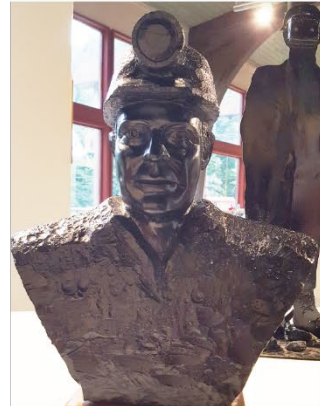


Logan County

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2026



Prepared by:



Center for Business and
Economic Research

Logan County, West Virginia
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGIC PLAN for 2022-2026

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INTRODUCTION

The Marshall University Center for Business and Economic Research (MU CBER) was tasked by the U.S. Economic Development Administration to produce this strategic economic development plan for Logan County, West Virginia. This plan was produced by MU CBER in partnership with the Logan County Development Authority (LCDA).

The purpose of this plan is to assist Logan County and the LCDA by providing a guide for its ongoing pursuit of economic development. The planning process included the analysis of demographic trends, examination of existing studies, interviews with key stakeholders, public engagement via an online survey, and follow up with the LCDA. This work has resulted in the identification of priority planning areas and the development of goals and action items to attain them in the short, mid, and long-term.

This plan builds upon the work underway by the LCDA, the Logan County Commission, local business owners, and community development groups. These groups have already been working to improve quality of life in Logan County and its economy.

COUNTY PROFILE

Key Assets

Production Industries

Coal Mining: Logan County's most important industry has historically been and is still coal mining. Logan County is a coal-impacted community due to ongoing decline in coal production, although in recent years the county has lost less output than many areas due to the high-quality metallurgical grade coal that comprises much of its reserves.¹ Land companies that own coal reserves are essential partners in economic development.

In 2021 Logan County had around six primary producing coal mines and 7.3 million tons of production, equal to the 7.3 million tons produced in 2015. In 2005 the county produced 12.9 million tons of coal and had direct employment of 1,347. Employment in 2021 was 1,350, excluding indirect contractors.²

Timber and Manufacturing: As of 2022 there are no remaining sawmills in Logan County. Mohawk Industries, a producer of hardwood flooring, closed in 2017, affecting 111 workers. Although this facility is in neighboring Mingo County, its closure affected Logan County residents employed there. The Mingo County Redevelopment Authority assumed ownership of the facility and is working to recruit a replacement manufacturer.

There is deep interest in attracting a manufacturing facility to diversify the county's economy, increase employment options, and take advantage of the technical and problem-solving skills possessed by former miners and contractors. The LCDA is pursuing production of coal-based products that can add value to coal resources. These include materials from new coal like carbon fiber and from waste coal like rare earths.

Infrastructure

U.S. Route 119/Corridor G is a key 4-lane road connecting Logan County with Charleston, WV and intersecting with **WV Route 10** at Chapmanville before continuing into Mingo County. **Rt 10** follows the Guyandotte River from Huntington, WV to Logan and Man, traveling east-west through the center of the county. It is largely a 2-lane road, but is 4-lane between Logan and Man. Other key roads are the **Blair Mountain Highway** (Rt 17), **Buffalo Creek Memorial Highway** (Rt 16), and Rt 80 to Gilbert, WV.

Logan County Airport: A public general aviation airport with a 3,605-ft runway. It is owned by the Logan County Airport Authority and is located east of the City of Logan off Rt 17. The airport serves as a training location for a local Air National Guard station. Logan County has **AEROready Certification** due to the presence of the airport.

The West Virginia Aeronautics Commission produced a statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study in 2021 detailing the employment characteristics of all 24 public-use airports across the state. The study concluded that the **Logan County Airport** is the source of a total of 30 jobs, \$12.3 million in income, and \$3.6 million in revenue.³

The **Peach Creek Railyard and Turntable** is a historic transportation facility located north of the City of Logan. As of 2022, the railyard and the turntable are still operating.

