
Grant County Development Authority Strategic Plan

Developed by the Grant County Development Authority

www.grantcounty-wv.com

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Tammy Kitzmiller, Executive Director

PO Box 114

Petersburg, WV 26847

304-257-2168

TKitzmiller@grantcounty-wv.com

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INTRODUCTION

The Grant County Development Authority (GCDA) operates under the direction of a governing board, which includes representation from the Grant County Commission, City of Petersburg, City of Bayard, local banks, local businesses and individual business owners, community leaders, and citizens. As an arm of the county government under the laws set forth under West Virginia Code §7-12 (Chapter 7: County Commissions and Officers; Article 12: County and Municipal Development Authorities), the GCDA works to “promote, develop, and advance the business prosperity and economic welfare in Grant County.”

It should be noted that the development authority is not charged with doing overall planning for the county, but rather planning for its development activities. Creation of a comprehensive plan is the responsibility of the Grant County Planning Commission, whose work must then be adopted by the County Commission.

The GCDA is committed to promoting expansion of its economic base by efficiently allocating and using available resources, while encouraging new partners. GCDA recognizes the importance of using past history, experiences of other communities, existing resources, and the desires of its residents in developing goals for the future. While this document will help the GCDA meet the requirements set forth by the West Virginia Development Office to achieve recertification of Grant County’s Certified Development Community status until 2018, as well as continue participation in the Local Economic Development Grant program, its chief purpose is to serve as a planning strategy by which the county will move forward, grow and prosper.

The process of developing this strategic plan utilized a number of tools and resources to identify future goals and plot the course for achieving those goals through forward thinking and anticipation of the future. The result is a clearly defined blueprint illustrating the process by which the GCDA will successfully promote economic development in Grant County. As with any long-term plan, while some actions are clear, others may require further study to understand the direction that must be pursued.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Grant County Development Authority is committed to promoting a vibrant local economy by facilitating the expansion and retention of existing businesses, working to attract new opportunities, and fostering a climate in which businesses can thrive, while preserving the unique qualities that make Grant County a special place to live and work.

Population Trends

During the 20th century, Grant County generally saw slow but steady population growth (Table 1). The county experienced a population decline three times – 1920 to 1930, 1940 to 1950, and 1950 to 1960. Meanwhile, the population twice jumped by more than 10 percent – 1910 to 1920 and 1970 to 1980. Ironically, the decade immediately after that first large population jump, the county experienced its first (and largest) population decline. The combination of the small increases and declines over the next several decades meant that the county did not exceed its 1920 population until after World War II (1950).

Population gains of the 1970s resulted in the county having a recorded population exceeding 10,000 residents for the first time in 1980. Since then, the county population peaked in 2008 with an estimated 12,047 residents before beginning a slight downturn. By 2010, the recorded population was 11,937. Annual estimates between 2010 and 2014 show a downward trend (Table 2).

Table 1: Historical Population

| | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1950 |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Grant County | 7,275 | 7,838 | 8,993 | 8,441 | 8,805 | 8,756 |
| Percent Change | | 7.7% | 14.7% | -6.1% | 4.3% | -0.6% |
| | | | | | | |
| | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
| Grant County | 8,304 | 8,607 | 10,210 | 10,428 | 11,299 | 11,937 |
| Percent Change | -5.2% | 3.6% | 18.6% | 2.1% | 8.4% | 5.7% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Table 2: 2014 Population Estimates

| | April 1, 2010 | Population Estimate (as of July 1) | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Census | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| Grant County | 11,937 | 11,900 | 11,929 | 11,841 | 11,788 | 11,687 |
| Percent Change | | | -0.1% | -0.7% | -0.4% | -0.9% |

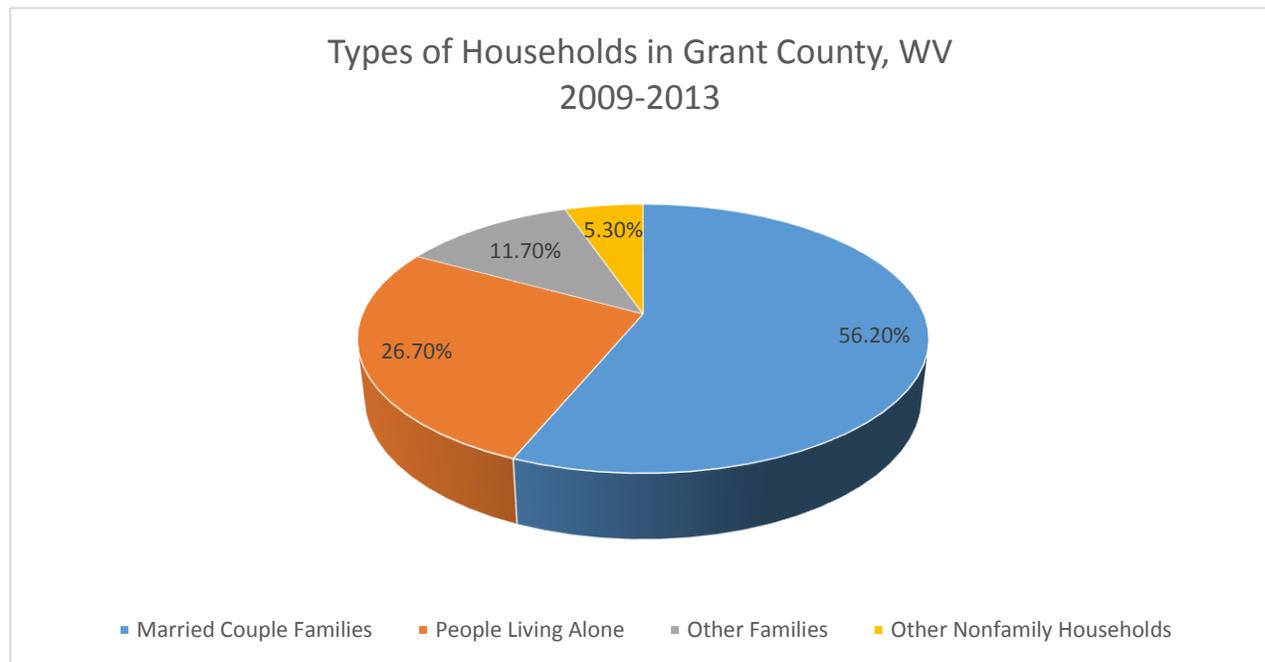
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Households and Families

There were 4,400 households in Grant County in 2009-2013, with an average household size of 2.6 people.

