

III. Assessment of Progress

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Economic Development

Region VII Goal 1.

The counties of Region VII shall complete the transition from an extraction-based economy to a more balanced and diverse economy taking advantage of the region's natural and renewable resources, unparalleled natural beauty, and enviable way of life, by attracting economic development which provides stable, long-term employment in well paid jobs, provides a sound tax base for local government, and enhances and reinforces the existing quality-of-life assets of the region.

Objective 1.1. To create new jobs in industry, commerce and services; particularly in forest products, applied technology / telecommunications, and recreation and tourism; by encouraging the development of entrepreneurship, expanding existing industry, commerce and services, and enticing large companies to establish operations in the region.

Strategy 1.1.1. Strengthen local development authorities and Chambers of Commerce with an eye toward identifying suitable sites and buildings for industrial and commercial development, and improving the ability to market their areas to prospective businesses.

- Completion of 23 acres of site work plus infrastructure at Upshur County Industrial Park (EDA, SCBG, WV Industrial Road Access Program, IJDC)
- Added acreage to Gilmer County Industrial Park (USDA RBEG)

Strategy 1.1.2. Assist in the establishment of multi-tenant buildings to foster new ventures in manufacturing (particularly in the forest products industry and in computer and telecommunications operations).

- Implementing Barbour County Aviation Industry Building Project (EDA, WV Industrial Road Access Program, CPGP)

Strategy 1.1.3. Support the revitalization of the region's historic downtown commercial areas and other historic resources so they can compete more effectively as retail centers; retain old, attract new office and other commercial activity; and attract tourists and travelers.

- Buckhannon Farmers Market (RBEG/ARRA)

Strategy 1.1.4. Encourage economic development along the accessible highway corridors, such as Interstate 79 and Corridor H.

- "Facing the future Together" regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)
- Robert C Byrd Corridor H Highway Authority
- CEDS local meetings

Strategy 1.1.5. Promote business development and entrepreneurship emphasizing technology (research, development and commercialization) and the tourism industry (food services, lodging, retail services, etc.).

- Upshur County Technology Building (early development)
- Staff participation in Food & Farm Coalition
- Staff participation in The Appalachian Foodshed Project (USDA-NIFA)

Strategy 1.1.6. Create jobs in the tourism industry that are directly related to the preservation of the region's historical resources, such as historical facilities and local heritage.

- Corrick's Ford Battlefield (Transportation Enhancement Grant)
- Kump Education Center (Transportation Enhancement Grant)

Objective 1.2. To provide the region's existing and potential work force with the education and skills needed to match the requirements of new job opportunities.

Strategy 1.2.1. Become more involved and provide more support for the Region VII Workforce Investment Board, Inc. in implementing and promoting the duties established by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

- Executive Director on Workforce Board
- "Facing the future Together" regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)

Objective 1.3. To improve and extend the region's basic infrastructure, including: transportation, facilities, public and private utilities, services, and communication facilities.

Strategy 1.3.1. Promote the improvement of transit & transportation to and within the region (especially the completion of Corridor H).

- "Facing the future Together" regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)
- Robert C Byrd Corridor H Highway Authority
- Participate in Regional Transit Planning

Objective 1.4: To find ways of financing all forms of business development and growth (particularly methods of capitalizing new, locally based companies) by establishing new loan programs, expanding the use of existing programs, and finding other incentives for business development.

Strategy 1.4.1. Assist private industry and commerce in taking advantage of existing state and federal programs and organizations (such as the Governor's Office of Community and Industrial Development [GOCID], United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development [USDA-RD], Small Business Administration [SBA], Economic Development Administration [EDA], Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and the West Virginia Economic Development Administration [WV EDA]), which provide financial and technical assistance.

- Region VII PDC is establishing an Intermediate Relending Program
- Barbour County Aviation Industry Building (EDA)
- A&O Railroad Improvements (Tiger III)

Strategy 1.4.2. Help local governments improve and extend public utilities and services; e.g. water, sewage and solid waste collection, roads, and police and fire protection; through the use of state and federal loans and grants.

- Barbour County- Chestnut Ridge PDC water (SCBG)
- Braxton County Sugar Creek PSD water (ARC, SCBG, Corp of Engineers)
- Braxton County- Flatwoods Canoe Run PSD sewer (SCBG)
- Gilmer County- Cedar Creek Water (USDA)
- Lewis County- Jane Lew sewer (SCBG)
- Tucker County- Canaan Valley VFD Fire Truck (AFG)
- Tucker EMS Ambulance (AFG)
- Tucker County- Canaan Valley PSD Sewer (EDA, ARRA, DEP)
- Upshur County- Adrian PSD Phase V (SCBG,USDA)

Transportation Infrastructure

Region VII Goal 2.

The counties in Region VII shall achieve a more complete transportation infrastructure, including the completion of Corridor H, a high-speed, east-west highway; well maintained highways where congestion and conflict with commerce and local traffic are avoided; well maintained local and feeder roads on which coal hauling and other heavy truck damage can be minimized; rail service which meets the needs of coals and other existing and potential industry; access to scheduled commercial air service; and the establishment and support of public transit systems which serve the entire service area.

Objective 2.1. To complete route location and construction of Corridor H between Interstates 79 and 81.

Strategy 2.1.1. Coordinate and expedite cooperation between local, state and federal agencies in determining the route location and construction of Corridor H.

Strategy 2.1.2. Assist communities, with cooperation from the WV Division of Highways, in upgrading the highway network for better access to Interstate 79 and Corridor H.

- Upshur County Industrial Park Industrial Road (WV Industrial Access Road Program)

Strategy 2.1.3. Encourage economic development along highway corridors, such as Interstate 79 and Corridor H.

- "Facing the future Together" regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)
- Robert C Byrd Corridor H Highway Authority
- CEDS local meetings

Objective 2.2. To improve truck-line access to Interstate 79 and Corridor H.

