and office, retail and industrial growth, and consider innovative growth management techniques to address imbalances across municipalities
5. Strong local work ethic	5. New growth is occurring in rural areas despite interest in agricultural preservation and focusing of growth to downtowns, industrial parks, and major transportation corridors	5. Focus office, retail and industrial growth to areas targeted for reuse and infill, particularly downtowns, brownfield sites, existing industrial parks, and major transportation corridors
6. Existing base of workers with core manufacturing skills	6. Growth should occur where infrastructure supports development	6. Focus growth in areas offering sufficient capacity from an infrastructure standpoint before extending service to new areas
7. Attractive and affordable array of housing choices	7. York County lacks a long-term regional vision for economic development	7. Develop a regional vision for economic development to address the County’s unique areas and industry prospects
8. Adequate land supply for expansion over next ten years	8. Numerous organizations and municipalities are involved in economic development, presenting a communication and coordination challenge	8. Provide coordination and championing for economic development efforts that incorporate growth management from the County level
9. At least some suitable development sites in most school districts	9. The timeliness and responsiveness of local governments has an important impact on economic development	9. Identify techniques for more efficient governmental approvals processes as a template for adoption by municipalities
10. Strong interest on some municipalities’ part in economic development, and much interest in adaptive reuse and smart growth		
11. Strong existing business attraction, retention and expansion program		
12. County planners and economic developers are involved in regional Chesapeake Science & Security Corridor Consortium		
13. County economic developers are already in touch with local municipalities to educate them about economic development		

## E. IV. Economic Development Strategy and Components Examples

Work Plan Task 5 requires that Regional Councils assemble detailed strategies to capitalize on the principal regional economic drivers and other opportunities, and to address critical issues that have impeded appropriate economic growth. It also requires Regional Councils to develop criteria to identify and prioritize transformative projects that achieve the region's vision, and address the needs and issues most critical for enhancing the region's competitiveness. Task 9 requires Councils to identify which of the priority projects and actions require funding.

Excerpts related to strategies are included from the following documents. You can read about the other strategies these communities have employed by going to the links provided.

- **Long-Term Strategic Economic and Community Development Plan, Southern Windsor Region (Vermont 2003)**

Presents a brief strategy statement; describes the need for the strategy; indicates partners to implement the strategy; and lists specific tasks and timeframes.

- **NorthernNVision: Regional Economic Development Strategy (Nevada, 2006)**

Succinctly states the strategy; presents a case for the strategy; describes what they want to accomplish with the strategy; and identifies action items and who will implement the actions.

Excerpts related to project selection criteria are included from the following documents:

- **Camden Strategic Revitalization Plan (New Jersey, 2003)**

Provides a three-step project selection process, screening first on the relevance of the project, second on the readiness of the project, and third on four criteria (financial, economic impacts, neighborhood impacts, and leverage)

- **U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (North Mariana Islands, 2009)**

Detailed scoring criteria for eight areas of measure. Clearly establishes the basis for scoring a measure 5 points versus 4, 3, 2 or 1 point.

## Excerpts Related to Strategies

### Long-Term Strategic Economic and Community Development Plan Southern Windsor Region (excerpt)

<http://www.springfielddevelopment.org/uploads/swcrep/FinalPlan.pdf>

#### Strategy #8: Develop Incubators in Strategic Industry Sectors:

Coordinate the development of business incubation (or incubators) in the region to encourage entrepreneurial activity and new business development in cooperation with strategic partners. These incubators would focus on key regional industries.

Most existing businesses in the region started and grew here. Business incubators enhance the likelihood of success for entrepreneurs. Incubators generate new jobs and income to a region or community as noted in the statistics generated by the National Business Incubators Association (NBIA) cited below:

- For every \$1 of estimated annual public operating subsidy provided the incubator, clients and graduates of NBIA member incubators generate approximately \$45 in local tax revenue alone.
- NBIA members report that 84 percent of incubator graduates stay in their communities and continue to provide a return to their investors.
- Publicly-supported incubators create jobs at a cost of about \$1,100 each, whereas other publicly supported job creation mechanisms often cost more than \$10,000 per job created.
- NBIA estimates that North American incubator clients and graduates have created approximately half a million jobs since 1980. That is enough jobs to employ almost every person living in Vermont.
- Every 50 jobs created by an incubator client generate another 25 jobs in the community

It is expected that this strategy will involve utilizing existing models for business incubation to support current incubator initiatives. Under this strategy, it will be necessary to forge strategic partnerships with the Small Business Development Center, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center, U.S.D.A. Rural Development, the Economic Development Administration, the Sustainable Valley Group, the Vermont State Colleges and others to support the current incubator initiatives. It is expected initiatives under this strategy will use these models to develop additional incubators.

#### Tasks:

1. Develop a Concept-Feasibility Team to support the food incubator feasibility study being developed by SRDC (Within 60 days).
2. Develop a Concept-Feasibility Team to support the SVG on the renewable energy incubator and “idea farm” (Within 60 days)

3. Each team will conduct research utilizing information from the National Business Incubator Association (NBIA) for incubator models which will be successful for applications that are the “best fit” for the South Windsor region (Within 60 days).
  4. Conduct and complete feasibility study on the food incubator (Within 365 days).
  5. Complete five-year concept and operating plan—including possible locations, funding sources, services to be provided, staffing, and financial resources needed (Within 180 days).
  6. Hold public hearing to build support for each incubator concept project (Within 210 days).
  7. Meet with State and Local officials for short-term funding needs (Within 240 days)
  8. Apply for public and grant funds (Within 270 days).
  9. Secure “first five years” sustainable funding and hire an Executive Director-Executive Vice President for each incubator to be pursued (at 540 days—or 1½ years from start).
  10. Develop a method of measuring outcomes (Within 365 days).
- 

### **NorthernNVision: Regional Economic Development Strategy (excerpt)**

[http://www.nnda.org/Admin/Uploads/Final\\_Strategic\\_Recommendations\\_Report\\_3.pdf](http://www.nnda.org/Admin/Uploads/Final_Strategic_Recommendations_Report_3.pdf)

#### **Business Climate Strategy One:**

##### **Develop a strong support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses.**

A critical aspect of building sustainable economic competitiveness is building a strong support network that will encourage entrepreneurs to create new businesses and help small businesses thrive. The stimulation of entrepreneurship through the formation and development of new commercial businesses and social enterprises can play a key role in employing underutilized resources in the region.