Married couple families made up 56.2 percent of the households. Other families, including female householder families with children and no husband present, totaled 11.7 percent. Nonfamily households made up 32 percent off all households in Grant County, including 26.7 percent living alone, and 5.3 percent composed of people living in households in which no one was related (Table 3).

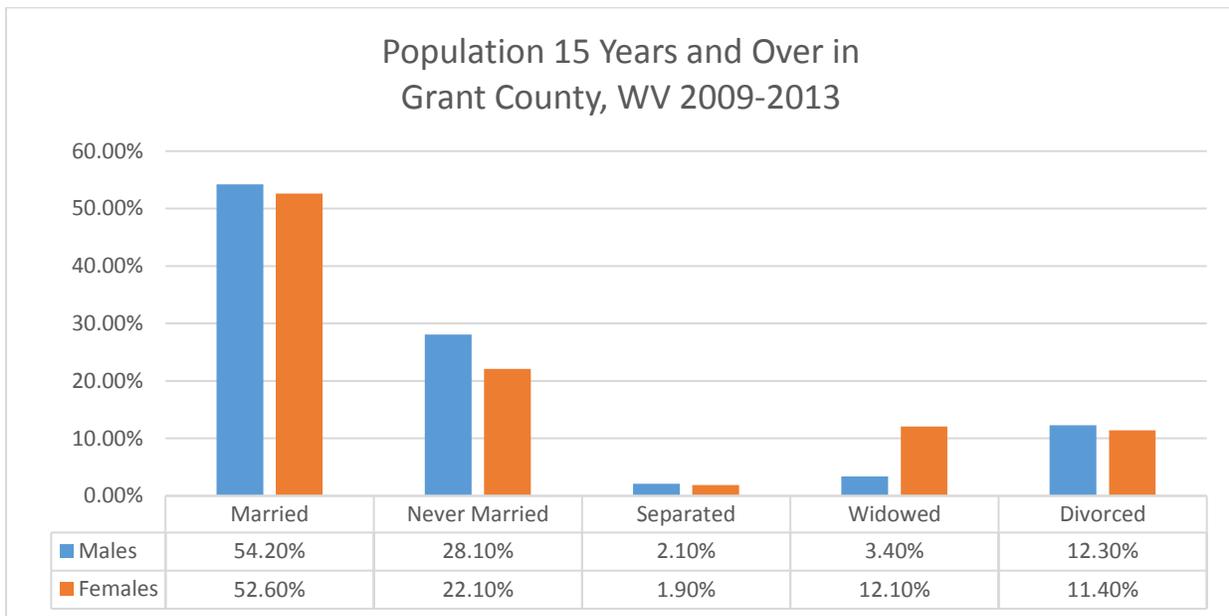
Table 3: Types of Households



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Among persons 15 and older, 54.2 percent of males and 52.6 percent of females are currently married. A total of 28.1 percent of males and 22.1 percent of females have never been married. Divorced males account for 12.3 percent and divorced females 11.4 percent. A larger number of widowed females are present at 12.1 percent compared to 3.4 percent of widowed males (Table 4).

Table 4: Marital Status

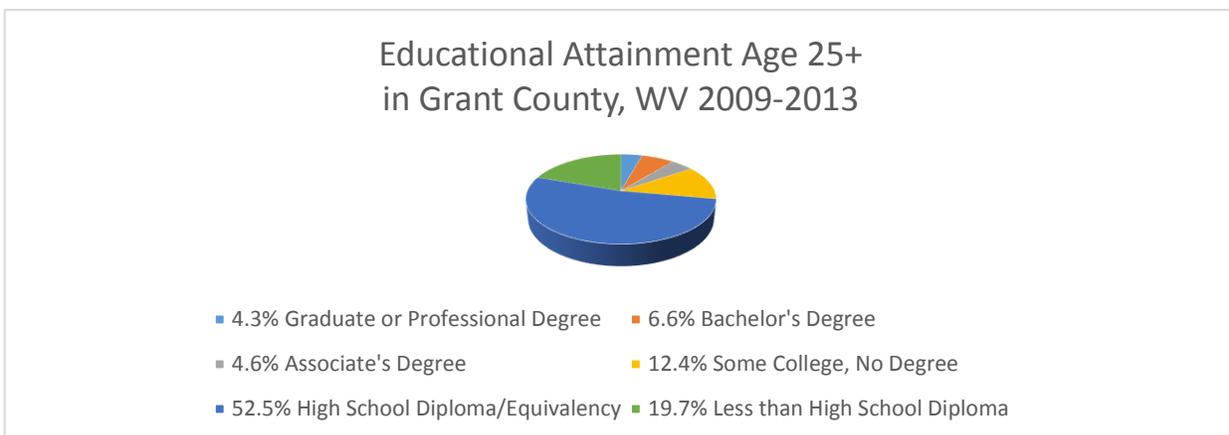


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Education

In the five year span of 2009-2013, 80 percent of people 25 years and older had a minimum of a high school diploma, and 11 percent had a bachelor’s degree or higher. About 19.7 percent of those age 25 and older did not complete high school (Table 5).

Table 5: Educational Attainment in Grant County, WV 2009-2013



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Disability

Among the civilian noninstitutionalized population in Grant County in 2009-2013, 17 percent reported a disability.

Employment Status and Type of Employer

In Grant County, 55 percent of the population age 16 and over were employed; 41 percent were not currently in the labor force.

An estimated 78 percent of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 13 percent were federal, state, or local government workers; and 8 percent were self-employed in a non-incorporated business they owned (Table 6).

