



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029

**Brooke Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan
Planning Commission/ Region XI
Planning & Development Council**

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Purpose & About Us



Purpose

The United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) describes the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as a locally based and regionally driven economic development planning process and document. The CEDS provides community leaders and residents with an opportunity to plan their region's future.

Stakeholders help craft the CEDS by identifying a region's economic and community development priorities. The CEDS tells a reader where an area has been, where it is now, and where it is going.

The CEDS facilitates strong relationships with federal agency partners and allows the region to receive federal infrastructure and technical assistance grants. A region must have a CEDS to be designated an Economic Development District (EDD) by the United States Department of Commerce, EDA.

The Brooke Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission (BHJ-MPC) has the responsibility of crafting and maintaining the CEDS for the EDD consisting of Brooke County, West Virginia, and Hancock County, West Virginia.

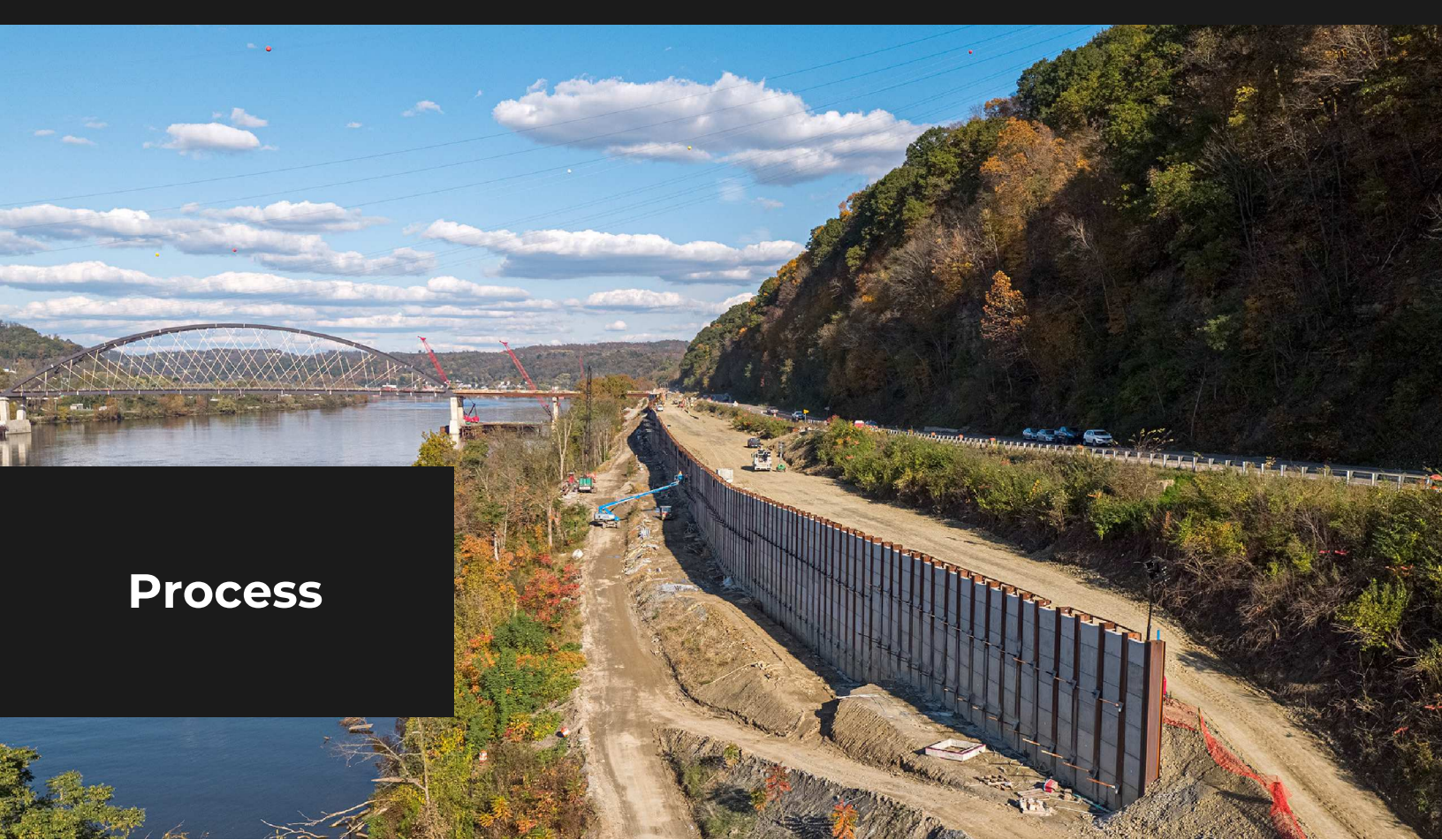
About Us

In 1969, the states of West Virginia and Ohio established BHJ-MPC as an interstate planning commission, a political subdivision set forth in provisions of the Ohio Revised Code 713.30 and the West Virginia State Administrative Code Chapter 8, Article 26. As a metropolitan planning organization, the federal government has charged BHJ-MPC to set regional transportation priorities. The BHJ-MPC meets monthly.

In 1971, the West Virginia Code, Chapter 8, Article 25, mandated the division of West Virginia into eleven regions to serve as development districts. Brooke County, West Virginia and Hancock County, West Virginia comprise the Region XI Brooke Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council (BH). BH is a council of local governments and collaborates with shared resources. The organization seeks to achieve optimal administration of planning and development functions. The BH Council meets quarterly and is comprised of government officials and appointees.

