
Regional Conference on Transportation and Land Use for Economic Development

North Central Region
(Cameron, Clearfield, Elk,
Jefferson, McKean, and Potter Counties)

May 27, 2005
DuBois, Pennsylvania

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the Regional Conference on Transportation and Land Use for Economic Development held on May 27, 2005 in DuBois. Building on the Statewide Action Plan presented by the Commonwealth in 2004, more than 50 regional leaders developed a common vision of the North Central Region. They then identified the objectives and action steps to realize that vision. The result is a regional-specific plan for moving the region forward in integrating transportation and land use for economic development.

Pennsylvania's Departments of Transportation (PennDOT), Environmental Protection (DEP), Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Community and Economic Development (DCED), and Agriculture (PDA), as well as the Governor's Office and State Planning Board, jointly hosted this regional conference. Following the welcome and opening remarks, DCED Secretary Dennis Yablonsky presented the Statewide Action Plan to session participants and set the stage for the conference.

The event was coordinated by the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) and facilitated by the Dering Consulting Group.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

The table below summarizes the conference agenda and outcomes.

Agenda Item	Outcome
Review of Statewide Action Plan	Participants' understanding of plan presented in 2004 and related achievements to date.
Regional Vision	Collective vision of the characteristics of a successful model for the future.
Regional Objectives	Identification of regional priorities for transportation and land use for economic development.
Review of Statewide Action Plan	Understanding and refining of Statewide Action Plan in light of regional priorities.
Working Lunch and Plenary Session	Identification of successful projects and initiatives, and the factors that made them successful.
Regional Action Agenda	Specific steps required to achieve the regional objectives.
Full Group Discussion	Presentation and feedback on groups' action planning.
Closing Comments	Regional call to action for the leadership and partnerships needed to advance the plan.

A VISION OF THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

When envisioning the region twenty years in the future, participants agreed that the region needs to build on its existing assets without compromising the abundant natural resources, especially its forests and waterways, so integral to the quality of life in the region. In designing its future, the region has to consider attracting clean industries, enhancing recreation opportunities, retaining its young people, redeveloping its core communities, and improving its infrastructure to better link the region to the rest of the state.

At its best, the region will have:

- Economic development, including tourism, that doesn't sacrifice green space. Recycled brownfields and grayfields are the sites for much of the commercial development.
- Diverse businesses and industries that provide quality employment, and continue to retain and attract workers to the area.
- Educational and workforce development programs that support the industries and economy of the region.
- Transportation and telecommunications infrastructure that links the municipalities within the region, and links the region with the rest of the state and beyond.
- Thriving core communities and energetic downtowns that look and are prosperous, all the while maintaining their small town charm.
- Parity in funding for both urban and rural economic development initiatives for the good of the whole region.
- Abundant recreation—cultural, historical, and environmental—drawing visitors to the region and enhancing the quality of life for all of the region's residents.
- Local control (at the county level) that reaps the rewards of state incentives for cooperation and interacts closely with state and federal agencies in addressing the region's needs.
- Streamlined governments that recognize the value of inter-municipal and regional cooperation and educated public officials that understand the integration of land use and transportation with economic development.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Conference participants generated a number of objectives in order to meet the bold vision of the North Central Region. These were further refined into primary objectives (recommended as fundamental in meeting the vision of the region) and additional objectives (recommended as important considerations in framing the future of the region).

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Conduct long-range integrated planning on a regional basis.*
- B. Engage in required comprehensive land use and transportation planning within each county every five to seven years that rolls into a regional economic development plan, or become ineligible for funding.*
- C. Promote tax fairness to encourage sound land use, regionalization, and appropriate economic growth.*
- D. Change the Municipalities planning code (MPC) to give counties land use planning and decision-making authority.*
- E. Encourage youth to remain in region through incentives and jobs.*
- F. Develop local incentive programs to help businesses.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- G. Set a level playing field by establishing standardized criteria for funding land use, transportation, and economic development initiatives.*
- H. Establish equity in funding public education. Ensure that every region has a technical training/community college for enhancing workforce competencies, with offerings based on long-range projections required for regional economic development.*
- I. Improve the quality of life by improving outdoor recreation, healthcare, retail outlets, communities, transportation, and technology.*
- J. Reduce the number of municipalities to the county level and require mandatory training and education for officials.*
- K. Improve communication between municipalities, counties, and the region.*
- L. Lobby as a region for transportation, service, and other allocations.*
- M. Integrate all forms of infrastructure (e.g., green, gray, sewer, water).*
- N. Promote reuse of brownfields.*
- O. Repair and maintain highways and bridges.*
- P. Have a grant coordinator for each county.*

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Conference participants proposed six primary regional objectives, related regional action steps, and recommendations for Commonwealth support. These objectives and action steps were generated by breakout groups and represent unedited recommendations. The full group did not participate in a consensus-development process. This important consensus development will take place in follow-up meetings within the region.