Strategy 2.2.1. Assist communities, with cooperation from the WV Division of Highways, in upgrading the highway network for better access to Interstate 79 and Corridor H.

- Upshur County Industrial Park Industrial Road (WV Industrial Access Road Program)

Objective 2.3. To promote highway bypasses for communities and improved highways in counties where necessary and feasible.

Strategy 2.3.1. Assist municipalities and counties, with the WV Division of Highways and other applicable agencies, to determine the impacts on the transportation network caused primarily by existing or proposed coal activities. Also, impacts from Marcellus Shale Natural Gas production.

- "Facing the future Together" regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)
- A&O Railroad Improvements (Tiger III)

Objective 2.4. To retain and improve existing rail lines.

Strategy 2.4.1. Actively support public and private agencies that are attempting to improve or preserve rail facilities.

- A&O Railroad Improvements (Tiger III)

Objective 2.5. To develop and improve all airports within the Region VII PDC boundaries; specifically the Elkins-Randolph County Airport, Upshur County Regional Airport, and the Philippi-Barbour County Airport.

Strategy 2.5.1. Support the Elkins-Randolph County Airports in their efforts to improve facilities and services.

Strategy 2.5.2. Support the development of the Upshur County Regional Airport and the Philippi-Barbour County Airport.

- Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport Aviation Incubator
- Industrial Road Access for Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport

Objective 2.6. To promote public and private transit programs in the region.

Strategy 2.6.1. Continue support for the Section 16(b)(2), Capital Assistance Program; Section 18, Formula Grant Program.

- Participate in Regional Transit Planning- 5 year Plan

Objective 2.7. To develop and improve pedestrian infrastructure.

Strategy 2.7.1. Assist municipalities and counties with locating funds to construct new and or make improvements to pedestrian walkways.

- Sutton Safe To Schools Project
- Jane Lew Safe To Schools Project
- Parsons Route 219 Pedestrian Walkway Project
- Wee’s Historical District Streetscape

Public Water Systems

Region VII Goal 3.

The counties of Region VII shall strive to provide all residents in their jurisdiction with public water service, including ensuring existing water supply systems have facilities to supply their customers with a healthy and safe quality, necessary quantity and pressure; and pursuing dependable raw water supplies that are adequate to meet demand, sufficient and proper water treatment facilities that are able to meet demand, and public water supply distribution facilities with adequate capacity to supply areas where individual water supplies are inadequate and where existing population concentration makes service economical and further development is appropriate and likely.

Objective 3.1. To increase water storage capacity so that all systems have a two-day domestic supply, plus an allowance for fire flows.

Strategy 3.1.1. Correct deficiencies in the existing systems through improvement and upgrading projects.

- CEDS local meetings
- Barbour Raw Water Project
- Flatwoods Canoe Run Water Plant Upgrades
- Philippi/Barbour County Regional Airport-Fire Suppression for Aviation Industry Building
- Philippi Water Treatment Plant Improvements

Strategy 3.1.2. Establish adequate operation and maintenance programs to ensure that the systems will continue to function at their optimal capacity.

Objective 3.2. To upgrade distribution systems by increasing pipe size, looping, and reducing pipe friction to provide suitable flow and friction to customers; and installing valves, replacing deteriorated pipe, and installing lines with consistent pipe materials to reduce water loss.

Strategy 3.2.1. Correct deficiencies in the existing systems through improvement and upgrading projects.

- Glenville Water Upgrades (WDA)

Objective 3.3. To make arrangements with neighboring systems, more completely develop existing water sources, or find new sources to ensure a sufficient supply of raw water during droughts.

- Region VII Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (WV DMAPS)
- Economic Adjustment Disaster Strategy for RVII (EDA)
- Barbour County Reservoir Project

Objective 3.4. To upgrade or expand existing treatment facilities, and construct new facilities so the demand can be met with properly treated water and the elimination of health concerns.

Strategy 3.4.1. Correct deficiencies in the existing systems through improvements and upgrading projects.

- Philippi Water Plant
- Parsons Waterline Replacement
- Flatwoods Canoe Run Water Plant

Strategy 3.4.2. Establish adequate operation and maintenance programs to ensure that the systems will continue to function at their optimal capacity.

Objective 3.5. To construct extensions to provide water service to areas where existing population density or development potential makes service appropriate.

Strategy 3.5.1. Define, plan and initiate new systems and / or extensions, which will provide service to areas currently without water facilities if construction is justified by existing population concentration or development potential.

- Adrian Phase V
- Gilmer County Alice Road/Cox's Mill
- Parsons Moore/Porterwood
- North Lewis County

Strategy 3.5.2. Establish adequate operation and maintenance programs to ensure that the systems will continue to function at their optimal capacity.

Objective 3.6. To develop programs and policies to encourage development in areas where water service is available or planned, and limit development in other areas.

- CEDS local meetings

Objective 3.7. To encourage watershed understanding and development.

Strategy 3.7.1. Support programs to educate the general public on the importance of watershed protection and development.

- Region VII Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (WV DMAPS)
- Economic Adjustment Disaster Strategy for RVII (EDA)

Strategy 3.7.2. Support the establishment of watershed authorities throughout the region.

Strategy 3.7.3. Attend as many watershed authority meetings as time and budget allow.

Objective 3.8. To support soil conservation efforts throughout the region.

Strategy 3.8.1. Attend as many soil conservation meetings as time and budget allow.

- Barbour County Raw Water – Tygarts Valley Soil Conservation District

Strategy 3.8.2. Assist in the search for funding of soil conservation projects.

- Barbour County Raw Water – Tygarts Valley Soil Conservation District

Objective 3.9. To support flood mitigation efforts throughout the region.

Strategy 3.9.1. Attend as many flood mitigation/prevention meetings as time and budget allow.

