



# 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

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# Introduction

## What is a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy? (CEDS)

The United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) defines the CEDS as a "strategy-driven plan for regional economic development" (EDA). This document, which is required to be updated at least every five years, provides a basis for which to assess the current economic state of the region, the opportunity to identify strategies to guide regional economic development, forge partnerships, and improve economic outcomes and quality of life.



The CEDS document is the culmination of year-round collaborative and meaningful discussions from a plethora of stakeholders, including but not limited to the CEDS Committee, government agencies, representatives of private sectors, education providers, non-profits, community and labor groups, workforce boards, and more. (EDA)

The CEDS is comprised of four main components: a summary background, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis, strategic direction, and an evaluation framework. While these sections are required, supplementary items may be covered to provide additional context.

# CEDS Committee

**Duane Miller**

- Executive Director, LENOWISCO
- 

**Rebecca Crockett**

- Deputy Director, LENOWISCO
- 

**Jimmy Adkins**

- Director of Planning, LENOWISCO
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**Thomas Lawson**

- Regional Planner, LENOWISCO
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**William Wampler**

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**Craig Seaver**

- Coordinator, Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority
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**Brian Falin**

- Executive Director, Wise County Industrial Facilities Authority
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**Fred Ramey**

- Norton Industrial Development Authority
- 

**John Kilgore**

- Executive Director, Scott County Economic Development Authority
- 

**Richard Johnson, II**

- Executive Director, Lee County Economic Development Authority
-

# CEDS Committee: LENOWISCO Board of Directors

**Mr. Bob Adkins**

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**Mr. Bobby Cassell**

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**Mr. Danny Mann**

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**Mr. Duane Miller**

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**Mr. Jackie L. Johnson**

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**Mr. James Lawson**

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**Mr. Joe Fawbush**

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**Mr. Joe Horton**

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**Mr. Larry Mosley**

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**Mr. Marshall Tipton**

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**Mr. Michael Brickey**

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# CEDS Committee: LENOWISCO Board of Directors

**Mr. Richard Leonard**

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**Mr. Robert Bloomer**

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**Mr. Robert Smith**

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**Mr. Sidney Kolb**

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**Ms. Suzy Harrison**

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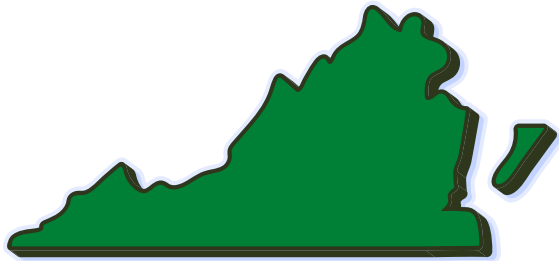
# LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

## Member Localities



# The LENOWISCO Region

Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton



**Total Population:** 85,715

**Total Land Area:** 1,381.72  
sq. miles



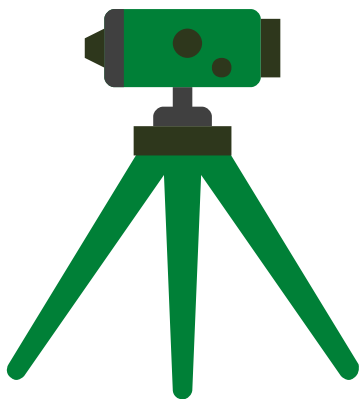
## Population by Locality:

Lee County: 21,983

City of Norton: 3,666

Wise County: 35,647

Scott County: 24,419



## Land Area by Locality:

Lee County: 435.52 sq. mi.

City of Norton: 7.48 sq. mi.

Wise County: 403.19 sq. mi.

Scott County: 535.53 sq. mi.



# The LENOWISCO Region

Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton



**LENOWISCO Average  
Median Household Income:**  
\$37,087.25



## Median Household Income by Locality:

Lee County: \$35,006

City of Norton: \$30,518

Wise County: \$41,285

Scott County: \$41,540



## Other Regional Measures:

Unemployment Rate: 4.4%

Average Poverty Status Past  
12 Months: 23.75%

# The LENOWISCO Region: Housing

## Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton

Housing Occupancy	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
-------------------	--------	----------	-----------

Total Housing Units	138,432,751	3,537,788	43,796
Occupied Housing Units	122,354,219	3,184,121	34,356
Vacant Housing Units	16,078,532	353,667	9,450

Housing Occupancy (%)	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
-----------------------	--------	----------	-----------

Total Housing Units	138,432,751	3,537,788	43,796
Occupied Housing Units	87.9%	89.7%	80%
Vacant Housing Units	12.1%	10.3%	20%

Housing Tenure (%)	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
--------------------	--------	----------	-----------

Owner-occupied	64.4%	66.7%	69%
Renter-occupied	35.6%	33.3%	31%

Owner-occupied Units	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
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Median Value of Owner-occupied Units	\$229,800	\$282,800	\$86,400
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Rental Rates	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
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Median Gross Rent	\$1,096	\$1,257	\$547.50
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Median Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income	29.6%	28.8%	30.8%
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# The LENOWISCO Region: Housing

## Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton

### LENOWISCO MONTHLY OWNER COSTS

Monthly Owner Costs as % of Household Income	Lee	Norton	Wise	Scott
Housing Units with a Mortgage Spending 29.9% or Less	79.7%	86.9%	78.4%	78.8%
Housing Units with a Mortgage Spending 30% or More	20.3%	13.2%	21.6%	21.2%
Housing Units without a Mortgage Spending 29.9% or Less	90.8%	100%	89.9%	91%
Housing Units without a Mortgage Spending 30% or More	9.1%	0%	10.1%	9%

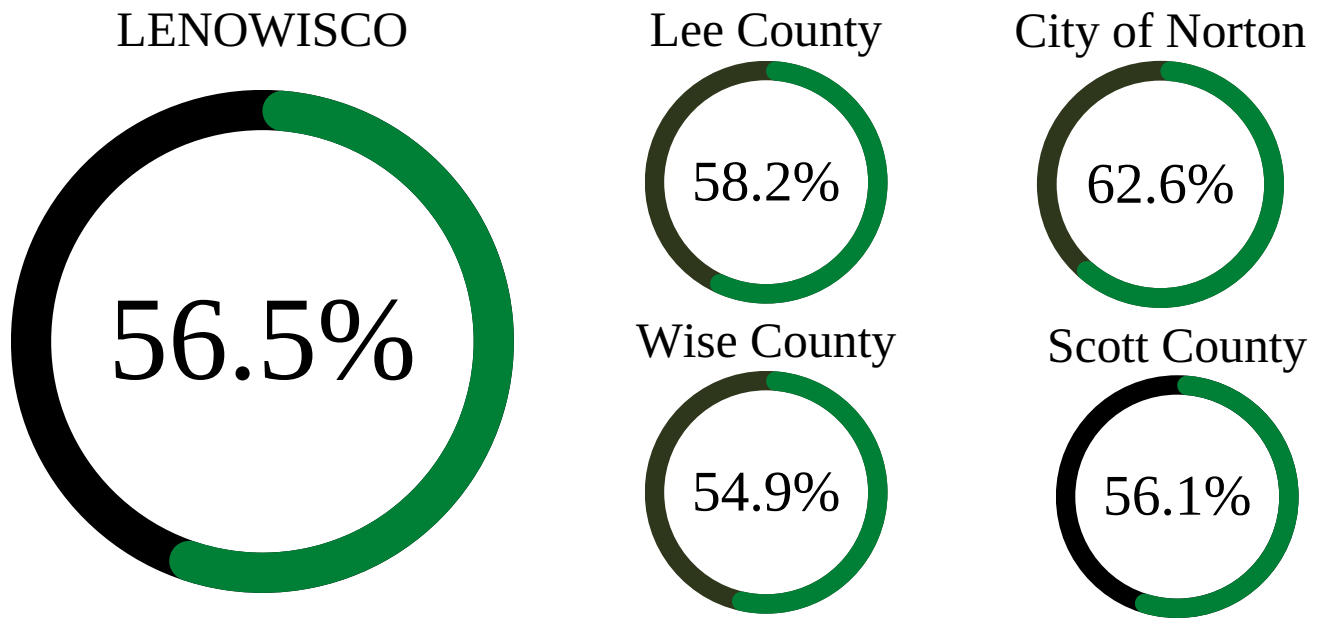
### Comparative Housing Characteristics

Housing Amenities	U.S.A.	Virginia	LENOWISCO
Occupied Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	0.4%	0.3%	0.75%
Occupied Units Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	0.8%	0.6%	1.15%
Occupied Units Lacking Telephone Service	1.6%	1.3%	1.1%

# The LENOWISCO Region: Housing

Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton

## Percentage of Housing Units Built Before 1980



### LENOWISCO Housing Composition

A factor of communities often congruent with local economic development is the housing stock of a region. In the LENOWISCO Planning District, there are 43,796 total housing units (2020 ACS: 5-Year Estimates). Of those, 24,735, or 56.5%, were built before 1980. The graphics above showcase the percentage of housing units that were built before 1980 each in locality located within the LENOWISCO Planning District's footprint.

Housing stock around the nation, and in the greater LENOWISCO region, has been detrimentally impacted by both decades of underbuilding and underinvestment. Underbuilding has constrained the housing market and the number of homes for sale or rent, resulting in a diminished housing inventory. This reduction has spurred increased demand and produced higher costs of living. Underinvestment in the nation and the LENOWISCO planning district has resulted in years of neglect, increasing the need for maintenance and, often times, trending towards functional obsolescence of aging housing infrastructure (RCG, 2021).



# The LENOWISCO Region

Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton

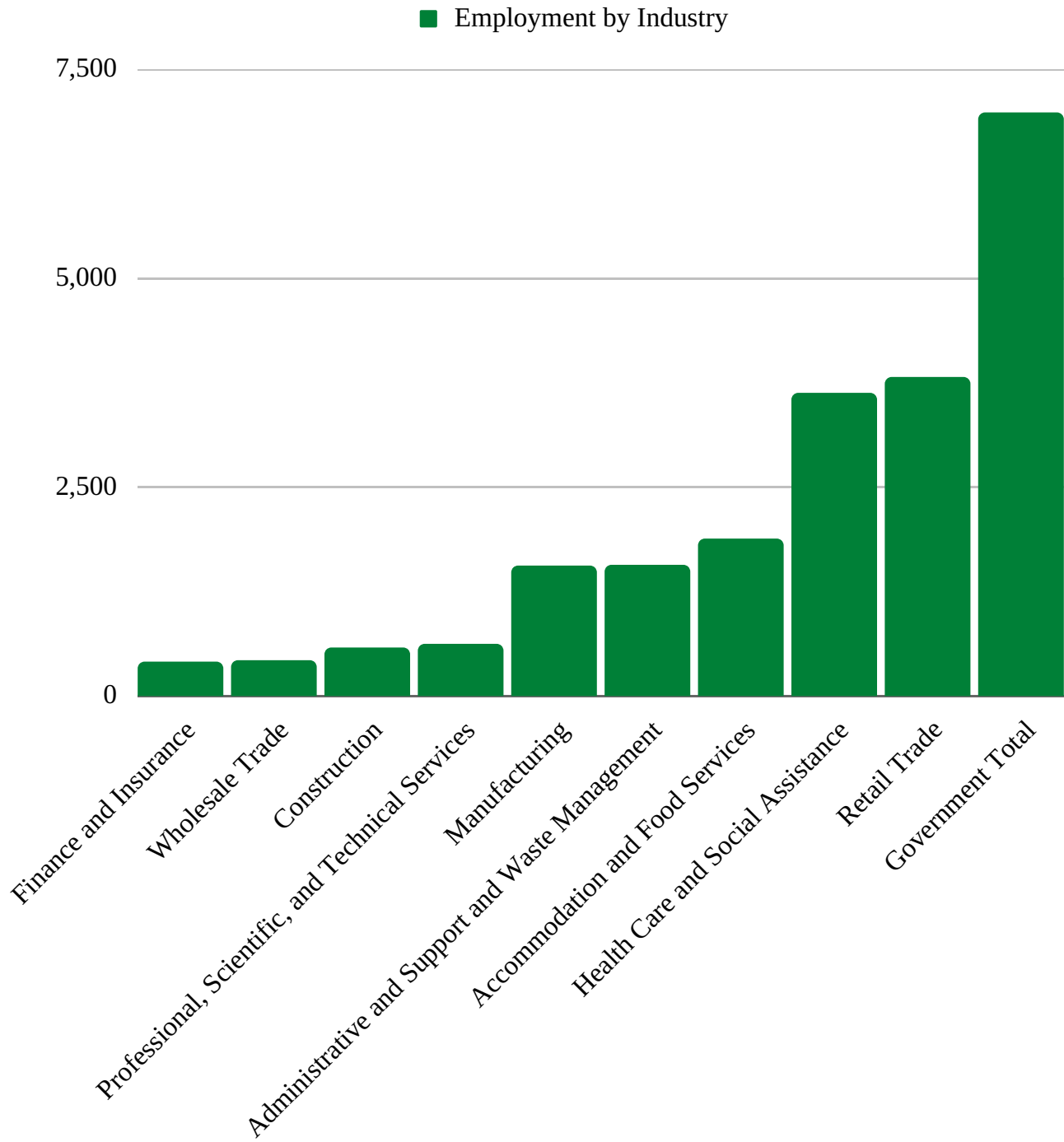
## Ten Largest Industries:

1. Government Total (Federal, State, and Local)
2. Retail Trade
3. Health Care and Social Assistance
4. Accommodation and Food Services
5. Administrative and Support and Waste Management
6. Manufacturing
7. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
8. Construction
9. Wholesale Trade
10. Finance and Insurance



