

**PRESTON COUNTY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Submitted as part of the LED Grant Program, this report reflects the development of a strategic plan for the Preston County Economic Development Authority. The intent of this plan is to layout the direction of the Authority by identifying the short-term objectives and long-range goals.

The Authority Executive Committee met and developed draft goals and objectives which were then presented to the entire board of directors for discussion, revision and review.

Following the review, the PCEDA developed 6 short-term objectives and 4 long-term goals. As the plan is implemented, these objectives and goals will be the basis for specific activities undertaken by the Preston County EDA. The objectives include:

1. Have Grace Chapel Property Ready for Sale/Lease Development
2. Create New Website and Branding for the PCEDA
3. Continue to Expand Broadband in Preston County
4. Continue to Work on County Water & Sewer Infrastructure
5. Encourage investment in amenities and recreational infrastructure
6. Develop a financial sustainability plan for the PCEDA

Evaluation Process:

Each year prior to beginning the strategic planning process, the staff of the Preston County EDA will review its annual work plan to determine what has been accomplished on both its goals and short and long term objectives. This information will be provided to the members of the Authority for their review prior to the strategic planning process. This evaluation process will assist the members in establishing new goals and objectives and an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the staff.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT FOR THE PRESTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY'S

LED Grant Program

Strategic Planning Process

This strategic plan is submitted as part of the LED Grant Program.

The strategic plan component was developed through a planning process that involved the staff and members of the Preston County EDA and other key business and government leaders in a collaborative process. The Preston County EDA also conducted an economic development analysis of Preston County. This analysis requires the utilization of available demographic and economic data. Additional information has been acquired by means of research, and lengthy discussions among the members of the Authority and other key community leaders. The strategic plan includes the following components:

1. Assessment of the county.
2. Identification of key local issues.
3. Establish goals and objectives and strategic initiatives including the results to be achieved and measurements of our progress.
4. Implementation plan that includes a one-year work program (annual action plan).
5. Define an evaluation process.

Assessment of the County:

The assessment of the County included the gathering and analysis of information on a wide range of topics including: labor statistics, educational attainments and demographic and income data. Preston County was then compared to the other West Virginia Counties to determine where we stood. This information was provided to everyone involved in the strategic planning process and utilized during our discussions.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies:

Vision Statement: The vision of the Preston County Economic Development Authority is to have the best climate and environment possible to attract new businesses to the area and to assist existing businesses which will provide job opportunities to meet the economic needs of our residents.

Mission Statement: The Preston County Economic Development Authority's mission is to aggressively promote economic vitality by creating and retaining jobs through

- developing strategic alliances to make us stronger and more effective
- working to improve infrastructure in the county
- assisting existing businesses
- attracting new businesses
- identifying industries that have the potential for growth in the county
- informing the public about economic opportunities

This will allow our residents and communities to become and remain economically secure.

Our work is guided by the following Process Agreement:

1. We agree to act on our own ideas.
2. We will be willing to step out of the comfort zone.
3. We agree to become more solution minded than problem focused.
4. We will maintain a positive mental attitude.
5. We agree to be open to and evaluate everyone's opinion.
6. We will follow the process we've established.
7. We will do our best to establish partnerships and encourage engagement.
8. If you say "Yes!" you automatically agree to commit.
9. We are willing to be open minded in allowing others to challenge existing mindsets.

One- to Two-Year Goals:

- Have Grace Chapel property ready for sale/lease/development
- Create new website and branding for the PCEDA
- Continue to expand broadband in Preston County
- Continue to work on county water & sewer infrastructure
- Encourage investment in amenities and recreational infrastructure
- Develop a financial sustainability plan for the PCEDA

Five-Year Goals:

- Investigate ways to increase the availability of workforce housing
- Work with the Preston County Commission and WVDOH to upgrade Rt. 7, Rt. 26, Kingwood Pike, Rt 50
- Attract agritourism opportunities and marketing
- Determine the viability of a workforce training center at Grace Chapel

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 WORK PROGRAM

Objectives within this document are categorized as either new or short-term “Initiative Objectives”, or longer-term, ongoing “Maintenance Objectives.” In some cases, objectives are comprehensive project areas, which are further outlined into specific tasks. Initiative Objectives are broken into One-Year and Five-Year Objectives.

