

# Strategic Plan Overview



This document describes the **Northwest Commission's Strategic Plan**, which was developed originally in 2004, revised in September 2010 and was approved by the Board of Directors on October 1, 2010.

## A. Process and Strategic Focus

This strategic plan will be utilized to guide the Commission's activities over the next five years. The new strategy addresses strategic work areas for the three departments of the Commission:

1. Business & Economic Development
2. Community Development and Planning
3. Organizational Development

The central priorities of the strategic plan are as follows:

1. Move the Commission from its current bureaucratic organization model to a customer-oriented, performance-based organizational model.
2. Increase collaboration within the Commission at the Board leadership and staff levels and increase collaboration and partnerships with external stakeholders (local government, business/private sector, local economic development, community development and planning organizations, education, state government, Federal agencies, and other groups).
3. Align the organization's future work priorities with the most pressing economic and community development needs and opportunities facing the Northwest Pennsylvania region.

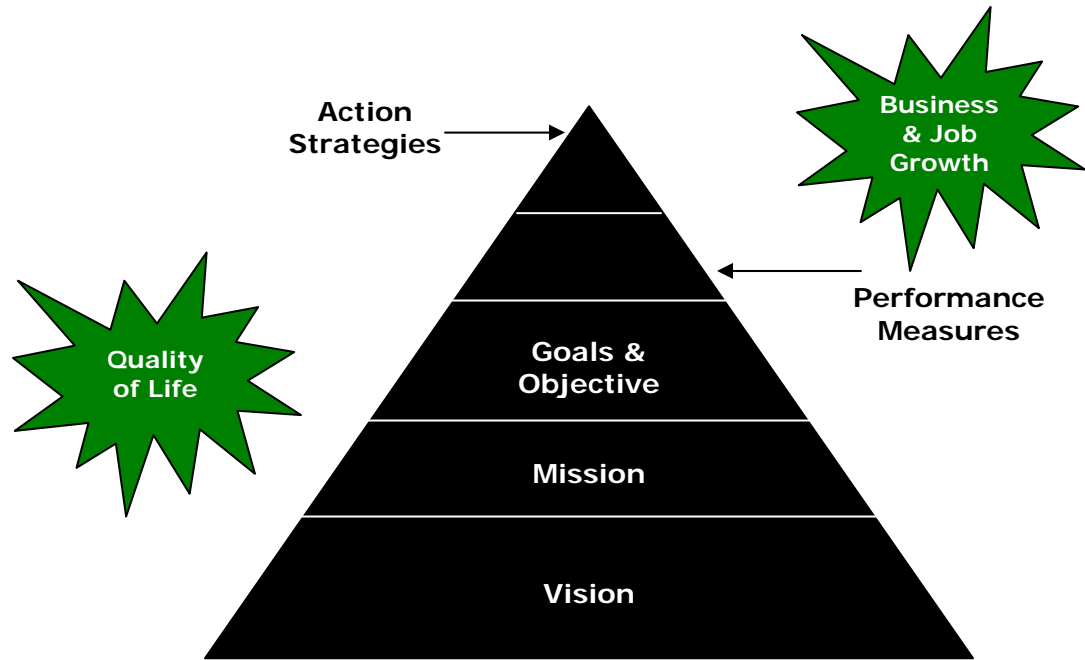
## B. Key Plan Elements

In developing the strategic plan, focus was placed on the following nine elements:

1. Vision
2. Mission
3. Goals
4. Performance measures
5. Work activities
6. Responsibilities and schedule
7. Linkages

8. Success factors
9. Performance reporting

**Figure 1: Key Northwest Commission Strategic Plan Elements**



### C. Strategic Planning Teams

To develop the strategic plan, the staff met several times in their respective work teams to contribute to the planning process. The three work teams are as follows:

1. **Economic and Business Development:** focused its attention on direct economic and business development activities to help counties and businesses in the region.
2. **Community Development and Planning:** focused its attention on transportation planning, quality of life, sewer and water infrastructure, technology infrastructure, and related issues that shape the regional economic development climate.
3. **Organizational Development:** focused its attention on equipping the Commission with the right resources and tools to strengthen and grow the organization in the future.

Each team was charged with providing inputs on the five strategic planning elements identified above. Summaries were prepared by each team and presented to the remainder of staff for input.

The groups were reminded of the need to address the three priorities set by the Board:

1. Make the Commission more performance-based and customer-oriented;
2. Increase the organization's partnerships and collaborative work teams; and

3. Align the Commission’s future efforts with the region’s leading development needs and opportunities.

## D. Guiding Values and Principles

Ten guiding values or principles were identified as providing an important foundation for the organization’s future plan. These are:

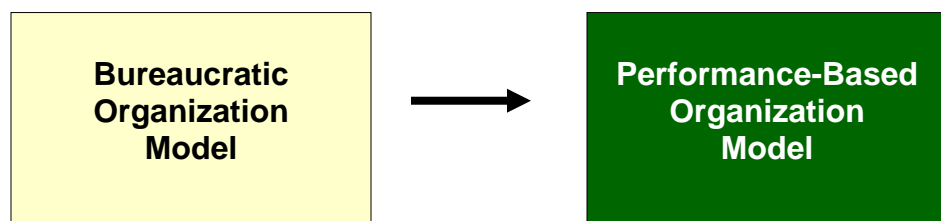
1. **Performance:** Increase organizational effectiveness and impact in serving stakeholders and growing the Northwest Pennsylvania regional economy.
2. **Measurable Results:** Create agreed upon metrics to evaluate effectiveness and impact on three levels: individual; team; and organization.
3. **Partnership/Collaboration:** Increase internal and external teamwork.
4. **Innovation/Creativity:** Identify new and better ways to get results.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Work at improving quality, results, and stakeholder value creation continuously.
6. **Synergy:** Create internal and external synergy.
7. **Investment:** Establish a clear definition of return on investment (ROI).
8. **Knowledge-Based:** Approach the organization’s work using best available knowledge, information, and state-of-the-art practices.
9. **Agile/Flexible:** Be flexible and adapt to internal and external change.
10. **Learning-Based:** Approach the organization’s work with a fresh and open learning attitude.

The adoption of these principles and values ensures that the Commission makes the “culture change” from being a bureaucratic organization to becoming a customer-oriented, performance-based organization.

It was agreed that these values, or principles, should be embedded in all work performed by the Commission, organizational decision-making, and they should guide future internal and external working relationships built by the organization with its clients, partners, and funding sources.

The shift to a performance-based organization model is consistent with broader trends in economic development nationally and globally. Most Economic Development organizations are working to put into place performance monitoring and measurement systems that ensure they get their intended job done. This shift is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Northwest Commission Organizational Cultural Shift**



Three critical interrelated questions must be asked in building this performance-based system:

1. Is the Commission doing the **right things** to reach its goals?
2. Is the organization **doing these things right**, or in the most effective manner possible?
3. Are the organization's work efforts **having the right impact** on the region, ensuring that places, businesses, and people are becoming more competitive and prosperous?

In other words, *are these activities creating sufficient value for stakeholders?*

# Regional Vision & Organization Mission Statements



## A. Regional Vision Statement

The following vision statement has been adopted for the Northwest Commission:

*Northwest Pennsylvania will grow in its business and economic vitality, its residents will become more prosperous, and the quality of life will be enhanced in the region's counties and communities.*

This vision statement captures the need for Northwest Pennsylvania to grow in both economic opportunity and quality of life. Both are vitally important to the region, and both are consistent with the Northwest Commission's charge.