# The LENOWISCO Region

Lee, Wise, & Scott Counties, and the City of Norton

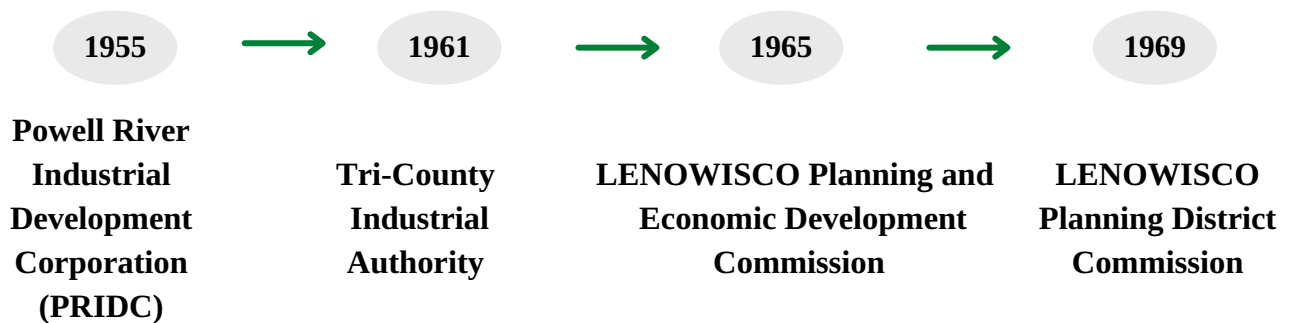


# History, Scope & Purpose

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO, Virginia’s Planning District One, is situated in the far southwestern corner of the Commonwealth and accounts for 1,381.7 square miles of the Appalachian Plateau. The district consists of Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties, and the City of Norton, and 15 incorporated towns. The 2020 total estimated population is 85, 715 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

## Chronology



The eventual development of the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission was organic in nature. In September 1954, Gordon Reckard, Consultant to the Area Development Division of the Virginia State Department of Commerce famously remarked that localities “must work together” in addressing the economic viability of the region. This proclamation sparked a sense of urgency within local constituents, leading to the establishment of the Powell River Industrial Development Corporation (PRIDC) in 1955. The PRIDC was led by stockholders comprised of area merchants. This coalescence was paramount in altering previous approaches and attitudes, coining the idea of “regionalism”.

Despite strong willed efforts, the flailing economy proved too treacherous for the merchants and the PRIDC dissolved shortly thereafter. However, many of the original stakeholders remained diligent in their efforts. In 1961 the counties of Lee, Wise, Scott, and the City of Norton joined an agreement to form the Tri-County Industrial Authority. The Authority shifted its primary focus from business attraction to community infrastructure, including water, sewer, and flood control projects. The Authority concluded that, in order to attract and retain worthwhile businesses, the region needed to be equipped with proper and reliable infrastructure. As citizens of the region continued to pursue regionalism, the Commonwealth of Virginia began to see the benefits.

On March 11, 1965, the LENOWISCO Planning and Economic Development Commission was born inside the walls of a local coffee shop under guidelines approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Shortly thereafter, in 1966, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce designated LENOWISCO as an Economic Development District (EDD), further cementing the purpose and scope of the Commission. LENOWISCO was reorganized in July 1969 and became Virginia’s first of 22 Planning District Commissions formed under the authority of the Virginia Area Development Act passed in 1968.

# Scope and Purpose

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO operates under authority granted by the 1950 Code of Virginia as amended, Title 15.1 Chapter 34, Virginia Area Development Act. As Virginia Planning District Commission One, LENOWISCO is responsible for regional planning activities conducted within its service area of three counties, one independent city and 15 incorporated towns.

The district's citizens benefit from coordinated planning and development efforts and increased opportunities for utilizing federal, state, and local resources to help address many of the area's problems. Unnecessary duplication of efforts can often be eliminated.

The philosophy guiding LENOWISCO's day-to-day operations was set forth by its Board of Directors in 1967 as a Statement of Ideals, declaring:

"We believe the residents of Lee, Scott and Wise Counties and the City of Norton are entitled to a standard of living equal to that of the residents of any other region in the United States. We believe that, given the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential, our people are as capable, as dependable and as enthusiastic as any people anywhere."

The primary goal of the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission and its Board of Directors is to guide and promote the development of the region in such a manner as to facilitate the employment, recreational and cultural development opportunities needed by the region's residents, in hopes they not find it necessary to leave the area in search of such opportunities. In order to accomplish this broad goal, it is recognized that LENOWISCO must:

- (a) receive public understanding and support of its overall goal;
- (b) promote development of a stabilized and diversified employment base;
- (c) guide the development of a network of viable communities;
- (d) encourage the development of an adequate transportation and communications system; and
- (e) secure better educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities for the region's residents.

# Administrative Organization

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO PDC is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors, filled on a population basis from the governing boards of each member jurisdiction. Wise County has six Board members, Lee and Scott Counties four each, and the City of Norton one representative.

LENOWISCO's Board of Directors meets bimonthly. Each Board members may cast one vote on all matters brought before the Commission, whose actions are taken only after a majority vote of those Board members present and voting.



# Administrative Organization (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

Officers of the Board of Directors and the immediate past chairman comprise LENOWISCO's Executive Committee. The powers and duties of the Executive Committee are determined by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee meets on a called basis.

Participation by local units of government in the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission takes two forms: (1) members on the Board of Directors, noted previously, and (2) financial support of Commission operations. This financial support consists of an annual per capita contribution by each of the four general units of local government, each of which was designated as a redevelopment area by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) effective February 15, 1974.

## Historical Perspective

### **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

Through the first half of the 20th century, the coal mining industry brought thriving prosperity to the mountainous area of far southwestern Virginia. Mechanization in the 1950s, while considerably increasing production, also resulted in a significant decrease in employment. While these productivity gains allowed the region's coal industry to survive, the local economy suffered, as unemployment increased and residents left the area to seek employment elsewhere.

The energy crisis and Arab oil embargo of the 1970s triggered another boom period, with sizeable concurrent activity in the service industries taking advantage of the renewed vigor of the coal industry. This boom, which brought a temporary halt to the region's economic and population decline, dwindled during the 1980s, however, exacerbated by a "second generation" of mechanization in the coal industry, again resulting in higher productivity but decreased employment, followed by falling population.

The coal industry's ongoing decline dealt a prolonged blow to the region's economic well being. While coal-related employment has been hardest hit, losses have been felt across the spectrum of the basic sector industry.

Little more than a decade ago, the LENOWISCO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy still placed heavy emphasis on conventional industrial development, with its project list dominated by infrastructure and industrial site development. Today, numerous other complementary development avenues have been explored and implemented.

The district's longtime economic dependence on mineral extraction is well documented. Decades of general decline in the coal industry heralded the need for economic diversification throughout the region, and accordingly prompted the pursuit of other development strategies.

# Regional Strategy Analysis

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

Efforts to diversify the local and regional economy have been driven by several decades of decline in the coal mining industry, exacerbated more recently by various outside factors. Losses have been felt not only in coal extraction, but across the breadth of basic sector industry, in LENOWISCO, and the larger region.

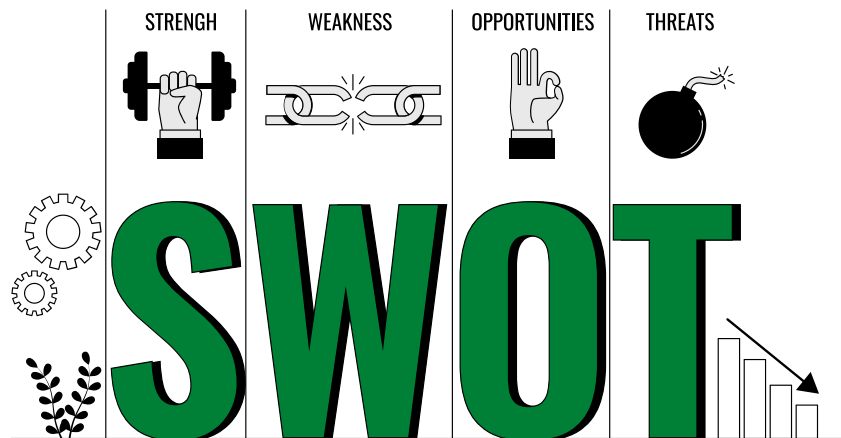
These diversification efforts have intensified within the past several years, as different initiatives have attracted significant regional interest.

These initiatives, many of which are noted in more detail elsewhere in this document, included advanced manufacturing, entrepreneurship, expansion of agricultural development, downtown revitalization, heritage and cultural tourism, and outdoor recreation.

### Regional SWOT Analysis

Significant numbers of persons across a broad range of interests, including private sector and public sector representatives, education, LENOWISCO's regional economic development partners, interested citizens, and others, have participated in a series of productive discussions and input sessions to help analyze and address potential alternative economic development strategies.

Many of these efforts have included conventional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) or similar analyses.



Such collaborative discussions have included blueprints for advanced manufacturing and entrepreneurship, an upcoming agricultural development strategic plan, support for localities pursuing downtown and economic revitalization, and an assessment of strategic plans covering a broad range of topics:

- SWOT analysis, *Blueprint for Attracting and Sustaining Advanced Manufacturing in Southwest Virginia*, covering Planning Districts One, Two and Three
- SWOT analysis, *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia*, also Planning Districts One through Three
- Work Group, LENOWISCO Regional Agricultural Development Strategic Plan
- Work Group, Agricultural Strategic Plan for the VCEDA Region
- Rally Southwest Virginia Community Coaching Summits, Planning Districts One through Four
- Strategic Plans Assessment focus group for LENOWISCO district

# SWOT Analysis

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission



### Strengths

- Technology
- Telework/Remote work opportunities
- Transportation
- Scenic beauty
- Strong higher education system (UVA-Wise, MECC)
- Dedicated work force
- Skilled work force
- Relatively low cost of doing business
- Cost of living
- Recreational Assets



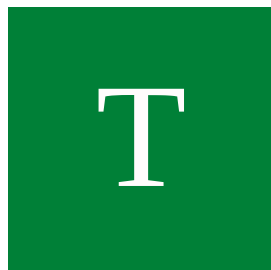
### Weaknesses

- Lack of public transportation
- Outside knowledge of recreational assets
- Aging population
- Brain drain
- Perception of commuting distances
- Lack of social/cultural/commercial amenities



### Opportunities

- Marketing as part of region
- Access to amenities
- Regional cooperation
- Market lower cost of doing business
- Expand/regionalize available information
- Better utilize economic development resources
- Widespread UVA-Wise/MECC student base



### Threats

- "State line" issues (Tax considerations)
- Stereotyping (e.g., downside of RAM events)
- Lack of diversity
- Drug usage
- Waning coal industry
- Macroeconomic threats

# Regional Partners and Assets

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO has numerous partners heavily involved in economic, industrial, and community development efforts.

The professional staffs of the **Lee County Industrial Development Authority**, **Scott County Economic Development Authority**, **Wise County Industrial Development Authority**, and **Norton Industrial Development Authority** serve as front-line practitioners in the region's development efforts. These Authorities actively market their respective localities, and frequently join forces in the pursuit of regional initiatives.

Serving the larger region, the **Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA)**, created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1988, continues to provide critical support in the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau districts. VCEDA markets its seven-county, one-city service area as Virginia's e-Region - with "e" representing Electronic Information technology, Energy, Education, and Emerging Technologies - a trendsetter in broadband and wireless access in rural America. To encourage diversification and the creation of new jobs, VCEDA also manages unique financing programs, based in part on job creation, wage rates, and the level of private investment.

The **Virginia Coalfield Coalition (VCC)**, another economic development partnership between the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau PDCs, was created through Virginia Regional Competitiveness Act. The Coalition has assisted in the successful launch of a number of coalfield-wide projects to spur economic development, including a regional business incubator network, workforce development programs, and market rate housing studies. The Coalition has most recently played a crucial role in securing significant funding for the region's expanding broadband and wireless network, described later in this section.

Additional public partners playing a key role in various economic development initiatives include, regionally, the Cumberland Plateau PDC, which administers an EDA-funded revolving loan program that includes the LENOWISCO footprint; at the state level, the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development; and at the federal level, the Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, and USDA Rural Development.

Two institutions of higher education in the district aid in economic development efforts. **Mountain Empire Community College (MECC)**, through its Center for Workforce Development, provides state-of-the-art workforce training and services to individuals, businesses, industries, and government. The Center also provides customized training to respond to the specific needs of existing businesses and industries, including new curricula developed from identified areas of need.

MECC is also home to a Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC offers free business consulting, affordable training courses, personal referrals to local resources, and guidance, insights and connections to help businesses succeed.

# Regional Partners and Assets

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

The **University of Virginia's College at Wise** is the only four-year public institution of higher education in Virginia's coalfield region. The College's Office of Economic Development and Engagement serves as the gateway to assets and resources of both the College and the University, linking the community to UVa-Wise faculty, staff, and students through strategic partnerships; linking resources available at the University to support opportunities in southwestern Virginia; serving as a resource to the economic development community; and serving as a source of professional and leadership development. The impact on Virginia's economy of the University of Virginia, including UVa-Wise, can be found [here](#).

Situated just outside the district, nearby **Lincoln Memorial University** in Harrogate, Tennessee, exerts significant economic development impact in western Lee County. LMU offers a range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. The DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine is located on the Harrogate campus, while the Duncan School of Law is in nearby Knoxville.

Meanwhile, through its emerging College of Veterinary Medicine, LMU is implementing a community-based model, sending students to work in various clinics and hospitals in the region to earn practical experience and specialize in areas of interest. Situated on 700 acres, 12 miles from Harrogate near the western Lee County community of Ewing, the DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center (DVTC) provides extensive hands on experiences and educational opportunities with a wide variety of species. The Large Animal Component of the DVTC provides a "working farm" environment with a large herd of cattle. LMU's DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center is now the largest veterinary school in the United States, enrolling approximately 225 students annually.

