Southern Alleghenies Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

2020-2024

SAP&DC

SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES PLANNING
& DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ADVANCING THE ALLEGHENIES

Engaging communities to foster regional economic opportunity

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to coordinate public sector and private sector planning and investments into a well-planned "roadmap" to guide initiatives for diversifying and strengthening a regional economy. This CEDS is for the six-county Southern Alleghenies Region that includes Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties (see **Figure 1** on the following page).

WHY DO WE NEED A CEDS?

As an Economic Development District federally designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC) is required to support an active CEDS process. While the CEDS' most critical function is to provide a framework or "roadmap" for guiding investments within the Region, it also serves as a required vehicle through which the EDA evaluates grant requests.

Without an EDA-approved CEDS, applicants in the Region are ineligible to receive grant assistance through the EDA.

PREPARING THE CEDS

The CEDS document is the result of conducting research and gathering input from people who live and work in the six-county Region. A SWOT Analysis Survey was completed. Informal stakeholder interviews were conducted on a rolling basis and a CEDS Committee meeting was held with members participating from each of the six counties to discuss the results of the SWOT Analysis and develop goals and strategies for the 2020-2024 CEDS Plan.

The CEDS Committee convened by SAP&DC is comprised of the following public and private sector representatives:

2020 CEDS Committee Members:
- Michael Keating   Juniata College
- Dave Carey   Central PA Area Labor Federation and AFSCME Council 83
- Lindsay Pyle   Somerset County
- Marty Malone   Joseph P. Lehman, Inc.

- Kellie Shaffer   Bedford County Chamber of Commerce
- Dwayne Zimmerman Crowsnest Broadband
- Blake Fleegle   Westwood Plaza Theatre
- Diana McClure   Keller Engineers
- Chris Boryan   Fulton County Medical Center
- Beth Futrick   Cherry Hill Farm
- Rick Truscello   Resident
- Larry Myers   Schneider Electric
- Mike Kane   Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
- Matthew Price   Huntingdon County Visitor's Bureau

Figure 1: Southern Alleghenies Region
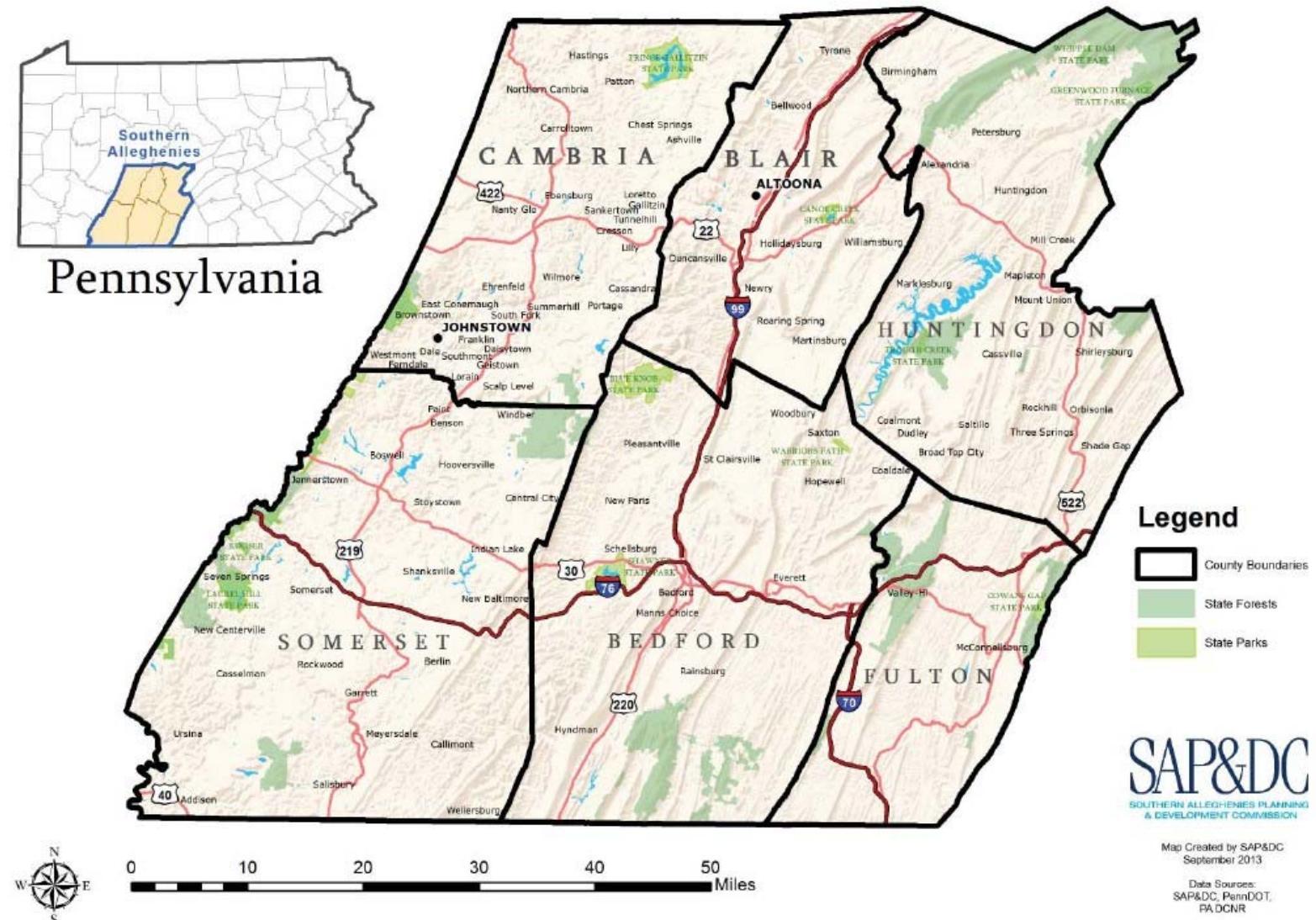
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

POPULATION TRENDS

The Southern Alleghenies Economic Development District (EDD) is comprised of six counties (Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset) in south-central Pennsylvania. Most of the Region remains rural and forested with a land area of 3,400 square miles and a population of 448,351 (2017 Census). The population is down 3.08% since the 2010 Census count of 462,582. The most populated county is Cambria with 135,871 residents, followed by Blair County with 124,736 residents. Fulton County is by far the least populated county with 14,631 residents. (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Population per County
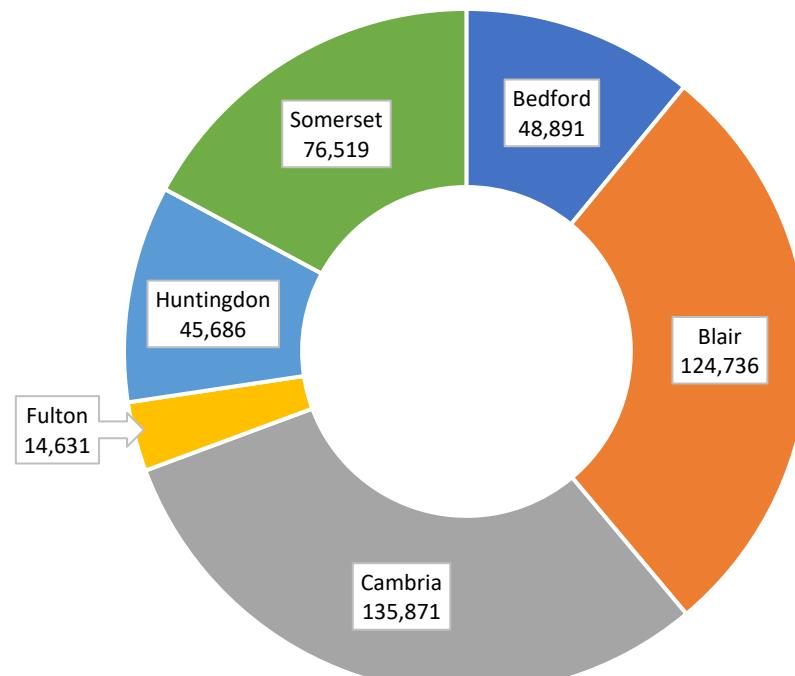
Data Source: US Census Bureau

As a percentage of the overall population for the State of Pennsylvania, the Region has declined from 4.24% in 1980 to 3.5% in 2017. (see **Figure 3,** Population as Percentage of State Population)

Figure 3: Population Percentage of PA

4.2% OF THE OVERALL STATE POPULATION 1980

3.5% OF THE OVERALL STATE POPULATION 2017
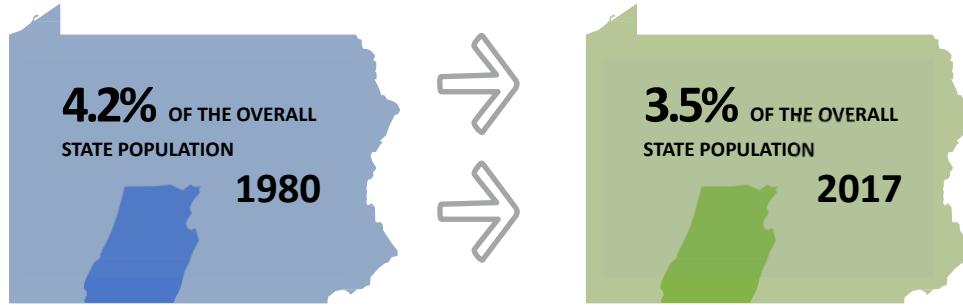
Data Source: US Census Bureau

Cambria County has experienced the brunt of the population loss in the Region, losing 8,870 residents since 2010. This is a -6.13% change in population for the county. In fact, Cambria County has the second fastest declining population in PA. Each county in the Region has experienced a population loss. The smallest population loss over the last eight years is Huntingdon County, only experiencing a -.31% decline, with a change in population of 144 less individuals. (see Figure 4 Percentage Change in County Population Change from 1980 to 2000 and 2000 to 2017).

Figure 4: County Population Change
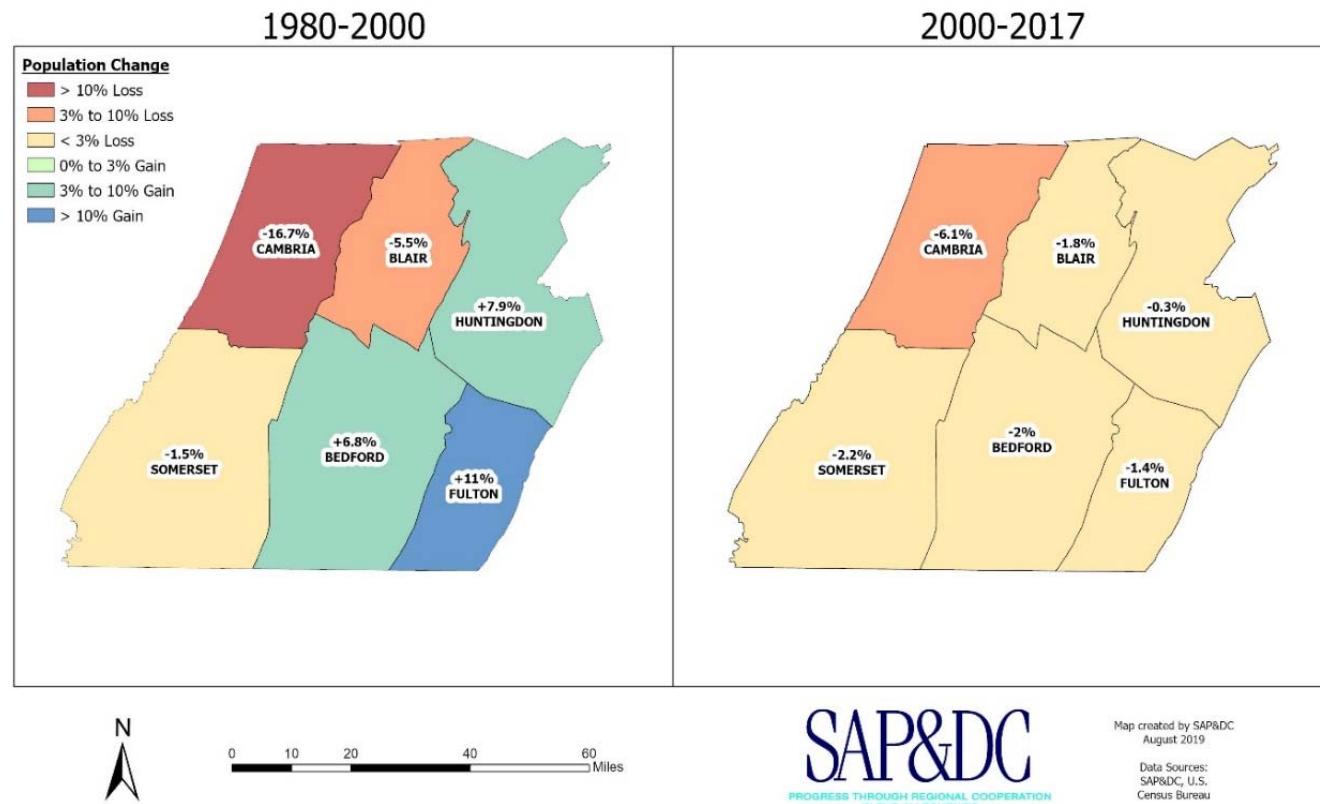
Data Source: US Census Bureau, PennDOT