## B. Organization Mission Statement

The purpose of the organization mission statement is to embody the regional vision; therefore, the following mission statement has been adopted:

*Provide leadership and assistance as well as collaborate and cooperate with our partners in strengthening business and job growth and improving the environment for economic and community development across the Northwest Pennsylvania region.*

This mission statement says that the Northwest Commission will act as a leadership organization, providing high value-added services to both geographic areas and businesses in the region, and taking action to improve the regional business and economic climate.

### C. Primary Organizational Roles

The Northwest Commission will play selected roles in the two strategic focus areas. These areas of focus and roles are identified in Table 1 below.

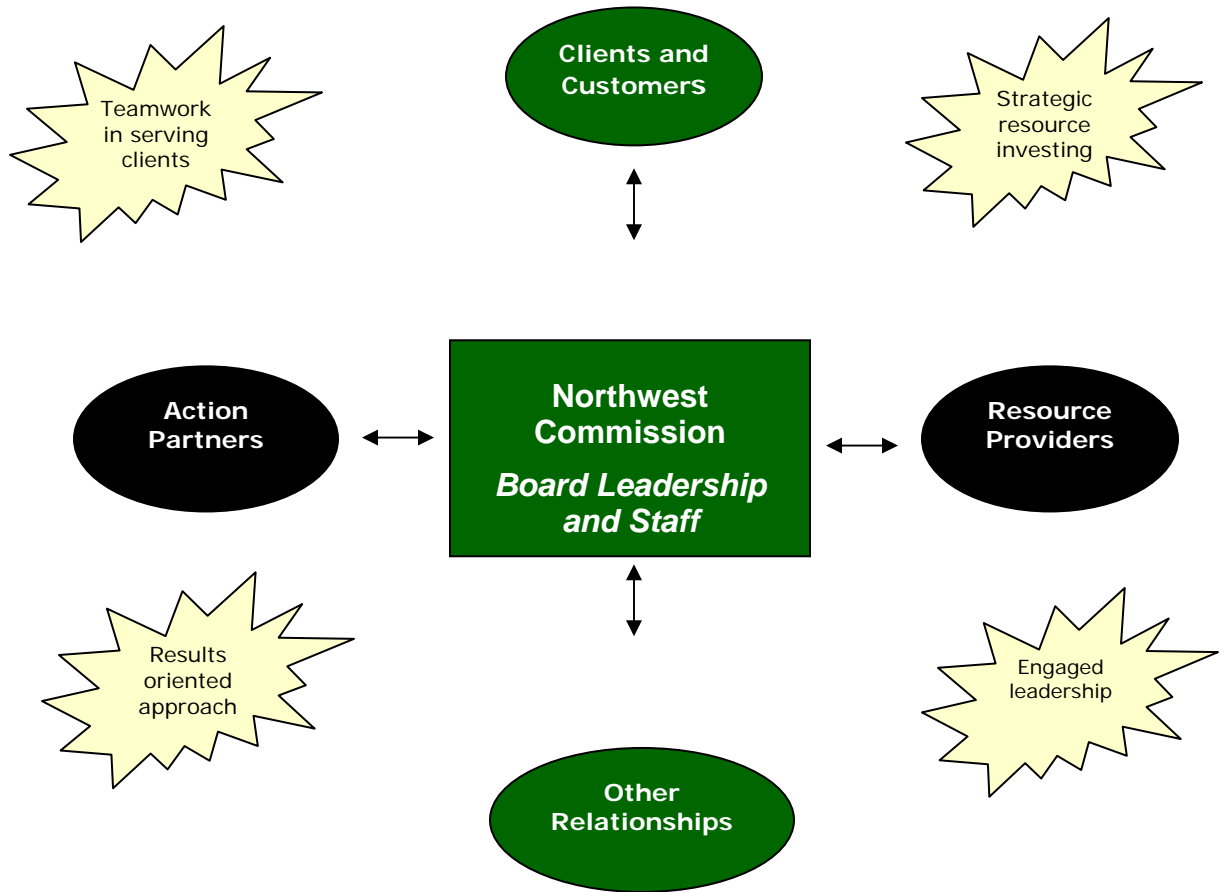
**Table 1: Northwest Commission Regional Development Roles**

<b>Strategic Roles</b>	<b>Business and Economic Development</b>	<b>Community Development and Planning</b>
<b>Direct client services</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Planning and analysis</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Funding</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Advocacy</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Capacity-building</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Regional policy and strategy forum</b>	Yes	Yes

These are crucial roles that set the stage for the more specific work activities the organization performs to reach its goals and objectives.

The Northwest Commission will operate as a strategic, flexible, and collaborative organization whose central focus is to improve the economic performance of the businesses and geographic areas (counties and communities) within the region.

**Figure 1: New Northwest Commission Organizational Model**



The new performance-based organization model represents a significant improvement over the earlier one from the standpoint of its emphasis on improved performance and process.

**Using this new model, the Commission will:**

1. Achieve better results
2. Work more collaboratively
3. Use its resources strategically
4. Follow an engaged and committed leadership model

# Business & Economic Development



## I. Business Attraction

### A. Strategic Goal

Attract new high quality companies to the region, especially but not exclusively, in the region's preferred target industries and industry clusters while collaborating with Keystone Innovation Zone partners to promote existing KIZ's and KOZ's.

### B. Performance Measurement System

#### Progress Measures

1. Acquire funding to support the program on an annual basis
2. Printed and electronic marketing materials developed as needed and distributed
3. Proposals sent to 2 prospects (target industry companies and site selection firms)
4. Conduct 4 face-to-face meetings with prospects
5. Interest 2 prospects in visiting the region
6. Work with lead county EDCs, partners and Commonwealth in determining appropriate trade shows to participate at a regional level and attend 2 shows.
7. Make 25 contacts at trade shows or missions
8. Develop 20 leads, with 10 leads being generated from trade shows
9. Work with the lead county EDCs in implementing attraction and marketing efforts
10. Update and market the business attraction website with the region's most competitive business sites and buildings available and current and accurate data on the Northwest region, generating 2,200 hits
11. Host site tours
12. Monitor website and marketing materials for KOZ's
13. Attend 3 outreach events (program networking, conferences or other events.)
14. Conduct 2 speaking engagements

#### Effectiveness Measures

1. Assist with the recruitment of firms to the region that commit to creating high quality jobs to the region
2. Increase use of the website and other online research tools by prospects
3. Increase use of the website by all local, regional, and state economic development partners
4. Promote contract manufacturing and facilitate connection to cluster supply chain in coordination with the Tap Into Manufacturing/TAKT Triangle effort.
5. Increase number of inquiries regarding KOZ sites in the region.