The **Virginia Employment Commission** provides employer and job seeker services, unemployment benefits, and labor market information. Employers may utilize VEC's Virginia Workforce Connection to post job openings and find qualified candidates; access labor market data; locate suitable training or education programs; or find information on a variety of topics, including human resources, diversity and affirmative action, or labor relations. Individuals may research specific occupations; undergo skills analysis; locate training or education opportunities; determine eligibility for community services; and receive assistance in job search capabilities.

The **Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board Area One (WDB)** covers the seven counties and one city of the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau districts. WDB offers programs to adults and dislocated workers, designed to meet employer needs by helping job seekers upgrade skills, obtain employment, improve job retention, and increase earnings. WDB also offers employer services designated to recruit and retain a quality workforce, saving time and reducing costs. Available services include pre-employment screening, target recruitment, internships and on-the-job training. WDB's youth programs focus on young people from low-income families, ages 14-21, who are unemployed or underemployed and need WDB services to improve their employability. The main goal of the youth programs is school retention and dropout retention.

One of the district's most impactful developments in many years, the **LENOWISCO Rural Area Network**, continues to expand. The provision of advanced communications infrastructure provides an extraordinary competitive advantage for the region.

# Regional Partners and Assets

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

Reliable, extremely high-speed network infrastructure will aid in the attraction and retention of industry; foster entrepreneurship, especially in information technology areas; and provide improved education, health care and information access opportunities throughout the region. This open-access, fiber-optic network positions the LENOWISCO district as one of the more advanced rural areas anywhere in the world.

Through generous investment from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Virginia Tobacco Commission, and the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, the network presently consists of 650 miles of distribution fiber, including more than 350 miles of backbone fiber installed through the district, and can thus far be credited with more than 1,200 new jobs and \$50 million in corporate investments.

In 2012, LENOWISCO completed the sale of its affiliated LLC to the Scott County Telephone Cooperative (SCTC), which continues to market retail broadband services. Previous deployment has expanded steadily and systematically, from K-12 school systems and higher education to business and industry to medical facilities.

Deployment of fiber optic cable throughout the region will also encourage the development of secure data storage facilities, an initiative attracting growing interest in the district. Additionally, the district continuously seeks ways to set itself apart in a growing field in broadband communications, as other communities invest in broadband infrastructure.

By continuing to expand the existing system and offering last mile connections with "fiber to the premises," an increasing number of entrepreneurs will be able to work from home as well as fill "virtual jobs" that need not be located in one particular facility.

Meanwhile, the Virginia Coalfield Coalition continues to implement advanced wireless communication systems in the seven-county region of far southwestern Virginia, with its goal to have universal internet coverage across the region. New developments in wireless technology have expanded the reach of wireless broadband and offer the potential to reach large geographic areas. VCC's project includes the upgrade of backhaul facilities at existing towers to fiber optics and construction of new build-to-suit towers at prescribed sites.

Partnering with the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative, which owns and operates more than 800 route miles of backbone fiber access across southern Virginia, has resulted in a branding and marketing initiative to promote the two regions' "giga-parks", more than 100 Virginia businesses, industrial and technology parks connected by an advanced fiber-optic broadband infrastructure network. Digital optical networking technologies with advanced transport capacity provide direct connections to key Internet peering points in Northern Virginia and the Southeast.

With equipment in the region's parks second to none, coupled with the ability to accommodate any type of data use, it's clear that broadband will continue to be an economic driver in the region.

## Industrial Development

Regional economic development has expanded considerably since the original Duffield project. Through the efforts and cooperation of local Industrial Development Authorities, the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, and other agencies, the district has seen significant progress through an increase in available industrial sites and the expansion of marketing activity. Over the years, EDA investments have

# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

played a significant role in all these initiatives.

Each county has one or more industrial parks, with access to the districts burgeoning broadband infrastructure offering relative advantages previously lacking at the counties' primary sites.

The Constitutional Oaks Business Park is the largest industrial acreage in Lee County, a nearly 300-acre site situated near the Rose Hill community in the western part of the county. Following property acquisition, a master plan for the park was completed and site development initiated, including construction of a 60,000 square foot speculative building, which was sold in 2019.

In Scott County, with the acreage of the regional industrial park, at Duffield nearly filled, the park was expanded via the development of adjacent properties. The first addition - the Scott County Regional Business and Technology Park - added 65 acres to the original park, while a subsequent acquisition added another 50 acres. Broadband accessibility aids in the park additions' marketability, with the park's first building, the Crooked Road Technology Center, a state-of-the-art, multi-tenant facility designed to establish Scott County as a regional host for technology-based companies.

Wise County's Lonesome Pine Regional Business and Technology Park, situated adjacent to the Lonesome Pine Airport and a short distance from the University of Virginia's College at Wise, currently hosts technology-based companies with total employment now exceeding 800 persons, and the Appalachia America Energy Research Center, which supports the commercialization of new energy technologies and the incubation of clean energy start-ups.

Scott County and Wise County host Virginia enterprise zones, with a combination of state and local incentives available. Scott County has now expanded from its original zone centered at the regional park at Duffield to also include a former mine complex northeast of Duffield; its new 93-acre Riverside property near Weber City, designed as a multi-use site to include office/flex, retail/commercial, recreational and residential components; add additional acreage incorporating several towns within the County. Wise County's zone incorporates the Lonesome Pine park and its Esserville site, and, likewise, several towns within the County. Lee County looks to regain state enterprise zone status at the next opportunity.

In Scott County, the County EDA has conducted a feasibility analysis, with digital mapping and other infrastructure assessments, to support the potential conversion of a former underground limestone mine, noted above, into a state-of-the-art underground secure data center.

LENOWISCO's economic development partners collaborated on a regional site study, designed to potentially "replace" the original Duffield park. The economic and site selection studies recommended the development of a regional mixed-use business park, with the top-ranked site situated in the City of Norton.

The partners have continued to strategize how best to pursue this opportunity, with funding accumulated from various sources to initiate planning and initial site development of a business park of pronounced regional significance. "Project Intersection" emerged as the district's first priority.

In related fashion, the recently formed Lonesome pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA), authorized by the Regional Industrial Facilities Authority section of the Code of Virginia, is designed to create viable regional industrial sites and to attract the creation of new jobs and investment. The RIFA includes the LENOWISCO localities of Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties and the City of Norton; and adjoining Dickenson County, which borders Wise County to the northeast.

# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission



Through the RIFA's creation, all member localities have the ability and opportunity to enter into a Regional Revenue Sharing agreement. This is the first RIFA created in southwestern Virginia. All of the members are fully committed to creating "regional marketable product" from which all can benefit, even if an actual project is not situated in their specific locality.

### Entrepreneurial Development

Industrial recruitment alone is not a realistic long-term solution to economic development problems. Another critical piece of the larger development puzzle is entrepreneurial development. Creating new small- and medium-sized businesses, expanding existing businesses and prevent closing of troubled but viable businesses can also bolster economic vitality.

A regional small business incubator network - the original facility opened (with EDA assistance) in the Duffield park in 1999, followed by a satellite site in the City of Norton's central business district in 2002 - continues to provide and expand support programs.

The regional broadband network has also significantly increased opportunities for home-based teleworking and remote work opportunities and similar entrepreneurial development, as strategies to address conventional geographic barriers continue to be developed.



# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO partnered with the University of Virginia's College at Wise, the Virginia Coalfield Coalition and others in an innovative initiative, the development of the Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia. Modeled on the region's Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity, this community-based initiative is designed to mobilize existing and emerging economic development efforts to create a thriving entrepreneurial community that will accelerate growth for both new and established ventures.

Among the Blueprint's initiatives are entrepreneurial planning projects aimed at formalizing programs either to develop additional entrepreneurs within the region or to market the region to attract outside entrepreneurs.

### Tourism Development

Tourism continues to have a strong economic impact throughout Virginia, as visitors to the state spent \$26 billion in 2018. In LENOWISCO, visitor spending exceeded \$87 million, with tourism-related payroll of more than \$18 million, and more than \$2 million in local tax receipts generated.

The district's historic heritage, scenic beauty and numerous attractions - from Cumberland Gap National Historic Park in western Lee County to Scott County's Natural Tunnel State Park to the "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" outdoor drama in Wise County - lure visitors to the area each year.

The "Crooked Road", Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, has significantly increased visitation to heritage music venues along its 250-mile route. Local major venues include the famous Carter Fold in Scott County and County Cabin II near Norton.

Established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2008, the Southwest Regional Recreational Authority oversees management of the growing "Spearhead Trail System", designed to make Virginia's seven westernmost counties a destination for all-terrain vehicle users.

The area's vast cultural heritage is on display throughout the region. The Southwest Virginia Cultural Center and Marketplace in nearby Abingdon is the gateway to Southwest Virginia's music, food, and local culture. Craft artisans at the Center are members of 'Round the Mountain, Southwest Virginia's artisan network, while artisans and musicians offer live events.

A recent phase in the region's asset-based creative economy - utilizing investments from EDA, USDA, ARC, and the Virginia Tobacco Commission - is Appalachian Spring, designed to identify and develop cultural and natural assets, particularly outdoor recreation and downtown revitalization.

### Business District Redevelopment

In recent years, numerous district localities have looked to reverse ongoing decline. Several towns are in various stages of downtown revitalization projects, aimed at bringing economic restructuring to their respective central business districts and communities. The establishment of technology zones and creation of micro-loan programs are among the additional tools available to assist business development and growth.

As part of these revitalization initiatives, many localities look to the adaptive reuse of older, deteriorated structures. Vacant former theaters are popular candidates, particularly for the creation of performing arts centers. The Lee Theater in Pennington Gap (Lee County), Gate City Theatre (Scott County), and Lyric Theatre in St. Paul (Wise County) have been at the center of such efforts.

# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### Business District Redevelopment

In recent years, numerous district localities have looked to reverse ongoing decline. Several towns are in various stages of downtown revitalization projects, aimed to conduct true economic restructuring. The establishment of technology zones (with local incentives) and creation of micro-loan programs are among the additional tools available to assist business development and growth.

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Connected to revitalization efforts in the Town of Wise, the Wise County Industrial Development Authority completed a \$12.6 million renovation and construction project that restored and redeveloped the historic Wise Inn property into a moderate-to-upscale lodging, restaurant and meeting facility to support regional tourism, education and, economic development efforts.

In the Town of Big Stone Gap (Wise County), the former Mutual Pharmacy property has provided a unique and important redevelopment opportunity, designed to take advantage of increased tourism interest. Redevelopment of the iconic structure is complete, and now housing a fully functional restaurant, loft apartments, and a co-working and event space in the basement.

### Grass Roots Development

Community-based development strategies increasingly have a place in the larger picture. Various alternatives to tobacco farming are being studied, from organic produce to aquaculture, while environmentally friendly, value-added agriculture and wood products are being developed.

Appalachian Sustainable Development, whose service area encompasses ten counties in southwestern Virginia and northeastern Tennessee, operates its Appalachian Harvest packing and grading facility in the Duffield industrial park. This facility continues to support the region's farmers.

### Transportation

Traditional transportation infrastructure continues to play a significant role in the region's development efforts. LENOWISCO has long promoted the efficient and economical location and design of a balanced transportation system that will ensure the maximum, yet safest, movement of persons and goods throughout the district and beyond. The Commission and its transportation partners continue to participate in a multi-state initiative to see U.S. 23 fully developed as a highway of both regional and statewide significance, and continue to actively pursue projects identified in the transportation plans of its localities, the district, the Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization, the Bristol VDOT Construction District, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Working with these partners, an ongoing slate of projects for the region is identified and updates are conducted to strategic plans such as the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP). Current strategies and projects can be found in Appendix B.

# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### Additional Issues and Opportunities

The ongoing evolution toward the "new economy" presents numerous challenges to the region's existing workforce.

Technology-based growth in the district, coupled with major technology in neighboring Russell County (where Northrop Grumman and CGI-AMS created 700 jobs), magnifies the need for a well-trained, well-educated, highly skilled, and qualified workforce.

The district's two colleges - the University of Virginia's College at Wise and Mountain Empire Community College - and the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board have programs designed to improve the skills of unemployed and underemployed workers and to develop a more highly skilled and trained workforce, and to customize training to meet specific industry needs.

A public-private partnership between UVa-Wise and Northrop Grumman Corporation serves to strengthen both the College's technology curriculum and the company's workforce recruitment efforts in Southwest Virginia. The company's significant financial commitment enhances UVa-Wise's new software engineering degree program, the only one of its kind in Virginia.

Workforce needs are present in many fields. Jobs such as computer programmers, network technicians, database administrators, as well as industrial, mechanical and electrical engineers, electricians, and welders are among those awaiting the region's current workforce.

Workforce needs also extend into the health care field, where appropriate facilities and personnel are needed to tend to the growing needs of both an aging and lower-income populace, and to medically underserved areas. Among the efforts to address workforce shortages are those undertaken by the local institutions of higher education, such as the nursing programs at UVa-Wise and Mountain Empire Community College, and through collaboration of several community colleges across southwestern Virginia to develop a healthcare workforce development consortium.

The Commission continually seeks to identify new and innovative means to foster economic development and diversification in far southwestern Virginia.

Following up the region's *Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity* and *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia*, LENOWISCO and its regional education and economic development partners completed the *Blueprint for Attracting and Sustaining Advanced Manufacturing in Southwest Virginia*, which looks to follow the success of the previously noted initiatives with the intent to preserve the region's rich tradition in successful manufacturing operations.

To fulfill recommendations of a 2013 consulting report, the Virginia Tobacco Commission, in partnership with the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM), initiated a project to fund three Centers of Excellence (COE's) for advanced manufacturing workforce training.