Entrepreneurs are the economic engines of a community, as are small businesses in general. They are employers, people who mobilize economic resources and stimulate further economic activity because of their efforts, and serve as stabilizing factors in a community.

They provide several major benefits:

- They create jobs at relatively low capital cost, especially in the fast growing service sector.
- They serve as a source of innovation in products, services, and techniques.
- They provide a productive outlet for the energies of enterprising and energetic people.
- They develop a pool of skilled workers who serve as the basis of industrial expansion.

- They contribute to the increased participation of all communities in the economic activities of a region.
- They serve an important social function by creating new career opportunities and fast upward social mobility.

Currently, there is no formal support network in the seven counties to bring entrepreneurs and small business owners together, support them, and allow them to communicate with each other. Northern Nevada needs to rediscover its entrepreneurial roots and encourage and reward risk-taking that is crucial to start up efforts.

Establishing a formal entrepreneurship association will provide a valuable avenue for entrepreneurial-minded individuals to congregate and share ideas and to inform the public sector on how to assist small and start-up companies. It will also serve as an important signal to outside individuals that entrepreneurship is valued and supported, which could act as a draw to attract more small business owners to the area.

The goal for Northern Nevada should be to create a “focus” on the importance of entrepreneurs for the region’s economic future and to leverage the region’s current related knowledge base and create a “story” to influence the recruitment of new entrepreneurs.

While Northern Nevada is engaged in some efforts toward this goal, there is room for improvement. It is critical that leaders in each county focus on this important economic development activity.

#### **Action Items:**

1. The Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology (CET), in partnership with NNDA and the Churchill, Pershing, and Mineral County EDA’s, and private sector leaders should establish an Entrepreneurs Association (EA) to support and build entrepreneurial activity in Northern Nevada.
2. Invite the region’s top five to ten entrepreneurs to initially start the association and task them with attracting others to join.
  - Aim at gathering membership representation from each of the seven counties (identifying top entrepreneurs from each county to serve as champions in their home counties could improve results)
  - Ensure that the EA is linked closely to the entrepreneurship efforts underway in Reno-Sparks

3. Key initiatives for the Entrepreneurial Association to undertake:

- The EA should first be tasked to identify and inventory all entrepreneurship and small business resources currently available.
- The EA organizes and serves as a forum for entrepreneurs to share ideas on how to improve their businesses in regularly scheduled meetings.
- The EA develops and maintains a website with resources on entrepreneurship, an electronic forum where entrepreneurs can discuss ideas, and a database of best practices that entrepreneurs can adapt for their own businesses.
- Acts as the regional “voice” of entrepreneurship and works with: local units of government to promote a business climate that supports entrepreneurship, Western Nevada Community College and K-12 systems to promote entrepreneurship training, and engage discussions with private sector financing institutions and other potential influencers who could help support funding for small businesses and other entrepreneurial ventures.
- Serves as a strong proponent to guide the development of a regional Incubator (see recommendation in the Sites & Infrastructure section)

4. Assess how active adults/retirees within the community could utilize their experience and intellectual capital as mentors to entrepreneurs and small businesses through the development of an “Executive Senior Business Council.” Throughout Northern Nevada, there is a wealth of knowledge and experience of individuals (many retirees) who have had extremely successful and fulfilling careers. Engaging these individuals’ knowledge and experience with an entrepreneurial and small business network can be a win-win arrangement for everyone involved. Closely involve the local chapter of SCORE to attract members to this Council.

- The Executive Senior Business Council would be a part of the EA and be structured as a subcommittee to that organization

5. Educate citizens on entrepreneurship and small business activity through regular communiqués from the EA, NNDA, and regional county EDAs. Develop presentations for business, civic, and non-profit organizations. Engage small business owners and entrepreneurs to share their success stories, and regularly communicate to the public at large the programs and services that are available to this important segment of the economy.

6. Improve access to early-stage venture capital by (CET, with private sector leaders should spearhead this initiative):

- Supporting the formation of a new angel investor network in the region.
- Working with the region’s banks to market existing regional loan programs.

- Providing local banks with resources that educate them on the best way to support small and startup companies.
- Work with the larger Reno-Sparks region to identify funding opportunities and promote what is occurring in the rural counties.

7. Involve educators in the process by hosting opportunities for students and entrepreneurs to communicate. Support the “Entrepreneurs Week” initiative that is being promoted and run by CET on an annual basis. This allows area high school students to learn the benefits of establishing and owning businesses. Also, allow students the opportunity to visit the business location of their choice to learn more about a particular company.

### **Excerpts Related to Project Selection Criteria**

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#### **Camden Strategic Revitalization Plan (excerpt)**

[http://www.camdenerb.com/SRP\\_Final\\_Plan.asp](http://www.camdenerb.com/SRP_Final_Plan.asp)

### **APPENDIX A: PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA AND SCREENING PROCESS**

#### **1st Level Screening: Relevance of Revitalization Project**

- The revitalization project is consistent with the legislation.
- A revitalization project is a planned physical improvement that, when completed, will contribute to the economic, cultural, recreational, tourism, social (including housing, parks and community centers) or educational development of the City of Camden. A revitalization project has a specific location within the City and a specific timeframe and costs associated with design, construction and implementation. It can involve the construction or rehabilitation of buildings, supporting infrastructure (utilities, streetscapes, drainage, etc.), or community facilities (parks, libraries, community centers, etc.).
- The revitalization project advances one or both goals of the Strategic Revitalization Plan (job creation and neighborhood improvement.)
- The project is consistent with the objectives of City Master Plan, neighborhood plans, other subarea plans or the visions of the key leadership of the City of Camden.