## Impact Measures

1. Over the next five years, increase the region's competitive advantages for recruiting and growing companies in the six identified target industries
2. Increase investment and jobs in the region

## **C. Work Activities**

1. Partner with Pennsylvania's Site Selection Database.
2. Continue to enhance the Select PA website to increase usage and hits
3. Participate in industry-specific trade shows/missions
4. Make new contacts through trade show and marketing efforts
5. Increase the number of solid leads for the region
6. Participate in corporate parent visits
7. Send informational proposals to leads
8. Send prospect referrals to the lead EDCs and other agencies
9. Participate in face-to-face meetings with prospects
10. Provide accurate and timely data to all prospects
11. Increase the number of prospects visiting the region
12. Increase the number of businesses and jobs entering the region
13. Increase the amount of investment into the region
14. Market the Northwest Commission as the regional single point of contact for prospects
15. Coordinate the Northwest KOZ program
16. Provide site and program information as needed
17. Market the Tap Into Manufacturing/Takt Triangle Initiative
18. Visit Site Selectors
19. Raise new funds for the program

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, Business & Economic Development; Coordinator, Business Development; Manager, International Trade; Marketing Specialist

**Assigned Committee:** Economic Development Committee

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$101,250/year

**Sources:** Enterprise Development, DCED, EDCs, Team PA Foundation

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** International Marketing, GIS,

**External:** DCED - OIBD Foreign Direct Investment Office, and DCED Marketing Office, EDCs, Governors Action Team (GAT), Team PA, BREP

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Number of leads received
3. Responsiveness to requests
4. Economic trends

5. Accuracy of web data
6. Cooperation of partners

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board
2. As needed reports to EDC's Quarterly Enterprise Development report
3. Quarterly progress reports to DCED

## **II. Government Contracting**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Increase the number and value of government contracts awarded in the region to businesses as well as increase the number of clients.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Progress Measures

1. Sponsor and/or co-sponsor 11 PTAC workshops attracting 75 attendees
2. Conduct 120 company visits, with 38% being new to the Government Contracting Program
3. Conduct 600 follow-up counseling sessions with the active client base
4. Produce 150 client-reported government contract awards
5. Provide 18 letters of support
6. Produce 2 success stories
7. Attend 5 outreach events (program networking, conferences or other events.)
8. Represent Commission at 5 regional events
9. Conduct 4 speaking engagements

#### Effectiveness Measures

1. Achieve government contract sales of \$15,000,000 annually
2. Increase the number of clients by 60 per year
3. Increase the jobs being created/retained by 100 per each additional year

#### Impact Measures

1. Over the next five years, continue to increase the number of companies utilizing the Government Contracting Program with success and satisfaction

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Annually complete DoD SCAA Application and DCED applications for special projects
2. Identify companies to visit utilizing BREP database, referrals from the EDCs and outreach activities participated in and events sponsored
3. Conduct initial counseling sessions with potential clients
4. Conduct follow-up counseling sessions with existing clients
5. Legislative outreach

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, B&ED; Manager, Government Contracting; Government Contracting Specialist; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010 - 2011

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$227,411

**Funding Strategy:** ARC, DoD

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** International Marketing, Business Financing, Public Relations and Marketing

**External:** Federal, state and local agencies, EDCs, other PTACs, APTAC and Federal and state legislators, BREP

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Economy
2. Funding
3. New performance-based management plan

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board
2. Quarterly reports to ARC
3. Quarterly 1806 reports to DLA
4. Annual SCAA submittal to DLA

## **III. International Trade**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen the international competitiveness of NW Pennsylvania businesses by increasing goods and service exports to global markets.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Progress Measures

1. Assist 244 companies with new international marketing efforts
2. Sponsor/co-sponsor 3 training events attracting 80 attendees
3. Organize 0 (due to lack of resources) trade event/mission for northwest regional companies to market products to international buyers with 0 companies participating
4. Conduct 60 company visits, with at least 25% being new to the International Program

5. Provide 15 letters of support
6. Produce 10 success stories
7. New initiatives: Increase / deepening of export technical assistance due to the subcontract with AGS.
8. Encourage 14 companies to attend foreign missions/trade shows
9. Attend 7 outreach events (program networking, conferences or other events.)
10. Represent Commission at 4 regional events
11. Conduct 4 speaking engagements

#### Effectiveness Measures

1. Facilitate international sales of \$60 million reported through the Enterprise Development program
2. Facilitate international sales of \$24 million reported through the Center for Trade Development (CTD)
3. Increase the number of clients annually by 25, with focus on client base in Mercer and Lawrence counties
4. Meet established goals and performance score set by the Center for Trade Development (CTD)

#### Impact Measures

1. Over the next five years, continue to increase the number of companies utilizing the International Marketing program with success and satisfaction

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Identify companies to visit, utilizing BREP, Harris Selectory Online, and other information sources
2. Conduct regional company visits
3. Work on strengthening network partners
4. Recruit clients to participate in international trade shows/missions
5. Work with CTD to develop Inbound/Outbound Missions where applicable
6. Identify pertinent topics for seminar development
7. Promote CTD programs and activities
8. Implement new performance measures
9. Identify new regional mentors to participate in quarterly events for the Breakfast with the Pros program

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, B&ED; Manager, International Trade; Senior International Trade Specialist, and International Trade Specialist

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$225,000

**Funding Strategy:** ARC, DCED, Erie County

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Business Financing, Government Contracting, KIZ, Business Attraction, Public Relations and Marketing

**External:** DCED, SBDCs, USDOC, Federal and State Legislators, Local Elected Officials, EDCs, GAT, Chambers

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Funding
2. World Economy
3. Time and location of events (missions, trade shows, seminars)
4. World events
5. New performance-based management plan

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Monthly reports to CTD
2. Bi-Monthly reports to Board
3. Quarterly reports to ARC

## **IV. Business Finance**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen the Business Finance Program's competitiveness and effectiveness in the Northwest Pennsylvania region.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Progress Measures

1. Increase marketing efforts
2. Sponsor/co-sponsor 4 training events
3. Conduct 50 company visits, with at least 15% being new to the Finance Program
4. Produce 3 success stories
5. Provide 12 letters of support
6. Make 70 referrals to other partners (State certification)
7. Attend 11 one-on-one meetings with bankers, agriculture representatives, tourism representatives, and other potential funding sources or service providers for increased marketing
8. Attend 7 outreach events (program networking, conferences or other events)
9. Represent Commission at 5 regional events
10. Conduct 4 speaking engagements

#### Effectiveness Measures

1. Close 10 loans
2. Leverage \$4.3 Million as match

3. Send out 65 loan applications

#### Impact Measures

1. Over the next five years, continue to increase the number of companies utilizing the Business Finance Program with success and satisfaction

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Identify potential borrowers and schedule meetings
2. Identify and organize training events
3. Attend necessary meetings at the State and Regional level
4. Identify potential referral sources and schedule meetings (banks)
5. Promote all funding sources in the correct manner

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, Business & Economic Development; Manager, Loan Programs; Loan Specialist; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Loan Review Committee

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$300,000

**Funding Strategy:** ARC, EDA, USDA, SBF, SBA

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Government Contracting, International Marketing, and Marketing

**External:** DCED, SBDCs, EDCs, GAT, Banks

### **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Economy
2. Bank finance rates
3. Number of loan programs not administered by Northwest Commission, interest rates and amount available for loans
4. New performance-based management plan
5. Funding
6. Program requirements

### **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board
2. Monthly delinquency reports
3. Quarterly reports to SBA for the Microloan Program
5. Quarterly delinquency reports to SBF
6. Annual job impact report to SBF

## **V. Northwest PA KIZ Program**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Establishes network for businesses, service providers and institutions of higher education to collaborate, innovate and create opportunities for economic technological and entrepreneurial advancement.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Progress Measures:

1. 8 companies receiving business assistance
2. 1 new start-ups
3. 7 full-time jobs created
4. 28 jobs retained
5. 5 entrepreneurs provided with research assistance
6. 1 patent filed
7. 10 student research teams engaged
8. 1 university-corporate partnership contract
9. 6 published articles
10. \$400,000 investment into KIZ companies and/or projects
11. Attend 4 outreach events (program networking, conferences or other events)
12. Represent Commission at 3 regional events
13. Conduct 3 speaking engagements

#### Effectiveness:

1. Achievement of above goals
2. Develop closer relationships between businesses, individuals, and the higher education institutions.