A. Conduct long-range integrated planning on a regional basis.

Regional Action Steps

1. Identify key players, including community members and municipal and county officials.
2. Form a regional planning organization, with local leaders as decision-makers. Include state-designated representatives, local planning officials, and private investors/consultants (if applicable).
3. Define success measures. Meet with key players to establish a vision agreement. Enlist the aid of a facilitator and support staff to assist in the process.
4. Establish goals/action items. Engage county and municipal planners, state designated program representatives, state and congressional elected officials, as well as the private sector.
5. Implement goals/action items. In addition to the Commonwealth, work with the private sector, rural planning organizations (RPOs), county planning commissions, and municipal level representatives.
6. Determine if goals need to be adjusted. The assessment should be conducted by the key players, but with participation from PennDOT, DEP, DCNR, DCED, and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVEST).
7. Establish communication systems to enable dialogue and task sharing.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Establish guidelines and commitment to support planning initiative.
2. Provide technical support and assistance via agencies (PennDOT, DEP, DCNR, DCED, and PennVEST input).
3. Offer dedicated staff to coordinate and facilitate program, and allocate funding to support ongoing activity.

B. Engage in required comprehensive land use and transportation planning within each county every five to seven years that rolls into a regional economic development plan, or become ineligible for funding.

Regional Action Steps

1. Identify key player at the county level. Recruit representatives from municipalities, counties, businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Councils of Government (COG), transportation associations, the media, the public, and from state-wide associations (e.g., PSATS, PA State Boroughs Association).
2. Establish a planning committee or task force of emergent leadership.
3. Set a timeline, scope of work, and selection criteria.
4. Hire a consultant via request for proposal (RFP), coordinated by the regional planning committee.
5. Hold public meetings of stakeholders and conduct a private focus group of selected individuals to gather input and formulate a plan educate the community. Invoke the participation of state agencies and the State Planning Board.
6. Draft the plan, then review draft at town hall meetings to gather public input. Include representatives from focus groups (schedule at varied times). Conduct creative networking and promotion. Advertise via community communication channels. Highlight “What’s in it for me?” Publicize individual report.
7. Set and publicize short turnaround time. Require that the task force visibly acknowledges input, defines what has happened with input, and offers next steps.
8. Adopt and implement a finalized plan that is succinct, user-friendly, flexible, and dynamic. Distribute to all engaged parties and the media, and to venues for public consumption (e.g., online and public libraries).
9. Showcase regional best practices of comprehensive county planning with municipal support.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Furnish templates to assist counties in developing integrated comprehensive plans that link to state standards and the Commonwealth’s comprehensive plan.
2. Offer technical assistance from DCED, especially in the consultant selection process.
3. Provide funding to support initiatives.

4. Assist in gathering information on successful models. Provide guidance on selecting best practices.

C. Promote tax fairness to encourage sound land use, regionalization, and appropriate economic growth.

Regional Action Steps

1. Provide strong regional support to a Commonwealth Action Committee on Tax Fairness.
2. Develop fees or tax incentives (at the regional level) to promote sound, environmentally friendly land use.
3. Educate all stakeholders on the benefits of tax fairness. Under local leadership, involve the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), municipal associations, and Commonwealth agencies and affiliates. Seek the support of the state in direction, funding, and staffing for the educational initiatives.
4. Develop fees or tax incentives regionally to promote sound, environmentally friendly land use.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Create a Commonwealth Action Committee on Tax Fairness. Recruit members from the legislature (in a leadership role), the Governor's Office, Commonwealth agencies, municipal associations, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP), Chambers of Commerce, and PSBA.
2. Set a course of direction and funding for this initiative. Seek input not only from state sources, but also from those on the regional level as well.
3. Develop menu of tax options. Outline the strengths and weaknesses of each tax and revenue generation projections.
4. Enact legislation to promote regionalism and cooperation.
5. Develop fees or tax incentives statewide to promote sound, environmentally friendly land use.