Initiative Objectives: (One to Two-Year)

I. Have Grace Chapel Property Ready for Sale/Lease/Development

Action Steps:

1. Repair security system
2. Repair electrical system
3. Mill and repave parking lot
4. Replace roof
5. Build road to back pad site
6. Extend utilities to back pad site
7. Clear back acreage for development
8. Create pad site on back acreage
9. Remediate building environmental issues

Budget: \$2.2 million

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA, environmental consultant, engineer, security company, electrical contractor, WVDEP, contractor

Other Resources Needed: Staff time, WVDEP, contractors, consultants, AML PILOT funds

Measurement:

1. Security system repaired.
2. Electrical system repaired.
3. Parking lot work completed.
4. Roof replaced.
5. Road complete.

6. Back acreage prepared for development.
7. Remediation complete.

II. Create New Website and Branding For the Preston County Economic Development Authority

Action Steps:

1. Hire a marketing firm that specializes in economic development branding
2. Rebranding to include new logo, stationery, signage, tag line (if needed)
3. Make sure discussions on rebranding include a diverse group of Preston County residents and businesses
4. Incorporate new branding in website redevelopment
5. New website developed to meet the needs of both site selectors and local businesses and people
6. Release new website with publicity

Budget: \$20,000/annually for 4 years

Responsible Party: PCEDA, Golden Shovel Agency, community groups, PCEDA board

Measurement:

1. Consulting firm hired
2. Focus groups to determine Preston County identity meet and discuss
3. New draft brands developed
4. PCEDA board to select brand from drafts
5. New brand incorporated in logo, stationery, signage, etc.
6. New brand incorporated in website
7. New website developed based on input from community and board
8. Roll out new website with publicity

III. Continue to Expand Broadband in Preston County

Action Steps:

1. Complete North Preston Broadband Project

2. Review WV Broadband Council maps and Preston County 911 maps to create a map of Preston County that shows area with and without broadband service.
3. Urge residents to do broadband speed tests and submit results to the PCEDA.
4. Start work on the East Preston Broadband Project, if funded.
5. Apply for NTIA Broadband grant for unserved areas of the county.
6. Identify potential funders/grants for broadband projects.
7. Work with ISP to apply for grant funding.
8. Partner with Monongalia County on a project(s) to provide broadband to areas without coverage that span both counties based on Region VI study.
9. Complete new broadband project, if funded.
10. Make sure projects are sustainable.

Budget: Grant funded

Responsible Party: PCEDA, WV Broadband Council, PC Citizens, Region VI

Other Resources Needed: ISP, Funding Agency

Measurement:

1. North Preston broadband project completed
2. Preston County broadband map developed
3. Broadband speed test results compiles
4. Funding for project identified
5. East Preston Broadband project started
5. NTIA grant application submitted
6. Project with Monongalia County identified and completed
7. Begin new broadband project

IV. Continue to Work on County Water & Sewer Infrastructure

Action Steps:

1. Work with the Town of Rowlesburg on a project to upgrade and/or replace their existing sewer system.
2. Work on Preston County Sewer PSD upgrade of Bruceton Mills WWTP.

3. Continue work on Terra Alta Water System upgrade project
4. Begin work on Town of Terra Alta Sewer System upgrades project.
5. Assist PSD 4 and their project engineer with well and treatment plant upgrades.
6. Prepare Town of Tunnelton Sewer Project for funding and construction.
7. Assist Sewer PSD with engineering procurement for Hazelton WWTP upgrade project
8. Partner with Sewer PSD and their engineer to begin work on Phase II of the Bruceton Mills WWTP upgrade project.