Table 6: Type of Employment

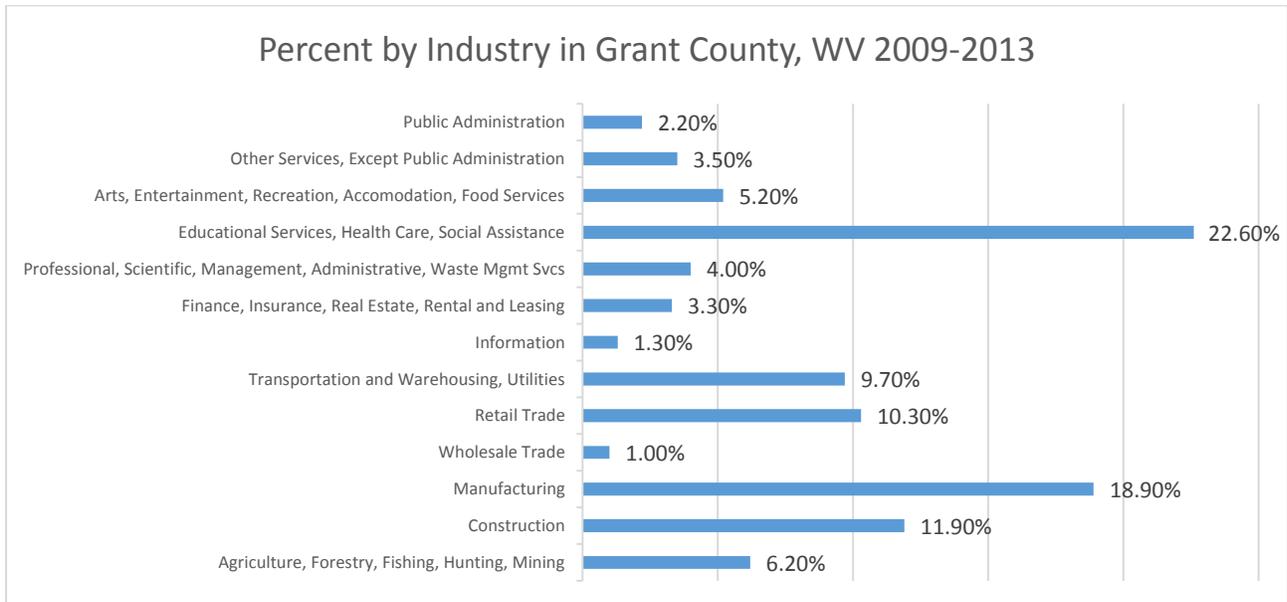
| Class of Worker | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| Private wage and salary workers | 4,121 | 78.30% |
| Federal, state, or local government workers | 696 | 13.20% |
| Self-employed workers in own non-incorporated business | 433 | 8.20% |

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Industries

Over 53 percent of the civilian population age 16 years and older worked in three main categories in Grant County in 2009-2013. The largest percentage of 22.6 worked in the category of education services, health care, and social assistance; 18.9 percent worked in manufacturing; and 11.9 percent worked in construction. The distribution percentage of civilian workers in all categories is displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Percent Employed by Industry

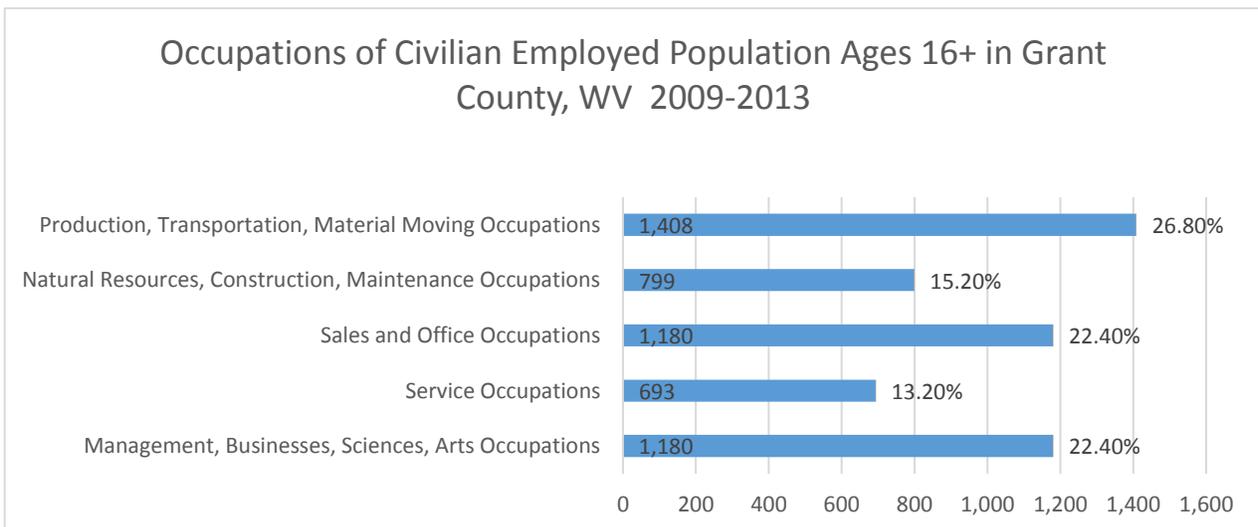


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Occupations

Occupations for the civilian employed population age 16 years and over in Grant County in 2009-2013 show the greatest number in production, transportation and material moving occupations. Table 8 provides the number and percentages among the five main occupations.

Table 8: Occupation Distribution of Civilian Population



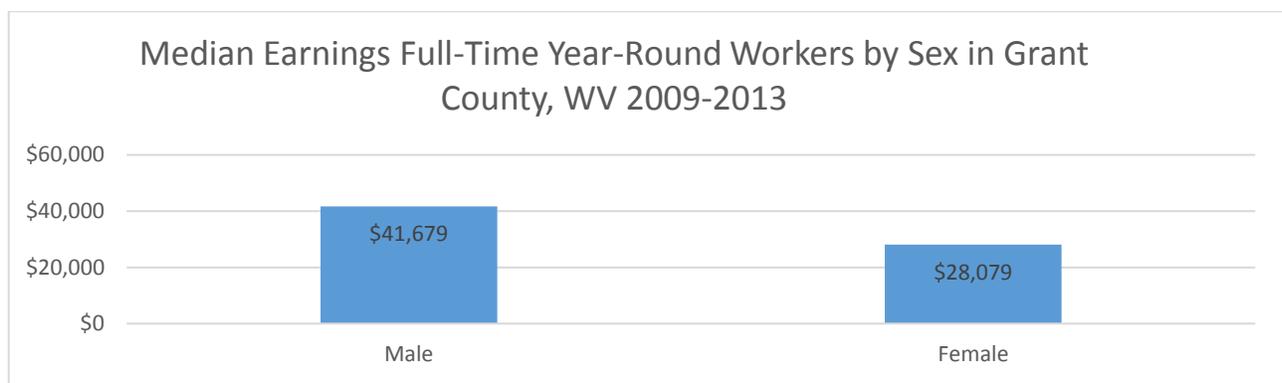
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Income

While an estimated 14 percent of households in Grant County had income below \$15,000 a year, the average median income was \$41,368. One percent had income of \$150,000 or more.