- Region VII Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (WV DMAPS)
- Economic Adjustment Disaster Strategy for RVII (EDA)
- WV DMAPS Acquisition outreach meetings in Parsons & Hendricks (FEMA)

Strategy 3.9.2. Assist in the search for funding of flood mitigation projects.

- Sutton Storm Sewer (DRI)
- Hambleton Storm Sewer (DRI)
- Parsons Storm Sewer (DRI)

Sewage Facilities and System Improvements

Region VII Goal 4.

The counties of Region VII shall strive to provide all residents in their jurisdiction with public sewage collection and treatment service, including ensuring centralized, cluster, or individual treatment is adequate to protect water quality, individual and community health, and the aesthetic quality of the environment that is in use; making centralized sewage collection facilities available where individual disposal facilities are not satisfactory due to population concentration or soil conditions; and discouraging development in areas where soil conditions make individual systems unsatisfactory and the location makes centralized facilities uneconomical.

Objective 4.1. To build additional sewage collection lines to serve additional residents who do not have satisfactory sewage disposal and where there is high population concentration or development potential.

Strategy 4.1.1. Define, plan and initiate new systems and / or extensions, which will provide service to areas without adequate sewerage supply where construction is justified by existing population concentration or development potential.

- Jane Lew Sewer (SCBG)

- Sutton Sewer
- Canaan Valley PSD Sewer (EDA, ARRA, DEP)

Objective 4.2. To upgrade existing sewage systems to ensure that they continue to function satisfactorily.

Strategy 4.2.1. Correct deficiencies in the existing systems through improvement and upgrading projects.

- Parsons Sewer
- Harman Sewer

Objective 4.3. To build new, and upgrade existing sewage treatment facilities so that proper sewage treatment is provided.

Objective 4.4. To establish controls and regulations which can be enforced to prevent development from occurring in a manner, which will create sewage disposal problems.

Objective 4.5. To improve installation and operation techniques of individual systems so they function more satisfactorily.

Strategy 4.5.1. Establish adequate operation and maintenance programs to ensure the systems will continue to function at their optimal capacity.

- Follow 5g Process by procuring Architects & Engineers

Objective 4.6. To support soil conservation efforts throughout the region.

Strategy 4.6.1. Attend as many soil conservation meetings as time and budget allow.

Strategy 4.6.2. Assist in the search for funding of soil conservation projects.

Objective 4.7. To make improvements to storm sewer drainage systems to ensure that they function satisfactory.

Strategy 4.7.1. Correct deficiencies to the existing storm sewer drainage systems through improvements and upgrade projects.

- Sutton Storm Sewer (DRI)
- Hambleton Storm Sewer (DRI)
- Parsons Storm Sewer (DRI)

Solid Waste

Region VII Goal 5.

The counties of Region VII shall practice effective solid waste disposal methods, including operating and making available safe and convenient disposal facilities which serve populations large enough to make their proper operation economically feasible; practice resource recovery to

the greatest extent practical and economical; make house-to-house collection available where road conditions and housing concentration deem it reasonable; make an acceptable disposal alternative available for all types of solid waste and reasonably convenient for everyone; and clean up unacceptable and uncontrolled disposal sites and other litter and junk and eliminate improper disposal of any solid waste.

Objective 5.1. To upgrade existing disposal sites and / or open new landfills which will be convenient and accessible to the user, and safe in regard to pollution and disease control.

Strategy 5.1.1. Initiate and implement projects to upgrade existing disposal facilities, or develop new landfills, which comply with standards for landfill operations.

Objective 5.2. To expand collection service so a greater portion of the population has service.

Strategy 5.2.1. Expand collection service through more extensive house-to-house collection.

Objective 5.3. To take advantage of facilities such as transfer stations, recycling centers, containerized collection, and other innovative methods to make solid waste collection and disposal more effective and economical.

Strategy 5.3.1. Initiate and implement projects to upgrade existing disposal facilities, recycling centers, or develop new landfills, which comply with standards for landfill operations.

Strategy 5.3.2. Expand collection service through more extensive house-to-house collection.

Objective 5.4. To remove refuse dumps and litter.

Objective 5.5. To support soil conservation efforts throughout the region.

Strategy 5.5.1. Attend as many soil conservation meetings as time and budget allow. Efforts are underway to schedule meetings with all the stakeholders to discuss the available water sources for the region.

Strategy 5.5.2. Assist in the search for funding of soil conservation projects.

Recreation

Region VII Goal 6.

The counties of Region VII shall develop sufficient, appropriate and attractive recreation facilities and programs and enhance access to the region's extensive parks; forests, rivers and streams, so they serve the regions own people and attract tourists.

Objective 6.1. To add active community recreation facilities, both indoor and outdoor, including youth facilities in all counties.

Objective 6.2. To revitalize and maintain existing facilities.

Strategy 6.2.1. Support the preservation and revitalization of the region’s historical facilities, such as mills, forts, mining sites, etc., which can be used as recreation and / or tourist attractions.

Objective 6.3. To add organized recreation programs.

Objective 6.4. To add and improve access sites to rivers and streams.

Strategy 6.4.0. Support stream access programs for the Public.

Strategy 6.4.1. Promote the development of related services, such as fishing and boating shops, as part of the recreation and tourism industry.

Objective 6.5. To develop more campsites in parks and forests.

Strategy 6.5.1. Promote the development of related services, such as camping supply shops, as part of the recreation and tourism industry.

Strategy 6.6.1. Create and construct new recreation facilities both indoor and outdoor.

- Pedestrian Bridge Stonewall Jackson Resort

Education

REGION VII GOAL 7.

The counties of Region VII will have the skills and knowledge to effectively participate in the diverse economy; make available as many resources and programs for the youth: and to develop sufficient job-training programs.

Objective 7.1. To create awareness of local government and community development in the region.