Budget: None – Funding responsibility of municipality/PSD

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA, PSD 4, Town of Rowlesburg, Preston County Sewer PSD, Town of Terra Alta, Town of Tunnelton

Other Resources Needed: Engineer, USDA, WVIJDC, Attorney, USEDA, WDA, WVDEP, USEPA

Measurement:

1. Rowlesburg sewer funded.
2. Bruceton Mills WWTP project under construction.
3. Terra Alta water project is under construction.
4. Terra Alta Sewer Project receives funding.
5. Studies completed for possible PSD 4 upgrade and expansion.
6. Engineer for Hazelton project procured.
7. Phase II Bruceton Mills WWTP project funded.

V. Encourage investments in amenities and recreational infrastructure

Action Steps:

1. Continue to work on the development of Wade’s World of Wonder Playground.
2. Partner with Friends of the Cheat on the development of the Kingwood to Rowlesburg Rail Trail.

3. Reach out to Preston County Parks and Recreation to determine possible partnership opportunities.
4. Work with Kingwood Pool Committee on development of a splash pad at the pool.
5. Continue to work on the Empower Albright Project task force on plans to redevelop the Albright Power plant property and to enhance the nearby Cheat River recreation area.
6. Assist the Preston County Youth Center with publicity and with locating potential funding opportunities.

Budget: \$500

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA, Friends of the Cheat, Preston County Parks and Recreation, Wade's World of Wonder Playground, WVLS, Preston County Youth Center

Other Resources Needed: Funding agencies, staff time

Measurement:

1. Wade's World of Wonder playground complete
2. Kingwood to Tunnelton rail trail open
3. Partner with Kingwood Parks & Rec on one project
4. Splash pad at Kingwood pool complete
5. Kingwood to Rowlesburg rail trail open
6. Albright Power Plant property redeveloped.
7. Preston County Youth Center open and providing programming.

VI. Develop a Financial Sustainability Plan for the PCEDA

Action Steps:

1. Hold session to brainstorm ideas to provide ongoing income to the PCEDA
2. Implement a Northpointe Business & Industry Park property owner's association to cover maintenance costs
3. Analyze strategies of successful WV Development Authorities.
4. Considering charging a fee for some types of business assistance, including assisting with grant writing for a fee.

5. Look into possibility of constructing a housing development, either by preparing land and infrastructure for developer or by PCEDA completing the entire development.
6. Construction of an Innovation Center with office space which can be leased on the Grace Chapel property.
7. Develop the Main Street Rowlesburg property into a building that will generate income.
8. Continue to watch for available property which could be developed or sold to generate income.

Budget: TBD

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA Staff, PCEDA board

Other Resources Needed: Staff Time, developer(s)

Measurement:

1. Brainstorming session completed.
2. Possible projects prioritized.
2. Work begins on identified projects.
3. Projects completed and implemented.
4. PCEDA begins to recognize new revenue streams.

Initiative Objectives (Three to Five-Year):

I. Investigate ways to increase the availability of workforce housing

Action Steps:

1. Schedule meeting with Rowlesburg property donors to review goals for property.
2. Evaluate options for Rowlesburg property housing, both stand alone and mixed-use
3. Determine the type of housing needed by location in the county.
4. Meet with major employers to determine the housing needs of their employees.

5. Partner with WV Forward for information on their work around this issue.

Budget: TBD

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA, WVU Extension, WV Forward, WVU

Other Resources Needed: Housing study, survey, funding

Measurement:

1. Meeting with Rowlesburg property donors complete
2. Location-based housing study complete
3. Meetings completed with PMH, Preston Schools, Camp Dawson, Federal Prison

II. Work with the Preston County Commission and WVDOH to Upgrade Rt 7, Rt 26, Kingwood Pike, Rt 50

Action Steps:

1. Meet with stakeholders who would benefit from road upgrades (WVANG, WVU, FCC Hazelton, Preston County Schools).
2. Identify opportunities for further development if roads are upgraded.
3. Engage legislators to gain their support for the upgrades.
4. Work on cooperation for these projects between WVDOH, Preston County Commission, Chamber of Commerce, PCEDA, Camp Dawson, WVU.
5. Examine the possibility of scenic pull-offs on these roads.
6. Gather data to support the need for upgrades.