The median income for year-round male workers in Grant County was \$41,679; the median income for year-round female workers was \$28,079 (Table 9).

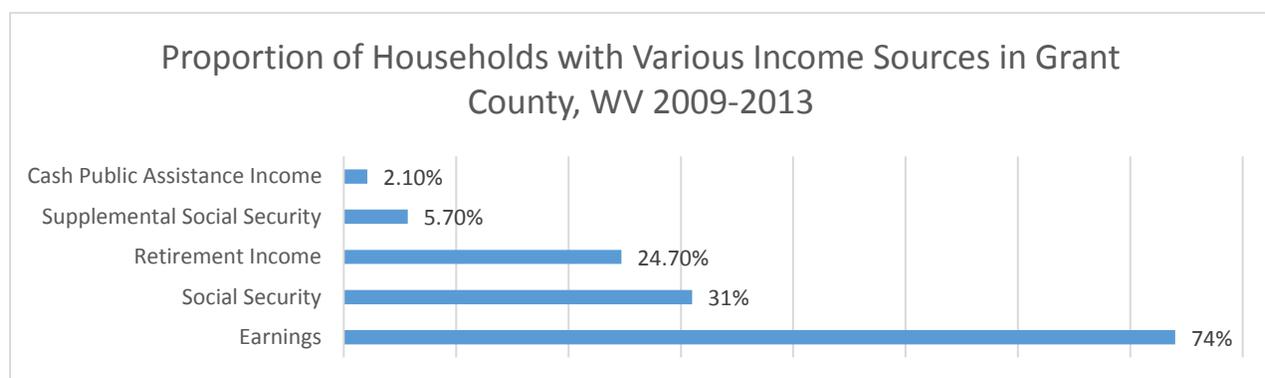
Table 9: Median Earnings by Sex



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

While some households received income from more than one source, an estimated 74 percent received earnings, and 25 percent received retirement income other than Social Security. Households receiving Social Security was an estimated 31 percent. The average Social Security income was \$15,876 (Table 10).

Table 10: Income Sources



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Unemployment

The West Virginia unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) increased from 7.6 to 7.7 percent in March 2015. Grant County's rate dropped from 9.8 percent in February to 9.4 percent in March. For the same period last year, the March rate was 8.2 percent.

Poverty and Government Program Participation

In 2009-2013, 15 percent of people in Grant County were in poverty. An estimated 21 percent of related children under the age of 18 were below the poverty level, compared to 10 percent of people age 65 and over. An estimated 10 percent of all families and 41 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

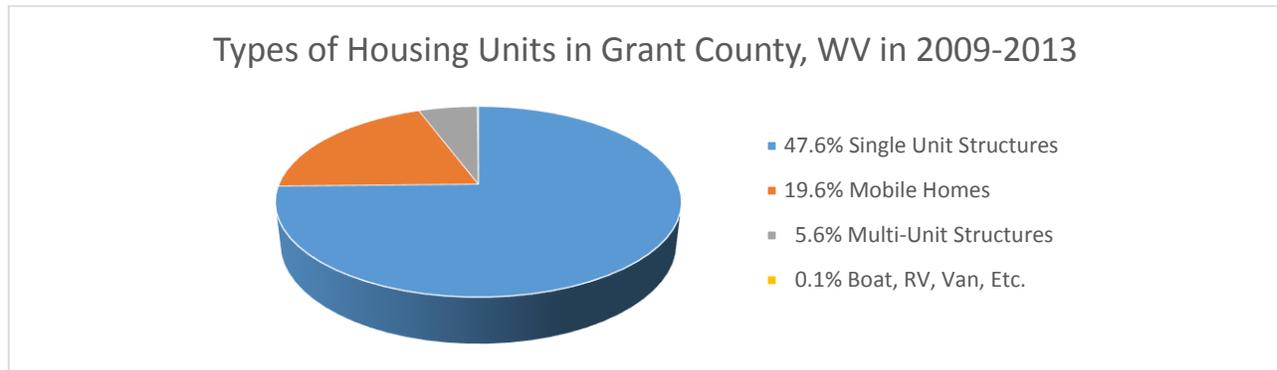
Among the civilian non-institutionalized population in Grant County in 2009-2013, 87 percent had health insurance coverage, including private coverage and public coverage, and 13 percent had no coverage. Three percent of those under 18 years of age had no health insurance coverage.

Housing

Grant County had 6,400 housing units in 2009-2013, 30 percent of which were vacant. Single-unit structures comprised 75 percent of the total housing units; 6 percent were in multi-unit structures; and 20 percent were mobile homes (Table 11). An estimated 24 percent of the housing units were built since 1990. The average number of rooms in all housing units in Grant County was 6. Sixty-two percent of the housing units have three or more bedrooms.

Among the average of 4,400 occupied housing units, 3,500 (79 percent) were owner occupied and 932 (21 percent) were renter occupied. About 46 percent of the owner occupied units had a mortgage. An estimated 6 percent had no vehicles available, while 31 percent had three or more.

Average monthly housing costs were \$1,011 for mortgaged homeowners, \$265 for homeowners without mortgages, and \$555 for renters. The estimated percentage of household income spent on housing in Grant County was 26 percent for owners with mortgages, 5 percent for owners without mortgages, and 38 percent for renters.

Table 11: Types of Housing

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, The Data Web

Transportation

The most fundamental impact of transportation is the capacity to convey passengers and goods between economic focal points. Adequate access to transportation methods is vital to the future growth of Grant County and the sustainability of its residents. The rural setting requires one to drive from one location to another in nearly all situations. In fact, Grant County residents had an average commuting time of 24.5 minutes to work during the period of 2009-2013.

The Grant County airport, railways going through Petersburg and near Mount Storm, and a newly completed section of Corridor H provide access to residents, industries, and businesses. Grant County also has access to public transportation through the Potomac Valley Transportation Authority (PVRTA), which provides short and long distance transportation for residents.

The Grant County Airport provides access in and out of the area for small commuter planes and jets for personal and business purposes. The airport has a 5000' paved runway with automated weather reporting and instrument landing capability, and is the only general aviation facility in the region with a lighted runway.