In 2014, three COE's were thus designated, based at the New College Institute in Martinsville, the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center in South Boston, and the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing in Abingdon (Washington County).

All three Centers serve multi-county areas through partnerships with community colleges and other education providers. The Centers focus on three main job classifications, broadly identified as 1) machinists, 2) welders, and 3) industrial machinery mechanics.

# Regional Partners and Assets (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

Commissioners also recognized the need and opportunity to extend the reach of the Centers into their respective regions, particularly in far southwestern Virginia. To reach far more citizens and benefit more companies in the farther reaches of the region, satellite facilities were established. One such satellite of the Washington County COE was slated for Duffield (Scott County).

The Duffield facility, which opened in March 2016, offers a fabrication laboratory equipped for both manufacturing capabilities and regional student pipeline recruitment; a COE-level welding program with prerequisites exclusively offered at Mountain Empire Community College; and distance learning, including classwork and virtual labs.

In a different vein, LENOWISCO facilitated the development of a new regional work group. The Commission led a collaborative effort to identify, support, and expand the region's agricultural, and forestry assets. Strategic planning activities, headed by the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development, were completed in 2017, culminating in the LENOWISCO Regional Agricultural Development Strategic Plan. Shortly thereafter, LENOWISCO also partnered in the development of an agricultural strategic plan for the larger region encompassing Planning Districts One and Two.

GO Virginia is a bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative led by Virginia's senior business leaders to foster private-sector growth, job creation, and career readiness through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education, and government. The initiative, designed the way the Commonwealth's diverse regions collaborate on economic and workforce development activities, is based on three main points: Virginia needs strong private-sector growth and job creation, to address an over-dependence on public-sector jobs; growth in Virginia's diverse regionals require effective collaboration in each; and state government must be a catalyst and partner, providing incentives for strategic, job-focused collaboration in each region of the state. The entire LENOWISCO service footprint all falls within GO Virginia Region 1.

In 2016, the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board certified nine distinct regions across the Commonwealth. These regions consist of multiple local jurisdictions that are geographically similar and share similar economic development and workforce needs. The Regional Councils were developed drawing from business leaders, economic development professionals, educators, and local government officials in each region. Each region developed growth and diversification plans. Region One encompasses 12 counties and three cities in far southwestern Virginia, including LENOWISCO's three counties and one city.

The Southwest Virginia Regional Marketing Initiative, officially known as InvestSWVA, was launched in 2019. InvestSWVA is a public-private partnership focused on supporting local economic development and marketing efforts spanning the entire GO Virginia Region One footprint. InvestSWVA will target four industry clusters in Region One's plan, including advanced manufacturing; agriculture and forestry, and food and beverage manufacturing; information and emerging technologies; and energy and minerals.

To aid in meeting regional goals and objectives, LENOWISCO's economic development partners look to build on recent or upcoming activities and to apply all available resources toward diversifying and expanding the local and regional economy.



# Regional Action Plan

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### Tools and Opportunities

LENOWISCO's advanced technology infrastructure continues to expand, significantly enhancing the marketability of the district's industrial and business sites.

In Lee County, a veterinary teaching center, a program of the Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary and Comparative Medicine, provides extensive hands on experiences and educational opportunities. The opportunity for growth of both complementary service sector entities and potential supply-chain business is significant. Meanwhile, further development of the Constitutional Oaks Business Park will include utilization of the Lee IDA's recently sold shell building as a stepping stone to additional expansion. Technology infrastructure will continue to aid the IDA in small-site redevelopment in the County.

Scott County's new technology park is an outstanding new tool in the region's arsenal, and available technology infrastructure, coupled with promising location, will aid the Scott EDA in expansion beyond the park's initial multi-tenant structure. A new multi-use business park being developed on the southern edge of the county looks to take advantage of tax advantages versus adjacent Tennessee localities.

Likewise, in Wise County, completion of the energy R&D center in the Lonesome Pine technology park highlights collaborative opportunities between all levels of government, higher education and the private sector.

LENOWISCO's partners collaborated on a regional site study, aimed at examining and identifying prospective regional parks to potentially "replace" the original park at Duffield. With consideration of large-scale, heavy industrial, rail-served sites, the combined economic study and site selection study recommended the development of a regional mixed-use business park. The top-ranked site in the study, dubbed "Project Intersection", is situated in the City of Norton, and development has commenced. Meanwhile, IDA/EDA leaders consider ways to develop joint sites in adjacent localities.

# Priority Initiatives

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Regional Business Park Site Development ("Project Intersection")**

Development of a 200-acre industrial site in the City of Norton to serve as a regional mixed-use business park.

### **Southwest Virginia Energy Park ("Project Innovation")**

Analysis of small-scale applications of pumped-storage hydro technology.

### **Grain Terminal Development ("Project Thoroughbred")**

Redevelopment of an abandoned coal loadout facility into a grain processing, storage, and distribution terminal.

### **Craft Beverage Supply Chain**

Public-private partnership to support efforts to grow, process, and transport malting-quality barley.

### **Analysis of Potential Data Center Sites ("Project Oasis")**

Identification and study of data center opportunities across GO Virginia Region One footprint.

### **Hydro Pump Storage ("Project Energizer")**

Analysis of small-scale applications of pumped-storage hydro technology.

### **Mined Lane Reclamation and Re-Use ("Project Homestead")**

Redevelopment of mined and unmined lands for housing, farming, orchards, vineyards, forestry, and other economic development projects.

### **Western Lee Sewer**

Extensive expansion of public sewer infrastructure in western Lee County, supporting residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development.

### **DVTC Housing and Transformation Strategy - Lee County**

Economic and Housing analyses to identify strategic business and housing opportunities surrounding the DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center, a program of Lincoln Memorial University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

### **Industrial Site Development - Scott County**

Development of additional phases of the 93-acre Riverside property in Weber City.

### **Central Business District Revitalization**

Downtown economic restructuring in numerous LENOWISCO localities, including adaptive re-use of vacant structures and integration with numerous regional outdoor recreation initiatives.

# Priority Initiatives

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### Outdoor Recreation

Develop Big Cherry Reservoir, Flag Rock Recreation Area, and Devil's Bathtub area with enhanced trail networks and a variety of camping.

### Interconnect Enhancement: Towns of Appalachia and Big Stone Gap

Further develop the Towns of Appalachia and Big Stone Gap's walking and biking trails with the Powell River Trail North proposed trailhead linking to the City of Norton.

### Lee County Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Industrial Site, Post-Mine Use

Reclaim Abandoned Mine Land (AML) features for new industrial park sites.

### Reclamation and Remediation of Waste-Coal Sites

Reclaim and remediate waste-coal sites known as Garbage of Bituminous (GOB) for a higher and better post-mine land use. Repurpose old waste-coal sites for future economic development efforts.

### Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

Analysis of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and alternative means of electricity generation.

# Goals and Objectives

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

The region's development goals are presented below, with objectives listed for each. These goals and objectives are reflected and noted in the Comprehensive Project List (Appendix A).

### 1. Encourage a strong regional economy through a diverse base of business interests, including large employers and entrepreneurial startups

- 1-1. Recruit businesses and industries in high-wage industry clusters
- 1-2. Promote small and entrepreneurial business
- 1-3. Retain and expand existing businesses in the region
- 1-4. Support regional economic development partners' efforts, including recruitment, retention, marketing, accessing public/private funding opportunities, including localized loan funds
- 1-5. Promote agricultural sector, including farming, livestock (including cattle, horses, sheep), and local and regional farmers markets
- 1-6. Promote remediation and reclamation of Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) and old waste coal piles, known as Garbage of Bituminous (GOB) for a post-mine use of lands that enhance economic development initiatives
- 1-7. Promote removal of GOB for use as a blend of fuel for the Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center (VCHEC)

**2. Develop and maintain a workforce adequately skilled to meet the challenges and today's economy**

2-1. Promote the development of specialized training and educational programs to further develop higher wage industry clusters

2-2. Promote career and technical education to address the growing needs of business.

2-3. Actively attract and retain young professionals to work in the region

2-4. Improve skills of unemployed and underemployed workers

2-5. Improve literacy and graduation rates

**3. Ensure the region has adequate infrastructure in place to support the growth of higher-wage industry clusters and to ensure regional, national, and global connectivity**

3-1. Pursue development of appropriate commercial, industrial, and research-oriented sites

3-2. Expand information technology infrastructure and telecommunications systems

3-3. Maintain and expand traditional infrastructure including water, sewer, and natural gas lines, in areas where such investments will support development

3-4. Encourage accessibility, safety, and multimodal improvements in existing primary and secondary transportation routes, and make recommendations concerning future transportation facilities necessary to support and maintain the district's present and future development

**4. Maintain and promote the region's natural beauty and its cultural amenities, and seek sustainable growth opportunities**

4-1. Promote the region's arts and cultural amenities

4-2. Promote the region's outdoor recreation amenities and opportunities

4-3. Promote regional efforts to enhance outdoor recreation initiatives that create interconnectivity.

**5. Target existing underutilized commercial and industrial properties for redevelopment**

5-1. Direct investment to unused or underused properties where available and appropriate

5-2. Pursue revitalization of blighted areas

5-3. Direct investment to increase appropriate use in presently developed areas

5-4. Promote public and private efforts to reclaim surface mined lands with a post-mined use to further economic development strategies.

**6. Project a collaborative and positive identity for the LENOWISCO region**

6-1. Pursue regional marketing initiatives to promote the region to select markets

6-2. Engage the public and media to inform/educate residents on area economic development initiatives.

6-3. Foster regional collaboration and growth through community-based and stakeholder discussions.





# Evaluation Framework

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### Evaluation Framework: Performance Measures Used to Evaluate the Organization's Implementation of the CEDS and Its Impact on the Regional Economy

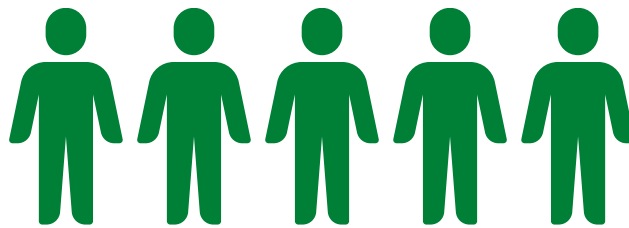
The final section that the EDA requires be included within the CEDS document is the Evaluation Framework, which "serves as a mechanism to gauge progress on the successful implementation of the overall CEDS while providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Report" (EDA).

This iteration of the CEDS employs demographic and spatial data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Virginia Employment Commission. Metrics considered include population counts and relevant trends, median household income, unemployment rates, educational attainment, and broadband availability. The data provided in this 2022 CEDS will be revisited in 2027 as a means of tracking the progress of the LENOWISCO district.

**Population Change:** In PDC 1, the entire LENOWISCO region, the total population declined by a staggering 4.85% from 2010-2020, while population in the Commonwealth as a whole increased by 9.29% in the same time frame. Projections for 2030 and 2040 predict further decline for the PDC 1 region, though at a much smaller rate (0.10% and 1.47%) (U.S. Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service).

#### LENOWISCO:

2000: 93,105  
 2010: 94,174  
 2020: 89,603  
 2030: 89,515  
 2040: 88,196



#### Virginia:

2000: 7,079,030  
 2010: 8,001,024  
 2020: 8,744,273  
 2030: 9,546,958  
 2040: 10,201,530

**Aging Population:** As discovered in the SWOT analysis, a weakness of the PDC 1 is the aging population. In the 2020: ACS 5-Year Estimate Subject Tables, the total population of the United States is projected to be 326,569,308, with 16 percent of the population being 65 years of age or older. In the LENOWISCO region, the total population is estimated to be 87,485, with 21% of the population comprised of adults aged 65 or older.