Budget: \$500

Responsible Party: PCEDA, WVDOH, County Commission, Legislators, Preston County Chamber of Commerce, Preston County Schools, Visit Mountaineer Country CVB

Other Resources Needed: Existing plans & maps, funding, Legislative support

Measurement:

1. Stakeholder meetings completed
2. Opportunities identified
3. Local legislators support projects
4. Various organizations work together on upgrades
5. Data obtained to support need for projects

III. Attract Agritourism Opportunities and Marketing

Action Steps:

1. Become a partner in the next Preston County Farm Crawl or hold a similar event.
2. Partner with WVU Extension to develop a Preston County agritourism tour.
3. Set up agricultural marketing co-op/marketing classes.
4. Explore and support efforts surrounding hemp and medical marijuana including participation with the ARC Hemp Grant Advisory Committee.
5. Partner with WV Department of Agriculture on business start-up assistance, training assistance, marketing plans and promotional assistance.
6. Work with the Preston County Chamber to host a local foods dinner.
7. Investigate the possibility of more farm to table partnerships for Preston County schools.

Budget: \$1,500

Responsible Party: Preston County EDA, WVU Extension, WV Department of Agriculture, University of MD Extension, Preston County Chamber of Commerce, Preston County Board of Education

Other Resources Needed: TBD

Measurement:

1. PCEDA is a partner in the next Farm Crawl or similar event
2. Preston County agritourism tour complete
3. Agricultural marketing classes formed
4. Partner with WV Department of Ag for business assistance and training

5. ARC Hemp Grant report is issued
6. Local foods dinner held
7. Preston County schools procuring more local foods

IV. Determine viability of a Workforce Training Center at Grace Chapel

Action Steps:

1. Complete building repairs at Grace Chapel.
2. Meet with local business owners to determine training needs.
3. Review similar programs in WV to learn how they are structured and funded.
4. Identify potential programming/education/training partners.
5. Determine best programs to offer in year one.
6. Work on how to achieve sustainability for the program.

Budget: \$2 million – building repairs; \$500 other work

Responsible party: PCEDA, business owners

Other Resources needed: Community colleges, workforce training funds, trainers

Measurement:

1. Grace Chapel building repairs complete.
2. Meeting with local business owners held.
3. Information on similar programs received.
4. Potential partners identified.
5. Starting programs identified.
6. Plan for sustainability completed.

Maintenance Objectives:

- I. Inform the public about the activities of the PCEDA through press releases, local media event coverage, interviews, town meetings, presentations to local clubs, e-newsletter, FaceBook, etc. Keep PCEDA members informed of status of projects through regularly scheduled meetings and email updates.

II. Secure West Virginia Local Economic Development Grant (LEDG) and matching Preston County Commission funding allocation.

III. Conduct annual business retention (existing industry and other business) visits with at least 10 local employers in Preston County. Partner with WVDO officials and other state officials such as the SBDC, WV Division of Forestry and the Appalachian Hardwood Center at WVU.

IV. Update web site (prestonwv.com), community profiles, and site and building inventories for Preston County.

V. Market available business, industrial and commercial properties through direct referrals; cooperation with local realtors; and through the PCEDA and WVDO Internet web sites.

VI. Provide response to inquiries from business prospects within twenty-four hours.

VII. Continue to provide professional development training opportunities to all members of the PCEDA staff.

VIII. Organize, plan and conduct Annual Strategic Planning meeting in June 2022 to set PCEDA priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Invite public to attend and participate in the strategic planning process.

IX. Draft Annual Strategic Plan, Annual Work Plan, and Budget for FY 2022-2023.

X. Cooperate and coordinate with other local (MAAP, Preston County Farmland Protection Board, Mountaineer Country Convention and Visitors Bureau, Preston County Chamber of Commerce, Preston County Task Force, Kingwood Blueprint Communities), regional (Woodlands Development Group, WV HUB, WVHAZ, Region VI) and statewide (WVDO, WVEDC, SBDC) economic development efforts.