Corridor H is about 75 percent complete, and all sections through Grant County are open. The section from Kerens to Parsons is ready to begin construction. A vital gateway for economic development, Corridor H will connect Grant County's rural area with points west, e.g. Parkersburg and Ohio, with points east, e.g. Virginia and Washington, DC when the entire route is finished. This represents the first four-lane roadway in Grant County and will allow a link from West Virginia to the Inland Port in Front Royal, Virginia. From the Inland Port, double-stacked rail containers make their way to the Port of Norfolk, one of the world's busiest and deepest ports, dramatically increasing West Virginia's potential to export products.

Infrastructure

Grant County infrastructure includes water and sewage, utilities, and various sources of communications. The availability of potable water has expanded throughout Grant County, with the majority of county residents having access to public water, although expansions are needed in some areas of the county. Wastewater services are available in Petersburg and some areas of Mount Storm, although expanded sewer services could be beneficial to the county.

Solid waste disposal is available through private and municipal haulers throughout the county. The Southern Transfer Station near Petersburg collects waste from Grant, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties, and it is then transferred to the Tucker County Landfill for final disposition. Recycling efforts have been minimal and could be beneficial to the county.

Broadband internet is important for the economic future of Grant County. Residents, current businesses, and the ability to attract future business and industry are all reliant upon the need for high speed internet. Current providers include Frontier, Shentel, HardyNet, and Atlantic Broadband, although not all areas are served by all providers. Adequate and reliable high speed connection continues to be a frequent request of residents, businesses, and business prospects.

Cellular telephone coverage is good in and around Petersburg, but is intermittent, at best, throughout the rest of the county. Some areas experience minimal coverage, while other areas have no coverage at all. Improving cellular service is important to the future of the county.

Cable television services is available in and around Petersburg, with other county residents relying on satellite television services or signals from over-the-air broadcasters. Expanded access to cable services could be beneficial to residents of the county.

Public Services

Healthcare services are available through Grant Memorial Hospital in Petersburg, and the Mountaintop Clinic in Mount Storm. The Grant County Health Department is located in Petersburg, with some outreach clinical services.

The public school system has facilities throughout the county, including Maysville Elementary School, Petersburg Elementary School, Petersburg High School, Union Educational Complex (which is a consolidated school in Mount Storm serving Grades Pre-K through 12), and South Branch Career and Technical Center (SBCTC) serving students from Grant, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties. Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College also has an extension campus located in Petersburg and collaborates with SBCTC to provide enhanced career training.

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Economic development can be broadly defined as activities that seek to facilitate job growth, provide a stable tax base, and improve the quality of life for our citizens. The strategic planning process serves to clarify the direction and methods by which Grant County will accomplish these tasks, grow and prosper.

No single approach to economic development can adequately meet the needs of rural communities. In fact, a strategy focusing entirely on recruitment, for example, fails to recognize the importance of adaptation and efficient use of existing resources. A successful economic development plan must be multi-faceted, recognizing the importance of retention and expansion of existing businesses, attracting new business and industry, and creating opportunities by focusing on growth through entrepreneurship.

A key component to developing a roadmap to success is analyzing existing resources and improving economic competitiveness. Without first improving economic competitiveness by focusing on diversification, structural realignments, effective transportation, and access to technology advancement, it is difficult to be competitive at recruiting new opportunities and growing a strong economic base.

To improve economic competitiveness, we must first examine existing assets, strengths, and opportunities, as well as existing threats, perceived threats, and challenges we must overcome.

Strengths/Opportunities

Access to Career/Technical Training: The presence of both Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College (EWVCTC) and South Branch Career and Technical Center (SBCTC) in Grant County serves as an economic engine for the local region, providing opportunities to tailor training to meet the demands of local employers.

EWVCTC successfully collaborates with business and community to provide opportunities for training to meet regional requirements. Its Technology Training Center, located in the Petersburg Industrial Park, offers training in Automotive Technology, Wind Energy Turbine Technology, and a Commercial Driver's License training program. The Workforce Education Department offers a Healthcare Training Series to prepare successful graduate for National Certification Exams, focusing on Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, Pharmacy Career Track, EKG Technician, and Medical Billing and Coding. EWVCTC's main campus is located in neighboring Hardy County, home of the newly created Institute for Rural Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (IREED). The IREED initiative was created to lead local and regional initiatives impacting EWVCTC's entrepreneurship program and community economic development.

SBCTC offers programs that equip secondary and post-secondary students with the skills needed to enter the local work force. The Center also hosts an Adult Basic Education Program under a grant from the West Virginia Department of Education. Programs include Automotive Technology, Carpentry, Computer Systems Repair, Industrial Equipment Maintenance, Welding, Therapeutic Services, Cosmetology, and Career and Work Skills Training.

The availability of training programs in the immediate region provide access to semi-skilled and skill trades labor to existing and potential business and industry. The good quality of life in the area helps local businesses attract and retain a dedicated work force, while EWVCTC and SBCTC offer a renewable supply of young, talented labor.

WV Hardwood: Grant County is one of nine counties situated in the West Virginia Hardwood Alliance Zone, a major hardwood producing area. Grant County is comprised of about 69 percent forest and 27 percent agriculture. Allegheny Wood Products is headquartered in Grant County and one of its largest employers, including some of the most modern sawmill and dry kiln facilities in the industry.

Natural Resources: Located in the Potomac Highlands, Grant County includes an abundance of scenic beauty. Closely tied to the quality of life in this region, there are numerous outdoor activities that also draw tourists to the area. The Monongahela National Forest, including Dolly Sods Wilderness Area is a haven for those seeking to enjoy the scenic beauty of the Appalachian

Mountains. Other attractions include Smoke Hole Caverns and Smoke Hole Canyon, situated along the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac, and Mount Storm Lake, a 1,200 acre manmade lake. These areas encourage camping, hiking, fishing, and boating enthusiasts to visit Grant County, providing a vibrant tourism industry and revenue opportunities throughout the county.

Parks System: Grant County Parks and Recreation has an impressive reputation for maintaining the county's six public parks and hosting a variety of annual events, making these locations popular among local residents, as well as tourists. An annual Christmas lighting display at Welton Park draws a remarkable following, and an Independence Day celebration is held at City Park. The Tri-County Fairgrounds hosts the Spring Mountain Festival, as well as the Tri-County Fair, and Turner Park in Maysville is popular for its public firearms ranges. The quality and quantity of recreational activities in the region is a benefit to area residents and visitors.