United States:  
 Total Population:  
 326,539,308  
 Total Population 65+:  
 52,362,817



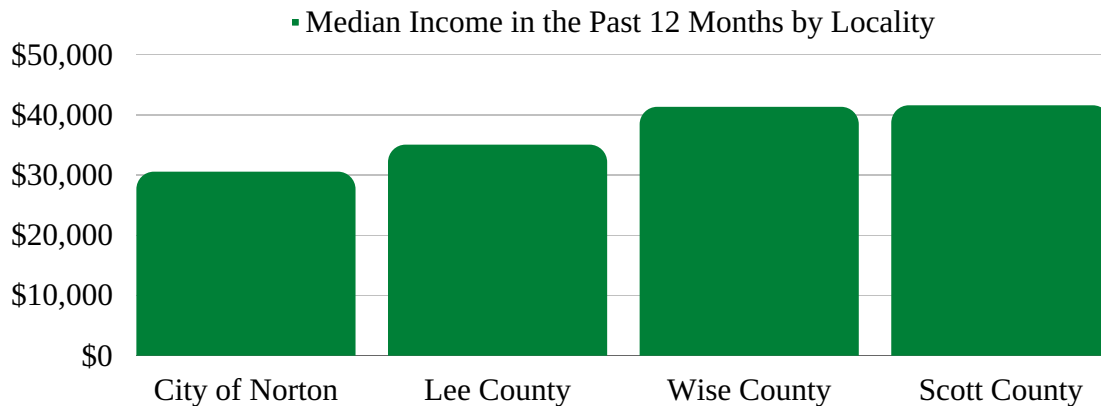
LENOWISCO  
 Total Population: 87,485  
 Total Population 65+:  
 18,127



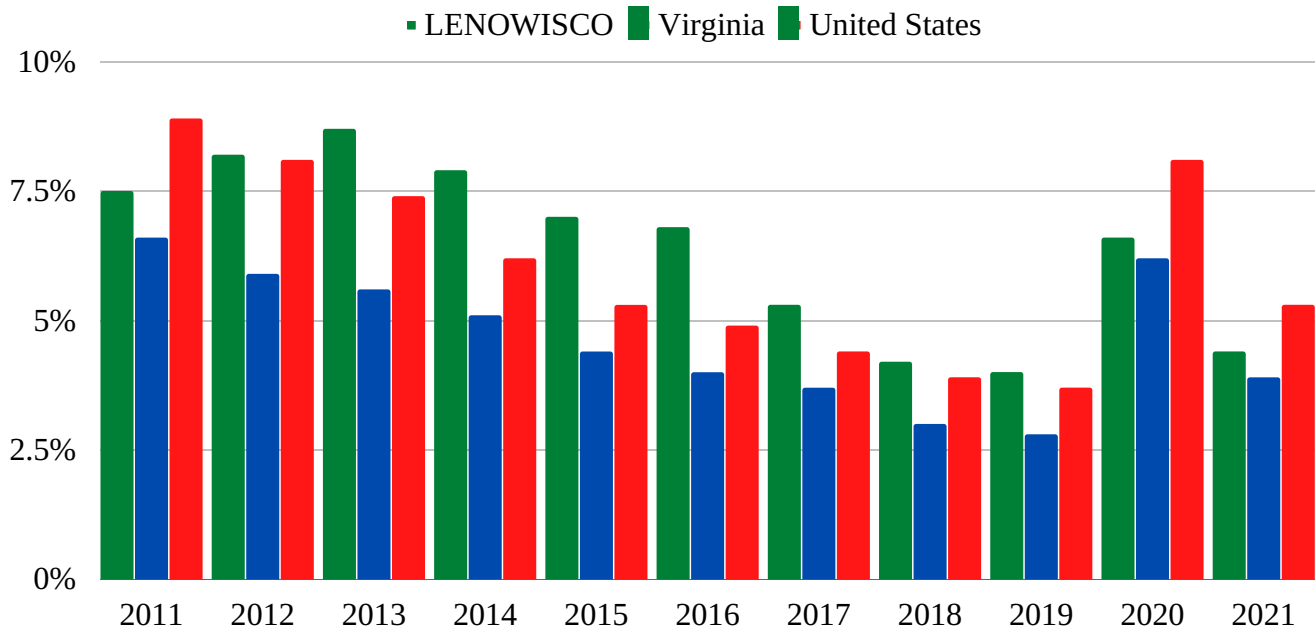
# Evaluation Framework

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

**Median Household Income:** According to 2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, there are 122,354,219 total households in the United States with a median income of \$64,994 (in 2020 inflation-adjusted dollars). In the same time frame, 34,346 total households were accounted for in the LENOWISCO district, with the median income well below that of the U.S. at \$38,145.50. In the graph below, the range in median household incomes is shown for each locality in the LENOWISCO district.



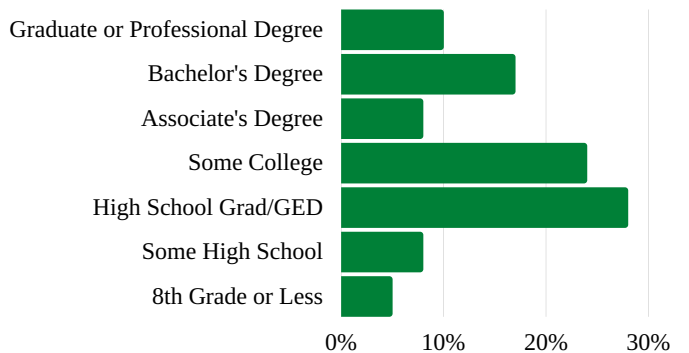
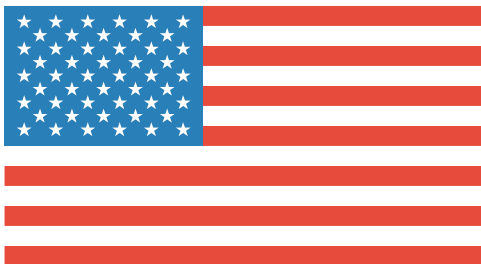
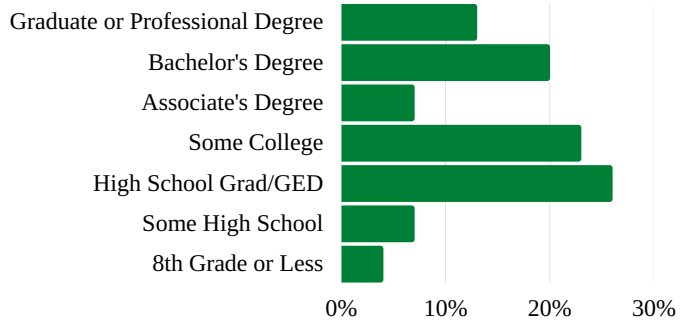
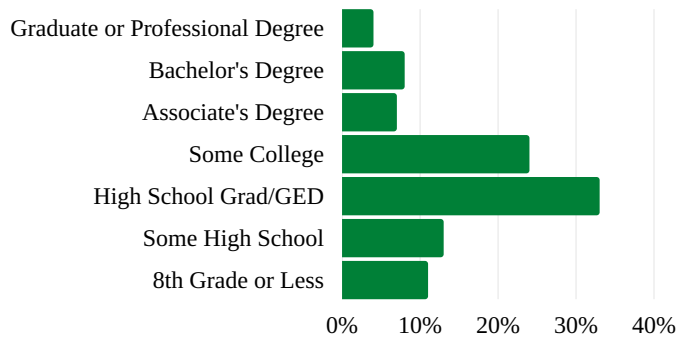
**Unemployment Rates:** Rates for the LENOWISCO region steadily declined in the years 2012-2019 until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The same proved true for the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States as a whole. However, in 2021, with sights set towards a pre-pandemic environment, rates started to decline (Virginia Employment Commission).



# Evaluation Framework

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

**Educational Attainment:** PDC 1, in comparison to the greater Commonwealth and the U.S., lags behind in most of the educational categories. However, the region matches the percent of those with "Some College" (24%) in the U.S., and bests both Virginia and the U.S. in the percent of people who are high school graduates/ have a GED (33%) (Virginia Employment Commission).



# Evaluation Framework

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

**Broadband Availability:** In May of 2022, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) announced the launch of a new broadband availability map in partnership with the Virginia Tech Center for Geospatial Information Technology (VT CGIT) (DHCD). The map, known as Commonwealth Connection, allows searches by address, cities and counties, VA State Senate Districts, VA House of Delegate Districts, and School Districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Once a jurisdiction is selected, a report is generated with information pertaining to the percent covered in the area, the speed of the broadband coverage, and the speed and type of internet service providers within the jurisdiction (Department of Housing and Community Development).

Lee County	<b>VA Collected - December 2021</b> Broadband Coverage: 40% of addresses in this jurisdiction are served
Scott County	<b>VA Collected - December 2021</b> Broadband Coverage: 39% of addresses in this jurisdiction are served
Wise County	<b>VA Collected - December 2021</b> Broadband Coverage: 85% of addresses in this jurisdiction are served
City of Norton	<b>VA Collected - December 2021</b> Broadband Coverage: 88% of addresses in this jurisdiction are served



# Evaluation Framework

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

**County Economic Status:** The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) utilizes an index-based county economic classification system to minor the economic status of Appalachian Counties (ARC). The status is measured based on three parameters compared to national averages:

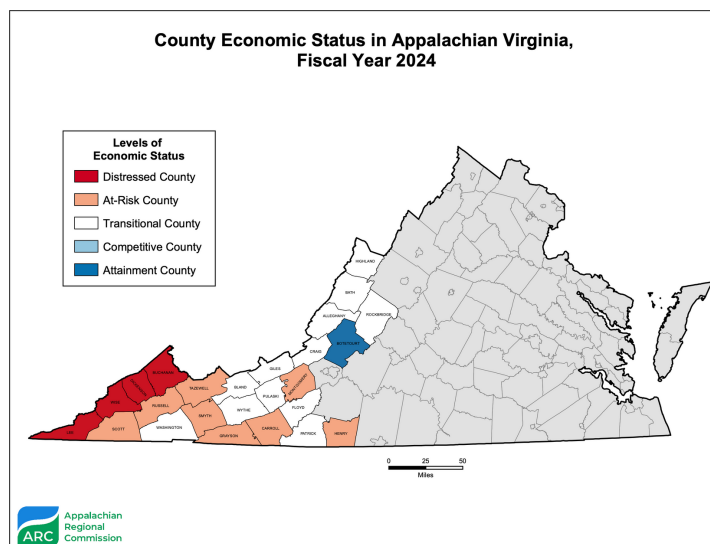
1. Three-year average unemployment rate
2. Per capita market income
3. poverty rate

For a breakdown on how each respective metric is calculated, please visit the Appalachian Regional Commissions (ARC) [website](#).

ARC designates five (5) different classifications to counties:

1. **Distressed:** Distressed counties are the most economically depressed counties. They rank in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties.
2. **At-Risk:** At-Risk counties are those at risk of becoming economically distressed. They rank between the worst 10 percent and 25 percent of the nation's counties.
3. **Transitional:** Transitional counties are those transitioning between strong and weak economies. They make up the largest economic status designation. Transitional counties rank between the worst 25 percent and the best 25 percent of the nation's counties.
4. **Competitive:** Competitive counties are those that are able to compete in the national economy but are not in the highest 10 percent of the nation's counties. Counties ranking between the best 10 percent and 25 percent of the nation's counties are classified competitive.
5. **Attainment:** Attainment counties are the economically strongest counties. Counties ranking in the best 10 percent of the nation's counties are classified attainment.

In the LENOWISCO region, comprising of Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties, and the City of Norton, each locality is designated as distressed according to the ARC's classification system, with the exception of Scott County, which is classified as At-Risk (Appalachian Regional Commission) for the fiscal year 2024.



# Appendix A

## Adoption of Resolution

**LENOWISCO PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**RESOLUTION 2024 - 02**

**Resolution of the LENOWISCO Board of Directors Adopting the 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

**WHEREAS**, the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, representing the Virginia counties of Lee, Scott, and Wise, and the City of Norton, is recognized as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the United States Department of Commerce; and


**WHEREAS**, LENOWISCO is therefore required to develop and, as appropriate, review and revise the LENOWISCO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); and

**WHEREAS**, the 2023 CEDS update accordingly has been compiled.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission does hereby submit its 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for EDA review and approval.

8/7/23  
DATE

8/7/23  
DATE

  
CHAIRMAN

  
SECRETARY

# Appendix B

## Comprehensive Project List





# Comprehensive Project List

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Regional Business Park Site Development ("Project Intersection")**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 200-acre former mined site in City of Norton to serve as regional mixed-use business park.

Estimated Cost: \$14,200,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, Virginia Energy, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA, Other

### **Southwest Virginia Energy Park ("Project Innovation")**

Goal: 1-1, 3-1, 5-1, 5-3

Description: Preliminary development of Southwest Virginia Energy Park. Initial activities include location vetting and operations planning.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000

Potential Funding: EDA, GO VA

### **Grain Terminal Development ("Project Thoroughbred")**

Goal: 3-1, 1-5, 6-1

Description: Redevelopment of abandoned coal loadout facility in City of Norton into grain processing, storage, and distribution terminal, to support larger agricultural economic development initiative.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000 (Phase I)

Potential Funding: Virginia Energy, TRRC

### **Agtech Tracking and Reporting of Specialty Grains ("Project Trace")**

Goal: 3-1, 1-5, 6-1

Description: Development of tool used to track and report food miles of specialty grains for end users.

Estimated Cost: \$66,500

Potential Funding: ARC, Private

### **Craft Beverage Supply Chain ("Project Calypso")**

Goal: 1-5

Description: Public-private partnership, Appalachian Craft Grains Project supports efforts to grow process, and transport malting-quality barley.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: Private to date; TA from multiple public sector stakeholders

### **Potential Data Center Sites ("Project Oasis")**

Goal: 3-1, 5-1

Description: Identification and study of data center opportunities across GO Virginia Region One.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

Potential Funding: Virginia Energy, GO VA

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Hydro Pump Storage ("Project Engineer")**

Goal: 3-1, 3-3, 5-1

Description: Analysis of small-scale applications of pumped-storage hydro technology.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Potential Funding: Virginia Energy, DOE, Dominion Energy

### **Mined Land Reclamation and Re-Use ("Project Homestead")**

Goal: 5-1, 1-5

Description: Redevelopment of mined and unmined lands for housing, farming, orchards, vineyards, forestry, and other economic development projects.

Estimated Cost: \$2,335,000

Potential Funding: ARC, Virginia Energy, TRRC

### **SMR Site Feasibility Study**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Analyze and evaluate the feasibility of siting Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) within the region.

Estimated Cost: \$150,000

Potential Funding: VE, GO VA

### **SMR Supply Chain Analysis**

Goal: 1-1

Description: Analyze supply chain implications of potential SMR deployment in region.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000

Potential Funding: EDA, GO VA

### **Reclamation and Remediation of Waste Coal Sites, Garbage of Bituminous (GOB) - LENOWISCO Region**

Goal: 1-6, 1-7, 5-1, 5-4

Description: Identify and reclaim waste-coal sites, GOB, to support economic development initiatives.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000 per site

Potential Funding: AMLER, BIL, TRRC, ARC, EDA

### **Regional Centers of Excellence**

Goal: 2-1

Description: Equipment and potential site to support Virginia Tobacco Commission's regional Centers of Excellence Initiative.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: EDA, TRRC, VCEDA

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Mega Site Development - Lee/Scott, Wise/Dickenson Counties**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of large joint sites serving adjoining localities, with revenue sharing.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: CDBG, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA, TVA

### **Targeted Brownfields Assessments**

Goal: 6-1

Description: Inventory of abandoned, idled, or underused industrial commercial facilities to assess potential brownfields redevelopment opportunities.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000

Potential Funding: DEQ, EPA, Local

### **Outdoor Recreation - Counties of Scott and Wise, City of Norton**

Goal: 4-2, 4-3

Description: Enhance regional outdoor recreation venues with trail connectivity and overnight camping and lodging.