BHJ-MPC is a parent agency to BH. Both agencies share the same office, and BHJ-MPC maintains administrative and professional control of service delivery. As the region's federally mandated metropolitan planning organizations, BHJ-MPC undertakes metropolitan planning needs for the Weirton-Steubenville, WV-OH urbanized area and regional planning and development activities for BH.

The Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) works closely with the BHJ-MPC to accomplish economic development priorities in Brooke County and Hancock County. The BDC was established in 1993 by five existing economic development organizations in Brooke and Hancock counties to create jobs and encourage investment in the Northern Panhandle. The county commissions appointed board members and provided funds for the new organization. Funds were matched by the West Virginia Development Office.



Process

Process

The CEDS was drafted by the BHJ-MPC with direction provided by the CEDS Strategic Planning Committee. The committee included many BH Committee members and community stakeholders.

A key aspect of CEDS development was the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis (SWOT.) Over eighty community

members participated in open-ended interviews with a BHJ-MPC staff member. Interviewees were asked to participate in a SWOT analysis and shared their perspectives on the regional economy.

Drafts of the CEDS were reviewed at two BH meetings before adoption.



Summary Background

Environment

The EDD consists of Brooke County and Hancock County located in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. Brooke County and Hancock County are the northernmost counties in West Virginia.

The counties are bordered to the west by the Ohio River and to the east by the state of Pennsylvania. Hancock County is bordered to the north by Pennsylvania and to the south by Brooke County. Brooke County shares its southern border with Ohio County, West Virginia.

The area has a humid continental climate with cold winters and warm summers. Temperature varies between 22 degrees 83 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year. Rarely does the temperature drop below 6 degrees Fahrenheit and rise above 83 degrees Fahrenheit. Residents in Weirton can anticipate an average of 175.9 days with precipitation for a total of 31.22 inches. Natural disasters are rare with the exception of flooding.

Sources

<https://weatherspark.com/y/19044/Average-Weather-in-Weirton-West-Virginia-United-States-Year-Round>
<https://www.weather-atlas.com/en/west-virginia-usa/weirton-climate>

Population Centers

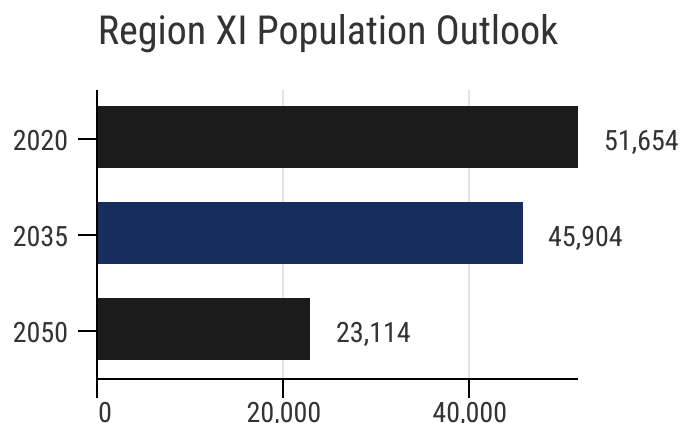
Communities primarily formed along the Ohio River. Most residents live close to West Virginia State Route Two. The road runs parallel to the Ohio River. In the north the road ends at Chester. It continues south through Brooke County to Wheeling and other points.

Hancock County and Brooke County are the two smallest counties in West Virginia. The size of Hancock County is 88 square miles, and the size of Brooke County is 93 square miles. The population of Hancock County is 28,172 with a population density of 352.2 people per square mile. Brooke County's population is 21,733 with a population density of 252.9 people per square mile.

Cities in Hancock County are the county seat of New Cumberland, Chester, and part of Weirton. The county seat of Wellsburg, Follansbee, and part of Weirton are cities in Brooke County.

Hancock County, WV, Brooke County, WV, and Jefferson County, OH comprise the Weirton-Steubenville, WV-OH Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA's population was 113,798 in 2021, and the population density was 196.2 per square mile. The largest cities are Weirton, WV, and Steubenville, OH. Both communities have populations of roughly 18,000 people.

Hancock and Brooke counties are two of twelve counties within the Pittsburgh-New Castle-Weirton, PA-OH-WV Combined Statistical Area (CSA). The CSA's population was 2,635,719 in 2021, and the population density was 374 people per square mile. Populations centers are in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The largest city is Pittsburgh, PA.



U.S. Census Bureau, 2023.

Source
<https://censusreporter.org>

Socioeconomics

The economies of Hancock County and Brooke County are similar. Both counties trail in traditional economic indicators in comparison to national trends. At the end of May 2023, unemployment in Brooke County and Hancock County was 4.2%. Meanwhile statewide unemployment in the state of West Virginia was 3.3%, and nationwide was 3.7%. For the year 2021, the real gross domestic product (GDP) of all industries in Brooke County, WV was \$1,363,927,000. The GDP of all industries in Hancock County, WV was \$1,263,923,000.

In 2021, both Brooke County and Hancock County had higher real median household income amounts than the state of West Virginia but were behind the national median. The real median household income in Brooke County, WV was \$52,217 and the real median household income in Hancock County was \$52,301. Statewide the real median household income was \$46,836. Nationwide the real median household income was \$70,784.

Statistically residents of Hancock County and Brooke County are older, less diverse, and unhealthier than the average American. According to the US Census Bureau in July of 2022, the 17.3% of persons in the United States are 65 years of age or older. In Hancock County, 24.4% of people are 65 years of age or older, and in Brooke County 25.3% of residents are 65 years of age or older. In the United States 75.5% of residents are white. In both counties that number is higher than 94%. Nationally Americans with a disability under the age of 65 account for 8.7% of the population. People with a disability under the age of 65 in Hancock County account for 11.4% of the population and 12.2% of the population in Brooke County. In 2018, according to the Division of Health Promotion and Disease, "West Virginia ranked 1st highest nationally in the prevalence of poor physical health, poor mental health, and activity limitations due to poor physical or mental health." West Virginia is highest in the nation for obesity and prevalence of heart attack.