POPULATION BY AGE

Compared to the State as a whole, the Region is older. As illustrated in Figure 5 below, the median age for the Region is 44.6, which is an increase from an average age of 42.7. This is compared to Pennsylvania's 2017 average age of 40.7, which has remained the same from 2010. Persons over 55 years of age represent 36% of the residents in the Region, compared to 31% for the State.

Figure 5: Age Distribution Region vs State
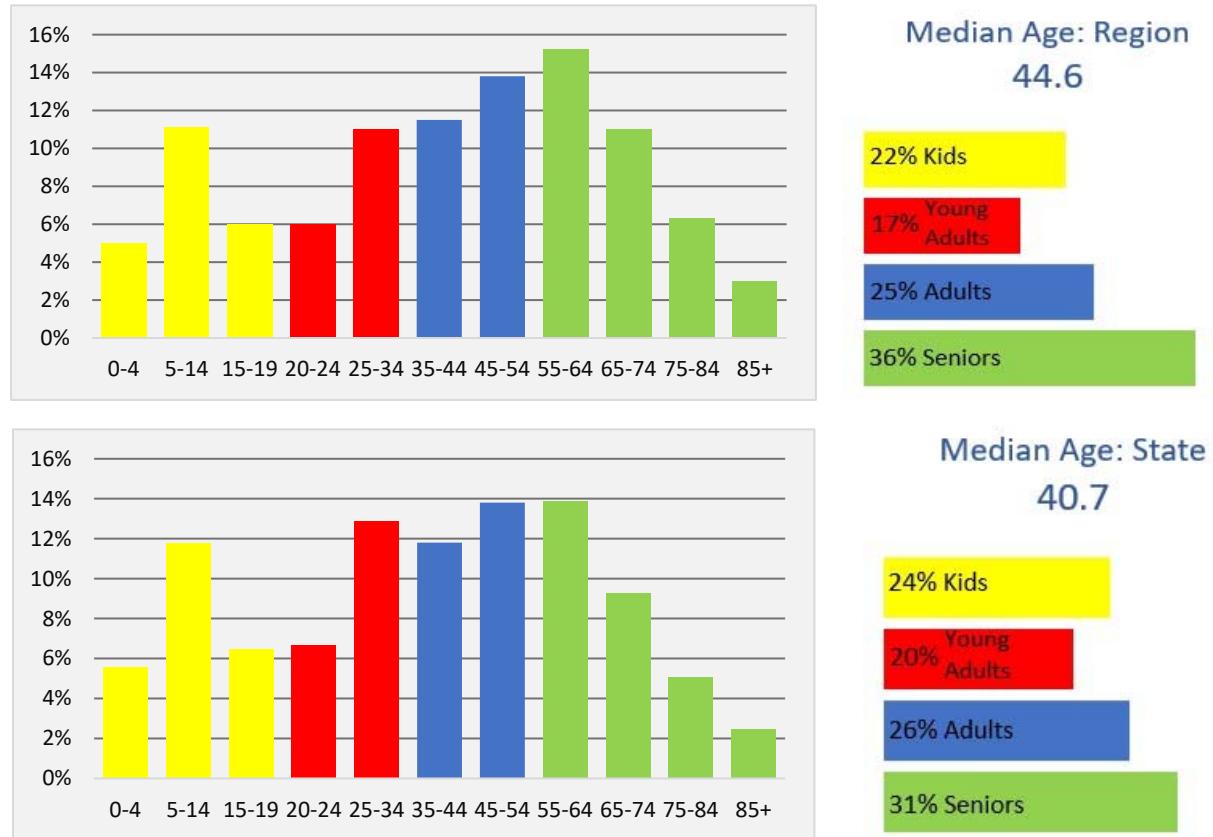
Data Source: US Census Bureau

As indicated by **Figure 6**, the Region has experienced a significant net loss among its working aged adults. Between 2000 and 2017, the Region lost roughly 34,216 (or 15%) of its population aged 20 to 54 years.

On the other hand, the Region experienced growth among its senior population (aged 55 and over). Between 2000 and 2017, the Region added 27,208 seniors representing a growth rate of 21%.

Figure 6: Population Change, 2000-2017
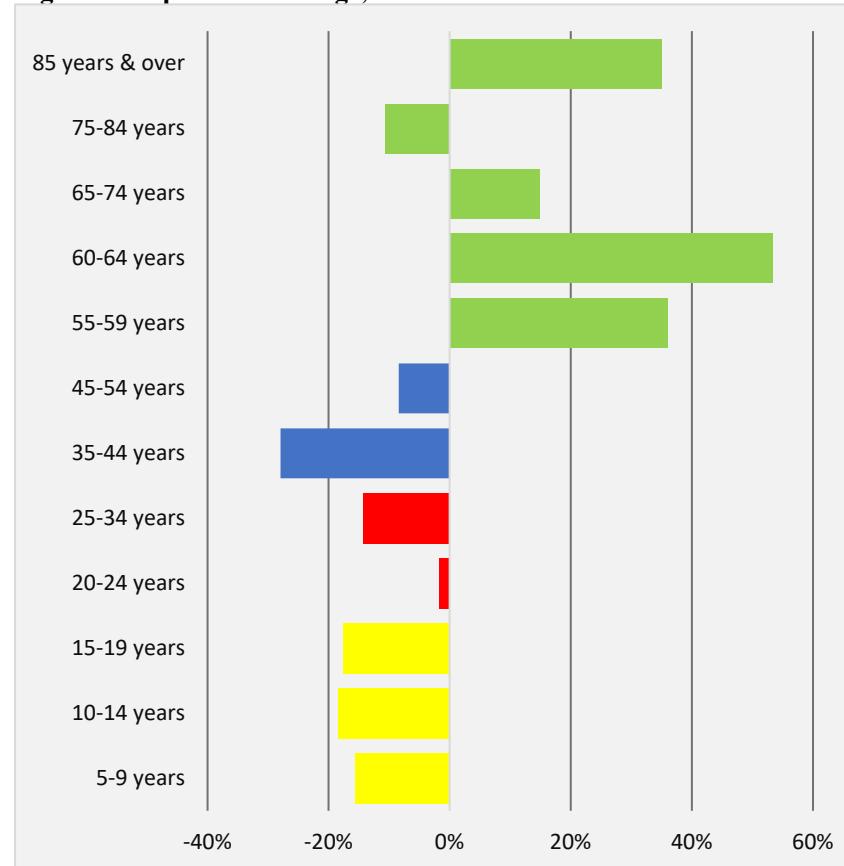
Data Source: US Census Bureau

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education attainment is a key indicator for a region's workforce talent and educational assets that can lead to technological innovation. As technology and knowledge-based industries become more central to the national and global economies, the high skill level of the regional labor force is one of the key drivers of job growth. At the individual level, one's education levels are closely linked to higher wages and employment rates.

The Region is well positioned in terms of higher learning institutions, boasting a list that includes the following four-year colleges and universities:

- University of Pittsburg at Johnstown
- Penn State University – Altoona
- Juniata College
- St. Francis University
- Mount Aloysius

In addition, several technical and community colleges offer two-year, associate degree programs. Among some of these schools are South Hills School of Business and Technology, Hiram G. Andrews Center, Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, and Allegany College of Maryland has several campuses within the Region (PA Department of Education). Despite the presence of these colleges and universities, college enrollment for the Region's 18 to 24-year olds lags the State as a whole. As shown in **Figure 7** below, 31.6.% of the Region's 18 to 24-year olds are enrolled in college or graduate school, compared to 40.3% for the state as a whole. Both enrollment figures are down from 2010 Census by 7.5% for the Region and 6% for PA.

Figure 7: College Enrollment, 2017

18 to 24 Year Olds Enrolled in College

Region	Percentage
PA	40.3%
REGION TOTAL	31.6%
SOMERSET	25%
HUNTINGTON	42.2%
FULTON	17.7%
CAMBRIA	49.8%
BLAIR	35.6%
BEDFORD	19.2%
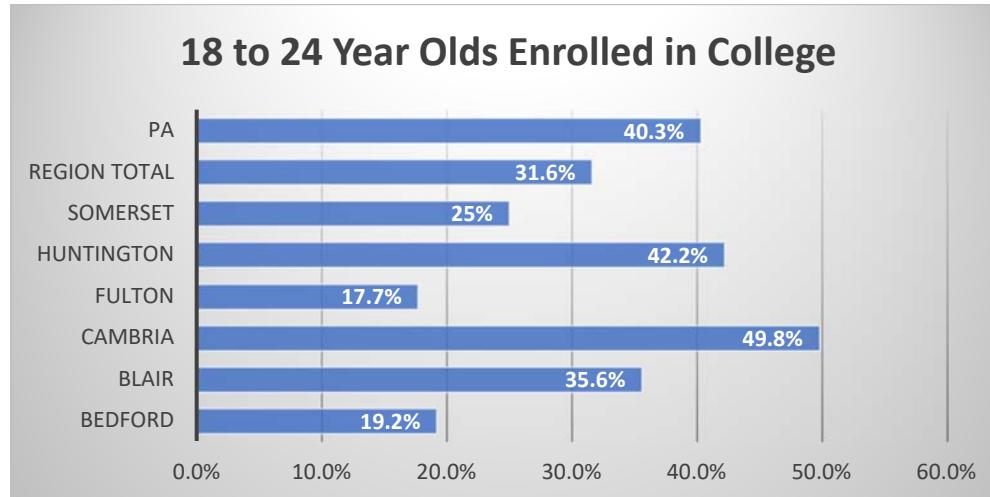
Data Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 8 below illustrates the educational attainment level for all residents 25 years of age or older. Slightly less than half of the Region's residents over 25 years of age hold high school diplomas at 49%. There was no change from 2010. This is compared to 27.1% for the state as a whole. These figures are significantly higher than the national average of 27.3%, which had a drastic decrease from 2010 of 10%. Furthermore, the percentage of the Region's residents aged 25 and older with college degrees is 24.8%, compared to 40.5% for the state and 39.2% for the nation. The Region had a .4% change while the state had an almost 5% increase and the nation had a 2.6% increase.

Figure 8: Educational Attainment over 25 Years of Age

	Region	PA	US
Less than 9th grade	3.5%	4.1%	5.4%
9th grade to 12th grade, no diploma	8%	6.9%	7.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	49.2%	27.1%	27.3%
Some college, no degree	14.8%	20.4%	20.8%
Associate's degree	8.2%	8.5%	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	10.6%	19.7%	19.1%
Graduate or professional degree	6%	12.3%	11.8%

Data: Source: US Census Bureau

The data illustrated in **Figure 8** also shows that the Region has a significantly smaller proportion of residents who possess Bachelor's degrees or higher—16.6% for the Region, compared to 32% for the state and 30.9% for the nation, almost double in percentage.