Estimated Cost: \$3,500,000

Potential Funding: TRRC, AMLER, ARC, EDA

### **Southwest Virginia Trail Network**

Goal: 4-2

Description: Construction of a regional multi-use trail network in PDC's 1 and 2.

Estimated Cost: \$5,400,000

Potential Funding: ARC, DCR, TRRC

### **Project Intersection Trail Development**

Goal: 4-2

Description: The purpose of the Project Intersection Urban Trail System would be designed with a "power hour lunch" in mind for future employees by offering hiking/biking trails for exercise and relaxation. The trails could attract certain types of employers who want to provide these amenities for its employees.

Estimated Cost: \$750,000

Potential Funding: VDOT, AMLER

### **LENOWISCO Rural Area Network (Broadband & Wireless Project)**

Goal: 3-2

Description: Continued expansion of region's advanced communications infrastructure.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000,000+

Potential Funding: ARC, EDA, TRRC

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Central Business District Revitalization**

Goal: 5-2

Description: Downtown economic restructuring within the district, including adaptive re-use of vacant, dilapidated structures and integration with numerous regional tourism and outdoor recreation initiatives.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000,000+

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, RD, TRRC, VCEDA, VDOT, Local

### **Entrepreneurial Planning Project**

Goal: 1-2

Description: Planning to develop entrepreneurial programs generated by Entrepreneurial Blueprint.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

Potential Funding: ARC, TRRC, VCEDA

## **County of Lee**

### **Lee County Abandoned Mine Land, Industrial Site Development, Post-Mine Use**

Goal: 1-6

Description: Reclamation of AML features for new industrial parks on or adjacent to AML features for development of industrial sites.

Estimated Cost: \$2,000,000

Potential Funding: AMLER, TRRC, ARC, GO VA

### **Site Development/Speculative Building Development**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Continued development of Constitutional Oaks Industrial Park in western Lee County.

Estimated Cost: \$3,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, RD, TRRC, TVA, VCEDA

### **Industrial Site Development**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 100+ acre industrial site near Keokee Lee County.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: EDA, Local, TRRC, VE

### **Industrial Site Development – Lee/Scott Counties**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 50-100 acre site near Jasper community, on Lee-Scott line.

Estimated Cost: \$3,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, TRRC

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Additional Airport Facilities Development**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of additional facilities at Lee County Airport. Terminal was constructed in 2011, completion of the tank farm is underway, and site is equipped with public water service.

Estimated Cost: \$1,750,000

Potential Funding: TRRC, VDA

### **DVTC Transformation Strategy**

Goal: 1-4

Description: Economic analysis to identify business opportunities surround the DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center in western Lee County.

Estimated Cost: \$60,000

Potential Funding: ARC, TRRC, Local

### **DVTC Community Market Impact Analysis**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of housing master plan to strategize housing development for faculty and students of the DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center in western Lee County.

Estimated Cost: \$20,000

Potential Funding: Virginia Housing

### **Western Lee Sewer**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Expansion of public sewer infrastructure in western Lee County, supporting residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development.

Estimated Cost: \$15,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, DEQ, TRRC, USACE, Local

### **Pennington Gap Industrial Park Redevelopment - Town of Pennington Gap**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Continued redevelopment of IDA-owned properties in Pennington Gap (Lee County).

Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000

Potential Funding: CDBG, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### County of Wise

#### Energy R&D Facility

Goal: 3-1

Description: Additional development of Appalachia America Energy Research Center in Lonesome Pine Regional Business and Technology Park near Wise.

Estimated Cost: \$4,000,000

Potential Funding: EDA, Leg, TRRC, VCEDA

#### Industrial Site Development

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 50-acre industrial site near Esserville.

Estimated Cost: \$8,000,000

Potential Funding: CDBG, EDA, TRRC, TVA, VCEDA

#### Industrial Site Development

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 150-acre, rail- and natural-gas served heavy industrial site (commonly known as Toms Creek or Dale Ridge site) near Coeburn.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, TRRC

#### Elam Farm Industrial Site Development

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 204-acre industrial site in the Lonesome Pine Regional Business and Technology Park.

Estimated Cost: \$6,000,000

Potential Funding: AMLER, VEDP, EDA, TRRC, GO VA

#### Site Development – Wise County Industrial Park (Blackwood)

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of additional 50 acres in park.

Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, GOF, VCEDA

#### J.J. Kelly Site Development

Goal: 5-1

Description: Development of 7-acre site in Wise County to be targeted for private residential multi-family housing.

Estimated Cost: \$2,000,000

Potential Funding: AMLER, DHCD, TRRC

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Sewer Development – U.S. 23, Wise County to Duffield Industrial Park**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of sewer lines from Wise County line to regional park in Scott County.

Estimated Cost: \$7,800,000

Potential Funding: CDBG, Local

### **Coalfields Expressway Industrial Site – Wise/Dickenson Counties**

Goal: 3-1, 3-3

Description: Development of 100-acre industrial park, including water and wastewater extension.

Estimated Cost: \$6,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, VCEDA, VDOT

### **Greenway Trail Project**

Goal: 4-2

Proposed walking/biking trail connecting the Lonesome Pine Regional Businesses and Technology Park, Town of Wise Athletic Complex, and UVA-Wise Campus.

Estimated Cost: TBD (PER currently underway)

Potential Funding: AMLER, VDOT, DCR, GO VA

### **Business Support Center Development**

Goal: 3-2

Description: Development of multi-purpose "support center" facility to serve Lonesome Pine Regional Business and Technology Park near Wise.

Estimated Cost: \$5,500,000

Potential Funding: CDBG, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA

### **Big Stone Gap Water Treatment Plant Renovation**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Renovation of Town's water treatment plant, which also provides water to surrounding areas of Wise County, to City of Norton, and to Lee County.

Estimated Cost: \$1,700,000

Potential Funding: DEQ, RD

### **Norton/Big Stone Gap Water Tank**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of water storage tank enabling City of Norton to share water regionally.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, RD

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **St. Paul Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Expansion of regional wastewater treatment plant, extension of public sewer service to currently underserved areas as well as industrial site in neighboring Russell County.

Estimated Cost: \$8,000,000

Potential Funding: RD, VDOT

### **Industrial Site Development – Town of St. Paul**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Site preparation of 6-acre industrial site in St. Paul. Utilities and power on-site.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000

Potential Funding: ARC, EDA, RD

### **Technology Training Center – Town of St. Paul**

Goal: 2-1, 2-4

Description: Renovation of existing facility into regional training center.

Estimated Cost: \$1,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, RD, TEA-21

### **Master Parks and Recreation Plan - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-2

Description: Development of a master plan to layout the goals and objectives for the Town regarding outdoor recreation, playgrounds, sports tourism.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: Local

### **Flood Mitigation/Resiliency Projects - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-2

Description: Partnership with RES for nature-based solutions to mitigate flood risk and provide outdoor recreation opportunities for locals using Hazard Mitigation Grant Program property.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DCR, FEMA, VDEM

### **Community Business Launch - Town of Wise**

Goal: 1-2

Description: Partnership between Town of Wise EDA, UVA-Wise, and Advancement Foundation to implement a community business launch program.

Estimated Cost: \$30,000

Potential Funding: DHCD, Local



# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Small Business Incubator Site - Town of Wise**

Goal: 1-2

Description: Purchase of an existing building to develop into a small business incubator.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Potential Funding: TBD

### **Yellow Creek Nature Trail - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-3

Description: Construction of a trail that will run alongside Yellow Creek Rd. towards Bear Creek Rd.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DCR, VDOT, Local

### **Seven Tank Rehabilitation Project - Town of Wise**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Rehabilitation of interior and exterior of seven water tanks and one pump station to ensure water storage capacity is maintained for existing and future development.

Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000

Potential Funding: ARPA

### **Community Center - Town of Wise**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Construction of a facility in downtown Wise to be used for indoor community events and to provide meeting and conference space.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DHCD, RD, Local

### **Brownfields Project - Town of Wise**

Goal: 5-1

Description: Assessing potential redevelopment opportunities at the former Osborne's Auto building.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DHCD, EPA

### **Food Truck Incubator Site - Town of Wise**

Goal: 1-2

Description: Development of a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Property into a temporary food truck lot to accommodate three food trucks near UVA-Wise.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Potential Funding: DHCD, TRRC, Opportunity Appalachia

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### RV Park - Town of Wise

Goal: 4-2

Description: Development of a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Property in a 10-15 unit RV park along Yellow Creek.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Potential Funding: DCR, DHCD, TRRC, Opportunity Appalachia

### Indoor Sports Complex - Town of Wise

Goal: 4-2

Description: Construction of an indoor sports facility to allow multi-use basketball, volleyball, competition gymnastics, competition cheer, indoor walking track, etc.

Estimated Cost: \$2,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, TRRC

### Outdoor Fitness Court and Studio - Town of Wise

Goal: 4-2

Description: Construction of an outdoor fitness court and group fitness studio at the Town of Wise Sports Complex.

Estimated Cost: \$210,000

Potential Funding: Town of Wise, National Fitness Campaign

### Three Mile Pedestrian Loop - Town of Wise

Goal: 4-3

Description: Construction of new sidewalk to connect existing sidewalks from downtown along Main St., Lake St., Hurricane Rd., and Park Ave. creating a three mile loop.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: VDOT, Local

### Pedestrian Safety Improvements - Town of Wise

Goal: 3-4, 4-3

Description: Construction of additional high-visibility crosswalks to improve safety for pedestrians.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Potential Funding: VDOT, Town of Wise

### Revolving Loan Fund - Town of Wise

Goal: 1-4

Description: Revolving Loan Fund managed by the Town of Wise EDA to provide loans to small business owners at low interest rates.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: RD, Local

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Façade Improvement Program - Town of Wise**

Goal: 5-2

Description: Program established by the Town of Wise EDA to provide grant money to small business owners for aesthetic improvements to buildings and other structures.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DHCD, Local

### **Bear Creek Reservoir Trail - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-3

Description: Construction of a trail around the entirety of Bear Creek Reservoir.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

Potential Funding: DCR, Local

### **Trail Connector, Bear Creek to Town of Wise Sports Complex - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-3

Description: Construction of a trail connector that will connect the Bear Creek Reservoir Trail to the trail at the Town of Wise Sports Complex.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: DCR, TRRC, VDOT, Local

### **Archery Range - Town of Wise**

Goal: 4-2

Description: Construction of an outdoor archery range to be located at the Town of Wise Sports Complex to provide a location for regional and/or national tournaments.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: Local, Private

### **Wise Up! Entrepreneurial Empowerment Program - Town of Wise**

Goal: 1-4

Description: Collaborative effort with UVA-Wise to assist new and existing businesses with startup and expansion plans.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: TBD

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

### County of Scott

#### **Mine Redevelopment**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Conversion of former limestone mine into energy-efficient, secure underground data center.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: CDBG, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA, Local, Private

#### **Industrial Site Development**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of additional phase of 93-acre Riverside property in Weber City into multi-use business park.

Estimated Cost: \$6,000,000

Potential Funding: EDA, CDBG, TRRC, VCEDA, Local

#### **Industrial Site Development – Lee/Scott Counties**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of 50–100-acre site near Jasper community, on Lee-Scott line.

Estimated Cost: \$3,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, TRRC

#### **Scott County/ Kingsport Water Interconnection**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Interconnection of water systems in neighboring Kingsport, TN, to Weber City, VA.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Potential Funding: RD, VDOT

#### **Gate City/Holston Regional Sewer**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Expansion of Scott County PSA's Holston regional wastewater treatment plant to support economic growth in Gate City/Weber City area.

Estimated Cost: \$4,700,000

Potential Funding: ARC, RDA, TRRC

#### **Gate City/Daniel Boone/Clinchport/Duffield Water**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of water treatment and distribution facilities in central Scott County, with interconnections to Duffield and Gate City.

Estimated Cost: \$4,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, VDH, VDOT, Local

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **Sewer Development - U.S. 23, Wise County to Duffield Industrial Park**

Goal: 3-3

Description: Development of sewer lines from Wise County line to regional park in Scott County.

Estimated Cost: \$7,800,000

Potential Funding: CDBG, Local

### **Moccasin Gap Technology Park**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Development of technology-driven park in/near Town of Gate City (Scott County).

Estimated Cost: \$3,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, EDA, RD, VCEDA

### **Duffield Regional Technology Center**

Goal: 3-1

Description: Build out of multi-tenant facility in Scott County Regional Business and Technology Park.

Estimated Cost: \$4,200,000

Potential Funding: ARC, EDA, TRRC, VCEDA, VDOT, Local

### **Artisan Food Production Center**

Goal: 1-5

Description: Development of packing house/food production/greenhouse facilities to support regional sustainable agriculture and regional artisan center.

Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000

Potential Funding: ARC, CDBG, TRRC, VCEDA, Local, Private Foundations

## **City of Norton**

### **Multi-Use Connector Trail**

Goal: 4-2

Description: This multi-use trail will connect the City's existing sidewalk system to the visitor/destination center. This will allow residents and visitors to enjoy the recreational and educational activities at the center while providing safe and easy access to the City's downtown restaurants and businesses.

Estimated Cost: \$1,200,000

Potential Funding: FHWA

### **Trail Master Plan and Development**

Goal: 4-3

Description: Evaluating existing City and USFS land for a viable trail corridor to allow the construction of a hiking and mountain biking trail from the visitor/destination center to the High Knob Tower.

