

TGCC
2013/2014 WORK PLAN

Goal I--Advance economic development issues of regional relevance through active participation in the key areas of Education, Transportation, Energy and Regional Leadership.

After decades of erosion of our industrial economic foundation, our region has been negatively impacted by out-migration of living wage jobs and, consequently, loss of population. Despite the emergence of a growing regional tourism product, the development of quality health care services and the strong presence of multiple institutions of higher education, population growth continues to be stunted, negatively impacting key measures of a viable community--population growth and new business development. Additionally, elements of aging infrastructure such as limited transportation systems and broadband capacity are deterrents to increased private sector development.

It is time to capitalize on the economic impact of our institutions of higher education and effectively brand the collective benefits of our region to spur growth and expansion. Emerging opportunities associated with the harvesting of natural gas development and the development and branding of an Energy Production Enterprise Zone are of increasing importance, particularly as the nation's energy portfolio seeks to expand in response to a national call-to-action regarding dependence on foreign energy sources. Likewise, the combined regional advancements in key infrastructure, such as the North/South Appalachian Highway and expanded broadband connectivity, will serve to position our service area to fully realize future population and economic growth.

Our region supports the advancement of economic opportunities by working in tandem with our bounty of the natural and historic assets found here. In managing those assets, we seek to broaden our business sector profile, capitalize on unique economic opportunities, and enhance our human capital through strategic growth initiatives.

Objectives

1) Champion initiatives that serve to support long term economic benefits across the region by engaging elected officials to share their perspectives for future development efforts.

- a. Support the strategy for Broadband development and identify opportunities with our Workforce Development partners to promote additional training and education.*
- b. Continue to participate, support and utilize the benefits of the Power of 32 attitudes to advance TGCC's service area and affiliate partners.*
- c. Encourage business funding sources such as Sales Tax TIF, expanded Property TIF, Angel Investment and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) opportunities that will support the goal of achieving notable population growth and increasing business opportunities across the region.*
- d. Engage regional economic development professionals to support and participate in the development of a regional branding initiative.*
- e. Serve as a catalyst to identify joint projects of regional impact in all areas of economic growth in keeping with TGCC's mission and vision.*
- f. Seek opportunities to provide cooperative promotion of trail development and economic benefits to our area.*

2) Continue to advance the North/South Appalachian Highway

- a. Secure funding for Tier 2 Study for US 220 S (Maryland and West Virginia)*
- b. Work with MD and PA Departments of Transportation to ensure Route 219 from Meyersdale to I-68 remains a top priority for completion*
- c. Maintain media momentum; create an editorial campaign with media partners to ensure TGCC remains proactive*
- d. Continue to build the North South Appalachian Highway Coalition, comprised of business & civic leadership, government entities and media outlets*

e. Continue to educate newly elected officials locally and in DC, specifically from PA and WV

f. Develop a transition plan that considers the best opportunity for this project to be completed

3) Educate state government officials on the unique energy opportunities available and seek their support to create expanded services in the areas of coal, timber, natural gas, wind and solar.

a. Collaborate with industry leaders and elected officials to establish an Energy Production Enterprise Zone (e.g. Energy Corridor).

b. Advocate for the development of tax credits and new business incentives to encourage and welcome all forms of energy production/conversion.

c. Encourage new and innovative technologies to sustain corridor capacity and advance future growth.

d. Utilize the momentum from the 2012 Coal Summit to host an Energy Summit to showcase the value of the numerous energy sources throughout the region.

e. Identify supporting businesses to complement the various energy sources to ensure greater vitality and success as part of the next generation investment.

Goal II—Support the development of the region’s emerging leaders.

The need for effective leadership exists in all corners of a community. With time and age, the baton of leadership will pass. How can the current leadership prepare those who will follow us for the responsibility of ensuring the health and vibrancy of our community? With four successful years of the Regional Leadership Series completed, the responsibility of the Leadership Work Group shall be to offer a fifth round of programs to the region’s emerging leaders and begin discussions with one or more of the four institutions supporting the program as it relates to the sustainability of the RLS beyond TGCC.

Objectives

1) Continue the Regional Leadership Series in 2013 within institutions of higher education.

2) Identify and locate a permanent home for RLS in 2014.

3) Support existing programs in the region, including: Achievement Counts and the Outstanding Young Professionals Event, as well as Leadership *Allegany!*. Support the development of a regionally based leadership program.

4) Engage existing organizations geared toward young professionals and form a relationship with up and coming leaders.

Goal III—Align educational resources to meet the workforce and economic development needs of the region.

Preparing students for the world of work is vital and the business community universally recognizes the importance of education as it relates to a positive economic environment. It is estimated that by 2018, two-thirds of all jobs in the US will require some amount of college-level education – with more than half requiring some college, but less than a bachelor’s degree. By 2016, the percentage of jobs in Maryland requiring some college preparation will be 77% according to Maryland’s Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations. To meet this demand, the Education Work Group recognizes that our region’s public school systems, community colleges, universities and the business community must collaborate at levels and in ways not before seen. Such collaboration will include learning about, understanding and responding to existing and anticipated workforce needs within our region, and developing educational programs and services to get more students the training, credentials, certifications and degrees needed for our region’s economic growth and development.

If we are successful, the Education Work Group sees a future where:

- We are aware of what each other (business/education) is doing; the business community understands what the educational system has to offer; education understands business’ needs;*

- *Students are significantly better prepared for post-secondary life (workplace and/or college readiness);*
- *We're doing things together (K-12, Higher Ed, and Business) that attract people into our programs and impact economic development;*
- *Students understand their role as a consumer of education – e.g., they understand the economics related to their educational pursuits;*
- *We attract resources (e.g., grants) to support our interest because of the highly collaborative and regional nature of these efforts.*

Objectives

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To work aggressively to close the gap in college and workplace readiness; 2) To close the gap in information between business/industry, all segments of education, and the public; 3) To collaborate like we never have before to make educational pathways clear and early college credit and credential earning opportunities widely known; 4) To encourage communities within the TGCC region to actively support broader access to higher education |
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The role of TGCC's Education Work Group, as it relates to each of these objectives, shall be one of support and the convening of appropriate groups. Members of TGCC will continue to inspire the relationship with the leadership within its regional educational community in assisting with the review of its strategic plan, which ultimately could affect future growth opportunities in the region.