- “Facing the future Together” regional economic summit (ARC Flex-E-Grant)
- CEDS local meetings

Strategy 7.1.1. Encourage youth participation from higher education and secondary education students in local government procedures and initiatives.

- Flex-E-Grants with Students In Free Enterprise

Objective 7.2. To create and provide training programs.

- Barbour County Leadership (ARC Flex-E-Grant)

Objective 7.3. To continually provide support to the educational programs for youth and family development.

Objective 7.4. To develop volunteer initiatives for senior citizens educational programs, community development programs, etc.

Housing

REGION VII GOAL 8.

The counties of Region VII shall provide more housing, improve existing living conditions, and develop programs to assist all residents in their jurisdiction with affordable, sufficient housing; and renovate and expand public facilities to provide residents with better services.

Objective 8.1. To increase the availability of low-income, elderly, and sheltered housing.

Strategy 8.1.1. Continue to promote efforts in attempting to construct housing for the homeless, elderly, low-income, and at-risk persons.

Objective 8.2. To improve existing living conditions.

Strategy 8.2.1. Assist local communities in demolishing dilapidated buildings and structures and getting rid of slums-blighted areas.

Strategy 8.2.2. Promote local efforts in renovating old and vacant structures.

Objective 8.3. To upgrade existing public facilities to enhance the availability of public services.

Strategy 8.3.1. Correct deficiencies in the existing facilities through improvements and expansion projects.

Objective 8.4. Continue promoting and creating programs to further fair housing practices.

Homeland Security

REGION VII GOAL 9.

The counties of Region VII shall develop sufficient, appropriate and effective programs in preventing terrorist attacks within their jurisdictions, reduce the vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage from natural disasters and potential attacks.

Objective 9.1. To establish plans and programs in preparation of potential terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

Strategy 9.1.1. Establish an organized task force to prepare and execute the plans and programs.

Objective 9.2. To increase the capabilities of public services in responding to disasters and attacks.

- Region VII Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (WV DMAPS)
- Economic Adjustment Disaster Strategy for RVII (EDA)

Strategy 9.2.1. To better equip and train local emergency response teams through the use of federal and state grant programs.

REGION VII GOAL 10

Region VII recognizes the value of diversifying the economy to leverage the region's advantages, increase high-value jobs and encourage new business development. To achieve this goal, the Regional Council will work collaboratively on local, state, federal, higher education and nonprofit-led initiatives to build innovation-based development opportunities. These initiatives may include: efforts to grow technology-based businesses and jobs through activities at colleges, universities and organizations dedicated to this mission; efforts to adapt technology to businesses, institutions and communities to enhance the capacity of local technology-related business growth; pursuing initiatives in specific technology 'clusters' which can advance the economic growth of the region; advancing entrepreneurial development programs; and construction of facilities needed for technology-based business development .

- Upshur county Technology Building
- Braxton County Technology Campus
- Extreme Endeavors Technology Transfer Projects (Barbour County)

Extreme Endeavors Relay Station
(Engineered & manufactured in Region VII)

Uses:

- IN-SCADA utility monitoring
- Radio Repeating
- Wireless Repeating



- **Assessment of Progress—County Narratives**

The purpose of this section is to lay out the accomplishments from the previous year and to show the existing/future developments occurring for each of the seven counties in this region. Many projects have been completed and many are being developed that have or will enhance the area's regional competitiveness. As mentioned earlier, Region VII is a very rural part of West Virginia. Any project that is completed and/or developed has a regional focus to make sure the impact and benefit is far beyond the political boundary in which the project is located. This is the only way rural West Virginia can compete in today's economic environment.

The goals and objectives of the Region VII Planning and Development Council have not changed and still continue to focus on economic development, infrastructure development, and other community development activities. Region VII's program direction continues toward the enhancement of its infrastructure systems in order for governmental officials to have the capability to recruit businesses for economic development. Our motto has always been "you must have community development before economic development". In reading the progress mentioned below, infrastructure projects continue to be one of the biggest priorities, if not the biggest, for our seven counties.

Below are the highlights for each county in which this regional council and staff continue to provide various levels of planning, technical assistance and project management.

BARBOUR COUNTY

Barbour County has three (3) municipalities: the **City of Philippi** (county seat), the **City of Belington**, and the **Town of Junior**. The **City of Philippi** continues, with the assistance of the Barbour County Office for Economic Development, to respond to interest in its industrial park. The City and County are working very hard to develop a raw water supply for the Philippi plant which provides water to 85% of the County. The City continues their efforts in constructing a new water treatment plant, which just commenced construction in August 2011. Philippi is also developing a project to make improvements to its sewer system that is very old. Funding has been requested.



The **City of Belington** is also working with the Barbour County Office for Economic Development to develop more sites in its industrial park. The Barbour County Office for Economic Development just recently sold its 48,750 square foot multi-tenant building located in the Belington Industrial Park to Life-Tite Metal Products, Inc. Its brand new 25,000 square foot multi-tenant manufacturing building (see picture on left) that was recently constructed has been leased.

The **Town of Junior** continues to provide sewer treatment services for the Regional Jail along Rte. 33 / Corridor-H, which was completed over five years ago. This project has provided the foundation for further development from southern Barbour County into Randolph County along Corridor H. In fact, a request was sent to Town officials requesting sewer service for the new WV Army National Guard Elkins Armed Forces Reserve Center to be located along Corridor H. Also, the Town of Junior has agreed to treat all sewage transported from the Norton Harding Jimtown PSD in Randolph County for the various projects they have completed and will complete in the future, specifically the Phase II Norton Sewer Project. The Town of Junior just recently completed a water project that will extend water service to outlying areas of Junior.