Sources

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

<https://www.census.gov/>

https://dhhr.wv.gov/hpcd/data_reports/pages/fast-facts.aspx

Workforce

The people of the Upper Ohio Valley are proud of their historic role in the steel, pottery, and glass industries and view their workforce as a primary strength. They pride themselves upon having a strong work ethic and a shared commitment to manufacturing quality products.

The region benefits from jobs in the energy sector. Brooke County in West Virginia is one of the state's highest producers of natural gas, and Jefferson County is Ohio's second largest producer of natural gas. Industry structural changes and the federal regulatory environment will impact the natural gas industry and the area economy.

The region cannot meet the demand for skilled workers from the regional extraction of oil and gas. Welding training programs are available at Eastern Gateway Community College in Steubenville, OH, West Virginia Northern Community College in Wheeling, WV and at the Utica Shale Academy in Salineville, OH.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, manufacturing accounts for 15 percent of jobs and 25 percent of economic output in the area's three counties. Manufacturers in the region include Cleveland Cliffs, Marsh Bellofram Corporation, Eagle Manufacturing Company, and Wheeling-Nippon Steel.

Manufacturing jobs account for 24.98%

of jobs in Hancock County and 17.25% of jobs in Brooke County. Local employers have expressed a need for skilled laborers, and the importance of training for the trades in local schools. The area needs people to fill trades positions including mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, and machinists.

The area continues to see losses in the steel industry but has seen growth in green energy technology and food processing.

The area has also experienced growth due to natural gas cluster industry related companies producing gas pressure regulators, pipe fittings, controls, and other industry related parts. While economic analysts expect the region's longtime decline regarding production and employment in steel and chemicals to continue, natural gas extraction and processing may lead to continued cluster industry growth.

Area jobs in the service sector include institutions of higher education, healthcare, and gaming. Workers in healthcare and gaming represent most of the jobs. Local hospitals faced significant challenges due to COVID-19 including staffing shortages and a loss of revenue from elective procedures/surgeries. Gaming venues have faced stiffer competition from new venues in the greater region and new laws legalizing online gambling. Although Jobs forecasts show an expected increase in healthcare and education, long-term decrease in population may

negatively impact demand.

The importance of workforce development is emphasized by new regional employers, Pure Watercraft, Fanti USA, and Form Energy.

Although the area has been impacted by the loss of young workers, many opportunities exist for education and training. West Virginia Northern Community College has a campus in Weirton and Bethany College is in Bethany. West Liberty College is located near the southern border of Brooke County in Ohio County. Eastern Gateway Community College, Kent State University (East Liverpool), and the New Castle School of Trades are in nearby Ohio communities. Technical training is available at the John D. Rockefeller Career Center in New Cumberland. Area high schools also offer vocational training.

Local stakeholders cite the lack of available housing as a major deterrent to attracting and maintaining a young workforce. Existing housing is old and fails to serve the needs of young home buyers and new housing construction is rare. Hancock County issued 22 permits and Brooke County issued 11 permits for new home construction in 2022. BH has previously passed a resolution to support family housing development projects in areas of Brooke and Hancock counties that have necessary infrastructure in place. The City of Weirton is currently performing a housing assessment.

Top 10 Employers Brooke County, March 2022

- Weirton Medical Center
- Brooke County Board of Education
- Walmart
- Mountain State Carbon, LLC
- WMC Physician Practices, LLC
- Justrite Manufacturing Company, LLC
- Kroger
- Bethany College
- Wheeling-Nippon Steel, Inc.
- Brooke County Commission

Top 10 Employers Hancock County, March 2022

- ArcelorMittal USA, Inc.
- Hancock County Board of Education
- Mountaineer Park, Inc.
- The Fiesta Tableware Co.
- Bellofram Corporation
- Ergon-West Virginia, Inc.
- Weirton Geriatric Center, Inc.
- Change, Inc.
- Highmark, Inc.
- City of Weirton

Workforce West Virginia, 2023.

Infrastructure

Broadband

According to U.S. News and World Report, West Virginia ranks last in internet access. It ranks 50th in infrastructure and 46th in “Best States Overall.” Most Hancock County and Brooke County households have a computer, respectively 88.9% and 97.7%.

As of August 2023, there are 334 homes in Hancock County and 100 homes in Brooke County designated as unserved by an internet provider. In Hancock County, there are 205 targeted unserviceable addresses, and in Brooke County there are 57 targeted unserviceable addresses in Brooke County. Determined by review of aerial imagery, unserviceable addresses do not have access to power or are accessory buildings.

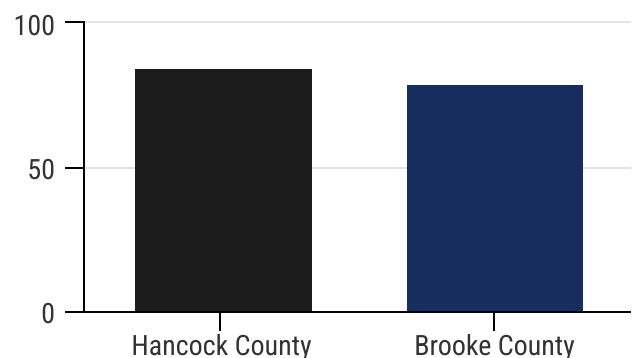
Comcast has been awarded funding by The West Virginia Department of Economic Development through the Line Extension Advancement and Development (LEAD) Program to continue expanding service in the region. The BHJ-MPC has been awarded several grants making it an active partner in regional broadband planning.