D. Change the Municipalities planning code (MPC) to give counties land use planning and decision- making authority

Regional Action Steps

1. Reach out to state legislators to discuss main objectives and gain support. In this effort, employ resources from individual counties, CCAP, as well as local governments and their representative associations.
2. Conduct outreach to the region’s officials and the general public regarding the benefits of accomplishing the main objective (including respective associations). Enlist the assistance of county and local governments, regional leaders, the private sector, and relevant non-profit organizations.
3. Work with the Commonwealth in a coordinating role to identify/implement opportunities to strengthen county/regional plans.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Review Pennsylvania’s MPC to identify changes. Create a stakeholder group that includes representation from counties and CCAP, as well as local governments.
2. Review and alter existing programs and policies to identify/implement opportunities to strengthen county/regional plans. Ensure that this review process is continual.
3. Adopt changes to MPC to give counties land use decision-making authority.

E. Encourage youth to remain in region through incentives and jobs.

Regional Action Steps

1. Provide first-time homebuyer incentives to recent college graduates in this region. Establish this program with funding and support from private financial institutions, realtors, and rent-to-own organizations, and public entities, such as counties, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), DCED, and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
2. Build healthy communities and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods (incorporating sidewalks, multi-modal opportunities). Tap into the resources of local and county governments, RPOs, neighborhood associations and related non-profits, as well as state agency programs (e.g., PennDOT’s Hometown Streets, Safe Routes to School).

3. Devise incentives to reduce tuition costs for graduates that remain in the region. Work with the region's colleges and universities, as well as the State System of Higher Education (SSHE), in developing and marketing the program. Also, offer local employers incentives to hire local graduates.
4. Cluster economic development at college sites. Promote entrepreneurship through student-operated businesses. Establish business incubators (locate businesses on/next to campus). Implement the telecommunications infrastructure necessary to support these businesses. Encourage local businesses to use a student workforce and locate within a Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ). Enlist the aid of SSHE, local governments and the colleges sited there (e.g., Dubois, Lock Haven, Clearfield, and Bradford), Chambers of Commerce, small business development centers, DCED, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE).
5. Provide education on comprehensive planning, land use, community development, economic development, and transportation to secondary education students. Include intermediate units, cooperative extensions, county commissioners and planning officials, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), and the interagency land use team.
6. Develop an organization to represent the region's youth and local government to identify planning/land use issues and needs.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Expand the KIZ program; in "hot spots," establish criteria to allow smaller colleges to participate in KIZs.
2. Encourage interagency cooperation in developing regional initiatives.
3. Provide funding and technical support for programs.

F. Develop local incentive programs to help businesses.

Regional Action Steps

1. Create more local revolving loan funds with state seed money. To do so, work with state agencies (e.g., DCED), local officials, economic development professionals, and private industry.
2. Request that some economic development funds be allocated like Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds.
3. Urge DCNR, through county and local entities, to change its programming to ensure that recreation funding to counties is allocated and based on regional needs and priorities.

4. Request that the state streamline economic development funding programs. Make certain that economic development professionals at local level have input into streamlining process.
5. Create one-stop shops at the local county level to facilitate grant applications and knowledge about available incentives. Involve regional representatives from state agencies.

Recommendations for Commonwealth Support

1. Provide seed money for local revolving loan funds.
2. Implement changes to allocation formulas to support regional initiatives (e.g., permit some economic development funds to be allocated like CDBG program funds).
3. Adjust state guidelines for economic development programs. For now, focus programs on job creation, new business development and expansion of existing industries. In the future, focus on job retention, giving priority to well-established businesses that contribute to local economy and community. Seek input on the business community for these adjustments.

REVIEW OF THE STATEWIDE ACTION PLAN

Conference participants considered the Statewide Action Plan's strategic objectives in relation to their regional objectives. In their review, participants provided suggestions, as listed below, regarding existing components of the Action Plan, as well as additional tasks that the Commonwealth might consider in addressing regional objectives.