#### Impact:

1. Foster innovation and create entrepreneurial opportunities by aligning the combined resources of educational institutions, partners, and the private sector
2. Job creation
3. Excite young people about emerging technologies in Northwest PA

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Continue to build partnerships with the region's universities and resource partners
2. Continue to identify KIZ pipeline companies
3. Continue to market available services from universities and partners for entrepreneurs and businesses
4. Co-sponsor training/seminars for businesses
5. Support Business Plan and Business Idea Competitions
6. Seek funding for program sustainability

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Executive Director; Director, Business & Economic Development; Coordinator, Business Development; other assigned staff

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Economic Development Committee

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$500,000

**Sources:** BFTDA, Allegheny College, Clarion University, Thiel College, Northwest Commission, Ben Franklin (CNP)

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Business and Economic Development Programs, GIS, Marketing

**External:** Establishes strong collaborative relationships with business and institutions of higher education, economic development agencies and partner agencies: Ben Franklin, eBizIT PA, First Energy, Clarion & Gannon SBDCs, Green Building Alliance, NWIRC, PennTAP, Plastics Technology Center, Senior Corp of Retired Executives (SCORE), USDA, SBA, CIC, BREP

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Number of new and existing entrepreneurs and companies to recruit
3. Maintaining collaborative relationships between universities, economic development agencies, partners and businesses

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bimonthly reports to KIZ Board
2. Bimonthly reports to NWC Board
3. Bimonthly conference call with KIZ Executive Committee
4. Quarterly Reports to Enterprise Development
5. Semi-annual Account Impact Measure reports to DCED

## **VI. Strengthen Economic Development Service Relationships**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen service relationships with the EDCs, Team Pennsylvania, the Business Retention and Expansion program, the chambers and various other partners in fostering and assisting with economic development.



## **B. Performance Measurement System**

### Progress Measures

1. Continue to build relationships with economic development service providers through the Economic Development Committee
2. Build stronger inroads with economic development agencies on the local/municipal level
3. Participate in Chambers of Commerce activities
4. Co-sponsor 5 projects and/or activities, such as trade fairs, seminars, receptions, etc.
5. Attend 2 PEDAs activities for networking

### Effectiveness Measures

1. Increase the number of projects completed with partners by 3 annually
2. Implement joint semi-annual meetings with service provider partners

### Impact Measures

1. Over the next five years, create a business-friendly, user-friendly environment for the businesses across the Northwest region

## **C. Work Activities**

1. Attend monthly Economic Development Committee meetings
2. Attend Chamber and EDC functions
3. Keep partners informed of Commission projects

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Executive Director, B&ED Staff

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Government Contracting, International Marketing, Business Financing, Business Attraction, Public Relations and Marketing

**External:** DCED, EDCs, GAT, Chambers of Commerce, Team PA Foundation, IRC, Ben Franklin Technology Partnership

## **F. Funding**

Program funding is not necessary for this objective, since the existing staff will be utilized. However, opportunities for co-sponsor activities will be sought when appropriate.

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Involvement of EDCs

## **VII. Entrepreneurship**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Increase start-up businesses and entrepreneurship capacity and networking in Northwest Pennsylvania.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Continue to expand an entrepreneurship network such as the Entrepreneur Club to educate and connect entrepreneurs with capital, management services, and mentors
2. Work with Chambers, SBA, Economic Development Corporations, Small Business Development Centers and other to expand opportunities for startup businesses and entrepreneurs

#### Effectiveness:

1. Create an effective network of mentors and services for start-ups and entrepreneurs

#### Impact:

1. Increase start-up and growth of small businesses to create new jobs in Northwest Pennsylvania

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Form an Entrepreneurship Network in Northwest Pennsylvania
2. Develop entrepreneurship training and leadership courses
3. Develop an entrepreneurship mentor support group
4. Develop entrepreneurship programs which focus on youth, minorities, and women

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, Business & Economic Development; Loan Specialist, Business Development Coordinator

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Economic Development Committee

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** SBA, Kellogg Foundation, ARC, Ben Franklin, Rural Development

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Micro-loan and other loan programs, Entrepreneur Club, other Business and Economic Development Programs

**External:** SBDC, Penn Tech, Chambers, SBA, Ben Franklin, USDA, ARC

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Partnerships with other agencies assisting small businesses
3. Recruitment of mentors

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly report to Board
2. Monthly report to Economic Development Corporations

## **IX. Industrial Clusters**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Analyze existing industrial clusters and the potential for new clusters in the region.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress

1. Analysis of existing clusters and update of cluster reports
2. Identification of new/emerging industry clusters

#### Effectiveness

1. Detailed supply chain analysis for industry clusters

#### Impact

1. Effective marketing of clusters

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Re-evaluate existing identified clusters
2. Develop a supply chain analysis for clusters
3. Explore the development of new industry clusters
4. Update the Carter Burgess cluster cost comparison reports
5. Assess needs of clusters and relate to the assets of the region
6. Develop an effective method to market the region's clusters

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, Business and Economic Development; Coordinator, Business Development

**Assigned Committee:** Economic Development Committee

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** DCED

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Business Attraction, Business Financing, Energy, KOZ, International Trade, Government Contracting

**External:** DCED, Economic Development Directors

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Reports to Economic Development Committee

# **XI. 2-3 Day Commission Event for Business & Economic Development**

## **A. Strategic Goal**

Create an annual high profile event bringing business and funders together

## **B. Performance Measurement System**

### Work Progress

1. Develop/host an annual event that encompasses all Business & Economic Development (BED) programs that mirrors C2C
2. Create this event in lieu of individual events
3. Determine event topics and identify expert presenters
4. Identify sponsors, exhibitors and attendees
5. Identify venue/budget/structure of event
6. Develop a marketing strategy

### Effectiveness

1. Develop an annual event
2. Increase awareness of the Commission and regional provider's programs
3. Attract new contacts, clients, and partners
4. Increase networking opportunities for regional businesses, as well as providers
5. Develop regional venues for this event

### Impact

1. Increase potential business investment in the northwest region
2. Consolidate events, reduce overall costs
3. Increase contacts and clients
4. Highlight the Commission as a leader in B&ED in the region

## C. Work Activities

1. Coordinate relative to time, place, meeting place (other regional events)
2. Hire/consult with an event planner
3. Showcase NWC programs/services
4. Invite DCED representatives to attend/present
5. Find sponsorships to cover costs (room rental, speakers, etc.)
6. Plan entertainment/leisure activity to attract participants
7. Promote extensively

## D. Responsibilities and Schedule

**Staff:** B&ED Event Committee, B&ED Program Managers

**Assigned Committee:** B&ED Event Committee

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## E. Funding

**Budget:** TBD

## F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities

**Internal:** Executive Director; Senior Director Organizational Development; Director, Business & Economic Development; Manger, International Trade; Manager, PTAC; Manager, Business Financing; Manager, Business Development

**External:** DCED, USDA, SBA, SBDC, IRC, Manufacturers Association, NTMA, Chambers of Commerce, County Economic Development Organizations, eBizIT PA, Ben Franklin, SCORE

## G. Key Factors Influencing Success

1. Funding (sponsorship & exhibitors)
2. Partner Cooperation
3. Client Participation
4. Extensive Marketing

## H. Performance Reporting

1. Updates to Staff
2. Post event report to Board
3. NWC Annual Report

# Community Development & Planning



## I. Transportation Infrastructure

### A. Strategic Goal

Create high quality transportation infrastructure to support economic development, quality of life, and job creation/retention in northwest Pennsylvania

### B. Performance Measurement System

**Performance Measure 1:** Act as a collaborative leader in the development and maintenance of a high quality and seamless transportation system to support economic and community development across the region