Development Sites

Logan County has one industrial park, the **Earl Ray Tomblin Industrial Park** located in the Tomblin Wildlife Management Area. This park houses the management building for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources **Elk Restoration Project**. Plans are underway to build a viewing tower on the property.

Logan County possesses a considerable amount of developable land under private ownership. These are largely post-mined lands with varying degrees of access. Many lack utilities or have windy access roads that limit development. Agreements with **land companies helped birth the tourism industry** in the county by enabling access to some properties for use as trails within the Hatfield-McCoy Trail system, which is present throughout Logan County.

Historical Sites

Logan County is named for **Chief Logan** (c. 1723–1780), also known as **John Logan, Logan the Orator, or Logan the Mingo**, and at birth as **Talgayeeta**. In 1748, he became chief of the Cayuga tribe, one of the Six Nations constituent tribes of the Mingo confederation. In 1770 Logan settled his family at Yellow Creek, Ohio near Hancock County, WV. He gave a speech that became famously known as Logan's Lament following the Battle of Point Pleasant in 1774.⁴



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The battle was sparked by Logan's revenge on frontiersmen who had murdered a dozen Cayuga, including members of his family in revenge for the killing of a settler. Logan persuaded the Shawnee and Delaware tribes of Ohio to attack white settlements across the Ohio River.⁵ Following the tribes' defeat at the Battle of Point Pleasant, Logan refused to attend peace negotiations and instead delivered Logan's Lament. The speech was printed in colonial newspapers and appended by Thomas Jefferson to his 1782 book *Notes on the State of Virginia*.⁶ He is honored with a statue in **Chief Logan State Park** and the **Chief Logan Memorial** statue and fountain in the City of Williamson in neighboring Mingo County, which was part of Logan County until 1895.

Princess Aracoma is a legendary daughter of Chief Cornstalk. Per the legend, she resided on Hatfield Island/Middleburg Island in Logan and was married to a British soldier named Boling Baker. A memorial to Aracoma is outside the Logan County Courthouse.⁷

Logan County has two Civil War sites that were memorialized as part of West Virginia's Sesquicentennial Highway Historical Marker Program. The **Battle of Kanawha Gap** took place near Chapmanville on September 25, 1861, when Union troops led by Col. Piatt of the 34th Ohio marched on and defeated Confederate positions around Chapmanville.⁸

The **Burning of the Logan Courthouse** occurred on January 14, 1862. This event followed Union pursuit of the Black Striped Company of local guerilla Confederates by troops led by Col. Siber of the 37th Ohio. Siber ordered the courthouse be burned after driving back the guerillas and prior to withdrawal of his troops.⁹

The **Hatfield Family Cemetery** is a historic cemetery that holds many members of the Hatfield family but is most known as the resting place of Captain William Anderson "**Devil Anse**" **Hatfield** (1839-1921). As the patriarch of the Hatfield family, Devil Anse was one of the most prominent figures in the Hatfield-McCoy feud. The cemetery is located near Sarah Ann, about 15 miles south of Logan on Route 44.

This cemetery is also the location of the **Hatfield Family Wash Stand**. The washstand was carved from sandstone by Devil Anse's cousin Robert Hatfield, son of "Preacher Anse" Hatfield, and was originally located near the well on the nearby Hatfield homestead. The cemetery, an older Hatfield family cemetery in Mingo County, and the washstand were jointly added to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1980.¹⁰

The **Devil Anse Hatfield Homeplace Site**, also located in Sarah Ann, was the last home of Devil Anse Hatfield after he moved there from Matewan in Mingo County. He selected the site for its remoteness, built a house in 1906, and resided there until his death in 1921. The original house burned down but a