The Region's ability to advance the educational attainment for its young people beyond high school will be a key component to prepare its future workforce, and a complementary policy direction that is equally important is to retain those young people graduating from area colleges and universities to stay and work within the Region. Much of this so-called "brain drain" is eroding the intellectual capital within the Region, diminishing the potential for innovation and detracting would-be employers from relocating within the Region.

HOUSING CONDITIONS

Since 2000, the Region has added approximately 5,628 housing units, or 331 units per year. The vacancy rate has increased from 11.4% in 2000 to 15.6% in 2017 overall for the Region (see **Figure 9**). The counties with the highest vacancy rates are Huntingdon County at 25.5% and Somerset at 22.1%. The lowest vacancy rates are in Blair County at 8.8% and Cambria at 13.2%.

Figure 9: Occupancy Status, 2000-2017

	2000	2000 (%)	2017	2017 (%)
Total Housing Units	209,400	-	215,028	-
Occupied Units	140,490	88.6%	181,258	84.4%
Vacant Units	23,940	11.4%	33,725	15.6%

Data Source: US Census Bureau

The Region's housing stock continues to be dominated by single-family detached homes. As indicated in **Figure 10** below, single-family detached homes account for approximately 143,635 of 215,028 units, or 66.7% of all housing units in the Region. Although, this is a decrease from 2013 of 72.7% of the housing units. Huntingdon has the largest percentage of single-family detached units at 76.7% and Blair has the lowest at 72%. There are 15,875 or 7.3% mobile home or other units in the Region. This is a decrease from 2013 of 19,031. The largest number of mobile homes are in Bedford County at 18.1% of housing.

Figure 10: Housing Units by the Number of Units in the Structure, 2017

	Number of Units	% of Total
Total Housing Units	215,028	-
1-Unit Detached	143,635	66.7%
1-Unit Attached	7,804	3.6%
2 Units	6,226	2.8%
3 to 4 Units	5,271	2.4%
5 to 9 Units	4,347	2.0%
10 to 19 Units	6,019	2.7%
20 or More Units	2,949	2.7%
Mobile Home or other type	15,875	7.3%

Data Source: US Census Bureau

Of the 215,028 housing units within the Region, approximately one-third were built before 1939. Since 2000, only 14,170 new units have been constructed. As of 2019, more than 51% of all housing units are 60 years old. Only 6.8% were built after 2000. Thirty percent of the housing stock was built before 1939 (**Figure 11**). Huntingdon County has the newest housing stock: 30.1% built after 1980 and Blair has the oldest housing stock with 53.1% built before 1959.

Figure 11: Aging of Housing

Data Source: US Census Bureau
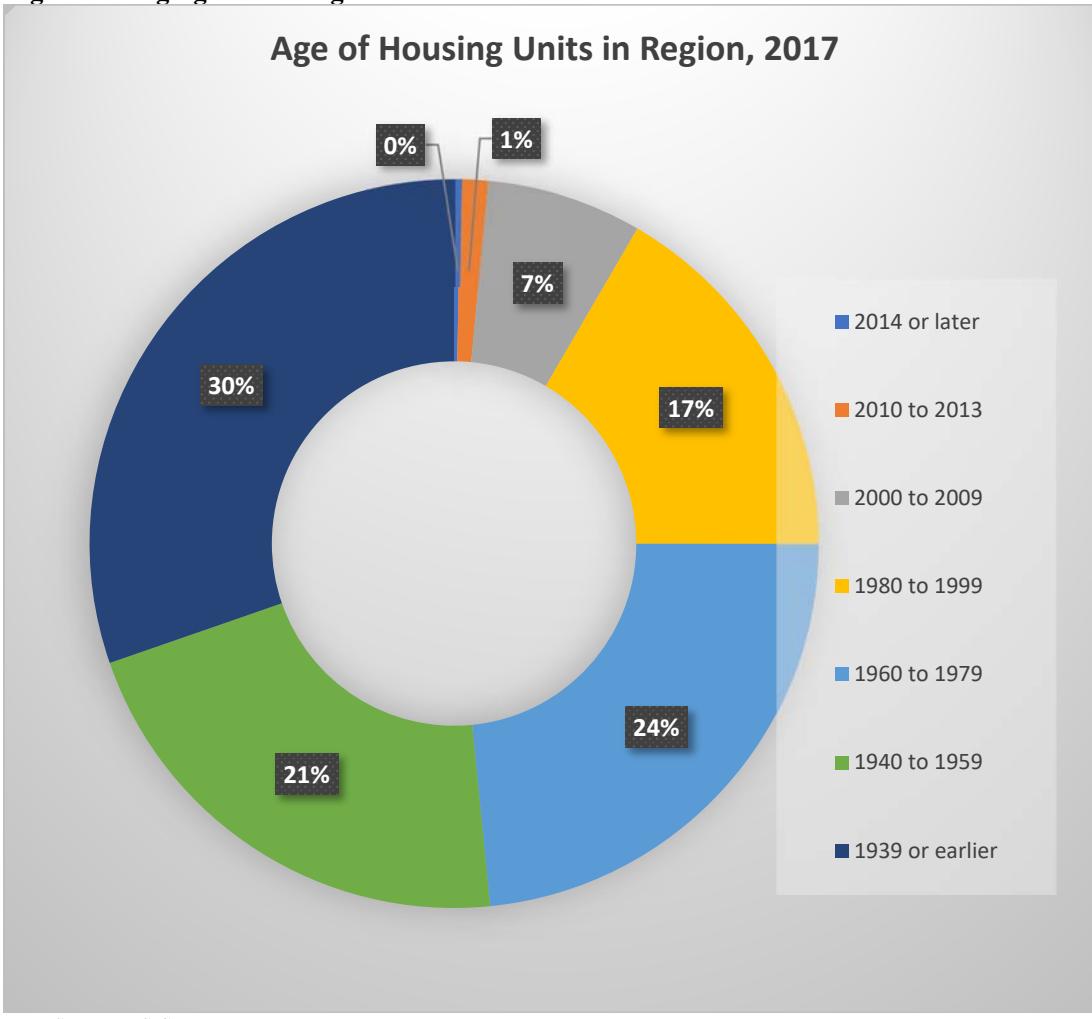
INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the major themes that emerged from the public engagement process for this project was the need to maintain and modernize infrastructure systems. In addition to making improvements to roads and public water/sewer systems, the Region's stake- holders identified high quality telecommunications systems—particularly broadband service—as a key component to recruiting employers and top talent to the Region.

BROADBAND SERVICES

In 2015, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler updated the minimum definition of broadband download speed to 25 Mbps and upload to 3 Mbps. This includes even the most remote and rural areas within the state. This was an increase to the previous standard of 4 Mbps download, 1 Mbps upload. The benchmark increase was justified as necessary due to "advances in technology, market offerings by broadband providers and consumer demand."

This change was in keeping with the Obama administration's focus on increasing telecom regulation. The Obama administration was the only administration to give the telecom industry a "failing" grade in the annual Broadband Progress Report, with Obama stating that "this isn't about faster Internet or fewer dropped calls. It's about connecting every part of America to the digital age." This change was also in keeping with 2010 FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler's focus on drawing attention to the "digital divide" in rural areas, as increasing the minimum speed results in less favorable coverage statistics.

In PA, Broadband service is defined under Pennsylvania Act 183 of 2004 as at least 1.544 megabits per second download speed and 128 kilobits per second upload speed. This law has not been updated to match FCC's regulations.

HIGHWAY NETWORK

There are two interstate highways intersecting the Region: I-70/I-76 (Pennsylvania Turnpike) that runs east-west through the southern part of the Region; and I-99 running north-south through the center of the Region. The communities that are close to these interstate highways enjoy superior transportation access, but a significant portion of the Region remains poorly connected. For example, Johnstown is the second largest city in the Region, yet its access to the Turnpike or to I-99 is less than ideal. Huntingdon County is also not well-served by an interstate highway. In addition to the two interstate highways, there are other primary transportation corridors in the Region, including US 22, US 219, and US 220. Other highways within the Region that have regional significance include US 30, US 422, US 522, and SR 56.

In November 2018, an 11-mile, four-lane section of Corridor N (U.S. 219) from Somerset, PA to just south of Meyersdale, PA was completed. Currently, efforts are being made to fund and construct the remaining 5.5 miles of roadway to the Maryland border, which will eventually connect to Corridor E in Grantsville, MD.

AIRPORTS

The Region currently lacks an international airport. Altoona-Blair County Airport and John Murtha Johnstown-Cambria County Airport are the only two airports in the Region with scheduled commercial airline flights. Lack of a major international airport in the Region means local companies must depend on airports outside the Region in State College, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, or the Washington, D.C. area.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Amtrak service to the Region is very limited, with one eastbound and one westbound train each day that stops in Huntingdon, Altoona and Johnstown. Public bus service is available in Altoona and Johnstown by Altoona Metro Transit (AMTRAN) and Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran), respectively, but there are large areas of the Region that are not serviced by any form of public transit.

Huntingdon, Bedford, and Fulton Counties are served by the Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton Area Agency on Aging (HBFAAA), which provides CART Senior Transportation. HBFAAA offers a comprehensive social service delivery system for the older and functionally disabled populations and CART is a public transportation service available to all individuals, with a special focus on serving the aged and disabled.

The Somerset County Transportation System is operated by The Community Action Partnership for Somerset County, Tableland Services, Inc., and provides shared ride transportation service in Somerset County. This program offers service for senior citizens, disabled, medical assistance, and general public clients.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The starting point for the process of planning for future economic development activities—whether policies, programs, or specific investments—is a thorough understanding of the existing situation and the events that have led to current conditions. This analysis builds on the analyses completed for the Interim CEDS completed in 2013, updating the information with the most recent data.

This section deals with employment by place of work. It focuses on total change in the economy and on the major sectors that comprise the total. In addition to employment, wages and payroll are also considered.

The analysis presented in this section was created with data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) online database for the period 2013 through 2017. The data is derived from the Office of Employment Security ES—202 files, which is compiled for Unemployment Compensation purposes. Therefore, those industries and workers not covered by UC are not included in the employment totals. Workers not covered include railroad and postal workers as these industries have separate unemployment insurance programs. Also not included are all self-employed persons including family farmers.

Because of its importance to the Region, Agriculture, which for the most part is not covered by the BLS statistics, is given a separate analysis.

EMPLOYMENT, WAGES AND PAYROLL

The six counties in the Region had 192,872 employees covered by Unemployment Compensation in 2017. This was a loss of 3,589 jobs between 2013 and 2017 (-1.02%) (see Figure 12). During the period, Pennsylvania grew in employment by 2.3% and the US by 4.6%.

Figure 12: Loss of Total Employment, 2013-2017

192,872   **Employees in the Region**

-3,589   **Net loss of Jobs (2013-2017)**

Data Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

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In 2013, the Region's average unemployment rate was 8.7%, just recovering from the recession, with a total of unemployed at 19,988. In 2017, the total unemployed was 11,283 for the Region and the average unemployment rate dropped to 5.5%. Cambria, Huntingdon, and Somerset Counties had the highest unemployment rate at 6.0% while Blair County had the lowest at 4.8%. Pennsylvania's 2017 average unemployment rate in 2013 was 7.4% and in 2017 was 4.9%. The US was 7.4% in 2013 and 4.4% in 2017. **Figure 13** demonstrates the unemployment rates between the Region, PA and US from 2013 and 2017.