Access to Corridor H: Completion of the remaining 25 percent of Corridor H will improve the marketability of Grant County's Industrial Parks. Corridor H is the first four-lane roadway in the county and will allow ease of access to vital shipping ports, improved access for the trucking industry, and increasing opportunities in product movement and exportation. Travelers from the areas of Virginia and Washington, DC will also enjoy an easier and faster trip to enjoy the recreational activities available in this area.

Threats/Challenges

Limited Broadband Service: Among the greatest challenges for residents and potential business and industry sectors is the limited access to high speed internet. Many businesses rely on fast, dependable broadband service. While service is available many areas of the county, the speed and reliability of the service is quite often subpar. In most areas outside of the City of Petersburg, there is no diversity in the availability of providers.

Limited Cellular Service: Cellular telephone service is good in and around Petersburg, but there is no coverage available in many parts of the county. Although there are towers available, cellular carriers are not quick to add to towers that do not provide a large number of new customers.

Inadequate Supply of Business-Ready Buildings: Recent difficulties in expanding the business base in Grant County have included limited access to available buildings. Many start-up businesses seek locations with an option to lease rather than construct a building. There is a limited number of available buildings in the area, many of which are too costly to purchase, or need considerable and costly repairs to make them useable.

Lack of Three-Phase Power to Mountaintop Industrial Park: The completion of Corridor H will provide opportunity to market the Mountaintop Industrial Park as a prime business location. Challenges that must be met to enhance the marketability of the park include upgrade of existing infrastructure, and building three-phase power to the park.

Limited Access to Major Highways: Limited access to four-lane highways continues to create an uneven playing field when competing for business and industry investments against areas with direct access to major highways. While the completion of Corridor H through Grant County should serve as a benefit to open the region to economic development, the highway skirts the perimeter of the county, running through hilly topography in the most sparsely populated areas of the county. This could serve as both a benefit and a detriment to development and must be marketed carefully.

Land Use Planning

When planning economic development, consideration must be given to available properties, existing conditions, community expectations, and business and industrial needs. With an abundance of agricultural areas and natural resources in Grant County, maintaining that quality of life is essential to its residents. While the populace welcomes moderate growth, a healthy environment and preservation of the region's history and natural beauty are paramount expectations. Grant County's land should be utilized to preserve the core value of the county population, protect the many assets of the county, and promote a better future for county residents.

Industrial Locations

Locations reserved for business and industrial development include three industrial parks, a multi-tenant office building, and the new communications building (Table 12).

Table 12: Industrial Locations

| Area/Facility | Description |
|---|---|
| Grant County Business & Technology Park | Business & Technology Park: 84 Acres One Mile from Airport Electricity, Water, Sewage Available |
| Grant County Industrial Park | 100 Acres (70 Available) One Mile from Airport Rail Access Electricity, Water, Sewage Available |
| Mountain Top Industrial Park | 182 Acres 21 Miles to Airport Electricity, Water, Sewage Available |
| Multi-Tenant Building | 12,240 Square Feet Electricity, Water, Sewage Available Currently Fully Occupied |
| Communications Building | 10,200 Square Feet Electricity, Water, Sewage Available Houses Grant County E911 and Premium Cloud Solutions Data Center |

Business Parks

Grant County Business & Technology Park

Located on Business Park Drive on the southern edge of Petersburg is the Business & Technology Park (Map 2). This is the site of the newly constructed Communications Center. This park contains 150 acres, is located 13 miles from Corridor H, three miles from the Grant County Airport, and 95 miles from the North Central West Virginia Airport. Three-phase electricity is available in the park, along with water, sewer, telephone, and redundant high speed internet.

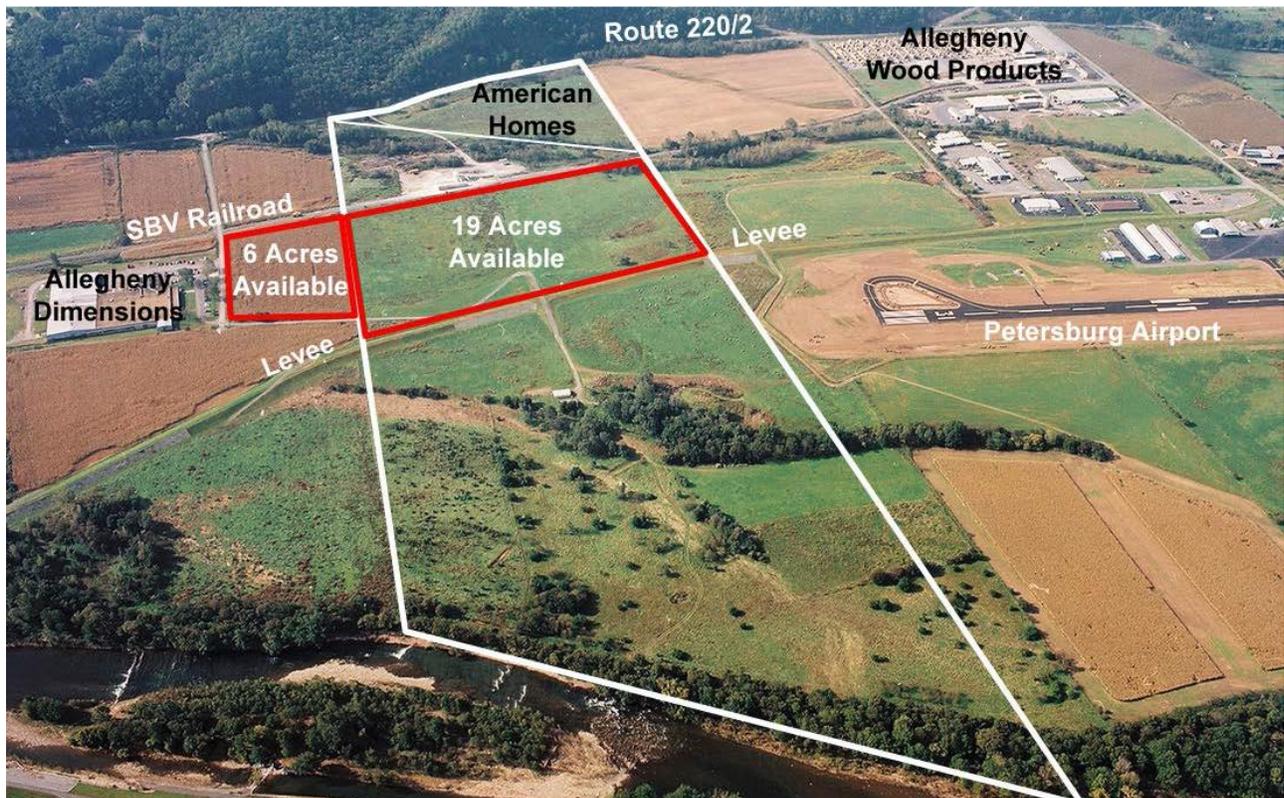
Map 2: Grant County Business & Technology Park