#### **2nd Level Screening: Readiness**

- The revitalization project has been defined (see project definition above) and development responsibility has been established and acknowledged.

- Organization has the demonstrated management capability or a management plan that can successfully implement the project.
- Implementation organization has achieved site control or there is sufficient evidence that site control can be achieved and the project started within a three- year period.
- There are no major environmental or other constraints (such as permit requirements) that would prevent the start of implementation within the next three years.
- There exists sufficient infrastructure to support the demand associated with the revitalization project or such infrastructure can be developed and constructed in the time frame of the project.

### **Ranking Process:**

Revitalization projects would be ranked on a 1-3 scale with 3 being highest rank based upon the following criteria:

- 3- High probability of achieving results
- 2- Moderate probability of achieving results
- 1- Low probability of achieving results

### **Financial**

- The project financing plan is reasonable.
- There is a high probability that the project can be financially sustainable.
- There is a high probability that the project can generate private sector investment.

### **Economic Impacts**

- The project will generate jobs for residents of Camden.
- The non-public projects will expand the tax revenues for the City of Camden.
- The non-public projects will contribute to the development of other income streams for the City of Camden.

### **Neighborhood Impacts**

- The project improves housing stock.
- The project will contribute to the improvement of the “quality of life” of the City through improvements in health, safety, or other contributions.
- The project contributes to neighborhood stability.

### **Leverage**

- The project will leverage other money, to include private, federal, city, county or voluntary sector funds.
- If this project were successful, it would catalyze other projects.

## U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (excerpt)

[http://www.doi.gov/oia/reports/reportsCNMI/StrategicPlan2009-2014\\_Nov2009.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/oia/reports/reportsCNMI/StrategicPlan2009-2014_Nov2009.pdf)

### Score Guidelines

#### Tourism Impact

Project will support the growth of CNMI's tourism industry.

- 5 Provides significant tourism needs as identified by local sources
- 4 Provides moderate tourism needs as identified by local sources
- 3 Provides minimal tourism needs as identified by local sources
- 2 Does not provide tourism needs as identified by local sources
- 1 Negative impact on tourism as identified by local sources

#### Defense Impact

Project will provide ancillary benefit/encouragement to future U.S. military activities in CNMI.

- 5 Meets significant military need as identified by DOD sources
- 4 Meets moderate military need as identified by DOD sources
- 3 Meets minimal military need as identified by DOD sources
- 2 Does not meet military need as identified by DOD sources
- 1 Reduces the chance the military will perform future activities in CNMI.

#### Employment Impact

(a) Project will generate direct employment in the construction industry.

- 5 Creates more than 100 person years of local employment
- 4 Creates 60 – 100 person years of local employment
- 3 Creates 30 – 59 person years of local employment
- 2 Creates less than 30 person years of local employment
- 1 No local employment impact

(b) Project will generate increase in long-term employment in CNMI.

- 5 Creates more than 100 new long-term positions
- 4 Creates 60 – 100 new long-term positions
- 3 Creates 30 – 59 new long-term positions
- 2 Creates less than 30 new long-term positions
- 1 No employment impact

### **Maximizing Leverage of Private Sector Investment**

Private Sector Investment as percentage of project cost.

- 5 Fully funded by private sector
- 4 More than 50 percent privately funded
- 3 Private sector interest expressed in funding participation
- 2 Potential for private sector investment
- 1 Fully funded by public sector

### **Financial Sustainability**

Degree of long-term (post-construction) public sector funding required.

- 5 Project is net revenue generator
- 4 Reduced or no public sector support required
- 3 No impact on direct public sector support required
- 2 Slight increase in direct public sector support required (less than \$100k)
- 1 Significant increase in direct public sector support required

### **Local Community Priority (Used only as a tiebreaker)**

Project priority according to the local Community.

- 5 Number 1 priority
- 4 Number 2 priority
- 3 Number 3 priority or lower
- 2 Not identified as one of top three priorities
- 1 Significant local opposition

### **Build the Skills and Capacity of CNMI Workforce**

Project will lead to improved job skills and higher paying jobs for CNMI qualified residents.

- 5 Project provides significant direct impact
- 4 Project provides moderate direct impact
- 3 Project provides slight direct impact
- 2 Project does not have direct impact
- 1 Project may have a direct negative impact

### **Sustainable Growth**

(a) Project minimizes potential impacts to shorelines, reefs, wetlands, critical habitats and other environmentally sensitive areas.

- 5 Project will redevelop an existing commercial or industrial property
- 4 Project is located more than 1,000 feet from any environmentally sensitive area
- 3 Project is located at least 500 but less than 1,000 feet from any environmentally sensitive area
- 2 Project is located at least 250 but less than 500 feet from any environmentally sensitive area
- 1 Project is within 250 feet of an environmentally sensitive area

(b) Project environmental footprint (e.g., carbon emissions, other impacts).

- 5 Project will reduce environmental footprint
- 4 No net impact
- 3 Potential minor increase to environmental footprint
- 2 Known minor increase to environmental footprint
- 1 Significant increase to environmental footprint

### **Implementation Timeline**

Time required implementing project (Implementation defined as project being operational).

- 5 Less than 1 year
- 4 1 – 2 years
- 3 2 – 3 years
- 2 3 – 4 years
- 1 4 or more year



## E. V. Regional Implementation Agenda Examples

Work Plan Task 7 requires the Councils to create a regional implementation agenda which includes a schedule with target dates to implement the public and private actions needed, as well as a description of the organizational structure and operational arrangements to ensure plan implementation and ongoing meaningful public participation.