Water Sanitary Sewer, and Stormwater

Many residents in Hancock County and Brooke County do not have access to public water service and sanitary sewers. Due to West Virginia’s terrain, public utility development is very expensive.

In West Virginia, local public service districts (PSDs) provide water and sewer services to residents. BHJ-MPC has worked with PSDs for decades applying for grants, preparing funding packages, and administering water and sewer projects throughout both Brooke County and Hancock County. In 2023, there were approximately thirty projects at varying stages of development.

Broadband Subscription Percentage



US Census, 2023.

Sources
<https://www.usnews.com/>
<https://www.census.gov/>

Transportation

Many local stakeholders cite access to transportation infrastructure as an important regional strength. Residents benefit by proximity to Pittsburgh International Airport and access to West Virginia State Highway 22. Highway 22 travels west to Steubenville, OH and east to the outskirts of Pittsburgh, PA. This route provides travelers with the opportunity to connect with important state routes and interstate highways. The road also provides valuable opportunities for warehousing and shipping. Walmart distribution center in Wintersville, OH, Amazon facility in Imperial, PA, and Rue 21 distribution center in Weirton, WV are located close to Highway 22.

Class 1 railway operator Norfolk Southern Railway operates in Hancock County and Brooke County. Track within the two counties largely follows the same path as West Virginia State Route 2 from Chester, WV to Wellsburg, WV. Track also passes through property formerly owned by Weirton Steel and now known as Weirton Frontier Crossings. The Frontier Group of Companies is redeveloping the site and along with the city of Weirton have sought funds to update the rail line and create a new access road.

Another regional asset is shipping and recreational activities on the Ohio River. In 2018, Ohio River terminals handled 41.2 million tons of cargo. Cargo included petroleum, coal, grains,

crude oil, and other products. The New Cumberland Lock and Dam passes through a monthly average of 320 lockages and an additional 120 recreational watercraft during warmer months. The lock moves 21.5 million tons of commodities along the river annually, totaling almost \$4 billion in value.

Residents have expressed concerns about public transit. The Weirton Transit Corporation (WTC) only serves residents within Weirton City limits. A demand exists for bus service outside of Weirton both for work and recreational purposes. WTC does connect with Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority (SVRTA) of Steubenville, OH. SVRTA takes riders to employers in Imperial, PA, shopping in Robinson Township, PA, and to the Pittsburgh International Airport.

Sources

<https://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/About/Technical-Centers/WCSC-Waterborne-Commerce-Statistics-Center-2/>



Tourism

In 2022, tourism spending in West Virginia exceeded \$7 billion. Brooke County and Hancock County are part of the West Virginia Northern Panhandle Tourist Region. Visitors to the region enjoy dining, entertainment, shopping, recreation, lodging, and history.

Some popular highlights for visitors include gaming, trails, and museums. Hancock County features the region's only full-service resort and casino. Mountaineer, Casino, Resort and Racetrack is also home to the West Virginia Derby. There are two recreational trails in Brooke County. The Panhandle Trail continues from the Pennsylvania Stateline to the city of Weirton, and the Weirton Rail Trail follows the east banks of the Ohio River from Wellsburg to the Brooke and Ohio county line. The Weirton Area Museum and Cultural Center, Hancock County Historical Museum, and the Brooke County Historical Museum are community-led organizations dedicated to the preservation and education of local history.

The Top of WV Convention and Visitors Bureau is in downtown Weirton alongside the Summit Art Gallery. The organization promotes tourism and seeks to enhance the economic vitality of the region.

Sources

https://www.wvnews.com/statejournal/west-virginia-tourism-spending-exceeds-7-billion-in-2022/article_b2e766e0-530d-11ee-b9d3-a732bc3ba861.html

Energy

West Virginia is ranked as the 18th most expensive state for residential utilities. Electricity rates in the state are below the national average at 13.4 cents per kilowatt hour. The average residential electric bill in Hancock County is \$105.60, and the average electric bill in Brooke County is \$127.73. In the United States coal-fired powerplants generated 22% of electricity.

Coal powered generators produce 91% of West Virginia's electricity followed by hydro, wind, and solar. Residential customers use half of the electricity generated in the state and almost half of West Virginia homes use electricity as their primary source of heating.

For decades two nearby coal-fired power plants located along the Ohio River provided electricity. The W.H. Sammis Power Plant in Stratton, OH, was operated by Akron-based Energy Harbor and closed in June 2023. The plant is visible from New Cumberland, WV. The Cardinal Power Plant is in Brilliant, OH and is across the river from Brooke County. AEP Generation Resources Inc owns Cardinal Power Plant unit 2 and Buckeye Power owns units 1 and 3. Cardinal Operating Company operates all three generation units. Buckeye Power plans to shut down unit 3 by the end of 2028. The Northern Panhandle is one of West Virginia's four principal areas for coal. Nearby communities once used

much of the locally mined coal to fuel industry, heating, and cooking. Since the development of extensive highway systems and improved transportation facilities this has been unnecessary. Local coals are no longer considered a portion of the minable coal reserve.

Extraction of oil and gas has created economic growth in both Hancock County and Brooke County. Between 2010 and 2021 West Virginia's crude oil production increased by 934%. The state produced over 19 million barrels of crude oil in 2020. In 2021, extraction operators withdrew 2.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas from West Virginia. The American Petroleum Institute claimed that West Virginia oil and natural gas resources yielded \$13 billion in economic, trade, and job benefits in 2021.