#### Work Progress:

1. Update the Long-Range Transportation Plan with a frequency as prescribed by PennDOT (currently every five years) and prepare other plans as needed

#### Effectiveness:

1. Efficiently utilize allocated transportation funds in order to maximize their use in improving the transportation system in northwest Pennsylvania

#### Impact:

1. A transportation system, which increases capacity, safety, and efficiency for businesses and the general public in northwest Pennsylvania

**Performance Measure 2:** Strengthen working relationships with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in the region

#### Work Progress:

1. Attend MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings and invite MPO's to Rural Planning Organization (RPO) TAC meetings

#### Effectiveness:

1. Contribute to a measurable increase in the level of collaboration and cooperation between RPO and MPO planning activities on shared transportation issues

Impact:

1. Coordinated transportation planning between the four organizations responsible for transportation planning in northwest Pennsylvania

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Implement a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
2. Coordinate quarterly Transportation Advisory Committee meetings
3. Participate in project scoping, Public Plan Displays, and Citizen Advisory Committee meetings
4. Assist Transportation Enhancement and Hometown Street sponsors
5. Administer and provide technical assistance for the ARC Access Road Program
6. Conduct and/or contract for traffic counts as a function of the Highway Performance Monitoring System
7. Implement new public dollars into the region's transportation system
8. Participate in Metropolitan Planning Organization meetings
9. Collaborate on projects with region's MPOs
10. Coordinate workshops outlining and promoting PennDOT programs (i.e. Hometown Streets, Safe Routes to School, Local Bridge Workshop)

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Regional Planning; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Transportation Advisory Committee

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$358,571 per year

**Funding Strategy:** PennDOT, State Enterprise Development

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

Good transportation infrastructure and systems promotes economic development and job creation/retention

### **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Congressional appropriations
2. General economic conditions/inflation
3. Material costs
4. Improved collaboration by key decision makers

### **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to DCED
3. Quarterly progress reports to PennDOT

4. Quarterly progress reports to TAC
5. Legislative Bulletin
6. Annual report

## **II. Local Technical Assistance Program**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

To coordinate PennDOT training to local government officials enhancing their overall knowledge and decision-making capabilities on transportation-related issues.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Plan, schedule, and coordinate transportation training programs and seminars

#### Effectiveness:

1. Address training needs as identified by local leaders, businesses, and other Stakeholders as represented in program evaluation forms.

#### Impact:

1. Improved local transportation decisions resulting in greater regional transportation investment and more efficient and effective transportation services

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Coordinate the Local Technical Assistance Program
2. Distribute LTAP surveys annually or as otherwise specified by funding agency and/or other key stakeholders
3. Contact local governments who do not respond to the LTAP survey
4. Provide training courses to local government officials

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Infrastructure Development; Manager, Regional Planning; Manager, Community Development; Community Development Specialist; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$35,000 per year

**Funding Strategy:** PennDOT



## **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

Direct link to Transportation program since the program is administered by PennDOT. There is also a municipal link with MTAP Municipal Technology Assistance Program, Regional Planning, and Municipal Outreach Program.

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Funding
2. Commitment from PennDOT
3. Local government needs
4. Quality of internal and external relationships

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to PennDOT
3. Annual report

## **III. Technology Development**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Promote the advantages of a high quality, affordable telecommunications infrastructure that will foster future economic and community development and job creation/retention across the region.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

**Performance Measure 1:** Increase investment and knowledge in a high quality telecommunications infrastructure by utilizing the region's Technology Advisory Group (TAG) and Planners Committee as a planning and investment catalyst

#### Work Progress:

1. Educate and aggregate broadband demand in unserved and underserved communities throughout northwest Pennsylvania
2. Work with community, business, and political leaders, as well as telecommunication service providers, to expand broadband service in the region

#### Effectiveness:

1. Actively participate in increasing the number of communities with access to high speed Internet services

#### Impact:

1. An advanced telecommunications infrastructure that supports future economic and community development and creates/retains jobs
2. Increased perceived value of broadband among regional leaders

**Performance Measure 2:** Increase the technology capacity of local government decision makers in making choices about future technology infrastructure investments by providing training, information, and technical assistance

Work Progress:

1. Survey all local governments in the region regarding their level of technology use and understanding at least annually
2. Conduct a series of needs-based educational classes per year in the region
3. Train at least 120 local government personnel with regard to technology and broadband programs

Effectiveness:

1. Increase awareness and value that technology has in local government operations

Impact:

1. Measurably increased integration of technology/technology based assets in municipal government management and operations

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Hold bi-monthly Technology Advisory Group (TAG) meetings
2. Educate community, business, and political leaders on broadband value, needs, and applications
3. Develop public-private partnerships between communities and telecommunication companies to attract affordable broadband service
4. Develop and distribute a technology survey to all local governments at least annually
5. Provide technology training to local government personnel in group and one-on-one settings
6. Assist with local government Internet connections

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Technology Advisory Group

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$178,000 per year

**Funding Strategy:** MTAP, BOAF

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. Enhances Public Relations of Commission through successful telecommunication projects
2. Telecommunications infrastructure provides foundation for future economic development and job creation/retention

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Funding
2. Access to future federal and state appropriations
3. Level of stakeholder involvement
4. Cooperation of telecommunication providers

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to Board of Directors
2. Bi-monthly progress reports to TAG
3. Quarterly progress reports to DCED
4. Legislative Bulletin
5. Annual Report

## **IV. Keystone Opportunity Zones**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Promote existing KOZ's and collaborate with Keystone Opportunity Zone partners.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Maintain website and marketing materials for KOZ's

#### Effectiveness:

1. Increase number of inquiries regarding KOZ sites in the region

#### Impact:

1. New businesses, jobs, and capital investment in the KOZ

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Coordinate the Northwest KOZ program
2. Provide site and program information as needed
3. Increase number of companies locating within KOZ areas
4. Increase amount of business investment within a KOZ
5. Increase number of jobs created and retained within KOZ areas

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedules**

**Key Staff:** Director, Business & Economic Development; Manager, Regional Planning; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. Promotes economic development, new business investment, and job creation/retention

## **F. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Economic Conditions
2. Responsiveness of Commission staff and sub-zone managers
3. Support from DCED

## **G. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to DCED
3. Legislative Bulletin
4. Annual report

## **V. Energy Efficiency**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

To help local governments, schools, and non-profit organizations reduce their operating costs and energy consumption through education, training, and service delivery focused on conventional energy demand reduction.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Coordinate activity of an Energy Advisory Council (EAC) made up of energy experts to provide guidance and direction of the program
2. Build relationships with Commonwealth agencies associated with energy efficiency and other agencies with energy expertise
3. Learn techniques on how to save money and reduce energy consumption
4. Work with the PA LDDs to implement across the Commonwealth

#### Effectiveness:

1. Demonstrable impacts on money saved and the reduction of energy consumption and toxic gases released into the atmosphere
2. Complimenting the Administration's Energy Independence Strategy

#### Impact:

1. Over the next five years, deliver quality services to local governments, schools, and non-profit organizations related to energy efficiency with measurable impacts and return on investment

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Actively participate with LDD energy committee to achieve deliverables identified in work plans.
2. Coordinate and conduct educational workshops
3. Conduct utility bill analysis for clients
4. Facilitate the development of energy audits and implementation plans
5. Attend training to increase energy skills

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Energy Program; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Energy Advisory Council

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** \$100,000

**Funding Strategy:** DCED, ARC

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. Direct link to Transportation, LTAP, and other programs related to local governments, schools, and hospitals
2. Link with programs with DCED, PennDOT, DEP, and ARC

### **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Cooperation of partners

### **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to DCED and ARC
3. Quarterly Legislative Bulletin
4. Annual report

## **VI. Regional Action Plan Related To Land Use, Transportation, and Regional Infrastructure**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Collaborate with DCED, DEP, DCNR, PennDOT, PDA and other partners to implement a Regional Action Plan that will focus on targeting investments for a variety of community and economic development needs, including but not limited to, infrastructure, land use planning, municipal services, and alternative energy.