The following excerpts are from regional economic development plans. Some plans present the implementation steps alongside the strategy discussion. To see the implementation steps in the context of the plan, go to the link provided.

- **Palm Beach County Strategic Economic Development Plan (Florida, 2007)**

States the strategy and identifies action items in narrative form. Provides a simple matrix identifying the action item, the lead agency, the partners, and timeline goals.

- **Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Florida, 2007)**

Presented in the form of a matrix, which includes the steps to be taken, the timeline and the lead parties that will develop the projects identified.

- **Central Connecticut Corridor Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Connecticut, 2011)**

Presents in a matrix the goals, objectives or strategies, timeframes for completion of the objectives and strategies (short-term, mid-term, long-term). Also identifies the organization with lead responsibility and other resources to help implement the strategy.

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### **Palm Beach County Strategic Economic Development Plan (excerpt)**

[http://www.pbcgov.com/edo/pdf/PBC\\_EconPlan\\_Adopted-031307.pdf](http://www.pbcgov.com/edo/pdf/PBC_EconPlan_Adopted-031307.pdf)

#### **IV. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: EQUITY AND EDUCATION**

Expand our traditional economic development focus to equity and education ensuring the development of housing that is affordable and providing education and job training for industry of the mind workers and their families.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

IV. 01 Develop a continuing education, international trade import and export college level curriculum for Palm Beach County's 28,000 businesses: The PBC EDO and the World Trade Center Palm Beach (WTCPB) are working with Palm Beach Community College to develop a continuing education, trade import and export curriculum for PBC's 28,000 businesses and PBC students. Distance learning and on-site curriculum are being planned. The initial curriculum will consist of three offerings ranging from preparing to import, legal preparation, export business issues, and finance (attracting finance and security of financing).

IV. 02 Create an Educational endowment for math and science teachers: Palm Beach County is creating a permanent Educational Endowment for Math and Science to insure that Palm Beach County teachers and graduates excel beyond or at the highest levels of national and international engineering and science benchmarks. This Educational Endowment will be a public/private partnership that is intended to boost K-20 teacher and student education in math and science in the public schools. The purpose is to grow industries of the mind as educational infrastructure for Palm Beach County and for America's future.

The initial five-year goal is to propel students' grades in math and science. Corporate leaders are being asked to participate in the planning and fundraising of this Endowment partnership for at least the initial three years of the County's efforts to support the costs of fundraising for the math and science endowment. The costs are anticipated to be a minimum of \$100,000 annually for three years, with the objective to raise \$30 million.

As background, the concept of the Palm Beach County Educational Endowment for Math and Science was conceived by the Palm Beach County School Board Superintendent and the Executive Director of the Education Commission. The concept was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in July 2006 as a desired economic alternative, with their expectation of matching financial commitments from the private sector.

IV. 03 Conduct a television campaign aimed at popularizing the School District of Palm Beach County's Career Academies: The School District of Palm Beach County's Career Academy developed an external marketing campaign to raise awareness of the importance and success of the career academies and to urge enrollment and support for them. The budget would be for \$100,000 spread over five years, with additional funding of between \$100,000 and \$300,000 from other sources. These additional dollars are being sought to achieve greater outreach and frequency through additional airtime. The goal is that those businesses that invest in career academies will receive top quality employees. The broadcasts are intended to reach three distinct audiences: parents, businesses, and students.

**Implementation Matrix**  
**Palm Beach County Economic Development Strategic Plan**

*\* The numbers in parenthesis correspond with the Summit Recommendations in Appendix C*

<b>IV. Strategic Direction: Equity and Education</b>				
<i>Please see Appendix B for acronym identifications</i>				
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Timeline Goal</b>
IV. 01 (26)	Develop a continuing education, international trade import and export college level curriculum for Palm Beach County's 28,000 businesses	WTCPB	PBCC	
IV. 02 (44)(48)	Create an Educational endowment for math and science teachers	PBCEC	PBC, Office Depot and other corporations	
IV. 03	Conduct a television campaign aimed at popularizing the School District of Palm Beach County's Career Academies	PBCEC	SDPBC	
IV. 04 (42)(46)	Increase programming of Junior Achievement designed to encourage a business culture in Palm Beach County school children	PBCEC	Junior Achievement & Northwood University	
IV. 05	Emphasize teaching PBC school children the world's largest languages	PBCEC	Education Stakeholders	
IV. 06 (18)(35)	Design housing best practices identified during the 2005 Economic Summit as well as a Palm Beach County Workforce Housing Program	PBC HCD	Workforce Alliance, Housing Stakeholders	
IV. 07 (9)	Continue the work of the PBC Community Land Trust	PBC HCD	PBC	
IV. 08 (13)	Purchase Land for Workforce Housing	PBC HCD	PBC Stakeholders	
IV. 09 (14)(11)	Assist with the economic analysis and promote and update the existing Palm Beach County Granny Flats Ordinance	PBC P, Z & B	PBC P, Z & B	
IV. 10 (18)	Examine the Housing Leadership Council of Palm Beach County, Inc. study	ECPCB	HLCPCB, Inc., PBC HCD	
IV. 11 (8)(15)	Explore options of Linkage and Luxury Home Fees	PBC HCD	PBC HCD	
IV. 12 (15)	Explore Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) options for master planned communities clustered around Lake Okeechobee	PBC P, Z & B	PBC P, Z & B	
IV. 13 (10)	Evaluate transit oriented/corridor land use alternatives for workforce housing	PBC MPO	PBC P, Z & B	
IV. 14 (17)(11)	Examine regulatory reform: height, density, fees, air rights housing development over county owned garages and parking lot properties and other assessments and property appraisals	PBC HCD	PBC P, Z & B, PBC MPO	

\* Please see Appendix B for acronym identifications.

# Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (excerpt)

<http://www.tcrpc.org/departments/CEDS%202007-2012.pdf>

Number	Project	Lead Organization	Tasks	Project Cost					Project Time Line				
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5					
1.0	Coastal Restoration for Marine Industry Development	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	Design, Pro-Forma and infrastructure improvements	\$25 Million - State/Local \$16 million - EDA \$2 million - Private \$17 million									
2.0	Homeland Security Training Center	Indian River Community College	infrastructure improvements	\$27 Million - State/Local \$26.5 million - EDA \$500,000									
3.0	Marine/Florida Institute	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	infrastructure improvements	\$102 Million - State/Local \$182 million - EDA \$2 million									
4.0	Lake Region Water Treatment Plant and Water Transmission and Distribution System	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	infrastructure improvements	\$28 Million - State/Local \$27 million - Private \$24 million - EDA \$2 million									
5.0	Fisheries Skills Accelerator	City of Ft. Pierce	Renovated site assessment and/or site remediation; Design, development and construction	\$2.5 Million - State/Local \$180 - Private \$2.1 million - EDA \$200,000									
6.0	Pilot Project for Sea Going Public Ferry System	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	System design and initial ferry purchase and/or improvements	\$30 Million - State/Local \$200,000 - Private \$27 million - EDA \$2.5 million									
7.0	Paper Mill Manufacturing Facility (Retention)	Indian River County and the City of Vero Beach	Land assembly; infrastructure improvement, building construction, and other technical support activities	\$ TBD									
8.0	Regional Inland Port	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	Design, Pro-Forma and infrastructure improvements	\$300 Million - State/Local \$198 million - Private \$100 million - EDA \$2 million									
9.0	Regional Storm Water Drainage Project	Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners	Land acquisition for regional storm water retention system	\$10 Million - State/Local \$7 million - Private \$2 million - EDA \$2 million									
10.0	Port of Fort Pierce	St. Lucie County Port Authority	Roads and sewer installation	\$5 million - State/Local \$4 million - EDA \$1 million									
11.0	St. Lucie County Research and Education Park	Treasure Coast Education, Research and Development Authority	infrastructure improvements	\$15 Million - State/Local \$6 million - EDA \$1.5 million									
12.0	Fellsmere Composite Research Park	City of Fellsmere	infrastructure improvements	\$ TBD									
13.0	Regional Aviation Park	City of Sebastian	infrastructure improvements	\$ TBD									

Figure 34: Action Plan Projects

## Central Connecticut Corridor Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (excerpt)

<http://www.ccrpa.org/CEDS/CEDS%20Final%202004.pdf>

### ACTION PLAN

#### Goals and Objectives

At the March 18, 2003 meeting of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee, the process for establishing the framework goals was discussed. The goals would be based on the SWOT analysis just completed.

Four framework goals were discussed and approved at the April 29, 2003 meeting of the same group. Each one was discussed at length and it was felt that all the objectives and strategies would be developed around them.

The CEDS was approved by the CEDS Steering Committee at its July 9, 2003 meeting. Four broad framework goals with equal priority have been selected:

1. To build a more effective regional approach to economic development.
2. To build the physical, financial and human capital capacity in the region necessary to support economic development.
3. To achieve an effective transition of the region's economic base through business retention, expansion, attraction, creation and transition.
4. To improve the economic prosperity of the region's residents and increase the profitability of its businesses.

#### Timeframes

The time frames established for completion of objectives and strategies (activities) are:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Number of Years</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
Short term	1-2 years	S
Mid term	3-4 years	M
Long term	5+	L

#### Objectives

There are 24 objectives listed under the 4 goals. Of these, 11 are short term, 1 is short to mid term, 8 are mid term, 2 are mid to long term and 2 are long term. A list of the goals, objectives and strategies follows.

<b>GOAL 2: To build the physical, financial and human capital capacity in the region necessary to support economic development.</b>				
<b>ID</b>	<b>Objective/Strategy</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2-1	<p><b>To develop/expand essential tools needed to promote economic development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Prepare, maintain and disseminate a comprehensive list of properties suitable for occupancy by office, business and personal services, research &amp; development, manufacturing and retail uses.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Explore ways to develop a real estate and marketing information database. This database should include all typically requested data fields, zoning and community profile information, economic and tax information, recent sales or leasing information, properties currently available, maps and diagrams of available sites, and other information. The recently developed Recommended Data Standards available from the International Economic Development Council should serve as a model for the data section.</i></li> </ul>	CCRPA	DECD, CERC, IEDC EDA TA Grant	S
2-2	<p><b>To improve infrastructure &amp; services in the region.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Alleviate congestion and improve traffic access.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Construct a key segment of Route 72.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Construct the New Britain Hartford busway.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Enhance accessibility to future busway.</i></li> </ul>	CCRPA	DOT, FTA, FHWA	M-L
2-3	<p><b>To increase site availability.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Identify key sites in region for development.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Enhance economic development opportunities along New Britain Hartford busway.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Encourage redevelopment and adaptive reuse in brownfields and grayfields sites.</i></li> </ul>	CCRPA, P & Z, EDC	DOT, DEP, DECD	M-L
2-4	<b>To create better linkages for incubating, nesting and</b>	CCRPA, CCEDA,	DECD, CI, National	M



## E. VI. Performance Measurement Examples

Work Plan Task 7 requires the Councils to develop specific performance measures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its strategic plan. ESD will also measure the performance of each Regional Council, based on statewide metrics. Please see below.

The following excerpts are from regional economic development plans. Some of the examples have the performance measures listed along with the strategy it relates to, others list the measures separately. To see the performance measures in the context of the plan, go to the link provided.

- **Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint – Summary Report (British Columbia, Canada, 2004)**

Includes a list of indicators that draw upon readily available quantitative data, as well as qualitative data obtained from periodic surveys. How they used those indicators was not included in the plan.

- **North West Oregon Regional Economic Development Plan (Oregon, 2005)**

The performance measurement and evaluation process includes regional benchmarks, interim indicators, and performance targets.