Sources

https://www.wvgazette.com/news/energy_and_environment/numbers-adding-up-against-wv-electric-ratepayers--and-manchins-argument-against-clean-energy/article_341ad4ec-ba1a-5492-8f7a-c9aa10df03d1.html
<https://findenergy.com/wv/>
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/20112022/soaring-west-virginia-electricity-prices-trigger-standoff-over-the-states-devotion-to-coal-power/>
<https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=WV>
<https://www.wboy.com/only-on-wboy-com/wboy-com-lists-and-rankings/west-virginia-13th-state-for-oil-production-almost-10-times-more-than-10-years-ago/>
<https://www.usgs.gov/news/national-news-release/usgs-estimates-214-trillion-cubic-feet-natural-gas-appalachian-basin>
<https://www.api.org/news-policy-and-issues/news/2023/05/16/api-pwc-wv-2023>

Industry Clusters

Today's regional economy is more diverse with employment opportunities primarily in seven industry super sectors. Regional super sectors are manufacturing, leisure and hospitality, education and health services, trade, transportation and utilities, government, financial activities, professional and business services.

Several clusters or concentrations of related companies, organizations, and institutions are present in the region. Sizable clusters in Hancock County include vulcanized materials, upstream metals, hospitality, and upstream chemicals. Brooke County's most significant clusters are downstream metals, upstream metals, manufacturing, education, and maintenance services.

Five industry clusters spurred economic growth in Brooke and Hancock counties in 2018-2019, machinery, energy industry, logistics and transportation, plastics production, and primary and fabricated materials.

The region is also seeing growth in the sub-sector of advanced materials. In May 2023, Form Energy held a groundbreaking in Weirton, WV for the construction of the company's first high-volume manufacturing facility for the manufacture and assembly of iron-air batteries. Form Energy expects to employ at least 750 people at the facility. Other new employers include Fanti USA and Pure Watercraft.

Employment by Traded Cluster Brooke County

(Private, Non-Agricultural)

- Hospitality and Tourism
- Vulcanized Fired Materials
- Upstream Metal Manufacturing
- Distribution and Electronic Commerce
- Production Technology and Heavy Machinery
- Business Services
- Upstream Chemical Products
- Oil and Gas Production and Transportation
- Paper and Packaging and Financial Services

Employment by Traded Cluster Brooke County

(Private, Non-Agricultural)

- Metalworking Technology
- Upstream Metal Manufacturing
- Education and Knowledge Creation
- Downstream Metal Products
- Paper and Packaging
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Distribution and Electronic Commerce
- Transportation and Logistics
- Upstream Chemical Products
- Business Services

The U.S. Cluster Mapping Project, 2023.

SWOT Analysis



A SWOT analysis is a strategic tool to help an organization maximize strengths, reduce weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and identify potential threats. The execution of the analysis also provided BJJ-MPC/ Region XI Planning and Development Council an opportunity to have meaningful conversations with existing organizational partners and develop new relationships with regional stakeholders.

SWOT analysis discussions took place with regional stakeholders throughout the three counties comprising the Weirton-Steubenville, WV-OH MSA. BJJ-MPC staff scheduled individual appointments with participants. Questions were straight-forward, and

respondents were encouraged to provide detailed answers. The interviewer asked participants to identify, in their opinion, their region's strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses. All interviews were open-ended, and participants often provided detailed explanations for answers. The length of interviews varied from fifteen minutes to two hours. Special consideration was given to include members of underrepresented communities. Over 80 interviews were conducted, and hundreds of responses were received.

Responses were placed into three categories consisting of Infrastructure, Economic Development/ Workforce and Quality of Life. The Infrastructure



category consisted of responses related to transportation, water, sanitary sewer, and storm drainage. The second category Economic development/ Workforce included answers related to the retention and attraction of economic or business opportunities and those pertaining to worker related themes like technical training and the labor pool. The final category was Quality- of-Life. Answers placed into this category were those associated with the subjective concept of the well-being and satisfaction of one's life. Stated issues included poor neighborhood walkability and a shared sense of community.

Answer placement was subjective. Many answers could have been placed in two or even all three categories. For example, education related answers could be placed in the Economic Development/ Workforce category or the Quality-of-Life category, since education may impact both standard of living and peace of mind.

Infrastructure

Strengths

Roads to interstate highways
Ongoing water, sewer, stormwater projects
Access to rail, water, and air
New bridge between Wellsburg, WV and Brilliant, OH

Weaknesses

Lack of "shovel ready" projects
State Route 2 improvements
Areas with no or poor internet access
Poor rural road conditions

Opportunities

Broadband internet investment/ development
US Route 30 development
Interstate highway connecting Pittsburgh and Columbus
Waterfront development

Threats

Flooding
Old water and sewer lines
Aging watershed dams
Lack of internet provider competition

Economic Development/ Workforce

Strengths

Access to higher education/ training options
Low cost of living/ taxes and energy
Work ethic
Ease of access to major population centers

Weaknesses

Skilled labor shortage
Aging workforce
Undevelopable land
Vacant buildings/ urban blight

Opportunities

Redevelopment of industrial sites/ downtowns
Regional promotion
Develop recreational opportunities/ tourism
Interstate partnerships/ relationship building

Threats

Population loss
Trauma by nostalgia
Inactive bureaucratic leadership
Non-community-based landowners/ investors

Quality of Life

Strengths

Shared sense of community/ tradition
Proximity to medical facilities
Recreational opportunities
Proximity to urban areas

Weaknesses

Drug addiction/ lack of residential treatment
No homeless shelter
No public transit outside City of Weirton
Generational poverty

Opportunities

New housing
Mentoring/ leadership opportunities
Community/ relationship building with minority communities
Youth activities and sports programs

Threats

Lack of mental healthcare options
Food insecurity
Poor urban walkability
Pollution



Strategic Direction/ Action Plan

Whereas the purpose of the SWOT analysis is to identify a region's unique advantages and disadvantages, the Strategic Direction/ Action Plan builds upon the SWOT Analysis by describing how the region will achieve its goals. The following section will answer the questions, "Where do we want to go?" and "How are we going to get there?"