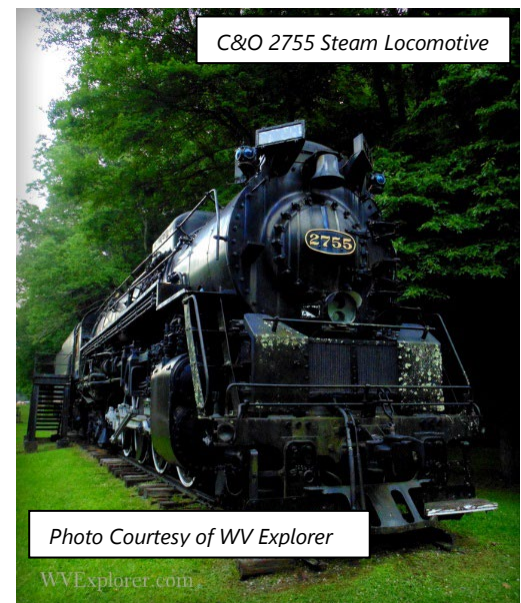
bridge, a retaining wall in the creek bed, and an old moonshine well remain. The **Hatfield & McCoy Foundation** plans to turn the property into a museum and gift shop to help preserve the history of both the Hatfield and McCoy families.¹¹

The **Chafin House** in Logan, WV was home to one of the most well-known figures of the **West Virginia Mine Wars**, a series of conflicts between coal mine operators and union organizers supported by the United Mine Workers (UMW). Don Chafin, known as the "Czar of Logan," was sheriff of Logan County and fought against the labor movement. Chafin was a key player in the Battle of Blair Mountain in 1921. In 1929 he left Logan and moved to Huntington, WV. The house was added to the NRHP in 1994.¹²

The Battle of Blair Mountain took place in August 1921 and was the culmination of the West Virginia Mine Wars. The war began in Kanawha County where thousands of armed pro-union miners began marching outside of Charleston, WV. The miners were headed to Mingo County where striking miners were being held following their arrest after martial law had been declared by the governor. To reach Mingo, the marchers had to cross Blair Mountain, which was defended by Sheriff Don Chafin and an anti-union citizen army. The conflict involved four days of fighting in which over 100 miners and at least twenty anti-union men were killed. This battle remains the largest labor uprising in US history and the largest insurrection in the U.S. since the Civil War. The battle ended only after President Harding deployed 2,500 soldiers and a squadron of bombers.^{13 14}

In 2006, the **Blair Mountain Battlefield** was named an Endangered Historic Place by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and in 2009 was added to the NRHP. Following some controversy, the battlefield was removed from the register in 2009. In 2018 the battlefield was placed back on the NRHP. It comprises 1,700 acres and includes trenches, earthworks, foxholes, and numerous artifacts, including weapons and shell casings.¹⁵ The Battle of Blair Mountain Historical Marker and the Chaffin House are stops on the **West Virginia Mine Wars Heritage Trail**.

The refurbished **Chesapeake and Ohio 2755 Steam Locomotive** located in Chief Logan State Park was gifted to the park in 1961. It is one of 90 standard gauge steam locomotives built by ALCO and Lima between 1943 and 1947. This locomotive spent nine years hauling coal from Logan, WV to Russell, KY with its last run was on January 18, 1956. It was added to the NRHP in 2006.¹⁶



The **Buffalo Creek Disaster Memorial** in Man, WV is a site dedicated to all that was lost on February 26, 1972 when a coal slurry dam failed. The failure caused a ripple effect, catalyzing the failure of two other dams with a combined release of 132 million gallons of slurry. The flood hit sixteen communities along Buffalo Creek and took the lives of 125 individuals, injured 1,100, displaced over 4,000, and caused more than fifty million dollars in property damage.¹⁷ The disaster led to the

federal Dam Control Act of 1973, and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, which established federal standards for coal slurry impoundments and the reclamation of strip-mined land.

The **Buffalo Creek Watershed Association** was formed to improve water quality in the creek and make it habitable for fish. In 2006 the creek was added to the monthly stocking schedule and has become a popular trout stream. In 2009, the name of Rt 16/Buffalo Creek Road was changed to the "**Buffalo Creek Memorial Highway.**"

Arts & Cultural Assets

Logan County is known for its musical talent, particularly with respect to mountain music, traditional music local to the area.