- **The Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress (Massachusetts, 2004)**

A detailed evaluation process is described, which evaluates implementation performance and the ongoing planning and implementation process, using both quantitative indicators and qualitative supporting evidence. Initial process measures include outreach, external engagement, and participation indicators. Also includes benchmarks for cross-border collaboration, diversity, education, industry clusters, sustainability, technology, and urban investments.

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### **Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint – Summary Report (excerpt)**

[http://www.crd.bc.ca/reports/regionalplanning\\_/generalreports\\_/economicdevelopment\\_/greatervictoriaecono/greatervictoriaecono.pdf](http://www.crd.bc.ca/reports/regionalplanning_/generalreports_/economicdevelopment_/greatervictoriaecono/greatervictoriaecono.pdf)

#### **How Will We Gauge Our Performance?**

An important component of moving forward with the Blueprint is the establishment of a process for monitoring the success of the region in achieving its economic prosperity goals and vision. A list of indicators has been developed that draw upon both quantifiable data readily available from secondary sources as well as more qualitative data that would be obtained from periodic surveys:

- Regional employment.
- Regional income.
- Regional distribution of economic activity.
- Regional real estate demand.
- Regional taxes.
- Number of businesses by sector.
- Industry sector revenues.
- Total and per capital retail sales.
- Education levels in comparison to the Lower Mainland, Calgary and Ottawa.
- Number and percentage of residents and businesses reporting “optimistic” or “very optimistic” in terms of the state of future economic prospects for the region.
- Number and percentage of residents and businesses reporting “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the degree of cooperation amongst community and economic development organizations.
- Number and percentage of residents and businesses reporting “satisfied” or “very satisfied” in regional efforts to attract new entrepreneurs and economic ventures.
- Number and percentage of businesses reporting “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the state of local business services and infrastructure (could specify by type of service or type of infrastructure).
- Number and percentage of residents and businesses reporting “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with efforts to protect regional environmental and other natural assets.
- Number and percentage of businesses reporting “satisfied” or “very satisfied:” with core government services, permitting and enforcement.

As a next step in establishing a regional economic development office, the GVEPS will need to ... Refine the performance measures and prepare an annual “state of the regional economy” report.

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### **North West Oregon Regional Economic Development Plan (excerpt)**

[https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/9428/NW\\_OR\\_Regional\\_Economic\\_2005.pdf?sequence=1](https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/9428/NW_OR_Regional_Economic_2005.pdf?sequence=1)

Performance Measurement and Evaluation Plan including Regional Benchmarks and Interim Indicators of Performance

### **Benchmark I: Increase Traded Sector Employment**

*Interim Indicators:*

- A. Number of above average wage jobs created
- B. Number of jobs retained that were at risk of being lost
- C. Number of acres of industrial/commercial land moved toward building-ready status
- D. Number of new business leads generated

Performance Targets: 1 job created/retained for every \$5,000 in Regional/Rural Investment funds

### **Benchmark II: Build Capacity of Communities to Be Economically Self-Reliant**

*Interim Indicator:*

- A. Amount of additional funds leveraged for local community economic development activities

Performance Target: \$5,000 in additional investment for every \$1000 in Regional/Rural Investment funds

### **Benchmark III: Strengthen the Regional Economy Through Regional Partnership Business Development Activities and Communications**

*Interim Indicator:*

- A. Number of business activities enhanced by the involvement of the Regional Partnership

Performance Target: 5 projects linking businesses, local communities and State regulatory agencies that result in successful business development

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## **The Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress (excerpt)**

[http://www.pvpc.org/resources/ecdev/pfp\\_report.pdf](http://www.pvpc.org/resources/ecdev/pfp_report.pdf)

### **Summative Evaluation**

Each year, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, under the supervision of the Plan for Progress Coordinating Council and in conjunction with the submission of the annual CEDS report, will complete a comprehensive evaluation of the prior year. This evaluation will include two components: 1) an evaluation of implementation performance and 2) an evaluation of the ongoing planning and implementation process. Both evaluation components will provide quantitative indicators with qualitative supporting evidence.

### **Performance Evaluation**

Overall, implementation of the Plan for Progress will be measured against the Plan's seven cross-cutting themes. There will be three components of the performance evaluation:

- 1) Overall Theme Grades: Near the end of each fiscal year (June 30), staff of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission will identify and organize, by cross-cutting theme, the major accomplishments of the Plan for Progress for the previous year. These will then be sent with a questionnaire to each member of the Plan for Progress Coordinating Council, who will assign a letter grade (A to E) to each theme. Every effort will be made to ensure that a majority of Council members respond. Responses will be aggregated so that an overall grade can be assigned to each cross-cutting theme (theme grades will have a point value between 0 and 4).
- 2) Benchmarks: Because there is an element of subjectivity in Coordinating Council members evaluating progress, quantitative benchmarks will also be used. These are outlined in the “Cross-Cutting Themes” section of this Plan. Near the end of the fiscal year, the most recent available data will be collected for each benchmark and rated from 3 (significant progress) to 1 (no progress) by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission staff. As with overall theme grades, benchmark grades will be aggregated for each theme area into an average score between 1 and 3. Because data from various sources is released at different times, some benchmarks may not be used every year.
- 3) Action Steps: Information about accomplishments received from implementer organizations will also be applied to performance measurement. PVPC staff will rate each action step as completed (3), in progress (2), or not started (1). These ratings will be submitted to the Plan for Progress Coordinating Council for discussion, modification, and final approval. Action step ratings will be aggregated for each strategy to produce an overall strategy rating between 1 and 3.

Once all three components of the annual performance evaluation are complete, results will be aggregated into an annual evaluation profile. This profile will reveal aggregate overall crosscutting theme and strategy ratings. In each case, the aggregate overall rating will be from one (worst performance) to ten (best performance). Each aggregated rating will incorporate all three components of the performance evaluation. Forty percent of ratings will be determined by Coordinating Council theme grades, and 30 percent each will be determined by benchmarks and action step ratings.