Encompassing the document's vision statement, the strategic direction aspect of the section includes goals and objectives. Goals and objectives do not only serve as benchmarks themselves but also provide a basis for decision making regarding limited available resources.

The focus of the action plan is implementation. It explains how the region will achieve its goals and

and objectives. Below each goal section and following the strategies section there are two additional sections.

The sections are "Benchmarks" and "Partners." Benchmarks help to explain the process of implementation and may serve as measurements of overall project progress. The partners section identifies partners that will help complete goals.

The Strategic Direction/ Action Plan also includes pages discussing priority projects and the document evaluation framework. Priority project pages include project steps, funding partner roster, cost estimate, and timeframe for completion. The evaluation framework page lists the performance measures for the annual CEDS review.



Vision Statement

“To continue building better infrastructure, providing better transportation options, and creating a stronger regional economy.”

The CEDS vision statement is inspired by the US EDA’s basic principle that “distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies.” The themes expressed in the vision statement encompass the priorities of both the CEDS Strategic Planning Committee and SWOT analysis participants.

Adoption of the statement proceeded a public request for suggestions via social media and review by committee members.

Goal 1

Support water, sewer, & stormwater projects

Objectives

- Help provide a safe and dependable water supply.
- Assist development by assuring access to water.
- Help provide sanitary sewer service.
- Assist development of stormwater projects

Strategies

- Provide pre-application technical assistance.
- Provide assistance for state and federal grants.
- Administer community development projects.
- Help state and federal agencies identify regional priorities.

Partners

- WV Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- WV Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- USDA
- US EPA
- FEMA
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- County commissions
- Congressional representatives
- Public service districts

Benchmarks

- Funding received.
- Number of completed projects.
- Number of submitted applications.
- Number of utility recipients.
- Amount of pipe installed.

Goal 2

Facilitate transition to a more diversified & resilient regional economy.

Objectives

- Contribute to infrastructure planning and development.
- Promote maintenance and expansion of tourism/ recreational areas.
- Support local economic development authorities.
- Build relationships with education sector/ workforce developers.

Strategies

- Provide planning assistance to governments and nonprofit entities.
- Assist entities applying to fund facilities necessary for tourism/ recreation.
- Assist economic development entities.
- Encourage cooperation and task sharing with education sector/ workforce developers.

Partners

- BDC of the Northern Panhandle
- Follansbee Chamber of Commerce
- Weirton Area Chamber of Commerce
- WV Economic Development Council
- WV Office of Broadband
- WV Department of Economic Development
- US EDA
- WV Economic Development Authority
- ARC
- Top of West Virginia Convention and Visitors Bureau

Benchmarks

- Funding received/ leveraged for economic development activities.
- Number of new job/ businesses created.
- Number of meetings attended with partners.
- Number of plans completed.
- Amount of technical assistance provided.

Goal 3

Support a safe & resilient transportation system.

Objectives

- Increase transportation services for older adults, low-income users, and persons with disabilities.
- Improve transportation provider communication.
- Support increase of service hours, service areas, and fixed route frequency.
- Promote creation of multimodal transportation and walkable communities.

Strategies

- Continue mobility committee meetings.
- Explore opportunities for travel training.
- Continue BHJ-MPC representation on Weirton Transit Corporation board.
- Assess needs for older persons and persons without transportation by geographic area.
- Explore funding and provide technical assistance for multimodal and walkability studies.

Partners

- Weirton Transit Corporation
- Local senior centers
- City of Weirton
- Change Inc.
- Weirton Housing Authority
- Weirton Board of Parks and Recreation
- Brooke County Parks and Recreation Commission
- WV Public Transit Association
- US DOT
- WV DOT
- FTA
- National Rural Transit Assistance Program

Benchmarks

- Number of public transportation riders.
- Related meeting attendance.
- Creation of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes.
- Miles of route expansion
- Amount of public transit or project funding received.

Goal 4

Continue brownfields program to facilitate, assess, cleanup, & reuse neglected or blighted properties.

Objectives

- Assess redevelopment opportunities.
- Build a community vision of reuse sites.
- Collaborate with agencies, community groups, and private-sector partners to implement solutions and leverage investments.

Strategies

- Complete phase 1 and phase 2 assessments on priority sites.
- Promote program public awareness.
- Revise GIS file for governmental reviews.

Partners

- BDC of the Northern Panhandle
- Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center
- US EPA
- County commissioners
- WV Department of Environmental Protection
- Local municipal governments

Benchmarks

- Number of properties assessed.
- Number of dollars leveraged.
- Number of acres made available for use.
- Number of jobs created on redeveloped sites

Goal 5

Improve regional broadband internet network.

Objectives

- Support plan development and projects to provide regionwide broadband service.
- Foster relationships with service providers and encourage expansion and system upgrades by private sector entities.
- Continue to work with WV Office of Broadband to create good policy.