Both the **City of Philippi** and the **City of Belington** have had enormous problems with flooding over the years. The **City of Philippi** has been applauded by FEMA for their model flood mitigation programs. The Army Corps of Engineers has worked extensively with both cities, and is planning the construction of a floodwall in **Belington**, which is located upstream from **Philippi**. The City of Belington participated in the WV Main Street ON TRAC program for downtown revitalization. **The Barbour County Commission** continues to actively upgrade its technological systems at the courthouse and has constructed a new E-911 center.

The County Commission has also been improving the Barbour County Fairgrounds/Recreational Park Complex by constructing a walking/biking trail. This trail is approximately 1.3 miles that is located at the “back-end” of the fairgrounds. Funding applications will continue to be submitted as additional work is planned for these trails by the Commission. A small private college, Alderson Broaddus, is located near Philippi and continues to provide local employment and secondary educational opportunities.

Barbour County and the local PSD’s are continuing to submit applications to fund infrastructure upgrades and extensions to rural areas of the county. The **Century Volga PSD** just completed construction of its water extension project that extended water service to the Brushy Fork Road, Spawlick Road and Scales Road areas. The **Chestnut Ridge PSD** has completed design and is currently waiting on additional funding to extend water service to the Colebank, Pea Ridge and Route 92 areas of Barbour County.

The Philippi/Barbour County Airport Authority is partnering and working with local officials to develop an economic development project to make improvements to the airport. This project will construct a multi-tenant building and provide infrastructure at the airport. Once complete, this project will create approximately 20 jobs in the community.

Barbour County Project Progress	
City of Philippi Water Treatment Plant	Construction
City of Philippi—Philippi Industrial Park Improvements	Funded
Philippi/Barbour County Airport Authority	Funded
Century-Volga PSD Brushy Fork, Spawlick Road, Scales Road Extension	Completed
Chestnut Ridge PSD – Colebank, Pea Ridge, Rt. 92 North Water Extension	Designed

BRAXTON COUNTY

There are four (4) municipalities in **Braxton County**: the **Town of Sutton** (county seat), the **Town of Gassaway**, the **Town of Burnsville**, and the **Town of Flatwoods**. Interstate 79 runs through the **Town of Burnsville** and is in close proximity to the other three (3) municipalities. The **Town of Burnsville** has an up to date municipal wastewater treatment and collection system and the water extension project that services the Curry Ridge area of Braxton County. **Burnsville** enjoys a very active senior population that helped to raise local funds to support a small medical clinic, and hosts an annual homecoming event that is extremely well attended by former residents. Future growth is anticipated in **Burnsville**. The Town is currently extending water service to the local WV Department of Highways site along Route 5 and is developing a project that will extend water service to the Hyer’s Run and Orlando areas area of Braxton County.

The **Town of Sutton** and the **Town of Gassaway** have extremely involved local governments that are striving to develop projects to improve their infrastructure. **Sutton** was selected for the WV Main Street ON TRAC Program to receive technical assistance for downtown revitalization. A Disaster Recovery Initiative is being implemented to correct a deficiency with the storm drains along North Hill Street. Initial surveys show that a storm drain that sits under a sidewalk has collapsed, thus causing that sidewalk to do the same. **Sutton** is implementing a grant project from the WV Department of Transportation Safe Routes to Schools program. This sidewalk is a publicly owned sidewalk that accesses a local elementary school, which cannot be used.

The Braxton County Senior Citizens Center, Inc. Board of Directors continue to enjoy the its brand new senior center (picture to right). This new facility was completed in December 2007 and has experienced an enormous increase in participation and activities since the move. Future plans are being developed to increase the services at the site of the new senior center. The senior center is located between the communities of Sutton and Gassaway.



The **Town of Flatwoods** has experienced extraordinary growth due to I-79 and its central location in West Virginia. The economy has experienced an enormous positive impact due to a factory outlet shopping area that continues to expand, a motel/conference center that attracts numerous conferences. Weyerhaeuser has an Oriented Strand Board (OSB) manufacturing facility at Flatwoods.

The **Braxton County Commission and the Flatwoods-Canoe Run PSD's (FCR PSD)** Water Treatment Plant Upgrade project is substantially complete. The **Braxton County Commission** continues to pursue funding to develop and complete the numerous water projects listed on its project priority list.

The **Sugar Creek PSD** has been successful in securing funds to complete the Wilsie/Rosedale water project and the project is funded. ARC, IJDC and ARRA funds were committed in 2008 to complete Phase I (Wilsie/Tague water extension) and to make improvements to the existing system. Phase I is expected to begin construction in October 2011. The second phase, Phase II—Rosedale Water Project, is 100% funded and should begin construction in June 2012.



The **Braxton County Development Authority** finished constructing an office building (see picture on left) in Flatwoods with the help of an EDA grant. The building is wired with the latest technological equipment and infrastructure and is completely occupied. Since this new facility is already full with business firms, discussions are taking place on the possibility of developing a new project to build a new "technology" building adjacent to the existing facility. The **Development Authority** is also continuing its mission to develop an industrial park, and is in discussion with businesses interested in locating there.

Private development continues to flourish along the I-79 Corridor. In addition to a new MicroHotel at the Sutton Exit, a new bank was constructed at the Flatwoods exit. Go-Mart, one of the State’s largest convenience store chains, has occupied a new consumer facility for one year at the Flatwoods Exit. Development work and site prep continues in the area adjacent to the Flatwoods’s Outlet Mall.

Braxton County is a designated part of the Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone (CAEZ).

Braxton County Project Progress	
Burnsville Hyer’s Run Water Project	Being Developed
FCR PSD Water Plant Upgrade	Construction/Substantially Complete
FCR PSD Sewer Project	Construction
Little Birch Water Project	Complete
BCDA--Multi-Tenant Building (Phase II)	Being Developed
Sugar Creek PSD Water Project	Funded
Sutton North Hill Street Storm Drain Project	Under Construction

GILMER COUNTY

There are two (2) municipalities in **Gilmer County**. The county seat is the **City of Glenville** and another small municipality is the **Town of Sand Fork**. **Glenville** is home to Glenville State College. **Gilmer County** is sparsely populated, and has been plagued with flooding problems. In June 2008, Glenville and Gilmer County was hit with the most severe flooding that occurred throughout West Virginia (see picture on right). The area was declared a Federal Disaster Area by the Federal Government.