Agency Coordination

- Implement the Statewide Action Plan for the long-term (20 year development period, subject to updates/renewals at 5 year intervals), independent of changes in administration. Make the plan legislative process.
- Explain Executive Order 1999-1.
- Issue Executive Order to retain youth in Pennsylvania.
- Require state agencies to coordinate efforts to implement economic development.
- ***Planning, Program, and Project Delivery***
- Implement tax reform to address the lower tax revenues generated by public lands (e.g., greenways, state parks, state forests).
- Make decisions for economic development, transportation plans, and funding on a regional basis by using county comprehensive plans as a guide.

- Employ designated professionals to implement plans on a regional basis. The Commonwealth should provide staffing support for the regions, with standardization of staffing across RPOs.
- Make it a requirement that comprehensive planning is done every five to seven years as a prerequisite to funding.

Investment/Leverage

- Reform taxes to promote municipal mergers.
- Change the funding criteria and regulations of state agencies to provide funding on a county and regional level.
- Establish equal weighting system so that non-urban areas have equal opportunity to participate in funds/programs.
- Involve more local government representatives in the planning process. PSATS has resources to communicate to officials involved in the transportation/land use process.
- Avail to county commissioners a group of regional professionals in land use and economic development, independent of those associated with RPOs and MPOs.
- Add boroughs to Task 3.11.
- Render economic development funds directly to counties so they can use them how they want and to eliminate competition (block grant projects).
- Offer entitlement programs for counties.
- Provide grant programs for counties/local government so they can have a revolving loan fund.
- Use job retention as criteria for receiving funds.
- Consolidate funding programs so that commercial, retail, and industrial companies can draw from the same funds.
- Give financial support for outdoor recreation development.

Intergovernmental Partnerships

- Provide local governments with a menu of taxing options.
- Facilitate tax fairness by starting a state task force to reform property taxes.
- Pay for county-wide assessments to be completed every three to five years.

- Partner with colleges and universities to efficiently use existing infrastructure, especially telecommunications.
- Prepare a “lessons learned” primer from actual municipal consolidations (what worked, what didn’t, and the benefits of partnering).

Education

- Educate the public on the benefits of positive involvement in government, tax reform, and government consolidation.
- Require that elected officials be trained and educated.
- Permit smaller colleges to implement KIZs, with creative incentives for smaller colleges, to help retain college graduates in region.
- Capitalize on vocational/technical schools to develop workforce for the region.
- Focus on employment retention and population growth.

SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES

During the working lunch and plenary session, participants discussed successful regional initiatives and the factors contributing to their success. The purpose was to identify common elements of success within these regional initiatives that might serve as a model in meeting the objectives identified in this conference.

The following list is representative of the successful initiatives within the North Central Region:

CDBG Program—DCED-administered grant program that works well in the region by fulfilling vital needs, such as improving sewer and water infrastructure, within counties and municipalities.

Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP)—DCED-administered assistance program that provides local governments practice sound land use planning.

DuBois-Jefferson County Airport—owned and operated by the Clearfield-Jefferson County Regional Airport Authority; the airport offers commercial air service and is designated as a General Purpose Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). This designation assists local industries in enhancing their international competitiveness through certain tax advantages. The North Central Planning and Development Corporation serves as administrator of the FTZ.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Efforts—multi-municipal agreements for purchasing and code enforcement, as well as cooperative efforts and good working relationships with state agencies, such as the Pennsylvania Department of Housing (PDH), PennDOT, DEP, PDA, DCNR, and DCED.

Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs)—sites throughout the region, including the Air Commerce Park and the Punxsutawney Industrial Park that have been developed to draw business and industry to the region.

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)—Partnership between the Commonwealth, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the National LTAP Association for providing assistance to municipalities in road and bridge construction and maintenance.

Mahoning Shadow Trail—15.5 mile trail designated for non-motorized recreational use. The project was developed by the Punxsutawney Area Rails-to-Trails Association, Inc. a non-profit alliance of public and private partners.

Merger of St. Mary’s Borough and Benzinger Township—incorporation of two entities into the City of St. Mary’s, providing a model for the “pros” and “cons” of such mergers.

Regional Asset Districts (RAD) (in Allegheny County but proposed for the North Central Region)—One percent of increased (seven percent) sales tax dedicated to a county and their RAD Authority. Funding is used to support assets, such as schools, parks, museums, libraries, stadiums, and other municipal incentives viewed as important to local economic development.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

At the end of the session, participants discussed ways in which to move forward with the primary objectives. Howard Glessner, of the North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC), volunteered his organization as lead in the effort. A number of other organizations also pledged their commitment to work with NCRPC in this endeavor.