Following is the Plan for Progress performance evaluation profile that will be completed each year. Shaded areas will not be completed because they represent cross-cutting themes that are not relevant to the particular strategic goal in that row.

This profile will guide members of the Coordinating Council in holding implementers accountable for progress. Because the overall theme and strategy ratings rely on three different evaluative mechanisms, this profile ameliorates potential bias in any one method and provides a fairly accurate assessment.

## **Process Evaluation**

A key component of the annual summative evaluation will be a quantitative analysis of the planning process. Using a series of quantitative indicators in several categories, the Coordinating Council, supported by PVPC staff, will annually determine targets for each indicator. At the close of the year, staff will assemble the necessary data to determine if targets were exceeded, met, or

missed. Within sub-categories, the ratings will be aggregated to indicate overall performance in various aspects of the process.

Process indicators are likely to change as the Plan is implemented and evolves; however, the following are the initial process measures and their sub-categories:

1) Outreach measures

- The number of publications related to economic development produced and distributed by PVPC in the last year.
- The number of presentations related to economic development made by members of the PVPC economic development team at meetings not sponsored by the Plan for Progress or PVPC.
- The number of teams or committees working on economic development around the region that include members of the PVPC economic development team.

2) External engagement measures

- The number of organizations and companies, other than PVPC, actively engaged in implementing one or more strategies of the Plan for Progress.
- The number of presentations made to the Plan for Progress Trustees by non-board members.

3) Participation measures

- The average number of Plan for Progress Coordinating Council members in attendance at regularly scheduled meetings over the past year.
- The average number of Plan for Progress Trustees in attendance at regularly scheduled meetings over the past year.
- The diversity, by sector, of those Plan for Progress Trustees attending regularly scheduled meetings over the past year.

These indicators will be crucial to determining those parts of the planning process that need additional focus and attention.

### **Cross-Border Collaboration Benchmarks**

1. Are there increasing numbers of collaborative economic development projects between partners located on both sides of the Massachusetts and Connecticut border?
2. Are there increasing numbers of companies listing internships on [www.InternHere.com](http://www.InternHere.com); and are there increasing numbers of college students listing their resumes on [www.InternHere.com](http://www.InternHere.com)?
3. Is the number of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) on the Connecticut River being reduced so that measurable environmental benefits are achieved on an ongoing basis?
4. Are there a greater number of events co-hosted by organizations on both sides of the Massachusetts and Connecticut border?
5. Are more people commuting to work across the state line?

### **Diversity Benchmarks**

1. Are multiple racial and ethnic groups growing as components of the Pioneer Valley's overall population?
2. Are economic gaps (as measured by household income) between different racial, ethnic, and citizenship groups diminishing over time?
3. Are the labor force participation rates of ethnic minority and immigrant populations comparable to those of white and native-born populations?
4. Are the high school dropout rates of ethnic minority and immigrant students getting nearer those of white and native-born students?
5. Is population growth as a result of foreign immigration increasing?

### **Education Benchmarks**

1. Are third and tenth grade MCAS scores improving relative to statewide scores?
2. Are high school graduation rates increasing?
3. Are more high school graduates intending to pursue further education upon graduation?
4. Is the number of licensed early education and care slots increasing?
5. Is Chapter 70 education aid to the Pioneer Valley increasing (after adjusting for inflation)?
6. Is the University of Massachusetts Amherst's budget increasing (after adjusting for inflation)?
7. Are the budgets of the region's three community colleges increasing (after adjusting for inflation)?

### **Industry Clusters Benchmarks**

1. Is total employment in the Pioneer Valley's growth clusters increasing?
2. Is total employment in the Pioneer Valley's industry clusters to sustain remaining stable?
3. Is the region's share of national employment increasing in priority clusters and remaining stable in clusters to maintain?
4. Is the number of establishments in priority clusters increasing?

### **Sustainability Benchmarks**

1. Is the number of Connecticut River combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in the region decreasing?
2. Are there more resources available for brownfields assessment and remediation?
3. Are asthma related hospitalizations per capita decreasing?
4. Is the number of acres of open space being preserved increasing?
5. Are per capita vehicle miles traveled per day decreasing?
6. Is the average number of points for all communities in the Pioneer Valley on the Commonwealth Capital Fund rating criteria increasing?
7. Is public transit ridership increasing?
8. Is the number of businesses in the Pioneer Valley with ISO 14000 certification increasing?

	Average Action Step Ratings (1-3)	Cross-Border	Diversity	Education	Industry Clusters	Sustainability	Technology	Urban Investment	Overall Strategy Ratings (1-19)
<b>Average Theme Ratings (0-4)</b>									
<b>Average Benchmark Rating (1-3)</b>									
Business and clusters									
Small businesses and risk capital									
Efficient regulatory process									
Workforce development									
PreK to 12 education									
Higher Education									
New leaders									
Market the region									
Connecticut River									
Infrastructure									
Housing									
Public Safety									
Statewide fiscal equity									
<b>Overall Theme Ratings (1-10)</b>									

Cross-Cutting Themes

**Technology Benchmarks**

1. Is the high-speed broadband capacity of the region increasing?
2. Are the region's public and private sector higher education institutions fostering research and development and technology transfer on a sustained and substantive basis?
3. Are an increasing number of businesses members of RTC-sponsored industry groups?
4. Do an increasing percentage of K to 12 classrooms have Internet access?
5. Do an increasing number of public libraries have public-use computers with access to the Internet?
6. Is the productivity of the Pioneer Valley's businesses increasing?