Gilmer County continues to enjoy some economic boost from the new Federal Prison that opened in 2003. This facility has directly created over 300 livable wage jobs in the area. An investment of over \$14 million was used to complete the infrastructure (water and sewer) to the site. The county has been very active in developing a strategy to plan for the economic impact of the prison and future development. The availability of housing and the development of complementary businesses in Gilmer County continue to be a main focus for local officials. The local hotel was constructed as a result of the prison. Other industries of the local economy that have done and continue to do very well are the oil and gas businesses. The Gilmer County Economic Development Authority purchased additional property to expand its Industrial Park with USDA-Rural Business Enterprise Grant. This will make available the opportunity for the creation of additional jobs through recruitment and/or expansion of local businesses.

Glenville State College continues to be a very significant economic asset for Gilmer County. The College is instrumental in developing a Medical Health Center that will create many new higher skill jobs in the community.

The **City of Glenville** continues to be proactive to enhance the economic progress of Glenville and surrounding areas. A new pocket park now exists in the CBD to welcome visitors and service community functions such as the Annual State Folk Festival. Also, Glenville Utilities is currently seeking funding to make improvements to its water distribution system. This project is

needed to provide the water that is needed for the improvements and expansions being developed by Glenville State College.

The **Town of Sand Fork** continues to pursue funding to upgrade and make improvements to its sewer collection and treatment system. Due to the flooding in June 2008, FEMA funds have been used to correct some of the ongoing issues with this system.

The **Gilmer County PSD** recently completed the Route 5 water extension project. Approximately 150 new households received public, potable water as a result of this project. The Gilmer County PSD is now developing a new water project to provide water service to the Alice Road and Cox’s Mill area of Gilmer County. Funds are currently being requested to complete this project.

Other community efforts being made by the **Gilmer County Commission** include the refurbishing of the Rec. Center Pool and making improvements to the Gilmer County Park and popular Recreation Center. A new Head Start facility is open at the County Park.

Gilmer County Project Progress	
Courthouse Improvements	Being Developed
Bennett Head Start Building	Completed
Gilmer County E-911 Center	Being Developed
Sand Fork Sewer	Being Developed
Alice Road and Cox’s Mill Water Extension	Seeking Funds

LEWIS COUNTY

Lewis County has two (2) municipalities. The county seat is the **City of Weston** and another small municipality is the **Town of Jane Lew**.

Lewis County is also beset with flooding problems, especially in the Walkersville area and downtown **Weston**.

The **City of Weston’s** Wastewater Treatment Plant and Extension project, an \$11,000,000.00 project has been in full operation for over seven years now. The project consisted of a new plant and extended service to the communities of Deanville and Jordanville and also to the Market Square area at the intersection of I-79 and Route 33 (Corridor-H). The Market Square area has experienced a great deal of economic development in the county, but was stifled earlier by a lack of sewer service in the past. West Virginia University has opened a new State Fire School in the Jackson’s Mill Community. Jane Lew also has a project funded to decommission its old sewer plant and connect with Weston. This project will serve a larger area and allow the huge Weston treatment plant to operate more efficiently.

The **Lewis County Commission and the Lewis County Economic Development Authority** has been very active in providing water service to rural areas of the county. The southern water project has finally been complete and now County officials are developing a new water extension project. This new water project, called the North/West Water Project, will serve the areas of Churchville, Sassafras Run, Murphy Creek, Limestone Run, Linger Herschman Run, Laurel Run, Rock Cave Sugar Camp Road, and Mare Run that will serve the north and west areas of the county.

The **City of Weston** has an active downtown revitalization committee and historical society.

Lewis County has a very active economic development authority, which has filled the industrial



park located at Exit 105 off I-79. This park has seen the greatest economic impact in Lewis County over the last year. Numerous oil and gas companies have located to the **Jane Lew Industrial Park** along I-79, including Chesapeake Energy (see picture on right). Their Jane Lew District Office opened in Spring 2008. Chesapeake Energy is the number one producer of U.S. natural gas.

Lewis County is home to the Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park. This Park has seen many upgrades over the last five years and continues to seek funding to make additional improvements for its visitors. A new clubhouse at the Arnold Palmer Golf Course was recently constructed and the main lodge is the main attraction at the park. The Resort utilizes the WV Department of Transportation Recreational Trails program very well, as many of their projects have been funded by this program. Also, plans are being made to develop a portion of the land overlooking the lake for residential development.

Lewis County Project Progress	
North/West Water Extension	Seeking Funds
Stonewall Jackson Lake State Park	Pedestrian Bridge under Construction
Jane Lew Sewer	Designed

RANDOLPH COUNTY

Randolph County is geographically the largest county in this particular region of West Virginia. It has seven (7) municipalities including its county seat, the **City of Elkins**, which is the region’s largest municipality (7,500 pop.). The other six (6) municipalities include the **Town of Beverly**, the **Corporation of Huttonsville**, the **Town of Coalton**, the **Town of Mill Creek**, the **Town of Montrose** and the **Town of Harman**.