In addition, it was recognized that local governments must participate more fully in the process. The need for multiple municipalities to join one another as single entities was discussed as an important step in streamlining local government and reducing inefficiencies. Alternatively, counties may be allowed to handle the services that municipalities do not have the capacity to handle.

OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES

The Commonwealth agencies that hosted this conference offer this report not only as documentation of the proceedings, but as a tool the North Central Region can use in pursuing its plan for integrating transportation and land use for economic development.

The plan incorporates both regional motivation and the support of the Commonwealth. It is essential that regional participants now take the necessary steps to foster leadership, enhance relationships, and apply adequate resources to move this plan from paper to reality. For their part, Commonwealth agencies pledge their support and assistance to the North Central Region in furthering the region's defined objectives and pursuing discussions to that end with local agencies. The agencies also will consider the suggestions and recommendations of conference participants in regard to the Statewide Action Plan. In addition, recommendations outlined in the nine reports will be compiled and shared with other state agencies on the Interagency Land Use Team as appropriate. The Statewide Action Plan will be updated to reflect new tasks developed from the suggestions and recommendations.

In addition, the newly reconstituted State Planning Board agreed to consider outcomes from all regional conferences in its own recommendations on the direction the Commonwealth takes toward transportation and land use for economic development.

(APPENDIX)

**TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
OBJECTIVES AS DEFINED BY EACH REGION OF THE COMMONWEALTH**

CENTRAL REGION:

<i>PRIMARY OBJECTIVES</i>
<p><i>A. Create an overall development plan to identify designated areas for development and redevelopment for economic development (uses land use assets).</i></p> <p><i>B. Implement effective land use planning in this region.</i></p> <p><i>C. Revitalize, reinvest, maintain, restore, and improve existing communities through economic development and the preservation of natural, historic, cultural, and open space resources.</i></p> <p><i>D. Develop a broad, regional educational outreach about economic development, land use, and transportation for students, general citizenry, municipalities, and legislators. Raise awareness, define avenues to get involved, and stress the need to be involved.</i></p> <p><i>E. Encourage comprehensive regionalization of services (including policing, water and sewer, marketing and tourism, and reduced government).</i></p> <p><i>F. Capitalize on the location of institutions in our core communities (which are already supported by existing infrastructure) by providing for their growth, expansion, and modernization as a strategy for strengthening the local economy.</i></p>
<i>ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES</i>
<p><i>G. Improve interagency cooperation and create incentives for intergovernmental cooperation.</i></p> <p><i>H. Maximize use of existing infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>I. Design transportation processes—multi-modal, context sensitive, and "smart"—to link with land use concerns.</i></p> <p><i>J. Protect existing natural resources as the foundation for tourism.</i></p> <p><i>K. Make strategic investments that are prioritized within the overall plan—say "no" to ordinances, land use planning, and proposed economic development that is not part of the plan.</i></p> <p><i>L. Increase the availability of affordable housing in currently developed areas and where employment opportunities exist.</i></p> <p><i>M. Reduce reliance on property taxes (implement tax reform).</i></p>

NORTHEAST REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Establish a regional planning commission.*
- B. Create a regional comprehensive master plan, implement that plan, and promote regional zoning.*
- C. Improve technology infrastructure (e.g., fiber optics, WI-FI, and high speed Internet) to bring economic development into existing communities.*
- D. Pay for secondary and cumulative impacts.*
- E. Attract jobs.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- F. Promote/lobby for legislative changes and incentives to support regionalization.*
- G. Improve capacity (the ability to accomplish, finance and understand) at municipal and county level.*
- H. Promote expediency and concurrency in project implementation.*
- I. Improve existing transportation infrastructure through planning, reuse, and planned multiple access for the future.*
- J. Create and incentivize van pooling, ride sharing programs, and other transportation alternatives.*
- K. Designate logical development cores with state incentives and funding for capacity.*
- L. Educate the community on planning.*
- M. Use existing communities as the basis for economic development.*
- N. Improve the internal and external marketing of the region.*