The Coalfield Jamboree is a historic theater located in the City of Logan. It opened in 1938 as the New Logan Theater. The theater has 1,180 seats and is one of the largest performing arts venues in southern West Virginia. It was the first theater in West Virginia to have air conditioning. Many talented performers have graced this stage including America's Got Talent winner, Landau Eugene Murphy, Bing Crosby, Billy Ray Cyrus, The Crabb Family, and George Jones.¹⁸

Pickin' in the Park is a music venue in Chief Logan State Park that showcases local mountain music, classic country, gospel, bluegrass, and contemporary country music. Pickin' in the Park began in 2001 as a venue for local musicians to gather and play music.

Pickin' in the Park hosted the **Aunt Jennie Music Festival** until 2018, when it was moved to the Coalfield Jamboree for the 14th annual event. The festival is named for Virginia Myrtle "Aunt Jennie" Wilson, one of the first women to learn the banjo.¹⁹

The **Museum in the Park**, located inside Chief Logan State Park, exhibits art and historical items from the West Virginia State Museum. One area of the museum is dedicated to local and regional history featuring photography of life in coal mining communities and artifacts from the Buffalo Creek Flood.

Recreation Assets

Hatfield-McCoy Trail System (HMT) – An extensive off-road trail system for ATVs, dirt bikes, and in some areas OHVs, managed by the Hatfield-McCoy Trail (HMT) Authority. The system is comprised of ten individual trails with some interconnections. Two of the system's trails are fully or partially in Logan County. The **Bearwallow Trail** was the original trail in the system and is entirely in Logan County. The **Rockhouse Trail** connects to neighboring Mingo County. A third trail, the **Brave Heart Trail**, was announced in 2022 and will connect to the Rockhouse Trail via the Town of Man.

The HMT has been a source of new economic activity in the county and throughout southern West Virginia as demand for trail-riding permits grows. In 2021, \$7.4 million in spending by the HMT Authority generated an estimated \$7.3 million in additional economic activity, for a total operational impact of \$14.7million. The trails bring non-local visitors to the area whose spending is estimated to generate an additional \$53.4

million in economic activity. Combined, the total economic impact of the HMT in 2021 is estimated at \$68 million.²⁰

The HMT Authority’s partnership with area land companies enabled development of the trail system and is a model for future development efforts.

Chief Logan State Park - A 4,000-acre facility equipped with lodging, conference facilities, campgrounds, an amphitheater, 12 hiking trails, and other outdoor activities and attractions. This park is well-known for its annual Christmas in the Park drive-thru holiday display. **Chief Logan Lodge** includes hotel-style rooms and conference facilities. The **Liz Spurlock Amphitheater** is the site of the yearly “**Aracoma Story**” production, a drama of the legend of the Princess Aracoma, the daughter of Chief Cornstalk.

Chief Logan Recreational Center - The recreational center is located within the State Park and houses a soccer field, tennis courts, a multi-purpose area, an indoor walking track, and an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The facilities are open to the public.

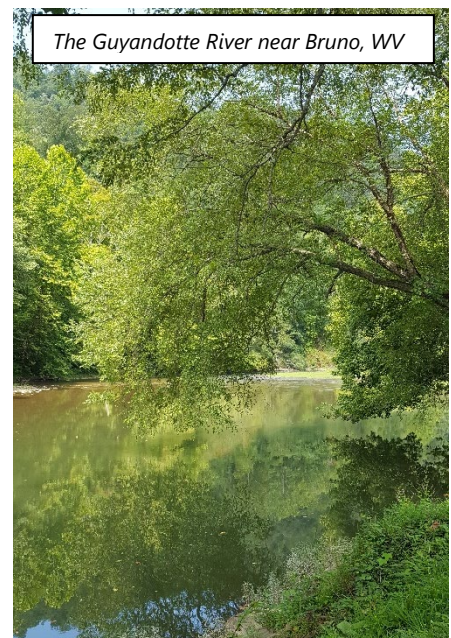
Tomblin WMA – This 25,155-acre WMA includes hunting grounds in Logan County and neighboring Mingo County, ranges for shooting and archery, and fishing at **Chief Logan Lake**. The WMA is the location of the WV Division of Natural Resource’s **Elk Restoration Program**. Listed game are deer, turkey, bear, squirrel, rabbit, grouse, dove, and woodcock. Portions of this property are reclaimed mine sites.