The **Randolph County Development Authority** has completely filled their South Elkins Industrial Park and is currently seeking a new area in the Elkins vicinity for development. The Historic Elkins Rail Yard is 60% filled with six new businesses with private investments of over \$15 million. The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad have three great excursion trains available for scenic train rides through the West Virginia Mountains. Next door in the rail yard is the American Mountain Theatre, which is a 525-seat state-of-the-art theatre offering West Virginia a “Branson style” family music, comedy and variety show (see photo on next page). The theatre has gained a tremendous amount of business and national notoriety for its quality of entertainment. In fact, the weekend “packages” for Railyard events are up 600%. Another Branson style entertainment venue featuring “Blue Grass Music” called the Gandy Dancer has located in this cluster. The scenic train rides and theatre have significantly increased the tourism to Randolph County. A new restaurant is operational in the Rail Yard, which will serve the train and theatre guests. The Development Authority continues to expand the services of the Wood Technology Center by providing in-house training as well as providing a custom training program to be taught at the company’s facility.



Corridor-H (U.S. Route 33) planning for continuing east is in progress but completion to the state line of Virginia is not anticipated until 2038. This highway is vital to the continued development of this county and region. The formation of the Robert C. Byrd Corridor H Highway Authority and Special legislation in Congress may cut 15 years off the completion date. A new windmill farm has been installed on the Barbour/Randolph County Line.

The **Town of Harman**, the **City of Elkins**, **Whitmer Water Association**, **Midland PSD**, and the **Town of Beverly** are all involved in developing various water and sewer projects. The Whitmer Water Association has just finished the second phase of their water. The City Elkins and the Town of Beverly are both working to make improvements to their water and sewer systems that will better serve its residents.

The **Norton Harding Jimtown PSD** has completed water projects for the local residents, the Regional Jail and the Kingsville Road area of Randolph County. The installation of a new sewer system for most of Norton is complete, and funding has been committed for Phase II, which will extend sewer service to the rest of the Norton community and to the Town of Coalton. The engineering design is complete.

The **Upper Tygart Valley Water Resources Committee** continues to supervise the development of the countywide plan it formulated. The Elkwater Dam is complete, which will provide potable water for several communities downstream and eventually two communities to the south of the dam. The treatment plant is being planned and funds are being sought for completion by the Huttonsville PSD.

The Huttonsville PSD is currently constructing its Phase I sewer project that will serve the Dailey and East Dailey areas and eliminate the tanks that have been used since the mid-1930s.

The **City of Elkins** is home to Davis and Elkins (D & E) College, a small private college that serves a popular facility for regional and interstate meetings. The College serves as the center of activities for the annual Forest Festival and the Graceland Restaurant and Inn serves the public year rounds. Each summer the Augusta Heritage classes are sponsored by and held at D & E College. The City of Elkins and the Town of Beverly have participated in the WV Main Street ON TRAC Program to receive technical assistance for downtown revitalization. The City of Elkins received an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) to replace one of two gas-fired boilers at city Hall.

The **Swiss Village of Helvetia** now has potable water system through the Adrian PSD in Upshur County.

Randolph County Project Progress	
Harman Sewer	Complete
Whitmer Water	Complete
Norton-Harding-Jimtown PSD Phase II Sewer	Designed
Upper Tygart Valley Water Resources Raw Water Reservoir	Complete
Harman Water Extension	Seeking Funding

TUCKER COUNTY

Tucker County has five (5) municipalities. The county seat is the **City of Parsons**. The other municipalities include the **Town of Davis**, the **City of Thomas**, the **Town of Hendricks**, and the **Town of Hambleton**.

Tucker County continues to suffer economic distress, but through the efforts of the local governments, agencies, and the **Tucker County Development Authority**, progress is being made. **Tucker County** continues to be a virtual Mecca of scenic beauty and tourist attractions (Blackwater Falls State Park, Canaan Valley State Park, Timberline Resort, etc.), which provide some seasonal employment. However, with a large percentage of property designated as State Park and National Forest, there is a low tax base and a need for full-time, livable wage employment.



The **Tucker County Industrial Park Development Project**, which included road and utility infrastructure, has been completed. A new industrial building was constructed (see picture on left), and is under lease. Property for this park is adjacent to the proposed expansion of Corridor-H, a four-lane highway.

A state-of-the-art windmill farm continues to operate between Parsons and Thomas in **Tucker County**.

The **Tucker County Commission**, together with the **Hamrick PSD**, has constructed sewer service to the Blackman Flats area of Tucker County.

The Canaan Valley Public Service District was recently established to provide public sewer service for the entire Canaan Valley. That project has been funded at the \$12 million level from various sources. The project is very close to completion.

The **Tucker County Commission** has broken ground for a courthouse annex.

The **City of Parsons** has suffered numerous flooding problems. The flood of '85 nearly destroyed the city, and it has suffered at least two (2) substantial floods since then. Parsons is has completed the upgrade of its sewage collection system. The City is also about to complete a Storm Sewer project to reduce runoff on 2nd street.

The **City of Parsons** has also developed a water project to upgrade their system that is operating with a 65% water loss. Funding was received and construction is almost complete. Also, the City is developing two other infrastructure projects. Extending water service to the Moore/Porterwood areas of Tucker County is the Council's priority and design has been funded. In addition to the infrastructure improvements, the City continues to be very proactive with their community development efforts. Transportation Enhancement funds have been requested and received for various sidewalk projects, trail projects and other transportation initiatives. The **Parsons Revitalization Organization** was established to address these types of concerns. This organization has made much progress and has completed a Veterans Plaza at the intersection of 219 & 72. The City of Parsons recently approved the purchase of the Wellness Center to keep it from closing. There was demonstrated demand from the community to keep the facility open.

The **Town of Davis** has completed a storm drainage project along Backwater Avenue, Thomas Avenue, Second Street and Third Street. ARRA funding was used. Replacing its water distribution lines is also a priority of Town Council. **Davis** is providing the water and sewer service to the new Tucker County Industrial Park.

The **City of Thomas** is currently making improvements to its sewer collection system. Additional funds are needed to make improvements to the entire system. Other priorities of the City include storm drain improvements and water line replacement.