FIGURE 13: **Index of Total Employment, 2013-2017**
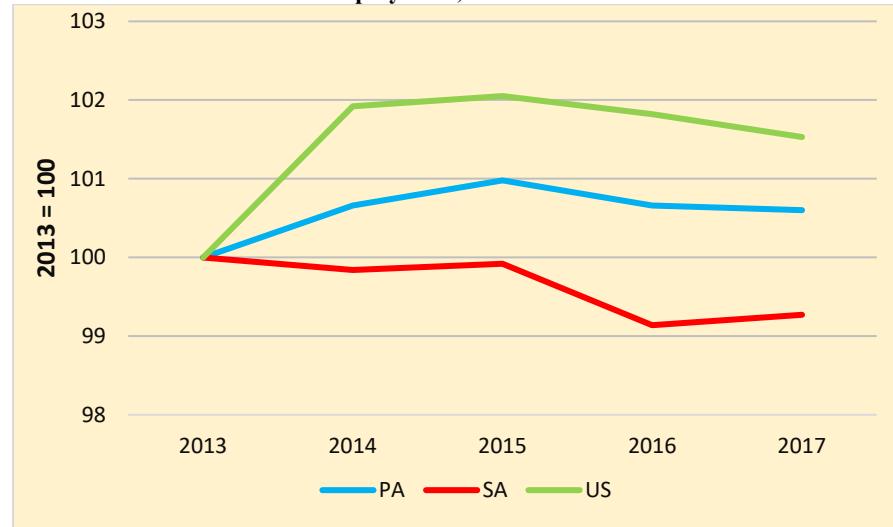
Data Source: Bureau of Labor and Industry

Wages in the Region are relatively low. In 2013, the average wage in the state was $924.31 per week compared to just $687.60 in the Region, which is 25.7% less per week. The disparity between the state and the Region is getting worse. In 2017, the Region's average wage $739.46 and PA's average wage was $1,016.63, 27.3% less. This difference in weekly wages remained almost the same over the last four years. See **Figure 14** below which demonstrates the differences in the Average Weekly Wages between, PA, the US and each county in the Region between 2013 and 2017, and the variations within the counties.

Figure 14: Average Weekly Wages


Average Weekly Wages
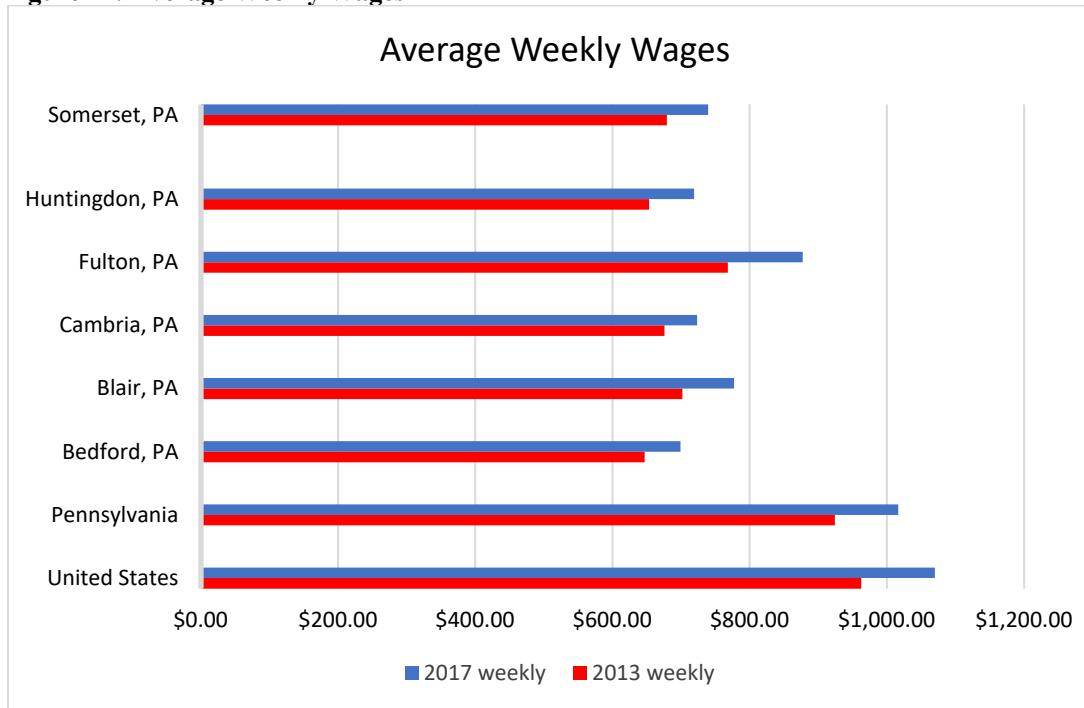
Data Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis

The lower average wage is due to both the structure of employment, with the Region having fewer high salary professional and managerial jobs and the fact that comparable positions pay lower wages in the Region than in the more urban areas of the state. Variations in the Cost of Living (especially housing costs) partially offset the wage differential.

STRUCTURE OF THE REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT
Employment in the Region is concentrated in five sectors: Education Services, Health Services, and Social Services (24.5%); Manufacturing (13.7%); Retail (12%); Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Accommodation and Food Services (8.1%) and Construction (8%). These 5 industries make up 127,833 of the workers in the Region or 66%. **Figure 15** demonstrates the employment in these sectors by county. This is a very large concentration of the employment. In Pennsylvania as a whole, the first four sectors total 57.6.%, almost a mirror image. Unlike the Region, construction does not fall next. For PA, Professional, Scientific, Management and Administration emerges in at 10.2%.

Figure 15: Regional Employment by County
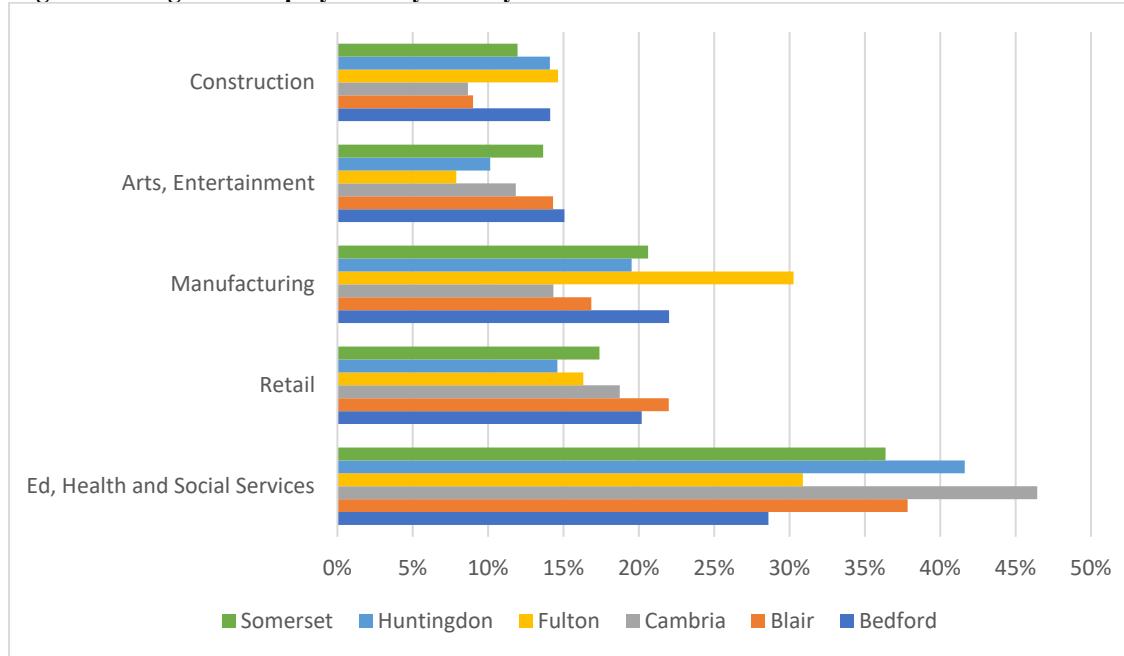
Data Source: American Fact Finder

The Southern Alleghenies Region saw relatively little change in total employment in the past seven years. The largest change was in Manufacturing with the loss of 3,264 jobs. This was a -1% change for the industry. Education Services, Health Services, and Social Services had a 2% increase in jobs. The state of Pennsylvania experienced gains and losses in the same industries. Education, Health Care and Social Assistance gained 102,533 or 1.1% and Manufacturing experienced a loss of 44,358 or -1.2%. Again, almost an exact percentage over the seven-year time frame (American Fact Finder, 2010-2017).

EMPLOYMENT BY COUNTY
Most of the counties in the Region lost a small amount of employment (one to five percent from 2013 to 2017) while Huntingdon and Fulton gained 271 and 157 workers for a 1.5% and a 2.3% increase in workforce. Cambria County had the biggest loss of employed at 2,954 or a 5.1% decrease in the workforce.

COMMUTING TO WORK

The Southern Alleghenies Region has a workforce of 153,900 and a resident labor force of 172,500 (2017); 75.5% of the workforce and 67.3% of the labor force are non-commuters, meaning they live and work within in the Region. Overall, more workers leave the Region for employment. Even though 37,800 workers in-commute to the Region for employment, 56,400 resident workers out-commute from the Region, resulting in a net flow of -18,600. There are two counties worth noting. In Blair County, where there are more in-commuters overall, the net flow increased from 4,100 in 2015 to 6,000 in 2017. The number of in-commuters increased by 1,200 while out-commuters decreased by 700. In Fulton County, the net flow increased from -2,700 in 2015 to 1,300 in 2017. The number of in-commuters increased by 1,100 while out-commuters decreased by 200. (Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC), 2017). See In and Out Commuting by county, **Figure 16** below.

**Figure 16: In and Out Commuting by County**
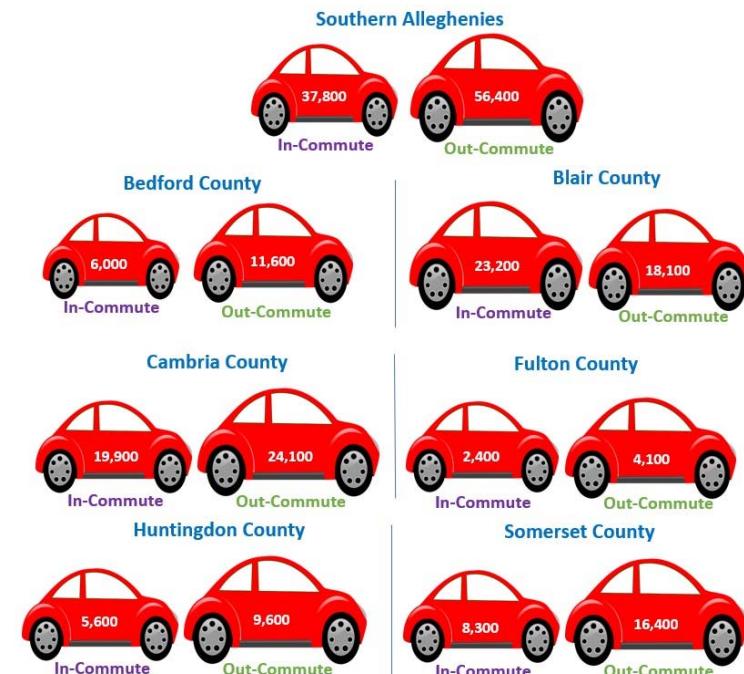
Data Source: CPWDC

Figure 17 below shows how many people live and work within the Region and identifies the top "home" counties for in-commuters and the top "work" counties for out commuters.