Estimated Cost: \$900,000

Potential Funding: FHWA

# Comprehensive Project List (cont.)

## **LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

### **High Knob Visitor/Destination Center**

Goal: 4-2

Description: This 5,300 square foot facility will be located on the northern side of High Knob Recreation Area, just off primary Route U.S. 23 and very close to the downtown City of Norton. The center will offer information and exhibits that highlight the scenic beauty, recreational, and educational opportunities centered around the ecological wealth of the region. The facility will also serve as a trailhead for hikers and mountain bikers who wish to access the mountain trail options.

Estimated Cost: \$2,000,000

Potential Funding: ARC, FHWA

### **Route 619 Upgrades**

Goal: 3-4

Description: This project would make safety improvements based on a Road Safety Assessment of Route 619 from Kentucky Avenue to Forest Road 238, evaluate the feasibility of adding bike lane markings and signage from Kentucky Avenue to Forest Service Road 238, and identify and evaluate the feasibility and cost of other needed improvements such as guardrails, drainage, grading modifications, etc.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: VDOT

### **Laurel Avenue Bridge Superstructure Replacement Project**

Description: This project would make safety improvements based on a Road Safety Assessment of Rte. 619 from Kentucky Avenue to Forest Road 238, evaluate the feasibility of adding bike lane markings and signage from Kentucky Avenue to Forest Service Road 238, and identify and evaluate the feasibility and cost of other needed improvements such as guardrails, drainage, grading modifications, etc.

Estimated Cost: TBD

Potential Funding: VDOT

### **Norton Riverwalk**

Goal: 4-3

Description: Trail will provide a recreational opportunity for the citizens of Norton, the residents of Wise County, and the visitors who pass through the area. Trail will also connect the community of Ramsey in east Norton to the Norton Community Center/Little League Fields and the Norton Elementary and Middle School and downtown utilizing the City's Safe Routes to School Program. Lastly, trail will help establish a permanent riparian buffer along the Guest River, a major tributary to the biologically rich Clinch River, improving water quality by preventing sedimentation from erosion and filtering pollutants from nearby coal mining, industrial, commercial, and residential land uses.

Potential Funding: VDOT, AMLER

# Funding Sources

## LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

ARC: Appalachian Regional Commission  
ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act  
CDBG: Community Development Block Grant (VDHCD)  
CIT: Center for Innovative Technology  
DCR: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
DDA: Duffield Development Authority  
DEQ: Department of Environmental Quality (RLF)  
DHR: Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
DOE: U.S. Department of Energy  
EDA: Economic Development Administration  
EPA: Environmental Protection Agency  
FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration  
GOF: Governor's Opportunity Fund  
GO VA: GO Virginia  
Leg: State/ Federal legislative earmarks  
RD: Rural Development (USDA)  
TRRC: Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission  
TVA: Tennessee Valley Authority  
USACE: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USFS: U.S. Forest Service  
VE: Virginia Department of Energy  
VCEDA: Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority  
VDA: Virginia Department of Aviation  
VDACS: Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
VDEM: Virginia Department of Emergency Management  
VDH: Virginia Department of Health  
VDHCD: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development  
VDOT: Virginia Department of Transportation  
VEDP: Virginia Economic Development Partnership  
VRLF: Virginia Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund  
VRA: Virginia Resources Authority

# Appendix C

## LENOWISCO SMART SCALE Projects





# Appendix C

## LENOWISCO SMART SCALE Projects

### LENOWISCO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy LENOWISCO SMART SCALE Projects

The LENOWISCO Planning District recognizes the importance of comprehensive, cooperative and continuing transportation planning is to be carried out with all applicable localities and partners in the region, working year-round on identifying and addressing the needs of the transportation infrastructure.

In 2013, the signing of House Bill 2313 (HB 2313) created a more sustainable revenue source supporting transportation funding. While passage of this bill enabled the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to add significant revenues to Virginia's transportation program, there are still many transportation needs that cannot be addressed with available revenues. In an effort for the CTB to prioritize transportation projects and subsequent investments for both urban and rural communities throughout the Commonwealth based on an objective and fair analysis applied statewide, House Bill 2 (HB 2) was signed into law and effective as of July 1, 2014. Following was the passage of House Bill 1887 (HB 1887) in February 2015 that established the new transportation funding formula, the High-Priority Project Program, as defined in §33.2-370 as the new statewide competitive funding program and the Construction District Programs, as defined in §33.2-371 as the Bristol District competitive funding program directly accountable to LENOWISCO, the Kingsport Transportation Planning Organization (which encompasses portions of Scott County, Virginia) and all localities within the PDC region.

In 2016, the process was renamed "SMART SCALE: Funding the Right Transportation Projects in Virginia." The purpose of SMART SCALE ("System Management and Allocation of Resources for Transportation: Safety, Congestion, Accessibility, Land Use, Economic Development and Environment") is to "fund the right transportation projects through a prioritization process that evaluates each project's merits using key factors, including: improvements to safety, congestion, reduction, accessibility, land use, economic development and the environment." The evaluation focuses on the degree to which a project addresses a problem or need relative to the requested funding for the project. With the latest updates to the program's design and project scoring and evaluation, SMART SCALE is moving to a biennial application process, with applications being due in August of years ending in even numbers. Projects are eligible for SMART SCALE funding that meet a defined need according to the VTRANS2040 statewide transportation vision document and be located within a corridor of statewide significance, within an identified regional network and/or within a local urban designated growth area, or specifically address a safety issue. Eligible projects will be scored on five (5) weighted factors as follows: Economic Development (35%), Safety (30%), Accessibility (15%), Congestion Mitigation (10%), and Environmental Quality (10%).

The Fiscal Year 2024 Six-Year Improvement Program cycle is the fifth round of SMART SCALE. The working relationship between the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, its localities, the Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (Kingsport MTPO), and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has identified a slate of projects for the region. Various staff at VDOT, at the Wise Residency, the Bristol District Office and the Richmond Central Office, have worked one-on-one with localities to create the most necessary, competitive, and fundable projects in the LENOWISCO region. The following projects for Round Five are scheduled to be submitted in 2022:

# Appendix C

## LENOWISCO SMART SCALE Projects

### County of Lee

#### ALT U.S. 58 TWLTL and N. Combs Road Intersection Roundabout

The proposed project will widen ALT U.S. 58 between Cecil St. and Westgate Mall Circle to install a continuous two-way left-turn lane. A dedicated left-turn lane will be installed to serve traffic entering Westgate Mall Circle from ALT U.S. 58. The project will replace the existing intersection ALT U.S. 58 and North Combs Rd. with a 150' diameter single-lane roundabout, which will include a raised center island and approximately 15' wide truck apron.

#### Intersection Improvements at Route 879 and Dr. Thomas Walker Road

The proposed project will realign the northbound approach of Route 879 to improve safety where it intersects with Route 58 Business in the vicinity of Thomas Walker High School. In addition to realigning Route 879, the project will also close the western entrance to Thomas Walker High School's parking lot and relocate it approximately 100 feet further south to provide added distance from the intersection.

#### Alt U.S. 58 at Trade Center Lane Offset Left Turns

The proposed project will convert the existing traditional left-turn lanes at the intersection of ALT U.S. 58 and Trade Center Lane into offset left-turn lanes to improve safety and increase sight distances. The channelized right-turn lane on Trade Center Lane will be removed and brought to the signal. The existing signal will be replaced to accommodate the new lane designs.

### County of Scott

#### U.S. 23 Access Management and Turn Lane Improvements

This project improves safety along U.S. 23 by implementing access management improvements along the corridor between the VA-TN line and Yuma Road. The access management improvements include limiting parcels to one driveway where possible. This project will also upgrade ten existing substandard left turn lanes to current VDOT standards. Additionally, the project will eliminate one existing median opening that does not provide left turn lanes.

#### U.S. 23 at Chapel Street Intersection and Railroad Crossing Improvements

This project improves safety along U.S. 23 by providing SB left- and right-turn lanes at the intersection of U.S. 23 and Chapel Street. Additionally, this project will eliminate two at-grade railroad crossings located on Blanton Drive and Boone Street by removing these roads from accessing U.S. 23.

### County of Wise

#### Coeburn Mountain Road Turn Lane Improvements

The proposed project will widen Coeburn Mountain Road (Route 646) between Paramount Road and Mount Olive Freewill Baptist Church to install turn lane improvements for safety and operational performance. The improvements include a left-turn and right-turn lane into a student housing complex and a two-way left turn lane (TWLTL) through the rest of the project corridor. The project will also widen the paved shoulder in certain areas, install curb and gutter, and improve drainage.

# Appendix C

## LENOWISCO SMART SCALE Projects

### City of Norton

#### Park Avenue and 11th Street Improvements

This project improves Park Avenue between 11th Street to 14th Street and between Coeburn Avenue to Park Avenue between 11th Street to 14th Street. A road diet includes on-street parking, pedestrian accommodations, and a TWLTL. The 11th Street intersection improvements include curb extensions, ADA ramps, increased radius, and relocated mastarm pole. The NB direction of 11th Street, south of Park Avenue, will be widened for a shared use path. Road diet between Coeburn Avenue and Park Avenue to include measures to reduce speeds entering the City.

### Town of Big Stone Gap

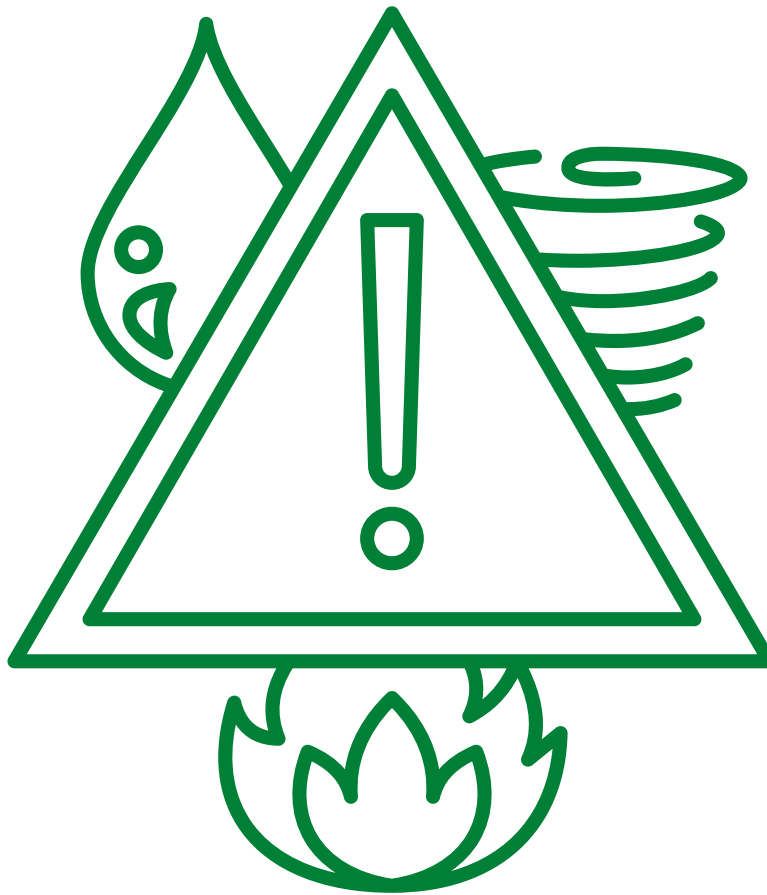
#### Gilley Avenue Turn Lanes and Access Management Improvements

The proposed project will widen a portion of Gilley Avenue to accommodate three new left-turn lanes at Carter Street, Dogwood Drive, and an existing gas station (all 100 foot storage and 100 foot taper) and a drop lane at Maxfield Road (200 foot storage and 150 foot transition). The widening will occur to the north of Gilley Avenue and will require right-of-way acquisitions. One of the gas station's driveways on Gilley Avenue will be closed and the remaining driveway will be modified to restrict left-turns out of the site.



# Appendix D

## 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update



# Appendix D

## 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

### LENOWISCO Planning District

#### Section 1.1: Executive Summary

For the purposes of this Hazard Mitigation Update (HMP), the LENOWISCO Planning District is comprised of Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties, and the City of Norton. Additionally, the Towns of Big Stone Gap, Coeburn, Gate City, Pennington Gap, Pound, St. Paul, and Wise participated in the HMP update. Hereinafter in this document, the area will generally be referred to as the LENOWISCO Planning District.

Recent decades have seen increased development in areas of potential harm, increasing the potential for severe economic and social consequences if a major disaster or other catastrophic event were to occur. Such an event could have the potential to cost local governments, residents, and businesses millions of dollars in damages to public buildings and infrastructure, lost tax revenues, unemployment, homelessness, and emotional and physical suffering for several years to come.

The Planning Team selected to focus on eleven (11) natural hazards that impact the LENOWISCO Planning District. Through an in-depth Risk Assessment, the Planning Team determined the following hazard risk ranking for the District:

<b>TABLE: Hazard Risk Ranking for LENOWISCO Planning District</b> <i>Complete Hazard Ranking Table is included here</i>					
Hazard	2021 Hazard Rankings				2013 Risk Ranking
	Frequency & Probability	Frequency & Probability	Risk Ranking	Risk Ranking	
Flooding	75	Very Probable/ Very Frequent	69	High	High
Non-Rotational Wind	75	Very Probable/ Very Frequent	68	High	Medium-High (combined with Tornado)
Winter Storm	75	Very Probable/ Very Frequent	67	High	Medium-High
Wildfire	50	Probable/Frequent	53	High	Medium
Communicable Disease	38	Somewhat Probable/ Somewhat Frequent	47	Medium	N/A
Landslide	44	Somewhat Probable/ Somewhat Frequent	47	Medium	Medium (combined with Land Subsidence, Soil Erosion)
Karst/ Subsidence	31	Somewhat Probable/ Somewhat Frequent	41	Medium	Low (Karst topography only)
Tornado	25	Somewhat Probable/ Somewhat Frequent	39	Medium	Medium-High (combined with Non-Rotational Wind)
Drought	19	Not Probable at All/ Not Frequent at All	28	Medium	Medium-High
Earthquake	13	Not Probable at All/ Not Frequent at All	25	Medium	Medium
Dam Failure	6	Not Probably at All/ Not Frequent at All	19	Low	Low

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## 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Given the varied geography, infrastructure, and social composition of each jurisdiction, the Planning Team also conducted a Risk Assessment for each jurisdiction. The Risk Assessments informed priority mitigation actions.