The **Town of Hambleton** is completing improvements to its storm water system that was damaged and abandoned many years ago. The **Town of Hendricks** is developing a Storm Sewer project to relieve flooding issues in town.

Tucker County Project Progress	
Hamrick PSD Improvements/Location Road Water Extension	Seeking Funding
Parsons Water Upgrades	Under Construction
Industrial Park Site Development and Industrial Building	Complete
Thomas Sewer	Completed
Hambleton Storm Drains	Complete
Parsons Source Water Plan	Completed
Moore and Porterwood Water Extension	Under Design
Second Street Storm Drain Improvements	Under Construction
Blackman Flats Sewer	Completed
Hendricks Storm Water Management	RFQ

The Canaan Valley State Park/Resort is undergoing a \$24 million renovation to upgrade lodge and amenities.



UPSHUR COUNTY

Upshur County contains one municipality, which is the **City of Buckhannon**. Buckhannon is the county seat. West Virginia Wesleyan College, a small private college, is located within city limits.

Significant development has occurred along Corridor H (US Rt. 33), which passes near the downtown Buckhannon area. A Super Wal-Mart, Lowe's, Pizza Hut, Huddle House and the Dollar Tree are located just off of Corridor H and are doing very well. The "mini strip mall" beside the Super Wal-Mart has been constructed and has filled with tenants. A New MicroHotel and Aaron's have located at the economic crossroads of Rt. 20 and Corridor H. The **Development Authority** is also working with both the **City of Buckhannon** and **Upshur County Commission** to further develop the county's industrial park, create a town square, expand the regional airport, and further acquire and develop sites for economic opportunities.

The Buckhannon-Upshur County Regional Airport is in a unique location. Close to Corridor H, this airport has been evaluated as having the clearest visibility of any airport in West Virginia. The Federal Aviation Administration is interested in assisting in the cost of extending the runway to 5000-8000 ft. This would be equivalent to the runway at Benedum Airport in Harrison County and the Pittsburgh, Pa. Airport. This extension will initiate tremendous development in and around the airport. Several courier companies have already expressed interest in locating at the airport. Health-Net, the air ambulance company, has a central hanger at this airport. The Airport Expansion Project has the most potential of any development project in **Upshur County**.

The Development Authority has completed site preparations, construction of infrastructure upgrades, construction of an access road to the industrial park along Corridor H (see picture on right). This project utilized a \$1.75 million US EDA investment and a \$500,000 Small Cities Block Grant. This project should create and retain up to 100 jobs for the commuting community.



The **Upshur County Development Authority/A.F. Wendling, Inc.** project is complete and has been very successful. This project provided additional jobs to the area. This project, which has renovated an old retail department store building, utilized an ARC grant. The company has done so well they are ready to expand again.

The Elkins Road PSD, with the completion of this Phase II project has developed its Phase III water extension project and is seeking funding.

The Adrian PSD has completed its Phase V water extension project. Phase VI water extension project is designed and is seeking additional funds to complete the project.

The **Upshur County Commission** transferred Stockert Youth Center to the City of Buckhannon. A renovation project was completed at Stockert Youth Center in December 2004 and more renovations/additions are planned. This project will aid in the expansion of all of Stockert's much-heralded youth programs.

The **City of Buckhannon** continues to take a progressive direction with downtown revitalization and with feasible solutions to flooding problems throughout the city. The flower

planting initiative in the city has made Buckhannon a very beautiful attractive community. The City has expanded its limits along Corridor H to the west and north along Route 20. A new development for the City is a County Safety Complex. The old Foodland property was purchased and renovated and now houses a first responder campus complete with communications, equipment storage, and headquarters for firefighters, police and EMTs.

The City of Buckhannon recently received an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Grant to improve the sanitary sewer lines in the area of Jawbone Run, which is currently under construction. Also, the Farmers Market is almost constructed in this location.

Upshur County Project Progress	
Adrian PSD Phase V Water Extension	Complete
Adrian PSD Phase VI Water Extension	Seeking Funding
Upshur County Development Authority— Industrial Park Improvements	Complete
Buckhannon-Upshur Regional Airport	Improvements Continue
City of Buckhannon Farmers Market	Substantially Complete
Armory/USPFO	Developing
Upshur County Wellness Center	In Development



SUMMARY:

The preceding report highlights the progress that has been made in each county during the past two years. However, there is much more to be accomplished. There are still many projects listed on the region's project priority list. The number of projects on the list decreases as projects are funded or deleted. This region typically receives funding for an average of three (3) or four (4) projects yearly. Over the past year, this region was fortunate enough to have several projects funded from FY 2006-2007 programs. These funding commitments came from sources such as the Small Cities Block Grant Program, the Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA and the U.S. Economic Development Administration. However, there are years when no projects are funded.

All seven (7) counties in this region still have a dire need for water/ wastewater services and livable wage jobs. Some areas have water of such poor quality that it is not safe for human consumption. Other areas have no water at all. There are too many areas where private septic systems are failing and severely contaminating groundwater.

Four (Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer and Tucker) of Region VII PDC's counties are designated as "At-Risk" by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Three (Lewis, Randolph and Upshur) of the counties are designated as "Transitional". After the flood of 2008, five of the seven counties were designated as FEMA-Designated Disaster counties. Tucker County has suffered tremendous economic losses since the 1990 census; however is not classified as distressed. All seven (7) counties are below the State of West Virginia's average per capita income.

The good news is that each county has citizens and elected officials that are working toward the improvement of their communities. There is a low-crime rate and a strong work ethic in this region. The Counties of Region VII are blessed with an abundance of natural resources. There is strong support for the Regional Council and staff who continue to provide all the services possible to the region. The CEDS process has promoted a stronger understanding and more public participation from regional stakeholders.

The Region VII Planning and Development Council serve the counties of Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Randolph, Tucker, and Upshur and the 24 municipalities therein.