## **B. Performance Measurement System**

### Work Progress:

1. Build relationships with the Commonwealth agencies associated with the development of the Regional Action Plan
2. Implement the Regional Action Plan over the next several years

### Effectiveness:

1. Begin to implement portions of the Regional Action Plan.
2. Tie in other regional plans (i.e. CEDS) to ensure a truly regional, comprehensive planning document

### Impact:

1. Over the next five years, implement a regional plan that will provide direction for targeted investment and resource allocation for major regional community development and planning projects

## **C. Work Activities**

1. Continue dialogue with Commonwealth agencies to implement the Regional Action Plan with ongoing input from Steering Committee

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Regional Planning; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Planners Committee

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** TBD

**Funding Strategy:** DCED, ARC

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. Direct link to all community development and planning programs
2. Link with programs with DCED, PennDOT, DEP, DCNR, and PDA

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Cooperation of partners
3. Definitive guidance from participating Commonwealth Agencies

## H. Performance Reporting

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to DCED
3. Annual Report

## VII. Greenways & Open Space Development

### A. Strategic Goal

To identify and develop greenways, open spaces, and corridors to balance development and preserve a high quality of life in northwest Pennsylvania.

### B. Performance Management System

#### Work Progress:

1. Continue to develop and implement an integrated, regional greenways plan for northwest PA

#### Effectiveness:

1. Implement the greenways plan to ensure maximum impact throughout the region

#### Impact:

1. Over the next five years, secure and preserve a network of greenways, corridors, and open spaces that will enhance high quality recreational activities, natural beauty, and quality of life for northwest Pennsylvania

### C. Work Activities

1. Complete regional greenways and open space planning document
2. Continue discussion with DCNR related to hiring a greenways coordinator or circuit rider
3. Develop a plan for funding greenways development based on finalized greenways planning document

### D. Responsibilities and Schedule

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Regional Planning; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Northwest PA Regional Greenways Steering Committee

### E. Funding

**Budget:** \$350,000 (Pending)

**Funding Strategy:** DCNR, DEP, PA Game Commission

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. Direct link to all community development, planning, economic development and tourism programs
2. Link with programs with DCED, PennDOT, DEP, DCNR, and PDA

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Cooperation of partners

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to DCNR and PennDOT
3. Annual report
4. Quarterly Legislative Bulletin

## **VIII. Downtown Revitalization**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Assist municipal and community leaders in understanding the principles and processes of central business district and neighborhood improvement and sustainability.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Identification of communities of similar characteristics which are in need of assistance in improving their downtown areas.

#### Effectiveness:

1. Implementation of revitalization efforts into northwest PA communities  
Quantity and quality of inquiry regarding Commission-based downtown revitalization programs
2. Quality of feedback in response to outreach and technical assistance programs related to downtown revitalization

#### Impact:

1. Revitalization of struggling downtown areas in Northwest Pennsylvania  
Development of practical and sustainable strategies for facilitating central business district and neighborhood revitalization

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Identify communities that meet technical criteria for participation in Main Street and Elm Street programs



2. Identify communities that do not meet technical criteria for participation in Main Street and/or Elm Street programs but that may be interested in pursuing similar revitalization efforts
3. Provide technical assistance with respect to processes of central business district and neighborhood revitalization activities

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Community Development; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Planners Committee

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** DCED, PennDOT, Local Communities, County-based and regional economic development agencies, other state and federal funding

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** All Community Development programs and certain Business and Economic Development programs including but not necessarily limited to loan programs

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Participation by local communities
2. Funding

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to the Planners Committee
3. Quarterly Legislative Bulletin

# **IX. Planner Relations**

## **A. Strategic Goal**

Improve communications and cooperation between and among planners across the region to ensure more coordinated planning for regional development in the future.

## **B. Performance Management System**

Work Progress:

1. Incorporate evolving regional planning documents and initiatives included the Land Use Transportation and Economic Development Regional Action Plan (LUTED), and Regional Greenways Plan
2. Incorporate sustainability and livability into regional planning activities.

Effectiveness:

1. Identify definitive opportunities to collaborate on regional planning initiatives and/or to develop shared planning assets (i.e.: shared hardware, software)

Impact:

1. A cohesive community development and planning action plan with regional scope and input
2. Improved dialogue among regional planners resulting in shared assets and measurable economies of scale with respect to regional planning initiatives

**C. Work Activities**

1. Meet with the Planners Committee at least on a quarterly basis
2. Update the annual community development section of the Commission's Strategic Plan
3. Identify or confirm planning points of contact within the eight-county service region
4. Identify planning tools, assets, issues, and priorities and Commission's role(s) in addressing specific needs and opportunities
5. Develop mechanism(s) to facilitate meaningful dialogue at and between planners meetings

**D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Director, Community Development & Planning; Manager, Community Development; Manager, Regional Planning; Manager, Energy Program; Administrative Assistant

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Planners Committee

**E. Funding**

**Budget:** N/A

**Funding Strategy:** N/A

**F. Linkages to Other Programs**

1. All Community Development programs

**G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. County Planning Directors cooperation and engagement
2. State and federal agency cooperation
3. Perceived value by county planning directors and consistent demonstration of measurable impact

## H. Performance Reporting

1. Bi-monthly progress reports to the Board of Directors
2. Quarterly progress reports to the Planners Committee
3. Quarterly Legislative Bulletin

## X. Infrastructure Development

### A. Strategic Goal

Improve level of awareness of available resources and provide solutions for infrastructure needs throughout the region.

### B. Performance Measurement System

#### Work Progress:

1. Update Deiss study (2003)
2. Develop a method for the ongoing identification of infrastructure funding needs

#### Effectiveness:

1. Prioritize regional infrastructure projects, according to the updated Deiss study, for implementation that will maximize regional economic and community development impact
2. Link local governments to additional funding resources and explore potential new and innovative methods to fund infrastructure

#### Impact:

1. Consistent funding of infrastructure projects in the region
2. Ongoing, updated database of infrastructure needs/projects

### C. Work Activities

1. Research and maintain consistency with "Rebuild America"
2. Develop a resource sheet with eligibility criteria and application timelines for infrastructure projects
3. Research potential to develop regional grant program
4. Utilize Municipal Outreach Program as a resource to determine infrastructure needs
5. Review and update of Deiss study

### D. Responsibilities and Schedule

**Staff:** Director, Community Development and Planning;  
Manager, Community Development; Manager, Regional Planning;  
**Assigned Committee:** Planning Committee  
**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** N/A

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Community Development and Planning Department

**External:** County Planners, municipal officials

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Obtaining data and information
2. Funding availability

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Reports to Planning Committee
2. Bi-monthly reports to Board

# Organizational Development



## I. Public Relations

### A. Strategic Goal

Maintain a positive organizational image through the creation and implementation of an on-going strategic public relations plan focused on professional communication and marketing protocols.