Strategies

- Increase involvement of community members/ stakeholders to assist broadband expansion/ development.
- Identify and apply for planning opportunities.
- Facilitate communication between the WV Office of Broadband and residents.

Partners

- WV Office of Broadband
- Private internet providers
- Congressional representatives
- ARC
- US EDA
- Follansbee Chamber of Commerce
- Weirton Area Chamber of Commerce

Benchmarks

- Number of planning dollars received.
- Number of dollars invested in expansion/ upgrades.
- Number of households receiving service.



Priority Projects

Beech Bottom Industrial Park Water Infrastructure Project

Project Steps/ Timeline

1. Establish funding (2022)
2. Preliminary engineering (2023)
3. Project construction (2024)

Partner/ Funding Partner Roster

- BDC of the Northern Panhandle
- WV Infrastructure Jobs and Development Council (Funding)
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (Funding)

Project Cost

- \$2 million

Broad-based Stakeholder Participation

- Village of Beech Bottom council meetings (ongoing)
- Village of Beech Bottom utilities committee meetings (ongoing)
- BDC of the Northern Panhandle meetings (ongoing)
- Region XI PDC meetings (ongoing)

Priority Projects

City of Weirton Water Infrastructure Project

Project Steps/ Timeline

1. Feasibility study (2019)
2. Preliminary design study (2021-2023)
3. Congressionally directed spending announcement (2022)
4. Project bid (2023)
5. Project construction (2024)

Partner/ Funding Partner Roster

- US EPA (funding)
- WV Infrastructure Jobs and Development Council (funding)
- WV governor's office matching funds (funding)
- Congressionally directed spending (funding)

Project Cost

- \$33 million

Broad-based Community Participation

- City of Weirton council meetings (ongoing)
- The Weirton Area Water Board meetings (ongoing)
- Region XI PDC meetings (ongoing)

Newell Company Acquisition/ Upgrade

Project Steps/ Timeline

1. Declaration of distressed utility (2022)
2. Establish funding (2023)
3. Systems assessments/ designs (2023-2024)
4. Acquisition of systems (2024)
5. Upgrade of systems (2025)

Partner/ Funding Partner Roster

- WV Infrastructure Jobs and Development Council (Funding)
- WV Water Development Authority (Funding)
- WV Clean Water State Revolving Fund (Funding)

Project Cost

- \$20-\$25 million

Broad Based Community Involvement

- WV Public Service Commission meeting (9/2021)
- Tomlinson Public Service District meetings (ongoing)
- Hancock Public Service District meetings (ongoing)
- Region XI PDC meetings (ongoing)

Evaluation Framework

Infrastructure

Measurement	Current (2022)	2023	2024
Drawdown Amount	14,353,593.62		
Projects	27		
PSD Meetings Attended	100		

Economic Development

Measurement	Current (2022)	2023	2024
Unemployment	3.6 (B) 4.6 (H)		
Regional GDP	2,464,312,000 (2021)		
Labor Force	22,490		

Transportation

Measurement	Current (2022)	2023	2024
WTC Ridership	32,328		
Mobility Meetings	5		
WTC Funding	672,768 (FY 21-22)		

Brownfields

Measurement	Current (2022)	2023	2024
Assessments	13		
Funding Received	275,000		
Acres	325		

Broadband

Measurement	Current (2022)	2023	2024
Households Served	97.61% (B) 96.95% (H)		
Total Investments	27,778,187		
Grant Funding	19,447,602		

Economic Resilience

Economies experience disruptions for many reasons. Economic resilience is a region's ability to anticipate, withstand, and recover from a disruption or shock to its economy. Both "steady state" initiatives and "responsive" initiatives are used to foster economic resilience in Hancock County and Brooke County.

"Steady state" initiatives implement resilience through goals or actions which strengthen the long-term

resilience through goals or actions which strengthen the long-term economic durability of the region. "Responsive" initiatives implement resilience by establishing information networks among regional stakeholders.

By undertaking "steady state" initiatives and "responsive" initiatives the Region XI PDC and its partners will continue contributing to regional economic resilience.

Steady State Initiatives

- BHJ-MPC undertakes comprehensive planning efforts involving extensive community involvement to implement and define a collective vision for resilience.
- BDC Supports efforts to broaden the region's industrial base.
- BHJ-MPC and BDC support efforts to create a more resilient workforce.
- BHJ-MPC and partners support efforts to build and maintain redundancy in telecommunications and broadband networks.
- BHJ-MPC encourages safe development practices in business districts and surrounding communities.

Responsive Initiatives

- BHJ-MPC conducts pre-disaster planning.
- BHJ-MPC and BDC regularly maintain communication with the business community recognizing needs and issues.



Annual Review & Conclusion

The CEDS annual review measures regional progress in context of the objectives and goals developed via the SWOT analysis and clarified in the Strategic Direction/ Action Plan. By annually reviewing the CEDS and making necessary changes, the CEDS Strategic Planning Committee can consistently answer the questions, “How are we doing?” and “What can we do better?”

An annual CEDS review maintains the CEDS status as a working or “living document.” As conditions change quickly, the CEDS review provides an opportunity for the economic development district to keep the CEDS current.

A successful CEDS process provides a means for community engagement,

leverages public sector involvement, and serves as a blueprint for regional economic collaboration.

Aspects of the CEDS will also be continually integrated into plans related to transportation, sustainability, hazard mitigation, and others. The completion of a five-year CEDS plan is not the end of a process, but the beginning of a much larger one.

The BHJ-MPC would like to thank both the CEDS Strategy Committee and SWOT analysis participants for their contributions to the Brooke Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council 2023-2028 CEDS.