Shawnee Island Park – A park located along the Guyandotte River in the City of Logan under the Water Street Bridge. The park includes picnic tables, fire pits, and swings.

Rockhouse Lake Park – This park is near Sharples, WV and includes a small lake for fishing and boating as well as a 0.9-mile walking trail.

Guyandotte River and Water Trail – The Guyandotte River is 166 miles long from its headwaters in Raleigh County, WV to its terminus at the Ohio River in Huntington, WV. The river traverses the length of Logan County flowing north/northwest and is divided into two watersheds. The **Upper Guyandotte Watershed** includes the area from the river’s headwaters to Island Creek near the City of Logan. The **Lower Guyandotte Watershed** begins at the confluence of the Guyandotte and Island Creek.

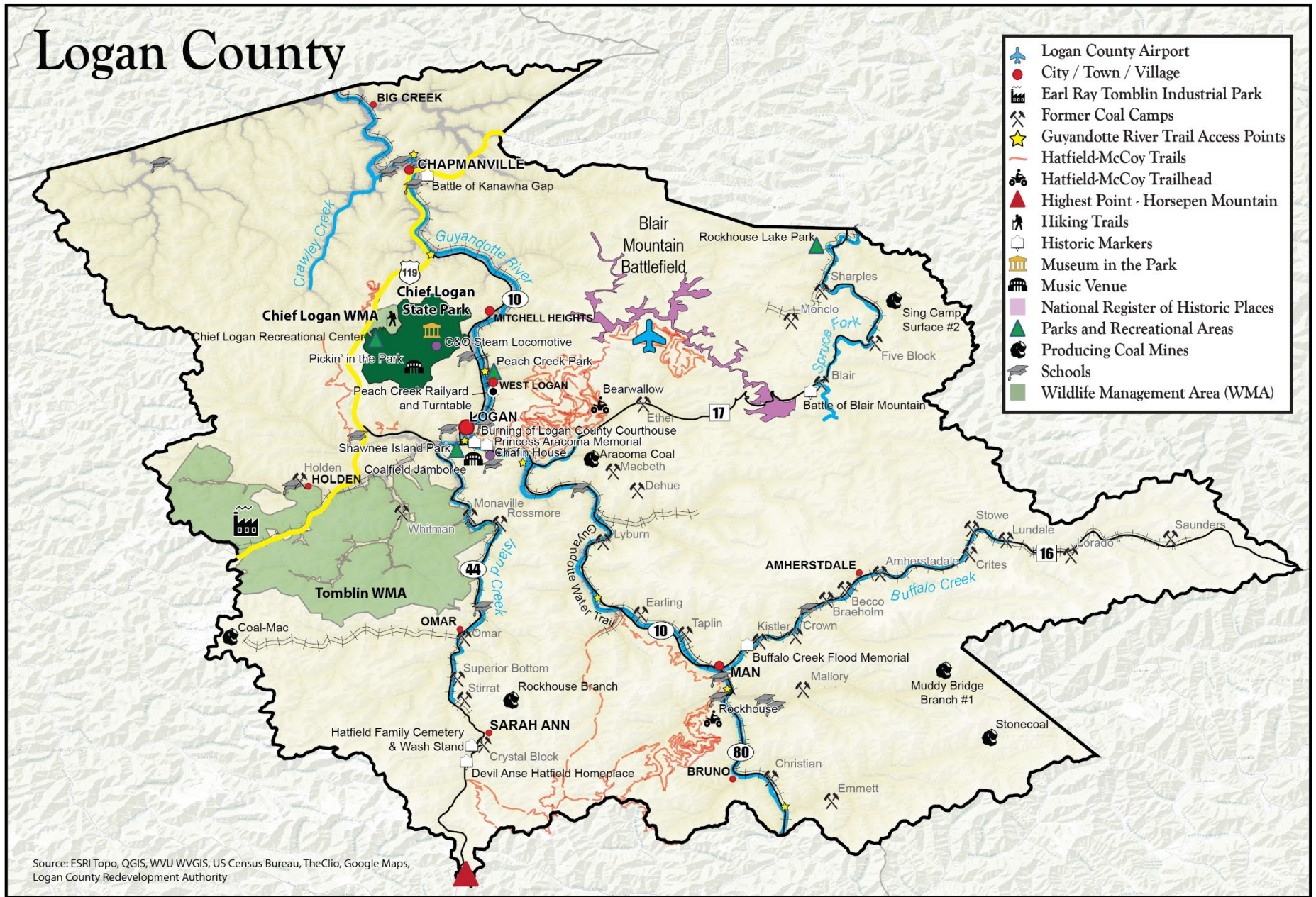
The **Guyandotte Water Trail** is a non-profit group that promotes clean ups and kayaking on the river and organizes the annual **Great Guyandotte River Regatta and Float**. The group also produces maps of the river, with marked access points. There are access points at Chapmanville, the former farmers market, West Logan (at Peach Creek), Logan, McConnell (at Three Mile Curve), Earling, Man (at Huff Creek), and Wylo (at Elk Creek).²¹