### B. Performance Measurement System

#### Work Progress:

1. Implementation of the strategic public relations plan, which will be updated as needed and reviewed annually
2. Continued outreach to regional, state, and miscellaneous media
3. Continued outreach to business service organizations (Chambers, Rotary, EDCs)

#### Effectiveness:

1. Increased regional awareness, positive perception and collaborative media events/releases
2. Increased and enhanced regional media relationships

#### Impact:

1. Overall receptiveness by regional media to report on organization to increase awareness and attract interest from the business and political community
2. Staff and board are better engaged in carrying message of organization forward

### C. Work Activities

1. Implementation and annual update of a strategic public relations plan
2. Notice of all public meetings distributed to media, chambers and partners
3. Meet with regional publishers and/or business editors
4. Enhancement of Northwest News, Legislative Bulletin, Annual Report /Impact Summary, and Annual Dinner
5. Key staff to meet with all state and federal legislators
6. Delegate speaking engagement circuit

7. Distribute regional event calendars to Leadership Team for review
8. Distribute press releases on as need basis
9. Keep media section of web site updated
10. Schedule and coordinate check presentations
11. Schedule and coordinate press conferences as needed
12. Adoption and implementation of promotional spending budget

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Key Staff:** Marketing Specialist; Senior Director, Organizational Development

**Assigned Committee:** N/A

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Linkages to Other Entities/Resources**

**Internal:** All staff offer input into Public Relations Plan, event attendance, speaking engagements, and promotion of their programs

**External:** Media and partner organizations, as well as stakeholders

## **F. Funding**

**Budget Amount:** \$12,000

**Funding Strategy:** Monies allocated to promotional spending as outlined by the promotional spending guidelines in the Public Relations Plan

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Cooperation of staff and board to carry a positive and consistent message at all times
2. Cooperation of media to engage in relationship building
3. Proper and consistent use of Public Relations Plan

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly report to Board
2. Quarterly metric reporting
3. Yearly promotional activity and spending report to Senior Director, Organizational Development and Promotional Advisory Committee

# **II. Marketing**

## **A. Strategic Goal**

Maintain a professional image of the Northwest Commission and its programs through marketing and graphic design.

## **B. Performance Measurement System**

Work Progress:

1. Development of a strategic marketing plan
2. Continued relationships with EDCs, Stakeholders and Partners
3. Build a more competitive region through marketing mediums

#### Effectiveness:

1. Increased professionalism, market identification and program awareness through marketing and graphic design
2. Continued professional networking relationships with all involved

#### Impact:

1. Over the next five years, use marketing to successfully embody the ideas and concepts incorporated in the Northwest Commission's mission and vision statements; strengthen relationships that foster national, state and local recognition of the Commission's partners and stakeholders

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Limited image development for Commission Partners
  - a. On-site photography
  - b. Brochure/eNewsletter analysis and/or design
  - c. Logo Analysis and/or design
  - d. Website Analysis
  - e. Press release development
2. Design/Distribute monthly electronic newsletters
  - a. The Northwest News
3. Design/Distribute quarterly electronic newsletter to our Legislators
  - a. The Legislative Bulletin
4. Sustain marketing tracking systems for email and web activity
  - a. Listrak.
  - b. Webstats
5. Attend necessary (marketing) meetings
6. Assist businesses with marketing efforts
7. Design/Distribute paid advertising pieces for Commission programs and business attraction efforts
8. Design/Assembly of checks for check presentations
9. Design/Layout of the Annual Report and Impact Summary
10. Event Planning/Creative for Commission's Programs, Annual Dinner and Special Events
11. Select/Recognize Partner of the year, Business of the year and Board Leadership of the year at the Annual Dinner
12. Annual review and revision of the Strategic Plan
13. Maintain the Commission's websites
  - a. nwcommission.org
  - b. SelectPAGreatlakes.com

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Marketing Specialist; Senior Director, Organizational Development

**Assigned Committee:** NA

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

### **E. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Marketing is driven by program needs as identified by staff for program enhancement within the Commission's Community Development and Planning, Business and Economic Development and Organizational Development divisions

**External:** EDCs, stakeholders and key partners

## **F. Funding**

**Budget Amount:** All Program Contributions

**Funding Strategy:** Allocated to Commission Programs as required

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Successes**

1. Involvement of EDCs, key partners and stakeholders
2. Cooperation from program staff
3. Availability of funding and staff time
4. Proper and consistent use of Marketing Plan

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to board
2. Quarterly metric reporting
3. Yearly process and performance report to Senior Director, Organizational Development

## **III. Board Leadership Development**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen Board leadership in the organization and increase the Board's involvement in achieving the Commission's goals and objectives.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

Work Progress:

1. Build new leadership teams as a vehicle to advance the organizational performance
2. Participation in specially appointed committees of the board, as well as the Commission's standing advisory committees
3. Engaged and providing leadership in developing policies and procedures
4. Participation in review of policy and achievements
5. Recognition of board members involvement

Effectiveness:

1. All board members being active, empowered and contributing to the value of the Commission

Impact:

1. Over the next five years, develop a Board of Directors that is active in promoting the Commission as a highly forward-moving organization



### **C. Work Activities**

1. Establish key advisory boards for organization
2. Continue to engage key committees: loan, transportation, technology, economic development, planning, etc.
3. Continue to keep board meetings interactive
4. Communicate with board on an ongoing basis about programs, activities, etc.

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** All Staff

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Full Board of Directors

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** n/a

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** All Commission programs

**External:** All Commission committees

### **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Staff ability to engage board
2. Board willingness to get involved

### **H. Performance Reporting**

**N/A** – This goal requires constant communication between staff and board

## **IV. Special Regional Projects**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Participate in special projects as directed by the Commission Board of Directors that are outside the normal scope of Commission services/activities but provide a significant impact to a project, a community, the region or the economy.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

Work Progress:

1. Establish an assigned team to handle special projects
2. Keep abreast of regional issues, problems, and potential problems in which the Commission could be a part of the solution

3. Build relationships with new agencies and funding sources that are not normally associated with Commission activities
4. Assist in special projects

Effectiveness:

1. Diversify Commission staff to be flexible and knowledgeable on a variety of topics

Impact:

1. Over the next five years, implement a variety of special projects that will increase the region's marketability and economic growth
2. Position the Commission as a proactive and flexible organization with the capacity to tackle a variety of complicated regional issues

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Identify staff to serve on team. Additional staff expertise will be brought in when necessary
2. Meet with partners, stakeholders, and Board members on an as-needed basis to determine regional special projects that the Commission could assist in addressing
3. Research new programs and funding sources that could meet the needs of new special projects
4. Assist in implementing special projects

### **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Executive Director; Director, Business & Economic Development; Director, Community Development and Planning; Senior Director, Organizational Development

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** To be determined

### **E. Funding**

**Budget:** n/a

### **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Community and Economic Development Programs

**External:** To be determined

### **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Cooperation of partners
3. New performance-based management system

### **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board

## **V. Development of New Strategic Initiatives**

### **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen the organization's capacity to proactively respond to the changing needs of our clients and the region by implementing new strategic initiatives.