Figure 17: Commuting Patterns

Southern Alleghenies Commuting Patterns
6-County Region

SUMMARY
- Non-Commuters: 116,200
- Jobs Located in Region: 153,900
- In-Commuters: 37,800 (25%)
- Workers Living in Region: 172,500
- Out-Commuters: 56,400 (33%)
- Net Flow: -18,600

IN-COMMUTERS
37,800
Home County
- Westmoreland County, PA: 3,600 (10%)
- Allegheny County, PA: 3,400 (9%)
- Clearfield County, PA: 2,700 (7%)
- Centre County, PA: 2,400 (6%)
- Indiana County, PA: 2,300 (6%)
- Other Counties: 23,400 (62%)

OUT-COMMUTERS
56,400
Work County
- Allegheny County, PA: 7,800 (14%)
- Centre County, PA: 5,300 (9%)
- Westmoreland County, PA: 4,500 (8%)
- Indiana County, PA: 3,200 (6%)
- Franklin County, PA: 2,600 (5%)
- Other Counties: 33,000 (59%)

Regional commuting patterns are based on the entire 6-county region; non-commuters may live and work in any of the counties

Data Source: SAWDB

AGRICULTURE

Family farms are typically not counted in employment data analyzed above because self-employed farmers do not get counted in the BLS data since they don't qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. Instead of the few hundred agricultural workers shown in the BLS data, there are 7,942 agricultural workers as of 2017, representing 4% of all residents in the Region. Pennsylvania had 90,461 agricultural workers in 2017, which represents 1.5% of the workforce. The Region's 7,942 agricultural workers represent 6.3% of the total regional employment. The smallest and most rural county, Fulton, had the highest percentage of their workforce in agriculture in 2017, at 13.1%. This is followed next by Bedford County at 8.6% of their workforce in agriculture, and Blair and Cambria Counties were almost identical at 1.5% and 1.6%.

Change in Agriculture

As of 2017, PA has a total of 53,157 farms. **Figure 18** demonstrates the number of farms in each of the counties in our Region as of 2017 compared to 2012. Bedford County has the most active farms at 1,159, down from 1,164 in 2012. Fulton County had the biggest loss in the number of farms at 17 since 2012. The Region has a total of 6,640 as of 2017, which is 12% of the state total of farms.

Figure 18: Number of Farms Per County
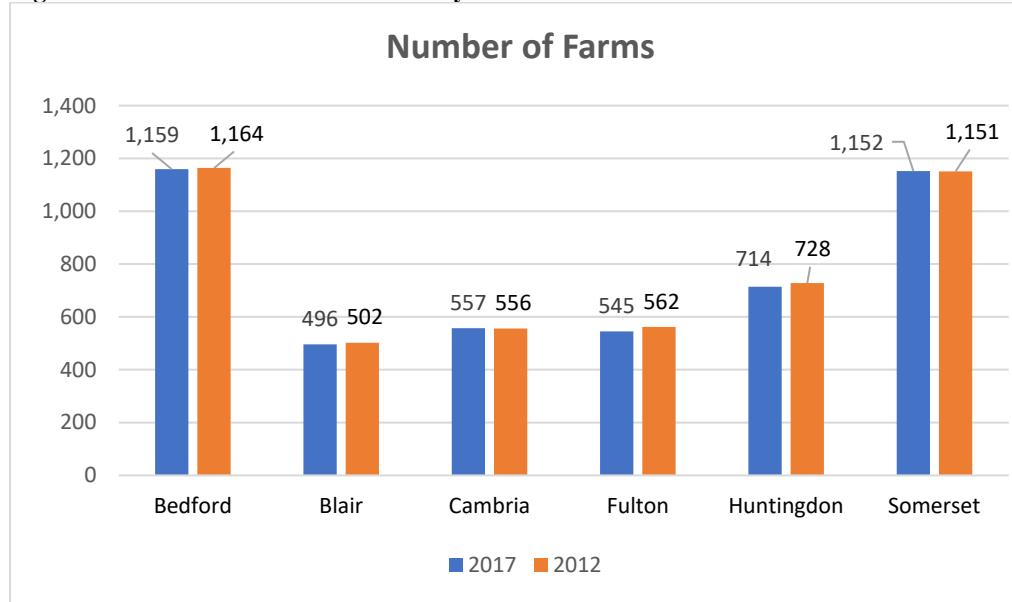
Data Sourc: USDA Publications

Total Sales

The total sales in the Region were $535,917,000 for 2017. Somerset County had the high sales at $115,449,000 with Bedford a close second at $115,273,000. PA total sales were $7,758,884,000. The Region accounted for 7% of the sales for PA.

Crops and Livestock

Agricultural sales in the Region were split 25% crop and 75% livestock. The top crop for all the counties in the Region was Forage (Hay/Haylage). Three counties top livestock sales were Cattle and Calves (Bedford, Cambria and Somerset). Blair's top livestock sale was Layers, Huntingdon's was Turkeys and Fulton's was Hogs and Pigs. PA's the top Crop was Forage but their number one sale was Broilers and other meat type chickens.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS FOR ECONOMIC TRENDS

Location and transportation infrastructure are two strengths of the Region and the growth of transportation and warehousing is logical. The locational advantage also strengthens Retail Trade, Health Care and other local market area dependent sectors.

Although its dependence on manufacturing has decreased in recent years, the Region still has a highly unbalanced economy. Government, Health Care, and Retail Trade are more concentrated in the Region than in the state or nation. Another way of describing this is to say that many of the other (smaller) sectors are underrepresented. These include sectors that have a high percentage of high wage white-collar jobs: professional services, finance and insurance, and information. This is partially a legacy of the high concentration of employment in the goods producing industries. The workforce necessary to support a strong manufacturing-oriented economy is not same as that required for modern growth sectors such as Professional Services.

The heavy concentration of jobs in just three sectors, namely Social Services, Government, Health Care, and Retail Trade, pose major threats to the resilience of the regional economy. In order to withstand major economic disruptions—whether triggered by a nationwide recession or the relocation of large businesses in the Region—employment must be expanded and diversified (especially in higher wage sectors) to attract more diversified workforce from outside of the Region and keep individuals and families staying in our Region.

POPULATION PROJECTION

The following population projection analysis has been prepared for the Region's total population in ten-year increments from 2010 to 2040. Using baseline census data for the years 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030, and 2040, the Region's net migration trends are estimated.

Population Trends

According to the Center for Rural PA, from 2010 to 2040 Pennsylvania is projected to gain 1.42 million people. Ninety percent (90%) of these new residents are projected to live in urban counties and 10% in rural counties. The bulk of the population gains in rural counties will be attributed to in-migration rather than natural change, as the projections indicate rural Pennsylvania counties will have more deaths than births from 2010 to 2040. The rapid increase of the number of deaths is expected to increase to 25% and far outpace the number of births, which are expected to be at 5%. In-migration, on the other hand, is projected to trend upward. Rural counties are projected to see a 5% increase in migration. Most of these new rural residents will come from overseas.

Another trend is with baby boomers. This trend is being fueled, in part, by aging baby boomers (persons born between 1946 and 1964) and a slowly increasing birth rate. From 2010 to 2040, the number of rural senior citizens is projected to increase 54% while the number of youths is projected to decline 3%. With all this information in mind for the future, from 2010-2040 it is

projected that PA's total population will grow 11.2%. For our more rural Region, the average population is expected to grow only 4.8%. This is with Huntingdon County expected to grow at a staggering 18.5% by 2040, far above the rest of the Region, and Somerset County predicting a loss by 2040 of 3.3% (Center for Rural PA, 2014). Figure 19 demonstrates the percentage in population change for the Region for each county from 2010 to 2040.

Figure 19: Population Projection, 2010-2040

Data Source: Center for Rural PA
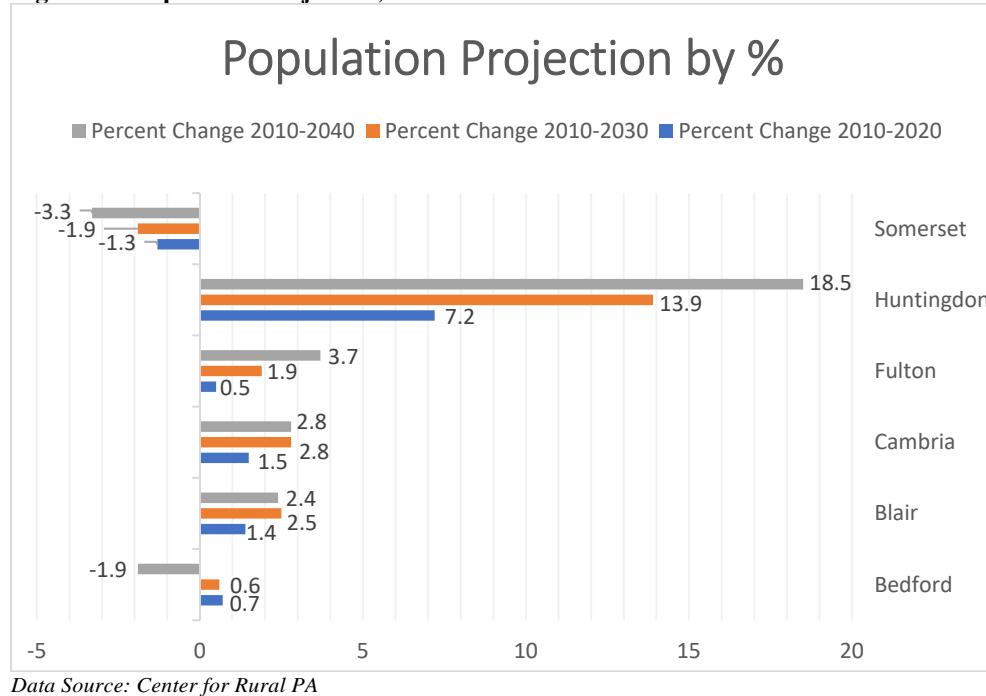
The next analysis has been prepared for the Region's total population in five-year increments from 2015 to 2040. Using baseline census data for the years 2000, 2010, and 2013, the Region's net migration trends are estimated.

Population Projection Alternatives
The first alternative method of projecting the population is based on net migration patterns observed in Trend 1. This method yields a population loss of 52,423 between 2015 and 2040, or -11.6% (see **Figure 20 below**).

Figure 20: Population Projection Alterative 1

2015	452,275	2030	422,419	▼ -52,423
2020	440,783	2035	411,136	Projected population loss in the Region between 2015 and 2040 (-11.6%)
2025	431,601	2040	399,852	

Data Source: Urban Partners

The second alternative method is based on net migration patterns observed in Trend 2. This method yields a population loss of 18,297 between 2015 and 2040, or -4.0% (see **Figure 21 below**).

Figure 21: Population Projection Alterative 2

2015	455,043	2030	443,910	▼ -18,297
2020	450,472	2035	440,328	Projected population loss in the Region between 2015 and 2040 (-4.0%)
2025	447,191	2040	436,746	

Data Source: Urban Partners

In Alternatives 1 and 2, the Region is expected to continue losing its working aged adults (20 to 54) while adding large numbers of seniors over 65 years-of-age. In both alternatives, the Region's senior population in 2040 will represent more than a quarter of all residents (see **Figure 22 below**).

Figure 22 Summary of the Regions Aging Population and Alternatives 1 and 2

	2015	(%)	2040 Alt 1	(%)	2040 Alt 2	(%)
Under 20	101,219	22%	87,711	21%	92,441	21%
21 to 34	79,589	17%	70,104	18%	76,684	18%
35 to 64	187,370	41%	139,222	35%	154,098	35%
Over 65	86,865	19%	107,815	27%	113,523	26%

Data Source: Urban Partners

The following three population projection alternatives factor in the Region's efforts to shape policies to grow the economy and the number of residents. The third alternative method is based on net migration patterns observed in Trend 2 and assumes a successful implementation of policies that result in a net in-migration of 200 young adults annually. This method yields a

population loss of 12,136 between 2015 and 2040, or -2.7% (Figure 23 below).

Figure 23: Population Projection Alterative 3

2015	455,043	2030	447,203	▼ -12,136
2020	450,472	2035	445,055	Projected population loss in the Region between 2015 and 2040 (-2.7%)
2025	446,313	2040	442,907	

Data Source: Urban Partners

Alternative 4 is based on net migration patterns observed in Trend 2 and assumes a successful implementation of policies that result in 100 value-added agriculture jobs annually. To model the potential growth of agricultural related industries, the State of Vermont was examined as a model for the Region. This method yields a population loss of 12,605 between 2015 and 2040, or -2.8% (**Figure 24** and **Figure 25**).