Contact Information

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Thank You

The Region XI Planning and Development Council would like to thank the following organizations for providing ongoing support necessary to produce this document.

- US EDA
- Hancock County, WV
- Brooke County, WV
- Local communities



BHJ-MPC

Brooke Hancock Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission

CEDS Strategic Committee Membership



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Treasurer
Village of Beech Bottom

Chip Fenske
Director of Business
Development
Empire Diversified Energy

Honorable
Thomas Diserio
Commissioner
Brooke County

Honorable
Harold Miller
Mayor
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President/ CEO
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Honorable
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Honorable
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Honorable
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Paul Cowey III
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Honorable
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City of Follansbee

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City of New Cumberland

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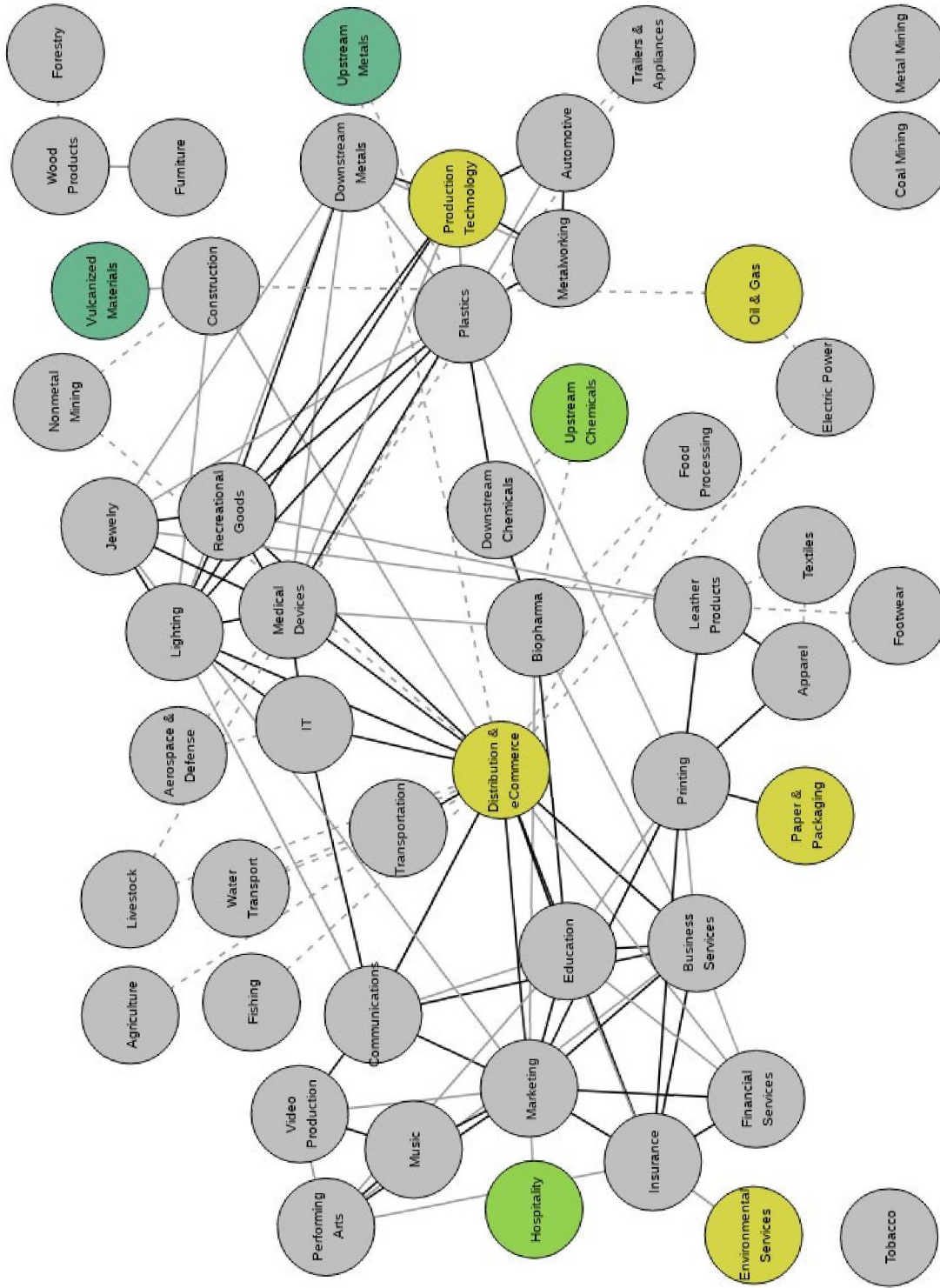
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Cluster Linkages and Economic Diversification

Hancock County, WV, 2016



Cluster Specialization

- Dark Green: Strong clusters above 90th percentile specialization
- Light Green: Strong clusters above 75th percentile specialization
- Yellow: Other specialized clusters (LQ > 1.0)

Linkage Criteria

- Solid line: BCR >= 95th pctile & RI >= 20%
- Dashed line: BCR 90th-94th pctile & RI >= 20%
- Dotted line: Next closest clusters not meeting above criteria



Public Notice & Public Comment

The 2023-2028 Region XI Planning and Development Council CEDS is posted on the BHJ-MPC website. Printed copies are available on request.

Attendees of the Region XI Planning and Development Council summer 2023 meeting received copies of the CEDS. Attendees were also provided with a PowerPoint presentation about the CEDS.

A public comment notice was printed in the Brooke County Review. A link to review the CEDS was posted on the BHJ Facebook page, and residents were encouraged to add comments to the post.