### **B. Performance Measurement System**

#### Work Progress:

1. Initiate a staff brainstorming exercise to flush out all ideas for new initiatives in which the Commission and partners could develop into programs for the upcoming fiscal year
2. Conduct a follow-up staff session to focus ideas and begin to develop a list of needed resources, potential partners, and possible funding sources
3. Articulate with staff realistic project ideas by creating project descriptions, a defined partner list, and funding sources to target
4. Ask staff to prioritize project ideas in terms of importance to our clients, potential clients, and the economic growth of our region
5. Determine realistic action steps, timeline, and team assignments to implement new initiatives based on prioritization by staff
6. Add new strategic initiatives to Commission's strategic plan for implementation over the upcoming fiscal year
7. Gain support from Board of Directors and partnering organizations
8. Formally incorporate the Staff Communications Protocols into the strategic initiatives development process providing a structure that taps into synergies through clear and effective staff involvement

#### Effectiveness:

1. Develop proposals/applications for new strategic initiatives and submit to funding sources
2. Obtain funding to implement new strategic initiatives
3. Begin implementing strategic initiatives

#### Impact:

1. Over the next five years, create dynamic initiatives that are proactive in meeting the needs of our clients and the region

### **C. Work Activities**

1. Conduct staff brainstorming and follow-up meetings to determine new strategic initiative ideas
2. Develop action steps, timelines, and team assignments related to strategic initiatives
3. Create proposals/applications and submit to funding sources
4. Keep partners involved and active with Commission projects

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** All Staff, led by Senior Director, Organizational Development

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

## **E. Funding**

**Budget:** n/a

## **F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Related to most current programs internally

**External:** EDCs, Planners

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Articulation of new "out of the box" ideas
2. Communication among staff
3. Access to new funding
4. Involvement of partners
5. New performance-based management system

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board

# **VI. Strengthen Travel & Tourism Relationships**

## **A. Strategic Goal**

Strengthen service relationship with the Tourism Promotion Agencies, the Commonwealth's designated tourism regions: PA Wilds, Pittsburgh and Its Countryside, and PA Great Lakes, as well as the Heritage Parks: Oil Heritage and Lumber Heritage, and the PA Route 6 Tourist Association.

## **B. Performance Measurement System**

Work Progress:

1. Establish Travel & Tourism Committee, which consists of the executive directors of the TPAs in the eight county northwest region and implement regular meetings
2. Build relationships with the Commonwealth's designated tourism regions: PA Wilds and PA Great Lakes
3. Develop relationships with the Heritage Parks: Oil and Lumber
4. Foster relationship with the PA Route 6 Tourist Association
5. Build awareness on how the Commission could assist with tourism-related projects
6. Package two (2) grant/loans applications related to the tourism industry

Effectiveness:

1. Assist the TPAs with at least one project.
2. Implement joint, semi-annual meetings with the Planning Committee and Economic Development Committee

Impact:

1. Over the next five years, assist the Travel and Tourism industry in making northwest Pennsylvania a travel destination and increase number of tourists coming to the region

**B. Work Activities**

1. Attend regularly scheduled Travel and Tourism Committee meetings
2. Attend TPA and partner functions
3. Keep partners informed of Commission projects

**D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** Executive Director

**Schedule:** FY 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Travel and Tourism

**E. Funding**

**Budget:** N/A

**F. Linkages to Other Programs/Activities**

**Internal:** Business Financing and Community Development staff

**External:** DCED - Marketing Office and Tourism Office

**G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Funding
2. Cooperation of partners
3. New performance-based management system

**H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly reports to Board

**VII. Human Resources**

**A. Strategic Goal**

Enhance the Northwest Commission's human resource and communications systems to meet staff, program, organizational and regional performance goals and objectives.

## **B. Performance Measurement System**

### Work Progress:

1. Implementation of specific formal employee development plans
2. Implementation of staff accountability processes with consistent consequences
3. Continued development of policies, processes and procedures ensuring regulatory compliance and achievement of goals according to plan
4. Continued promotion of a culture of ethical business practices that align with the principles of the Commission's *Statement of Ethics Philosophy*

### Effectiveness:

1. Continue successful development and implementation of the system utilizing leadership, communications, accountability and consequences
2. Motivating staff to accomplish desired results, ensure understanding and bring about purposeful action toward desired objectives

### Impact:

1. Improvement in the organization's performance based upon a structured system, staff development, board input and participation

## **C. Work Activities**

1. Implementation of new hire process, including selection, orientation, training and development
2. Coordinate bi-monthly staff meetings to enhance communication
3. Allow for leadership training and staff development to improve skills and provide for improvements in delegating, motivating, coordinating, managing differences and managing change
4. Establish and continue to improve accountability by implementing set reporting systems, developing performance standards, measuring results, taking corrective action and providing rewards
5. Establishment of internal leadership structure recognizing performance and potential of key staff
6. Formalize compliance training for staff and Board to ensure accountability and conformance to state and federal employment law
7. Implementation of the formal structure of an ethical business practices audit process to ensure accountability and conformance to the Commission's *Statement of Ethics Philosophy*

## **D. Responsibilities and Schedule**

**Staff:** All staff

**Schedule:** 2010-2011

**Assigned Committee:** Full Board of Directors

## **E. Funding**

**Budget Amount:** N/A

**Funding Strategy:** All sources

## **F. Linkages to Partners and other NW Commission Activities**

**Internal:** All staff gives input into system, processes and procedures

**External:** Economic development representatives and outside HR support professionals

## **G. Key Factors Influencing Success**

1. Understanding of the plan by the Board
2. Understanding and input by staff
3. Involvement by board and partners
4. Aggressive and accountable leadership
5. Patience to assure overall cultural shift assuring the success of NW Commission's goals and objective through its people systems

## **H. Performance Reporting**

1. Bi-monthly board meetings
2. Mid year review of plan along with budget

# Strategic Initiatives



## I. Identify/Develop assets in region

- Marcellus Shale
  1. Deepen knowledge on economic impact
  2. Identify benefits and issues
  3. Identify opportunities for regional businesses
  4. Educate public/private sector
- Erie Inland Port
  1. Survey businesses, trucking, and logistics companies for container usage
  2. Identify and market cost savings to businesses, trucking, and logistics companies
  3. Identify additional funding opportunities
  4. Assist with grant applications
  5. Advocate for funding
- Transform industries with traditional products/services/methods and processes
  1. Identify emerging products/services/markets for existing regional industries
  2. Educate businesses on benefits and marketability of emerging products/services
  3. Identify financing programs to assist with technology upgrades
  4. Identify emerging business methods & processes for existing regional businesses

## II. Prepare for Sustainable Communities

- Improve competency level in housing issues and programs
- Take initiative in the blighted/abandoned residential and industrial properties
- Develop capability to bring appropriate agencies to the table in a timely fashion
- Collect data/statistics necessary to create regional sustainability and enable submission of grant applications



### **III. Enhance partnership with Workforce Investment Boards (RCWE and West Central Job Partnership)**

- Encourage closer links between governing boards
- Identify potential joint projects/initiatives
  1. Remove the stigmatism related to technical schools
  2. Participate in the development of entrepreneurial curriculum for high schools
  3. Support a community college in the region
  4. Include superintendents when economic/community development meetings (such as Connect 2 Communities & the Annual BED event) are held

### **IV. Reduce parochialism in government arena**

- Educate township officials on better/more effective government structures
- Encourage collaboration/cooperation
- Show impact of savings when collaborating/cooperating
- Promote and participate in multi-municipal and mega-regional initiatives
- Facilitate a dialogue among Economic Developers and Municipal Officials to better understand each other's concerns and perspectives toward economic development and prospecting

### **V. Enhance Transportation Program Efforts**

- Coordinate short line rail initiatives
- Provide information on the process of obtaining rail sidings into businesses
- Facilitate the coordination of transit agencies in the region
- Coordinate joint meetings between MPOs/RPOs
- Define our intermodal relevance with others around us (Ohio, New York, Pittsburgh)

## **Appendix A: Performance Measurements**

*Performance Measurements will be updated on a quarterly basis, and projected in the strategic plan as yearly updated measurements. As time develops, so will this section. The measurements normally have numerical values that can be used as a general barometer of progress*