Figure 24: Population Projection Alternative 4

2015	455,226	2030	446,940	▼ -37,219
2020	451,112	2035	444,781	Projected population loss in the Region between 2015 and 2040 (-2.8%)
2025	449,026	2040	442,621	

Data Source: Urban Partners

Figure 25: Vermont as a Model for Value-Added Agriculture

VERMONT

Vermont has roughly equivalent average travel distances to major metropolitan markets as the Southern Alleghenies—both are about 250 miles to New York City; Vermont is 170 miles on average to Boston versus 180 miles from the Southern Alleghenies to Philadelphia; 160 miles from Vermont to Montreal versus 130 miles to Pittsburgh for the Southern Alleghenies.

If the Southern Alleghenies were to focus on modest increases in farming intensity and target growth in farm-related industries to achieve 70% of Vermont's current level, these efforts would add more than 100 jobs annually in the Southern Alleghenies Region though 2040.

More additional information on this comparison, please see the Appendix.

Data Source: Urban Partners, Center for Rural PA

As shown in **Figure 25**, the four projection alternatives all show the Region losing population for the foreseeable future, although each alternative shows varying rates of population decline (1.5% to 11.6% loss between 2015 and 2040). In comparison, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania published its statewide population projection study in which the Southern Alleghenies Region was expected to gain population between 2010 and 2040 (1.9% growth from 2015 to 2040). The same study projected a 9% increase for the state.

Figure 26: Various Projections of Population Change, Region and State, 2013-2040
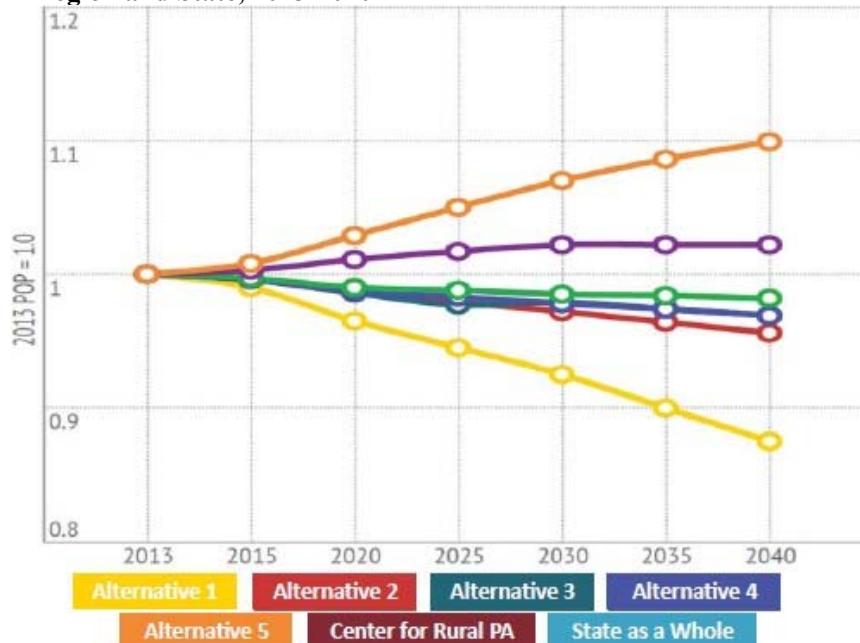
Data Source: Urban Partners

SWOT ANALYSIS

An important component of the CEDS process was the analysis of the Region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), which was completed through a five question survey sent out to over 900 individuals in the six-county Region, we conducted informal stakeholder interviews on a rolling basis and a meeting of the CEDS Committee to analyze the data collected from the survey results. The strategic direction and associated action plan set forth in this document flow from the Region's assets and limitations identified in the following SWOT analysis

1. Strengths
Our Region's Relative Competitive Advantages

- Natural Assets and Recreational Opportunities (e.g. State and Local Parks, Trails, Waterways, etc.)
- Community Sense and Quality of Life
- Strong presence of higher-education and post-secondary education institutions (Pitt-Johnstown, Penn State Altoona, Juniata College, etc.)
- Low and Affordable Cost of Living
- Reliable transportation network and access to major routes (U.S. 219, U.S. 22, PA Turnpike, I-99, etc.)
- Efforts towards the revitalization of downtowns and potential for economic growth
- The September 11th National Memorial Trail passes through Huntingdon, Hollidaysburg, Cresson, Johnstown, the Flight 93 National Memorial, and Garrett.

2. Opportunities
Chances or Occasions for Regional Improvement or Progress

- Growth of Recreation and Tourism (e.g. Raystown Lake, Trails, Historic Districts, State and Local Parks, etc.)
- Attraction of New Businesses and Industries such as Technology and Start-up companies, Manufacturing, etc.
- Collaboration and Consolidation of Local Governments and School Districts
- Improvement of Infrastructure and Transportation (e.g. Public transportation, completion of U.S. 219)
- Availability of Properties for Housing and Businesses

3. Weaknesses
Our Region's Relative Competitive Disadvantages

- Economic and Business Development is discouraged by blight and lack of adequate buildings and properties, which is unattractive for new businesses and industries.
- Lack of Good, Family-Sustaining Jobs
- Lack of strong, local government leadership and collaboration
- Out-migration of younger, working-aged persons from the Region and an aging population.
- Poor road network conditions (local roads, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, etc.), lack of public transportation, and inconvenient access to passenger rail and air travel.
- Inconsistent access to wireless and broadband service to businesses and residents.

4. Threats
Chances or Occasions for Negative Impacts on our Region or Regional Decline

- Out-migration of younger, working-aged persons from the Region and an aging population.
- Drug Abuse and Opioid Epidemic
- Loss and Lack of Jobs (e.g. limited opportunity for family-sustaining jobs, Norfolk Southern layoffs)
- The Region shows constrained economic growth due to limited development, outside competition for industry and closing(s) of local businesses and employers.
- Lack of strong, local government leadership and collaboration

GOALS AND OJECTIVES

This section presents the goals and objectives for economic growth and investment within the Region based on quantitative analysis shown in the previous sections, as well as input from stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and a public CEDS committee meeting. Under each goal are a series of objectives and strategies intended to help guide the economic development activities in the Region. Though many of the strategies offer practical solutions for local officials in their particular locale, they also present opportunities for Region-wide collaboration.

> **FOUR GOALS FOR THE SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES REGION**
> Seek Expansion of the Regional Economy through Diversified Job Growth.
> Maintain and Modernize Infrastructure to Make the Region More Competitive for Economic Development.
> Adapt Communities to be More Attractive as Places to Live and Work.
> Upgrade and Expand Telecommunications Service in the Region.
> Invest in Areas that Influence Health and Well Being while Raising Awareness of Health Opportunities for All Residents.

GOAL 1: SEEK EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED JOB GROWTH

Employment in the Region is heavily concentrated in five sectors: Education, Health and Social Services (1), Manufacturing (2), Retail Trade (3), Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Accommodation, and Food Services (4), and Construction (5). These five sectors combine to represent 66% of all employment in the Region. The Retail (1,513), Manufacturing (3,264) and Construction (1,913) sectors have experienced job losses in the Region since 2010, which poses threats to the regional economy. The Region also continues to struggle with offering jobs in the "Professional or Management" sectors to attract and retain young professionals. In order to withstand major threats to the resilience of the regional economy—whether triggered by a nationwide recession or the relocation of large businesses in the Region—employment must be expanded and diversified (especially in the higher wage sectors).

OBJECTIVE A: Continue the gradual movement of the Region to a more technology-related, diversified economy.
> *Strategy 1*: Continue to support manufacturing businesses in international trade and government contracting. Key sectors: manufacturing of mining equipment; food processing; precision manufacturing; and hardwoods.
> *Strategy 2*: Conduct annual assessments of high demand jobs and specific skills required in those positions to focus workforce development and job placement activities according to current opportunities.

Strategy 3: Promote business opportunities through Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs) and Keystone Innovation Zones (KIZs).

Strategy 4: Recruit businesses engaged in supply chain and other ancillary support operations for the gas extraction industry.

Strategy 5: Seek greater internship opportunities to recruit recent graduates and college students to underserved job opportunities.

Strategy 6: Continue support of civil and land use engineering consulting businesses.

OBJECTIVE B: Create an entrepreneurial environment to support start-up enterprises and strengthen existing businesses.

Strategy 1: Stimulate university-based entrepreneurship programs and faculty initiated efforts in new small business development via faculty sabbaticals and/or funding through research & development grants.

Strategy 2: Provide low interest loan funding for start-up and existing businesses in the Region.

Strategy 3: Support business incubators and shared workspace facilities.

Strategy 4: Support entrepreneurial ecosystems built on identifying innovative, entrepreneurial individuals and connecting them with coaches/mentors who will connect them with resources and training to facilitate their success (e.g. Startup Alleghenies).

Strategy 5: Provide assistance to small and emerging businesses to develop and deploy marketing strategies to increase their market reach.

Strategy 6: Support the Alleghenies Angel Fund: A group of private investors that will invest in new and emerging business in the Region and provide mentoring assistance to those businesses.

OBJECTIVE C: Support workforce development initiatives that build the talent pipeline and enhance the skills of the incumbent workforce to ensure the Region's employers remain competitive.

Strategy 1: Support and promote the Region's public workforce system, the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board and its network of PA CareerLink® sites as a significant resource for employer and jobseeker services.

Strategy 2: Expand and educate students and jobseekers to the many training options that lead to gainful employment in the Region. These can include traditional post-secondary education as well as occupational skills training through Career and Technology Centers and apprenticeships.

Strategy 3: Support opportunities for increased communication and collaboration between the employer community and the Region's educators to help ensure that employer needs and educational offerings are aligned.

Strategy 4: Support programs that provide education, workforce preparedness training and hands-on learning for young adults with significant barriers to employment. These can include low education levels, homelessness, low income, aging out of foster care and criminal records.

Strategy 5: Support expansion and enhancement of work-based opportunities for jobseekers, especially youth. These can range from summer work experience opportunities for in-school youth and internships for college students to transitional employment for adults with barriers to employment.

OBJECTIVE D: Expand the tourism visitation potential for the Region.
Strategy 1: Identify resources to continue promoting the Region as "The Alleghenies."
Strategy 2: Provide assistance to entities pursuing funding programs to expand and improve existing assets, and to create new assets in order to increase tourism potential.

OBJECTIVE E: Provide services and amenities intended to attract the retired (or near retired) households.
Strategy 1: Provide more choice in housing options for retired individuals or empty nesters, especially those strategically developed near college campuses, healthcare facilities, walkable shopping districts, open space amenities, and cultural venues.
Strategy 2: Provide support to the healthcare industry to establish and maintain the highest level of medical care within the Region.
Strategy 3: Promote areas within the Region with high quality broadband service as ideal locations for near retired individuals to telecommute to their job.

OBJECTIVE F: Support the growth of local agriculture-related businesses.
Strategy 1: Support the growth of farmer's markets and community-supported agriculture (CSA).
Strategy 2: Support the diversification of agricultural crops and products.
Strategy 3: Encourage direct-to-market sale of locally produced agricultural products.
Strategy 4: Provide local co-ops with local outlets for local products.
Strategy 5: Support agricultural training at local career and technology centers.

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AND MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Having adequate infrastructure in place is a prerequisite for economic development if existing firms are to be retained and new firms are to be attracted to the Region. Traditionally, providing infrastructure meant new roads and new public water and sewer systems. In an era of scarce public resources, infrastructure investments will need to be allocated primarily to key development zones so that random growth or unwanted sprawl is minimized.

Additionally, Somerset and Cambria Counties possess excess water capacity that could potentially be leveraged as opportunities for

supporting businesses that require high- volume water usage and/or are located in regions experiencing water shortages.

OBJECTIVE A: Improve the transportation network to tie the Region together and make the Region more accessible to other markets.