NORTHERN TIER REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Develop a comprehensive regional plan that involves collaboration among agencies, municipalities, and citizen groups that takes into account the region's future vision.*
- B. Create a regional (multi-county) entity to leverage economic development opportunities, integrating land use, transportation, and environmental planning.*
- C. Attract jobs and industry that complement the rural character of region.*
- D. Encourage the growth of small businesses.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- E. Change "state thinking" about funding formulas.*
- F. Develop a core economic development strategy for region (include land use, transportation, and environment).*
- G. Maintain the beauty of the region by planning where development occurs and plan for "green" communities.*
- H. Require more coordination and communication between economic development, transportation, and planners.*
- I. Coordinate transportation projects with other infrastructure projects.*
- J. Identify important transportation routes—rail, commercial/industrial routes, and county roads—and related issues (e.g., access, funding).*
- K. Improve educational opportunities at all levels within the region.*
- L. Revitalize downtowns and core communities.*
- M. Educate general citizenry (landowners) on conservation and planned development.*

SOUTHEAST REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Develop distinct advantages (regional strategies) to attract economic development opportunities, incorporating shared revenue, tax bases, defined services, and transportation.*
- B. Strengthen the authority of counties (planning, infrastructure, and zoning).*
- C. Coordinate state programs, policies, permitting, and decisions to ensure sound regional planning.*
- D. Integrate infrastructure with land use planning (communication, sewer/water, transportation, trails, and open spaces).*
- E. Ensure that quality of life issues are recognized in planning, with focus on green infrastructure.*
- F. Target economic development resources toward towns and cities.*
- G. Streamline development into previously developed areas.*
- H. Enact an urban growth boundary.*
- I. Develop efficient mass transit (multi-modal) with dedicated funding.*
- J. Preserve agriculture as an industry.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- K. Consolidate local governments and create leaner, more efficient government overall.*
- L. Guarantee consistency between municipal and county plans.*
- M. Advance interagency cooperation at the county level.*
- N. Increase transit-oriented development.*
- O. Ensure adequate and dedicated transportation funding.*
- P. Implement school finance and other tax reforms.*
- Q. Improve educational equity and the quality of public education.*
- R. Encourage more entrepreneurial and small start-up businesses.*
- S. Target economic development to sectors that have higher paying jobs and give geographic consideration to where those jobs are.*
- T. Create incentives to channel consumers and change negative mindsets.*

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Assure (improve) quality of life in this region. Components of this include: health and education; recreation; easy, clean transportation; livable neighborhood; arts and culture; equitable local taxes; and jobs.*
- B. Make changes to the Municipalities planning code (MPC) to allow local governments to have control over their own destiny (allow/prohibit development and growth).*
- C. Centralize planning and implementation for land use, transportation, and infrastructure investment, including municipal services. Designate the county as the keystone in governance and funding reform.*
- D. Streamline Pennsylvania by restructuring local governments by 2015 to achieve service, regulatory, and program efficiency (design for success).*
- E. Increase stakeholder cooperation and collaboration in the areas of transportation, land use, and economic development by reducing hurdles and providing incentives to do so.*
- F. Promote infill and greater density.*
- G. Encourage and require a diversity of housing products (using both incentives and regulations).*
- H. Incorporate traditional neighborhood development in new development and redevelopment.*
- I. Forecast the needs of the region to better plan for the future.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- J. Encourage the Commonwealth to build relationships with Maryland and Virginia and their counties.*
- K. Determine exactly what target cluster the region wants/needs. Accelerate public/private partnering, define roles and responsibilities, and “how to” specifics.*
- L. Define and develop a more equitable tax structure to support regional planning.*
- M. Make agriculture economically viable.*
- N. Encourage economic development through natural resource conservation (eco-tourism).*
- O. Revitalize existing downtown areas and municipal cores: inventory existing economic development projects, parking, use of space.*
- P. Promote workforce-housing connection.*
- Q. Use technology to reduce the presence of cars; build strong support for regional rail.*

SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Think regionally. Cooperate and collaborate at the municipal level through education of parties involving planning.*
- B. Create priority incentives for core community investment while reducing incentives for “greenfields/sprawl” development.*
- C. Provide coordination between development and transportation infrastructure.*
- D. Complete and maintain the multi-modal transportation system in the region.*
- E. Capitalize on the region’s assets.*
- F. Put policies in place now to preserve open space in the future.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- G. Expand objectives beyond land use and transportation to include education, life-long learning, and retraining.*
- H. Develop and implement land use plans and ordinances on a regional level.*
- I. Base land use policies upon infrastructure analysis.*
- J. Provide financial incentives for intergovernmental cooperation.*
- K. Improve the agriculture industry and retain/preserve agriculture land.*
- L. Establish beneficial uses of waste resources; create marketing and job opportunities.*
- M. Create ways to pilot and market clean energy products.*
- N. Grow and maintain existing businesses.*
- O. Implement tax reform.*

NORTH CENTRAL REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Conduct long-range integrated planning on a regional basis.*
- B. Engage in required comprehensive land use and transportation planning within each county every five to seven years that rolls into a regional economic development plan, or become ineligible for funding.*
- C. Promote tax fairness to encourage sound land use, regionalization, and appropriate economic growth.*
- D. Change the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) to give counties land use planning and decision-making authority.*
- E. Encourage youth to remain in region through incentives and jobs.*
- F. Develop local incentive programs to help businesses.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- G. Set a level playing field by establishing standardized criteria for funding land use, transportation, and economic development initiatives.*
- H. Establish equity in funding public education. Ensure that every region has a technical training/community college for enhancing workforce competencies, with offerings based on long-range projections required for regional economic development.*
- I. Improve the quality of life by improving outdoor recreation, healthcare, retail outlets, communities, transportation, and technology.*
- J. Reduce the number of municipalities to the county level and require mandatory training and education for officials.*
- K. Improve communication between municipalities, counties, and the region.*
- L. Lobby as a region for transportation, service, and other allocations.*
- M. Integrate all forms of infrastructure (e.g., green, gray, sewer, water).*
- N. Promote reuse of brownfields.*
- O. Repair and maintain highways and bridges.*
- P. Have a grant coordinator for each county.*

NORTHWEST REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- A. Identify regional priorities, incorporating a focused process for securing government funding for related actions.*
- B. Develop a long-term regional marketing plan.*
- C. Implement smart growth concepts.*
- D. Establish investment criteria for public investments to ensure return on investment (ROI).*
- E. Encourage the involvement of the private sector in all economic development activities (planning through implementation).*
- F. Focus on communities' needs for strengthening and developing strong communities.*

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

- G. Coordinate land use, transportation, and economic development horizontally (interaction among state agencies) and vertically (intra and inter-regionally).*
- H. Assess existing resources. Use benchmarks to make better use of government money.*
- I. Ensure that infrastructure development is concurrent with new development.*
- J. Encourage locals to implement county plans to facilitate proactive zoning.*
- K. Establish greater cooperation between post-secondary education and the public and private sectors.*
- L. Retain youth through education.*
- M. Strengthen the region's small businesses.*
- N. Change the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) so that county plans have more "teeth."*
- O. Make Pennsylvania's tax structure more competitive.*

SOUTHWEST REGION:

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES
<p>A. <i>Add value to products created in Pennsylvania.</i></p> <p>B. <i>Educate community officials on leadership, understanding of the development process, acting proactively, and acquiring resources.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Implement a focused comprehensive economic investment strategy which requires consistency with a regional comprehensive plan, incorporates job-related training, and requires the state and the region to make decisions based on that strategy.</i></p> <p>D. <i>Create a regional land use plan.</i></p> <p>E. <i>Prioritize regionally coordinated investments (transportation, infrastructure, create and support regional strategy).</i></p> <p>F. <i>Fix existing infrastructure first.</i></p>
ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES
<p>G. <i>Eliminate municipal boundaries and consolidate local governments.</i></p> <p>H. <i>Promote cooperation between state/local governments and business.</i></p> <p>I. <i>Concentrate investment money to appropriate locations for reinvestment and redevelopment.</i></p> <p>J. <i>Maintain and enhance existing communities and places. Grow the entire community; don't sacrifice one area for another.</i></p> <p>K. <i>Incentivize smart growth.</i></p> <p>L. <i>Improve viable downtowns.</i></p> <p>M. <i>Develop regional transit system.</i></p> <p>N. <i>Provide affordable housing, healthcare, and education.</i></p> <p>O. <i>Modernize taxing system and structure on all levels.</i></p> <p>P. <i>Institute Regional Asset Districts (RADs), with 1% generated used for discretionary spending.</i></p>

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