**Urban Investment Benchmarks**

1. Is the difference between the unemployment rate of the urban core and the region as a whole decreasing?
2. Are the gaps between tenth grade MCAS performance in the urban core and the region as a whole decreasing?
3. Is the urban core's share of the region's total population increasing?
4. Is the urban core's share of the region's poor (those living below the poverty line) decreasing?
5. Are the urban core cities sustaining and/or growing the number of businesses in their communities?
6. Are owner occupancy rates in urban core communities increasing?
7. Is the urban core's share of all affordable housing units in the region (as defined by Chapter 40B) decreasing?



## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

### **F. Relationship of US EDA Requirements for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs) to Regional Strategic Plans**

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides funding to support economic development efforts nationwide. EDA funding may enable implementation of certain priority actions detailed in your region's strategic plan. In order to qualify for some EDA programs, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or CEDS is required.

In New York State, planning organizations, Indian Tribes and other organizations have undertaken the development of a CEDS. If there is an existing regional CEDS, these plans may serve as resources to understand existing and ongoing economic conditions and economic development activities within the region. Strategic plans generated by the Regional Councils are expected to build on and complement existing CEDS.

The work plan to produce the Initial strategic plan describes tasks and products that closely align with the seven technical requirements and information that must be part of a CEDS document. Strategic plans generated by the Regional Councils should be compatible with the spirit and intent of the requirements for CEDS so as to be eligible and enhance competitiveness for EDA planning investment and assistance funding programs described below.

- Public Works Program (approx. \$130-\$150 million annually nationwide) - intended to help the nation's most distressed communities revitalize, expand and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies and generate or retain long-term private sector jobs and investments.
- Economic Adjustment Program (approx. \$30 million annually nationwide) - intended to address the needs of communities experiencing adverse economic changes that may occur suddenly or over time such as: military base closures or realignments, federally-declared disasters, long-term economic deterioration, and loss of a major community employer.

#### **CEDS Summary**

The CEDs is “a strategic planning document and process that helps guide the economic growth and development of communities or regions. The strategy promotes sustainable development by providing mechanisms for coordinating efforts and regional assets for combining resources of the community, business and local government, and for promoting processes to create jobs, and foster diversified economies.”

*An excerpted EDA summary of CEDS requirements follows.*

## **COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS (excerpted)**

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economic Development Administration

This document provides a synopsis of the requirements for comprehensive economic development strategies. For further information, interested parties are directed to section 302 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3162) and EDA's regulations at 13 C.F.R. part 303. The document is intended to serve as a convenient source for requirements relating to the CEDS. Nothing in this document is intended to supersede or otherwise modify EDA's statute, regulations, policies or procedures.

It should be noted that in determining the acceptability of a CEDS prepared independently of EDA investment assistance or oversight for projects under 13 C.F.R. parts 305 or 307, EDA may in its discretion determine that the CEDS is acceptable without it fulfilling every requirement set out in 13 C.F.R. § 303.7. In doing so, EDA shall consider the circumstances surrounding the application for investment assistance, including emergencies or natural disasters, and the fulfillment of the requirements of Section 302 of PWEDA.

### **Technical Requirements**

Pursuant to 13 C.F.R. § 303.7, a Planning Organization must include the following information in a CEDS submitted to EDA.

**1. Background:** The CEDS must contain a background of the economic development situation of the region that paints a realistic picture of the current condition of the region. This background must include a discussion of the economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources, environment, and other pertinent information.

**2. Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities:** The CEDS must include an in-depth analysis of the economic development problems and opportunities that identifies strengths and weaknesses in the regional makeup of human and economic assets, and problems and opportunities posed by external and internal forces affecting the regional economy. This analysis must:

- Incorporate relevant material from other government-sponsored or supported plans and demonstrate consistency with applicable State and local workforce investment strategies.
- Identify past, present, and projected future economic development investments in the region.
- Identify and analyze economic clusters within the region.

**3. CEDS Goals and Objectives** -- Defining Regional Expectations: The CEDS must contain a section setting forth goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic problems, or capitalize on the resources, of the region. Any strategic project, program, or activity identified in the CEDS should work to fulfill these goals and objectives.

- Goals are broad, primary regional expectations.
- Objectives are more specific than goals, clearly measurable, and stated in realistic terms considering what can be accomplished over the five (5) year time frame of the CEDS.

**4. Community and Private Sector Participation:** The CEDS must include a section discussing the relationship between the community in general and the private sector in the development and implementation of the CEDS. Public and private sector partnerships are critical to the implementation of the CEDS.

**5. Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities:** The CEDS must contain a section which identifies regional projects, programs and activities designed to implement the Goals and Objectives of the CEDS. This section should identify and describe:

#### **Suggested Projects**

- All suggested projects, programs and activities and the projected number of jobs to be created as a result.
- Lead organizations responsibilities for execution of the projects.

#### **Vital Projects**

A prioritization of vital projects, programs, and activities that address the region's greatest needs or that will best enhance the region's competitiveness, including sources of funding for past and potential future investments. These can be overarching "themes" for regional economic development success and is expected to include components. Funding sources should not be limited to EDA programs.

**6. CEDS Plan of Action:** The plan of action, as described in the CEDS, implements the goals and objectives of the CEDS in a manner that:

- Promotes economic development and opportunity;
- Fosters effective transportation access;
- Enhances and protects the environment;
- Maximizes effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy;
- Promotes the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications;
- Balances resources through sound management of physical development; and
- Obtains and utilizes adequate funds and other resources.

The CEDS must also contain a section that discusses the methodology for cooperating and integrating the CEDS with a State's economic development priorities.

**7. Performance Measures:** The CEDS must contain a section that lists the performance measures used to evaluate the Planning Organization's successful development and implementation of the CEDS, including but not limited to the:

- Number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS;
- Number and types of investments undertaken in the region;
- Number of jobs retained in the region;
- Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS; and
- Changes in the economic environment of the region.

These are not meant to be the only performance measures for the CEDS. Most Planning Organizations developing a CEDS will benefit from developing additional quantitative and qualitative measures that will allow them to evaluate progress toward achieving the goals identified as important in their regions.