> *Strategy 1*: Complete priority projects on the Region's Transportation Improvements Program and/or the Appalachian Development Highway System (e.g. U.S. 219 Improvement Project).
> *Strategy 2*: Designating Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFCs) allows for an efficient flow of freight and resources. In conjunction, this also improves connectivity to the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN).
> *Strategy 3*: Expand public transportation service to and within the Region.

OBJECTIVE B: Upgrade water/sewer infrastructure to accommodate new and modern growth.

> *Strategy 1*: Conduct an analysis of water/sewer service opportunities in the Region.
> *Strategy 2:* Identify and secure funding to upgrade sewer and water infrastructure as appropriate, particularly at developable sites.

GOAL 3: ADAPT COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE ATTRACTIVE AS PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK.

The Region has been experiencing a significant outflow of younger, working-aged persons for decades. Economists contend, and anecdotal evidences support, that this trend can lead to negative consequences in the economy resulting from shortages of skilled labor and slowdown of entrepreneurial innovation. The CEDS planning process has confirmed a desire and a need to slow down the pace of net outmigration of the younger demographic.

The Southern Alleghenies Region contains many assets that can be leveraged in a collaborative effort to improve the quality of communities and attract tourists, businesses, and younger, working-aged persons. By strengthening coordination between local government(s) and business/economic development organizations, communities will be able to develop and sustain vibrant, healthy areas to live and work.

The strategies outlined under this goal are intended to highlight the regional strengths and opportunities that can influence the overall attractiveness of communities within the Region.

OBJECTIVE A: Market the Region as an exciting, outdoor playground.

> *Strategy 1*: Develop and promote active outdoor recreation events/amenities in the Region (e.g. Raystown Lake).
> *Strategy 2*: Provide support for the Southern Alleghenies Region trail networks (e.g. September 11th National Memorial Trail).

OBJECTIVE B: Support innovative entrepreneurial initiatives that are designed to attract businesses, industries, and professionals to downtown areas.

    Strategy 1: Attract makers to downtown areas (e.g. Creator Square Downtown Johnstown).

    Strategy 2: Attract young entrepreneurs engaged in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) research and development (e.g. the Catalyst Space in Downtown Altoona).

OBJECTIVE C: Retain and recruit younger people to stay in and/or migrate to the Region.

    Strategy 1: Develop increased opportunities for employment for younger, working-aged persons.

    Strategy 2: Develop communities to be attractive for younger-aged people (e.g. entertainment, arts, recreation).

OBJECTIVE D: Invest in communities and work to promote and enhance their assets.

    Strategy 1: Support the development of multi-unit, market-rate residential projects in downtown areas, especially in historic buildings.

    Strategy 2: Encourage mixed-use commercial/residential development in pedestrian-oriented commercial districts.

    Strategy 3: Support cultural arts programming in downtown areas.

    Strategy 4: Educate and inform municipalities to help their understanding of National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) plans and policies.

    Strategy 5: Revitalize blighted, unusable buildings and properties to attract people and new business.

    Strategy 6: Support the implementation of Active Transportation Plans and Policies.

OBJECTIVE E: Build local leadership capacity.

    Strategy 1: Promote local government collaboration with state and federal agencies (e.g. PennDOT Connects, LTAP).

    Strategy 2: Continue to support local governments in regard to asset mapping and geographic information system projects in the Region.

    Strategy 3: Promote local government coordination between industry, business, and economic development organizations.

GOAL 4: UPGRADE AND EXPAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE IN THE REGION.

Residents and businesses in the rural areas of the Region are currently unserved or underserved regarding access to high-speed broadband internet and/or reliable cellular service. Improving telecommunications service will allow the transition from struggling industries to other industries (healthcare, tourism, technology, etc.) that will bolster the economy and enhance the lives of people within the Region.

OBJECTIVE A: Complete an infrastructure assessment in the Region to determine the best strategies in order to increase access and availability of broadband and cellular services to residents and businesses.

    Strategy 1: Gather, evaluate, and analyze broadband information and broadband dependent needs from users.
    Strategy 2: Conduct Local Broadband Market Assessment: Identify existing broadband options and costs across the community, particularly those for users identified in the Needs Assessment.
    Strategy 3: Build a comprehensive GIS database to facilitate analysis of the Region's broadband environment.
    Strategy 4: Perform a Gap Analysis of the Current Broadband Environment: Evaluate the current environment against the current and future needs of the Region.
    Strategy 5: Complete a *v*ertical asset assessment to include compiling data for towers/structures in the Region, contact information, and analysis/feasibility of wireless deployment.

OBJECTIVE B: Promote the deployment of high-speed broadband and cellular services throughout the Region.

    Strategy 1: Continue collaboration and alignment between local, state, and federal agencies, business leaders, and other stakeholders through the Regional Broadband Task Force.
    Strategy 2: Seek out funding to help support initiatives for the Region to improve broadband connectivity.

OBJECTIVE C: Develop and maintain a cutting-edge telecommunications infrastructure by supporting pilot initiatives to bring coverage to the unserved and underserved areas of the Region.

    Strategy 1: Partner with counties, communities, Consider Rural Electric Cooperatives (RECs), and local providers to expand high-speed broadband coverage throughout the Region (e.g. consider the formation of a Broadband Cooperative(s) in the Region).
    Strategy 2: Develop a low-interest loan program to offer service providers access to the capital needed in order to expand their networks.
    Strategy 3: Seek to implement innovative methods of deployment for broadband and cellular networks and systems when possible.

GOAL 5: INVEST IN AREAS THAT INFLUENCE HEALTH AND WELL BEING WHILE RAISING AWARENESS OF HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

Many people in the Region are affected by poor health outcomes because of *obesity, lack of physical activity, nutritional deficiencies, substance abuse, use of nicotine and smoking, chronic diseases, and mental health concerns. Improving the overall health of a community helps them live happier, longer productive lives.*

OBJECTIVE A: Expand rural health services throughout the Region.

Strategy 1: Enhance relationships with major health care providers to expand on existing infrastructure and facilities to reach rural needs.

Strategy 2: Explore the unmet health needs of the region's population, particularly outside the core areas where health services are more readily available.

Strategy 3: Install additional broadband and wireless facilities to provide telemedicine options to rural residents.

Strategy 4: Provide rural health screening opportunities for those residents that are unable to reach clinics.

OBJECTIVE B: Collaborate with employers to address employee health needs.

Strategy 1: Promote employee use of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) generally provided with group health insurance.

Strategy 2: Establish workplace wellness committees in each county.

Strategy 3: Provide a model for employers to undertake a workplace wellness' assessments.

OBJECTIVE C: Develop Community Plans to address substance abuse issues.

Strategy 1: Identify the specific drug problems in the community.

Strategy 2: Build on any existing resources (i.e. existing prevention programs).

Strategy 3: Develop short-term goals based on research-based prevention programs.

Strategy 4: Projects long-term goals and plans available resources for the future.

Strategy 5: Conducts ongoing assessments of the prevention programs and substance abuse issues.

IMPLEMENTATION/ACTION PLAN

The implementation or action plan identifies the goals, objectives, performance measures, and implementation partners necessary for guiding economic development initiatives for the next five years. The purpose of the action plan is to provide a "roadmap" for targeting future economic development investments throughout the Region, thereby launching the CEDS into action. Each of the goals and objectives within the action plan addresses one or more of the key issues facing future economic development within the Region. Thus, the action plan will be utilized to steer the selection of future economic development projects and investments as they are implemented to address critical barriers to regional economic vitality. Each goal and objective is associated with one or more performance measures in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

GOAL 1: SEEK EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH DIVERSIFIED JOB GROWTH

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE A: Continue the gradual movement of the Region to a more technology-related, diversified economy.	*Strategy 1*: Continue to support manufacturing businesses in international trade and government contracting. Key sectors: manufacturing of mining equipment; food processing; precision manufacturing; and hardwoods.	• Level of increase in job diversification in these sectors	• Workforce Development • Economic Development Partners
	Strategy 2: Conduct annual assessments of high demand jobs and specific skills required in those positions to focus workforce development and job placement activities according to current opportunities.	• Completion of Annual Assessment Studies • Number of workforce programs offering training in high demand skills	• Workforce Development • Local Colleges & Universities • Local Employers • Chambers of Commerce
	Strategy 3: Promote business opportunities through Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs) and Keystone Innovation Zones (KIZs).	• Official approval of the KOZ and KIZ • Number new businesses in the KOZs and KIZs	• County & Local Planning Commissions • Private Investors & Businesses • Chambers of Commerce
	Strategy 4: Recruit businesses engaged in supply chain and other ancillary support operations for the gas extraction industry.	• Number of businesses providing support for the gas extraction industry.	• County & Local Planning Commissions • Chamber of Commerce • Development Corporations • Private Investors & Businesses

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 5: Seek greater internship opportunities to recruit recent graduates and college students to underserved job opportunities.	• Number of internships offered to students • Number of former students employed fulltime at companies previously serviced as interns	• Local Colleges & Universities • Chambers of Commerce • Private Investors & Business
	Strategy 6: Continue support of civil and land use engineering consulting businesses.	• Net job growth in these job categories	• Local Colleges & Universities • Chambers of Commerce • Private Investors & Business
OBJECTIVE B: Create an entrepreneurial environment to support start-up enterprises and strengthen existing businesses.	*Strategy 1*: Stimulate university-based entrepreneurship programs and faculty initiated efforts in new small business development via faculty sabbaticals and/or funding through research & development grants.	• Number of new small businesses created • Number of students involved in entrepreneurship programs • Number of university/college faculty members involved in new small business development	• Local Colleges & Universities • Chambers of Commerce • Private Investors & Business
	Strategy 2: Provide low interest loan funding for start-up and existing businesses in the Region.	• Number of businesses supported with low interest loans • Number of new small businesses created	• Economic Development Agencies • Appalachian Regional Commission • Chambers of Commerce
	Strategy 3: Support business incubators and shared workspace facilities.	• Number of businesses incubators and shared workspace facilities • Number of businesses operating in such facilities	• Local Colleges & Universities • Chambers of Commerce • Private Investors & Business
	Strategy 4: Support entrepreneurial ecosystems built on identifying innovative, entrepreneurial individuals and connecting them with coaches/mentors who will connect them with resources and training to facilitate their success (e.g. Startup Alleghenies).	• Number of new coach/mentor relationships • Number of new businesses	• SAP&DC • Local Colleges & Universities • Private Investors & Business • Business Incubators

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 5: Provide assistance to small and emerging businesses to develop and deploy marketing strategies to increase their market reach.	• Number of businesses with marketing assistance • Number of businesses with increased sales	• SAP&DC • Chambers of Commerce • Private Investors & Business • Business Incubators
	Strategy 6: Support the Alleghenies Angel Fund: A group of private investors that will invest in new and emerging business in the Region and provide mentoring assistance to those businesses.	• Number of businesses assisted by the Angel Fund • Number of businesses mentored	• SAP&DC • Private Investors & Business
OBJECTIVE C: Support workforce development initiatives that build the talent pipeline and enhance the skills of the incumbent workforce to ensure the Region's employers remain competitive.	*Strategy 1*: Support and promote the Region's public workforce system, the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board and its network of PA CareerLink® sites as a significant resource for employer and jobseeker services.	• Number rereferrals made to PA CareerLink® sites	• Workforce Development Board • SAP&DC Workforce Staff • PA CareerLink®
	Strategy 2: Expand and educate students and jobseekers to the many training options that lead to gainful employment in the Region. These can include traditional post-secondary education as well as occupational skills training through Career and Technology Centers and apprenticeships.	• Number of students and jobseekers trained through Career and Technology Centers and apprenticeships	• SAP&DC Workforce Staff • PA CareerLink® • Local School Districts/Universities
	Strategy 3: Support opportunities for increased communication and collaboration between the employer community and the Region's educators to help ensure that employer needs and educational offerings are aligned.	• Number of employers assisted	• Workforce Development Board • SAP&DC Workforce Staff • PA CareerLink® • Local School Districts/Universities
	Strategy 4: Support programs that provide education, workforce preparedness training and hands-on learning for young adults with significant barriers to employment. These can include low education levels, homelessness, low income, aging out of foster care and criminal records.	• Number of businesses with assisted by the Angel Fund	• Workforce Development Board • Angel Fund • Private Investors/Businesses • PA CareerLink®