Grant County Industrial Park

The Grant County Industrial Park contains a total of 100 acres and is located on Johnson Run Road outside of Petersburg (Map 3). Partially located in Zone AE, all available acreage is located outside of the 100 year floodplain. Single and three-phase power are available, as well as city water and sewer. The park is located 13 miles from Corridor H, with the Grant County Airport and South Branch Valley Railroad nearby. It is 95 miles to the closest commercial airport, North Central West Virginia Airport.

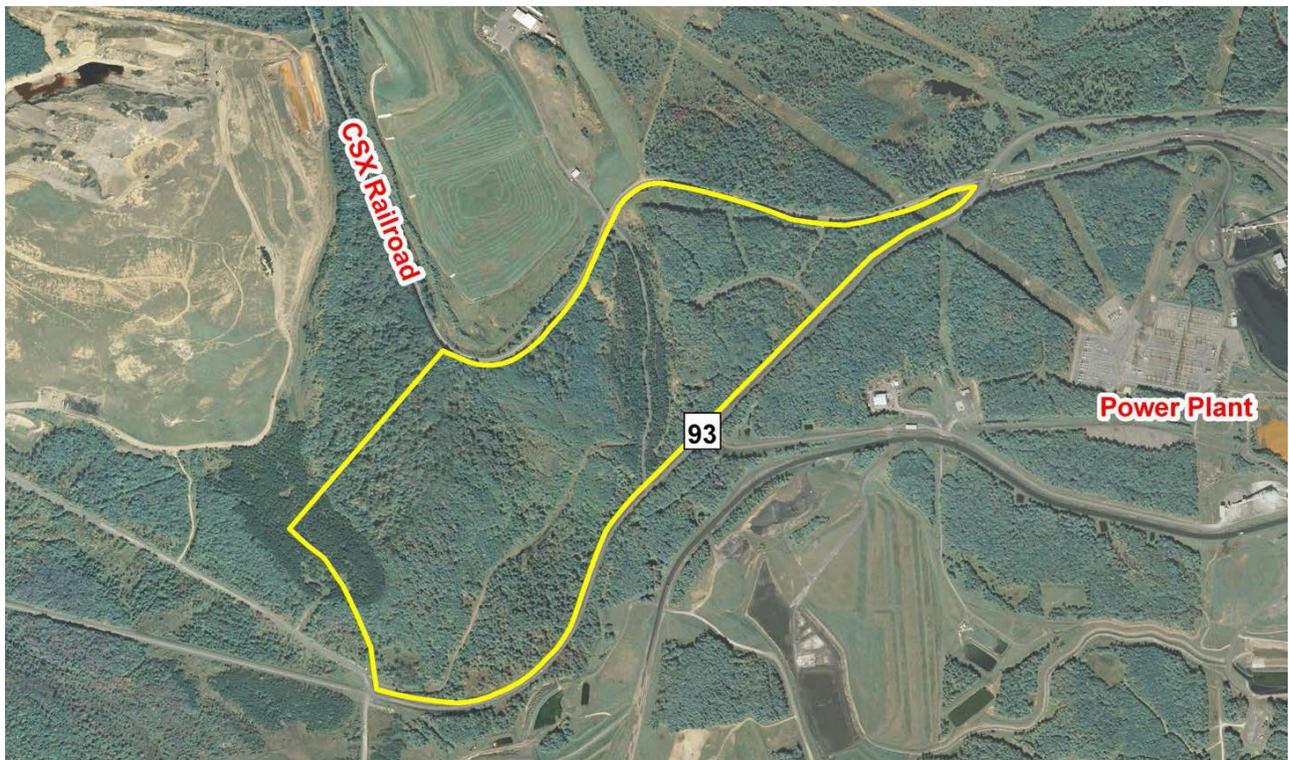
Map 3: Grant County Industrial Park



Mountain Top Industrial Park

The Mountain Top Industrial Park is located off Route 93 between Mount Storm and Thomas (Map 4). Located near the Tucker County line, the park contains 182 acres, with 50 acres available for development. The park is located next to the new Corridor H, is 29 miles to the I68 Interchange, near the CSX railroad line, and a prime area for new development. The closest commercial airport, North Central West Virginia Airport, is 69 miles. Single phase power is currently available, along with water and sewer.

Map 4: Mountain Top Industrial Park



Land Use Master Plan

As a result of Senate Bill 603 a Land Use Master Plan is developed by the West Virginia Office of Coalfield Community Development and the Rahall Technology Institute to assist counties affected by surface mining in West Virginia. The plan was approved by the Grant County Development Authority on October 8, 2014, and by the Grant County Commission on October 28, 2014. A separate copy of the Land Use Master Plan is included as part of the Certified Development Community (CDC) Recertification Application (Attachment I).