The update and adoption of the HMP by the District and all participating jurisdictions helps:

- Identify areas of risk and assess the potential cost and magnitude;
- Establish strategies and priorities to mitigate risk from natural and technological hazards
- Identify specific mitigation projects for each identified hazard;
- Guide the participating jurisdictions in their risk management activities and minimizes conflicts among agencies;
- Establish eligibility for future non-emergency disaster assistance.

The Mitigation Goals for the 2021 HMP (Hazard Mitigation Plan) include:

1. Protect the lives, health, and safety of LENOWISCO residents and visitors, maintain critical societal functions before, during, and after a disaster.
2. Identify and implement mitigation projects that will minimize a hazard's impact on existing and future developments, including reducing risk to NFIP repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties.
3. Incorporate mitigation into existing and future policies, plans, regulations, and laws in LENOWISCO.
4. Promote and support a whole community approach to mitigation that encourages residents, businesses, and public entities to become more disaster resilient.

The HMP includes 19 district-wide mitigation actions advancing each mitigation goal and across a variety of hazards and agencies. Each mitigation action was prioritized based on a series of parameters, including estimated cost, available funding sources, expected benefits, and timeline. The top priority new mitigation actions for the District include:

- Develop and deliver a Community Engagement Response Team (CERT) program for the LENOWISCO District and recruit members from all participating jurisdictions.
- Certify and/or maintain participation in StormReady Certification Program for all LENOWISCO District communities.
- Ensure each jurisdiction has a Continuity of Operations Plan that includes both natural hazards and epidemic/pandemic considerations.
- Update the LENOWISCO Health District Pandemic and Communicable Disease Plan using lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ensure continued compliance in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) through enforcement of local floodplain managements ordinances and take steps to participate in the Community Rating System (CRS).
- Develop a LENOWISCO Community Wildlife Protection Plan with specific regional and local actions for wildfire mitigation.

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## 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The new planning team and updated planning process are described and documented in the HMP. The 2021 HMP includes the following key updates:

- **District and Jurisdiction Profiles:** Demographics, social and economic data, as well as existing and future land use descriptions, are updated to reflect the current states of the District and jurisdictions.
- **Capability Analysis:** Primary considerations for implementing any mitigation action is hazard potential, project funding, and capability to enact the mitigation action. The HMP update includes a Capability Analysis for the District and each participating jurisdiction.
- **Public Outreach:** Given the update occurred during the historic COVID-19 pandemic, the planning team worked to include the public's input through multiple safe avenues, including a preparedness survey, a virtual meeting with a phone line option, and public hosting of the draft plan.
- **Hazard Profiles:** Each hazard section in the plan documents hazards reported in the last five years through the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), which merges three former National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) databases, and additional reputable sources. Additionally, climactic variations and future conditions are factored into all hazard profiles.
- **Risk Assessment:** The updated risk assessment includes HAZUS-MH advanced level analysis using LENOWISCO Planning District Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data when possible. Each participating jurisdiction provided its own hazard analysis, which describes the hazards and their impacts as they pertain specifically to the community. Several hazards were changed or re-organized from the 2013 HMP in order to better align with the 2018 Commonwealth of Virginia HMP. These changes include:
  - Severe Wind and Severe Thunderstorm/ Hail were re-organized into Non-Rotational Wind and Tornado;
  - Landslides, Land Subsidence, and Soil Erosion and Karst Topography were reorganized into Landslide and Karst/Subsidence;
  - Communicable Disease was added; and
  - Solar Storm was initially included in the 2021 hazard assessment; however, given the limited data, Solar Storm is included as a special interest hazard and not in the overall risk assessment.
- **Mitigation:** The mitigation section addresses the status of the previous plan's strategies in addition to new mitigation goals, objectives, and strategies. The plan includes district-wide actions and actions for the participating counties and jurisdictions.
- **Yearly Updates:** The 2021 HMP outlines the District's plan for yearly updates that include all participating jurisdictions and public involvement.

### Section 1.2: Introduction

#### Hazard Mitigation Background

Hazard Mitigation is defined as any sustained action to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has made reducing hazards one of its primary goals. Hazard mitigation planning and the subsequent implementation of the projects,

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measures, and policies developed as part of this Plan, is a primary mechanism in achieving FEMA's goal.

The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires jurisdictions to develop and maintain a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to remain eligible for certain federal disaster assistance and hazard mitigation funding programs. Renewal of the plan every five years is required to encourage the continual awareness of mitigation strategies. For the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) communities to be eligible for future mitigation funds, they must adopt the HMP.

The following disasters were declared in the LENOWISCO Planning District during the HMP Planning Period (2015-2020).

FEMA Disaster Declarations <i>Source: FEMA</i>			
Year	Disaster Number	Event	Applicable Jurisdictions
2018	3403	Hurricane Florence	Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties
2020	3448, 4512	COVID-19 Pandemic	Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties

### Plan Description

Natural, technological, and human-caused natural hazards pose a threat to every citizen and community within the LENOWISCO Planning District on some level and frequency. The process of hazard mitigation planning is a critical part of any community's planning program. Because most hazards occur infrequently, mitigation programs for hazards are usually initiated as a reaction to recovery from the most recent disaster. This form of hazard mitigation response is more costly, both in property and human loss, than is pre-disaster planning and mitigation.

Local Mitigation Plans must be updated and resubmitted to FEMA for approval every five (5) years to continue eligibility for FEMA hazard mitigation assistance programs. The mitigation planning regulation at 44 CFR §201.6(d)(3) states:

"A local jurisdiction must review and revise its plan to reflect changes in development, progress in local mitigation efforts, and changes in priorities, and resubmit for approval within five (5) years to continue to be eligible for mitigation project grant funding. Plan updates must demonstrate that progress has been made in the past 5 years for Local Mitigation Plans to fulfill commitments outlines in the previously approved plan. This involves a comprehensive review and update of each section of the Local Mitigation Plan and a discussion of the results of evaluation and monitoring activities detailed in the Plan Maintenance section of the previously approved plan. Plan updates may validate the information in the previously approved plan or may involve a major plan rewrite."

The process of all-hazard mitigation planning is the first step toward protecting a community from losses associated with hazards and resulting disasters. Regarding hazard mitigation, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) provides the following definitions:

- **Hazard mitigation:** Any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life



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and property from hazards.

- **Planning:** The act or process of making or carrying out plans, specifically, the establishment of goals, policies and procedures for a social or economic unit.

### **Plan Purpose**

This plan was developed to demonstrate a commitment to reducing or eliminating the impact of natural, technological, and human-caused hazards, and to support efficient and effective response and recovery. The Plan addresses myriad risks and degrees of vulnerability, mitigation goals, objectives, and strategies.

The LENOWISCO Planning District Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed to ensure the Planning District's future eligibility for disaster mitigation funds through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as provided through the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The Plan also ensures access to other federal programs, i.e., Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA). Although the LENOWISCO Planning District and local communities would remain eligible for certain emergency assistance and Human Services programs, the District understands that without an approved hazard mitigation plan, it and all participating jurisdictions would be ineligible for other disaster recovery programs, such as Fire Management and Public Assistance.

This plan is structured through the planning requirements detailed in 44 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 201. The key purposes of this 2013 Plan are:

- To involve members of the counties, cities, towns, other agencies, and the public to draft and adopt a mitigation action plan that serves as the blueprint for future development and preparedness activities across the LENOWISCO Planning District;
- To prioritize loss reduction and emergency preparedness activities for disasters;
- To determine areas within the LENOWISCO Planning District that may be vulnerable to various hazards;
- To develop strategies and best practices to avoid and mitigate the impact of hazards.

### **Section 1.3: Prerequisites**

The 2021 LENOWISCO Hazard Mitigation Plan meets the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require state, local, and tribal entities to closely coordinate mitigation planning and implementation efforts.

#### **Section 1.3.1 Plan Adoption**

This plan represents a comprehensive description of LENOWISCO's commitment to significantly reduce or eliminate the potential impacts of disasters through planning and mitigation. Adoption by the local governing bodies within the District legitimizes the Plan and authorizes responsible agencies to implement mitigation responsibilities and activities.

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### Section 1.4: Planning Process

All areas within the LENOWISCO Planning District are vulnerable to natural, technological, and human-caused hazards that have the possibility of causing severe threats to the health, welfare, and security of its residents. The cost of the responsible to and recovery from the potential disasters, regarding the potential loss of life or property, can be lessened when attention is turned to mitigating their impacts and effects before they occur or reoccur.

This Multi-Jurisdiction All-Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) seeks to identify LENOWISCO's hazards and understand their impact on vulnerable populations and infrastructure. With that understanding, the Plan sets forth solutions that if implemented, have the potential to significantly reduce the threat to life and property.

The HMP is based on the premise that hazard mitigation works. With increased attention to managing natural hazards and land use, communities can reduce the threats to citizens and infrastructure. Many mitigation strategies can be implemented at minimal cost and social impact.

This is not an emergency response plan; however, the HMP can be used to identify gaps and enhance coordination of other plans, including comprehensive emergency management plans, continuity of operations, and emergency response plans. The primary focus of the HMP is to support better decision making directed toward lessening hazard impact and the implementation of activities or projects that will eliminate or reduce risk for those that may already have exposure to a natural hazard threat.

#### **Purpose**

The purposes of the HMP are:

- Fulfill federal and local mitigation planning responsibilities;
- Promote pre-and post-disaster mitigation measures with short/long-range strategies to minimize suffering, loss of life, impact on traditional culture, and damage to property and the environment;
- Eliminate or minimize conditions that would have an undesirable impact on the people, culture, economy, environment, and well-being of the Planning District at large; and,
- Enhance elected officials', departments', and the public's awareness of the threats to the community's way of life, and of what can be done to prevent or reduce the vulnerability and risk.

#### **Scope**

This Multi-Jurisdiction All-Hazard Mitigation Plan covers all the areas within the eleven participating jurisdictions.

#### **Mission Statement**

The LENOWISCO Planning District Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) sets forth public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private and public property, the local economy, and the environment from risks associated with natural and human-caused hazards.

#### **Federal and State Plan Compliance and Integration**

This HMP is designed to comply with the requirements of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, and Related Authorities and 44 CFR Part 201, which states that

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local governments, to be eligible for pre-disaster and/or post-disaster mitigation funds, must have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in place. The Plan is also designed to comply with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), guidance documents (particularly the Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidebook dated 2018), and other applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

### **Plan Use**

The Plan should be used to help officials with the LENOWISCO plan, design, and implement programs and projects that will help reduce the jurisdiction's vulnerability to natural, technological, and human-caused hazards. The Plan should also be used to facilitate inter-jurisdiction coordination and collaboration related to all-hazard mitigation planning and implementation within the planning district. Lastly, the Plan should be used to develop or provide guidance for local emergency response planning. If adopted, this Plan will achieve compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

### **Hazard Mitigation**

Hazard mitigation is defined as any cost-effective action(s) that has the effect of reducing, limiting, or preventing vulnerability of people, culture, property, and the environment to potentially damaging, harmful, or costly hazards. Hazard mitigation measures which can be used to eliminate or minimize the risk to life, culture, and property, fall into three categories:

1. Keep the hazard away from people, property, and structures.
2. Keep the people, property, or structures away from the hazard.
3. Reduce the impact of the hazard on victims, i.e., insurance.

Hazard mitigation measures must be practical, cost-effective, and culturally, environmentally, and politically acceptable. Actions taken to limit the vulnerability of society to hazards must not in themselves be more costly than the anticipated damages.

Hazard mitigation planning should focus on capital investment and land use decision-making and be based on vulnerability. Capital investments, whether for homes, roads, public utilities, pipelines, power plants, or public works, determine to a large extent the nature and degree of hazard vulnerability of a community. Once a capital facility is in place, very few opportunities will present themselves over the useful life of the facility to correct any errors in location or construction concerning to the hazard vulnerability. It is for this reason that zoning and other ordinances, which manage development in high vulnerability areas, and building codes, which ensure that new buildings are built to withstand the damaging forces of the hazards, are often the most useful tool in mitigation that a jurisdiction can implement.

Since the priority to implement mitigation activities is usually very low in comparison to the perceived threat, some important mitigation measures take time to implement. Mitigation success can be achieved, however, if accurate information is portrayed through complete hazard identification and impact studies, followed by effective mitigation management.

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The LENOWISCO Planning District Board of Directors discusses and votes on several issues related to hazard mitigation, including:

- Water/ wastewater funding requests
- Allocation of construction funds
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications
- Updates on current improvement projects

A Hazard Mitigation Plan is only part of the emergency planning, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery process. Therefore a second objective of the planning process was to coordinate Plan preparation with existing LENOWISCO Planning District emergency plans, programs, procedures, and organizations. For purposes of this Plan, existing hazard mitigation goals and objectives within the LENOWISCO Planning District were reviewed. It should be noted that this Plan does not replace any existing plans or programs but is intended to provide a reference on hazard mitigation to be used in planning and program development.

*To view the LENOWISCO Planning District 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update in its entirety, please visit the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission's website.*