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 5: Support expansion and enhancement of work-based opportunities for jobseekers, especially youth. These can range from summer work experience opportunities for in-school youth and internships for college students to transitional employment for adults with barriers to employment.	• Number of businesses with assisted by the Angel Fund	• Private Investors/Businesses • Local School Districts/Universities • Workforce Development Board • PA CareerLink®
OBJECTIVE D: Expand the tourism visitation potential for the Region.	*Strategy 1*: Identify resources to continue promoting the Region as "The Alleghenies."	• Net increase in tourist visits and expenditures	• Recreation Authorities • Alleghenies Tourism Council • Convention & Visitors Bureaus
	Strategy 2: Provide assistance to entities pursuing funding programs to expand and improve existing assets, and to create new assets in order to increase tourism potential.	• Number of new projects/programs benefited from funding	• Recreation Authorities • Alleghenies Tourism Council • Convention & Visitors Bureaus
OBJECTIVE E: Provide services and amenities intended to attract the retired (or near retired) households.	*Strategy 1*: Provide more choice in housing options for retired individuals or empty nesters, especially those strategically developed near college campuses, healthcare facilities, walkable shopping districts, open space amenities, and cultural venues.	• Number of new residential units developed	• Community Development Organizations • County Government Organization/Authorities • Private Investors/Developers
	Strategy 2: Provide support to the healthcare industry to establish and maintain the highest level of medical care within the Region.	• Number of seniors assisted	• Local Hospitals and Healthcare providers
	Strategy 3: Promote areas within the Region with high quality broadband service as ideal locations for near retired individuals to telecommute to their job.	• Number of households with increased access to highspeed broadband	• Broadband Taskforce • County Government • Private Investors • ARC/EDA/USDA
OBJECTIVE F: Support the growth of local agriculture-related businesses.	*Strategy 1:* Support the growth of farmer's markets and community-supported agriculture (CSA).	• Number of farmer markers and CSA's	• Southern Alleghenies Local Food Network • Penn State Cooperative Extension • Private Businesses/Farmers
	Strategy 2: Support the diversification of agricultural crops and products.	• Number of new crops and products	• Southern Alleghenies Local Food Network • Penn State Cooperative Extension • Private Businesses/Farmers

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 3: Encourage direct-to-market sale of locally produced agricultural products.	• Number of new established relationships	• Southern Alleghenies Local Food Network • Penn State Cooperative Extension • Private Businesses/Farmers
	Strategy 4: Provide local co-ops with local outlets for local products.	• Increased number of local co-ops	• Southern Alleghenies Local Food Network • Penn State Cooperative Extension • Private Businesses/Farmers
	Strategy 5: Support agricultural training at local career and technology centers.	• Number of new enrollments of students	• Vocation Technical Schools • Penn State Cooperative Extension

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AND MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE A: Improve the transportation network to tie the Region together and make the Region more accessible to other markets.	*Strategy 1*: Complete priority projects on the Region's Transportation Improvements Program and/or the Appalachian Development Highway System (e.g. U.S. 219 Improvement Project).	• Number of completed projects	• SAP&DC • County and Local Government Organizations • PennDOT/ARC • ARC
	Strategy 2: Designating Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFCs) allows for an efficient flow of freight and resources. In conjunction, this also improves connectivity to the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN).	• Number of trains servicing the area	• SAP&DC • Economic Development Commissions • County and Local Government Organizations • Amtrak
	Strategy 3: Expand public transportation service to and within the Region.	• Number of buses providing service	• SAP&DC • Economic Development Commissions • County and Local Government Organizations

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE B: Upgrade water/sewer infrastructure to accommodate new and modern growth.	*Strategy 1*: Conduct an analysis of water/sewer service opportunities in the Region.	• Completion of an analysis	• DEP • County and Local Government Organizations • SAP&DC
	Strategy 2: Identify and secure funding to upgrade sewer and water infrastructure as appropriate, particularly at developable sites.	• Amount of investment in new projects	• SAP&DC • Economic Development Commissions • County and Local Government Organizations • PennDOT/ARC/USDA

GOAL 3: ADAPT COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE ATTRACTIVE AS PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE A: Market the Region as an exciting, outdoor playground	*Strategy 1*: Develop and promote active outdoor recreation events/amenities in the Region (e.g. Raystown Lake).	• Number or new events/activities	• County and Local Government Organizations • Alleghenies Tourism Council • Convention & Bureaus
	Strategy 2: Provide support for the Southern Alleghenies Region trail networks (e.g. September 11th National Memorial Trail).	• Completion of Trails • Counts on Trails	• SAP&DC • County and Local Government Organizations • Alleghenies Tourism Council • Convention & Bureaus
OBJECTIVE B: Support innovative entrepreneurial initiatives that are designed to attract businesses, industries, and professionals to downtown areas.	*Strategy 1*: Attract makers to downtown areas (e.g. Creator Square Downtown Johnstown).	• Completion of Creator Square and other similar projects • Number of new downtown residents involved in creative sectors	• Planning Commission • County and Local Government Organizations • Economic Development Organizations
	Strategy 2: Attract young entrepreneurs engaged in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) research and development (e.g. the Catalyst Space in Downtown Altoona).	• Number of new Businesses • Number of new young entrepreneurs	• Local Colleges and Universities • Chamber of Commerce • Private Investors/Businesses • County and Local Government Organizations • Economic Development Organizations

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE C: Retain and recruit younger people to stay in and/or migrate to the Region.	*Strategy 1*: Develop increased opportunities for employment for younger, working-aged persons.	• Number of new employment opportunities	• Workforce Development Board • Private Investors/Businesses • PA CareerLink® • Chamber of Commerce • Private Investors/Businesses • Economic Development Organizations
	Strategy 2: Develop communities to be attractive for younger-aged people (e.g. entertainment, arts, recreation).	• Number of new entertainment, arts and recreation activities in the Region	• Chamber of Commerce • Private Investors/Businesses • County and Local Government Organizations • Economic Development Organizations
OBJECTIVE D: Invest in communities and work to promote and enhance their assets.	*Strategy 1*: Support the development of multi-unit, market-rate residential projects in downtown areas, especially in historic buildings.	• Number of new multi-unit residential developments in downtown	• County and Local Government Organizations • Economic Development Organizations • Private Investors/Developers
	Strategy 2: Encourage mixed-use commercial/residential development in pedestrian-oriented commercial districts.	• Net increase in mixed-use developments in commercial districts.	• County and Local Government Organizations • Economic Development Organizations • Private Investors/Developers
	Strategy 3: Support cultural arts programming in downtown areas.	• Number of arts and culture venues • Number of arts and culture festivals	• Redevelopment Authorities • County and Local Governments • Economic Development Organizations • Private Investors/Developers
	Strategy 4: Educate and inform municipalities to help their understanding of National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) plans and policies.	• Number or local municipalities educated	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities
	Strategy 5: Revitalize blighted, unusable buildings and properties to attract people and new business.	• Decreased number of blighted properties	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Redevelopment Authorities • Private Investors/Developers

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 6: Support the implementation of Active Transportation Plans and Policies.	• Number of new plans and policies	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • PennDOT
OBJECTIVE E: Build local leadership capacity.	*Strategy 1*: Promote local government collaboration with state and federal agencies (e.g. PennDOT Connects, LTAP).	• Increased collaboration • Increased attendance at LTAP courses	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Regional Transportation Stakeholders
	Strategy 2: Continue to support local governments in regard to asset mapping and geographic information system (GIS) projects in the Region.	• Amount of GIS support provided to local governments	• SAP&DC • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities
	Strategy 3: Promote local government coordination between industry, business, and economic development organizations.	• Amount of increased coordination between organizations	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries

GOAL 4: UPGRADE AND EXPAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE IN THE REGION.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE A: Complete an infrastructure assessment in the Region to determine the best strategies in order to increase access and availability of broadband and cellular services to residents and businesses.	*Strategy 1:* Gather, evaluate, and analyze broadband information and broadband dependent needs from users.	• Completed data results on broadband information	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 2: Conduct Local Broadband Market Assessment: Identify existing broadband options and costs across the community, particularly those for users identified in the Needs Assessment.	• Identification of existing broadband options • Assessments of costs of broadband across communities	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
	Strategy 3: Build a comprehensive GIS database to facilitate analysis of the Region's broadband environment.	• Completion of GIS database	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 4: Perform a Gap Analysis of the Current Broadband Environment: Evaluate the current environment against the current and future needs of the Region.	• Results of Gap Analysis data	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 5: Complete a *v*ertical asset assessment to include compiling data for towers/structures in the Region, contact information, and analysis/feasibility of wireless deployment.	• Results of collection of vertical asset data	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
OBJECTIVE B: Promote the deployment of high-speed broadband and cellular services throughout the Region.	*Strategy 1*: Continue collaboration and alignment between local, state, and federal agencies, business leaders, and other stakeholders through the Regional Broadband Task Force.	• Ongoing collaboration efforts	• SAP&DC • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities
	Strategy 2: Seek out funding to help support initiatives for the Region to improve broadband connectivity.	• Number of funding initiatives for broadband	• SAP&DC • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments
	Strategy 3: Seek to implement innovative methods of deployment for broadband and cellular networks and systems when possible.	• Number of new broadband and cellular systems deployed	• SAP&DC • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments

GOAL 5: INVEST IN AREAS THAT INFLUENCE THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF THE COMMUNITY WHILE RAISING AWARENESS OF HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE A: Expand rural health services throughout the Region.	*Strategy 1*: Enhance relationships with major health care providers to expand on existing infrastructure and facilities to reach rural needs.	• Number of new facilities in rural communities	• Private Businesses/Industries • Major Health Care Providers
	Strategy 2: Explore the unmet health needs of the region's population, particularly outside the core areas where health services are more readily available.	• Results of assessment of unmet health needs	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 3: Install additional broadband and wireless facilities to provide telemedicine options to rural residents.	• Number of new residents and medical facilities with broadband access	• Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 4: Provide rural health screening opportunities for those residents that are unable to reach clinics.	• Increased number of resident's service with rural health screenings	• Private Businesses/Industries • Health Care Providers
OBJECTIVE B: Collaborate with employers to address employee health needs.	*Strategy 1*: Promote employee use of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) generally provided with group health insurance.	• Results of collect of vertical asset data	• SAP&DC • Hired Broadband Consultant • Broadband Taskforce • County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Private Businesses/Industries
	Strategy 2: Establish workplace wellness committees in each county.	• Number of new workplace wellness committees established	• Employers • Insurance Companies/Brokers
	Strategy 3: Provide a model for employers to undertake a workplace wellness' assessments.	• Number of assessments completed	• Insurance Companies/Brokers

Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Implementation Partners
OBJECTIVE C: Develop Community Plans to address substance abuse issues.	*Strategy 1*: Identify the specific drug problems in the community.	• Identification of drug problems	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Drug and Alcohol Commissions/Groups
	Strategy 2: Build on any existing resources (i.e. existing prevention programs).	• Number of new programs	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Drug and Alcohol Commissions/Groups
	Strategy 3: Develop short-term goals based on research-based prevention programs.	• Establishment of short-term goals	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Drug and Alcohol Commissions/Groups
	Strategy 4: Develop long-term goals and plans available resources for the future.	• Establishment of long-term goals	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Drug and Alcohol Commissions/Groups
	Strategy 5: Conducts ongoing assessments of the prevention programs and substance abuse issues.	• Results of ongoing assessments of programs	• County and Local Governments • Municipal and Local Government Authorities • Drug and Alcohol Commissions/Groups