The Economic Development Strategic Plan

| Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration | Time Frame | Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners |
|--|------------|--|
| GOAL 1: RETAIN AND EXPAND EXISTING BUSINESSES (Provide support for existing businesses and promote an environment to encourage expansion of existing business and industry). | | |
| A) Make personal business retention visits to major local employers in Grant County at least annually. | Ongoing | WVDO |
| B) Provide available business development services to existing local employers through its web site, email, direct mail, and industry visits. | Ongoing | WV Hardwood Alliance Zone, WVDO |
| C) Utilize existing land and building resources to assist and encourage local employers to continue doing business in Grant County. | Ongoing | GCDA Board, WVDO |

| Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration | Time Frame | Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners |
|---|------------------|---|
| GOAL 2: RECRUIT NEW BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY (Develop strategies to identify, attract, and locate business and industry that could create jobs and promote the prosperity and economic welfare of Grant County). | | |
| A) Develop marketing pieces and participate in advertising | Spring-Fall 2018 | GCDA, County Commission, Local/Regional/State Media |
| B) Enhance the GCDA website to include most recent information, relevant links, and resource availability | Ongoing | GCDA Director and Board |
| C) Participate in trade shows, events, and organizations that provide representation at trade shows and events. | Ongoing | WVDO, WV Hardwood Alliance Zone, Chamber of Commerce, CVB |
| D) Maintain business alliances that help promote the prosperity of Grant County and its attributes | Ongoing | WVDO, WV Hardwood Alliance Zone, Chamber of Commerce, Corridor H Authority, CVB |
| E) Recruit data centric companies to Business & Technology Park | Ongoing | WVDO, Site Selectors, GCDA, County Commission |

| Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration | Time Frame | Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners |
|--|---------------|---|
| GOAL 3: PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (Promote entrepreneurship by fostering relationships, providing mentoring, and assisting start-ups to reach new levels of growth). | | |
| A) Participate in training and coordinate with local, regional, and statewide economic development efforts to develop rural success, support the efforts of small business, and promote job growth through entrepreneurial activity. | Ongoing | SBDC, EWVCTC, Greater Cumberland Committee, Garrett College, SBDC, DCED, Region 8 PDC, Regional EDA Directors, Eastern Panhandle Development Team |

| Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration | Time Frame | Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners |
|---|---------------------|---|
| GOAL 4: ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVE POSITION TO RECRUIT NEW BUSINESS (Identify and focus on competitive advantages, promote expansion and enhancement of services, support initiatives that will promote competitive advantages). | | |
| A) Promote the expansion and enhancement of broadband services for high speed internet access in unserved and underserved regions of Grant County | Short and Long Term | Shentel, HardyNet, Frontier, County Commission, Regional EDA Directors, Region 8 PDC, Broadband Enhancement Council |
| B) Promote the expansion of cellular service areas to reach unserved and underserved areas to improve service access throughout the county | Short and Long Term | AT&T, US Cellular, Sprint, Verizon, Nextel, County Commission |
| C) Focus on identification and promotion of competitive strengths and advantages | Ongoing | County Commission, CVB, Chamber of Commerce |
| D) Promote and encourage construction, certification, and commercial operational phases of wind farm projects | Ongoing | NextEra, EverPower Wind Holding Inc., Laurel Renewable Partners LLC, Mt. Storm Wind Force LLC, County Commission |

| Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration | Time Frame | Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners |
|--|---------------------|---|
| GOAL 5: IMPROVE LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT (Support economic growth and community development). | | |
| A) Participate in LED grant program to support local economic development efforts through matching grant program | Annually | WVDO, County Commission |
| B) Maintain WV Certified Development Community (CDC) status to meet the needs of business and industry. | Every Three Years | WVDO, County Commission, Planning Commission, Region 8 PSD |
| C) Facilitate dialogue to promote a supportive local, regional, and state business environment, including joint projects, programs, and initiatives, when feasible | Ongoing | Local Municipalities, County Commission, Regional Economic Developers, EWVCTC, WVDO, Legislative Delegation |
| D) Support the completion of Corridor H in its entirety in a timely manner | Ongoing | Corridor H Authority, Legislative Delegation |
| E) Promote the Grant County Data Center to reach a viable and sustainable fiscal level, and encourage data centric companies to establish a presence in the Business & Technology Park | Ongoing | Shentel, HardyNet, Frontier, Business Partners, IT Companies, and WVDO |
| F) Explore installation of independent utility paths for electrical service to the Business & Technology Park in an effort to attract companies interested in constructing additional data center facilities. Redundant electricity is required for data centers to achieve Tier 3 and Tier 3+ status. | Short and Long Term | First Energy, Legislative Delegation |
| G) Explore installation of three-phase power to the Mountain Top Industrial Park to prepare for and attract industrial tenants along the newly constructed section of Corridor H in Grant County | Short and Long Term | First Energy, Mettiki Coal Company, CSX, WVDO |
| H) Explore installation of septic systems or new sewer plant at Mountain Top Industrial Park | Short and Long Term | Mettiki Coal Company, Region 8 PSD, WVDO |

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| <p>I) Increase networking opportunities and maintain memberships and positions among local, regional, and state boards and organizations to seek and enhance economic development opportunities.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Corridor H Authority, Region 8 PDC, Grant Co Farmland Protection Board, WV Hardwood Alliance Zone, WVEDC Board, IEDC, SREB, EWVCTC Economic Development Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, CVB</p> |
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| <p>Action/Focus Area – Strategy for Consideration</p> | <p>Time Frame</p> | <p>Technical Assistance/ Funding Partners</p> |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <p>GOAL 6: PROMOTE ASSET-BASED DEVELOPMENT FOCUSING ON EXISTING RESOURCES (Capitalize on local assets, natural resources, and cultural strengths to build economic competitiveness, local capacity, and community prosperity in a sustainable way).</p> | | |
| <p>A) Work with local entities to link natural resource industries and producers, including agriculture, with community and environmental resources to increase productivity, profit, and success</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Region 8 PDC, EWVCTC, Potomac Highlands Regional Tourism, WV Hardwood Alliance Zone, SBDC, WV Farmers Market Assn, WVU Extension Service, Farm Service, CVB</p> |
| <p>B) Promote tourism and community initiatives through social networking and website links</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CVB, EWVCTC, Potomac Highlands Regional Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Grant County Parks & Recreation</p> |
| <p>C) Encourage local buying through business directories, website, social media, and advertising</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CVB, Chamber of Commerce, Potomac Highlands Regional Tourism, County Websites</p> |
| <p>D) Develop and maintain available building and properties list for new prospects</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Community Members, Local Businesses, Chamber of Commerce, CVB</p> |

Information Sources

- Grant County Development Authority
- Grant County Planning Commission
- Region 8 Planning and Development Council
- United States Bureau of Labor Statistics
- United States Census Bureau
- United States Census Bureau: American FactFinder
- United State Census Bureau: The Data Web
- United States Department of Agriculture
- Workforce West Virginia (Department of Commerce)

References

- *West Virginia Code* (accessed on-line at www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/Code.cfm)

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – Grant County Land Use Master Plan 2014