The Guyandotte River near Bruno, WV

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Figure 1 Map of Logan County



Population Characteristics

Key Population Centers

2020 population estimates for towns and cities:

- **City of Logan** - population of 2,107 (peak of about 5,200 in 1940s)
- **Town of West Logan** - population of 350 (peak of about 850 in 1960s)
- **Town of Mitchell Heights** – population of 315 (peak of about 525 around 1970)
- **Town of Chapmanville** - population of 1,003 (peak of about 1,350 in 1950s)
- **Town of Man** - population of 1,121 (peak of about 1,650 in 1950s)

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2020 population of Logan County was 32,593. Between 2013 and 2020 the county’s population declined by around 3,850 or 10.6%. This corresponds with a shrinking labor force and an aging population.

Figure 2: Population Trends for Logan County

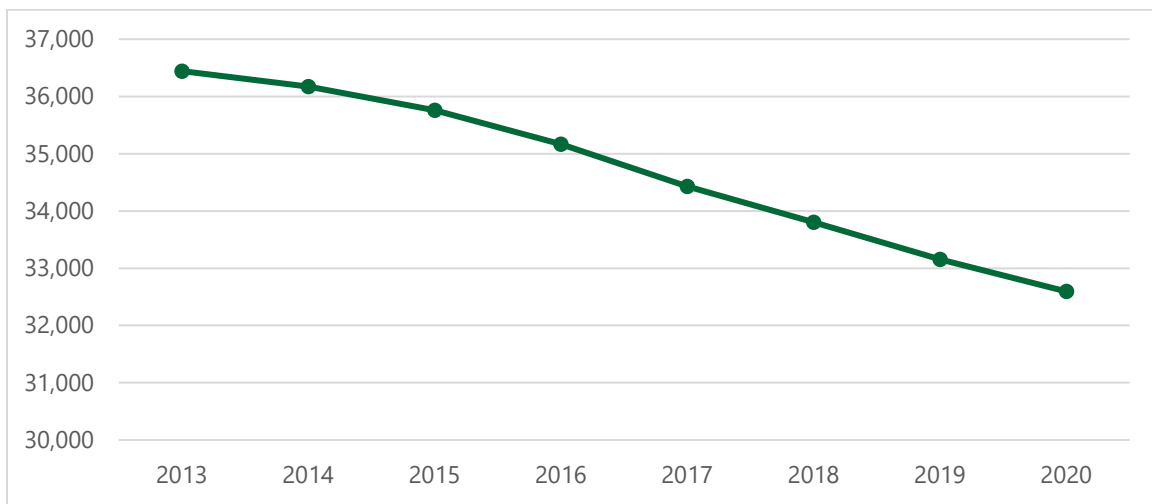
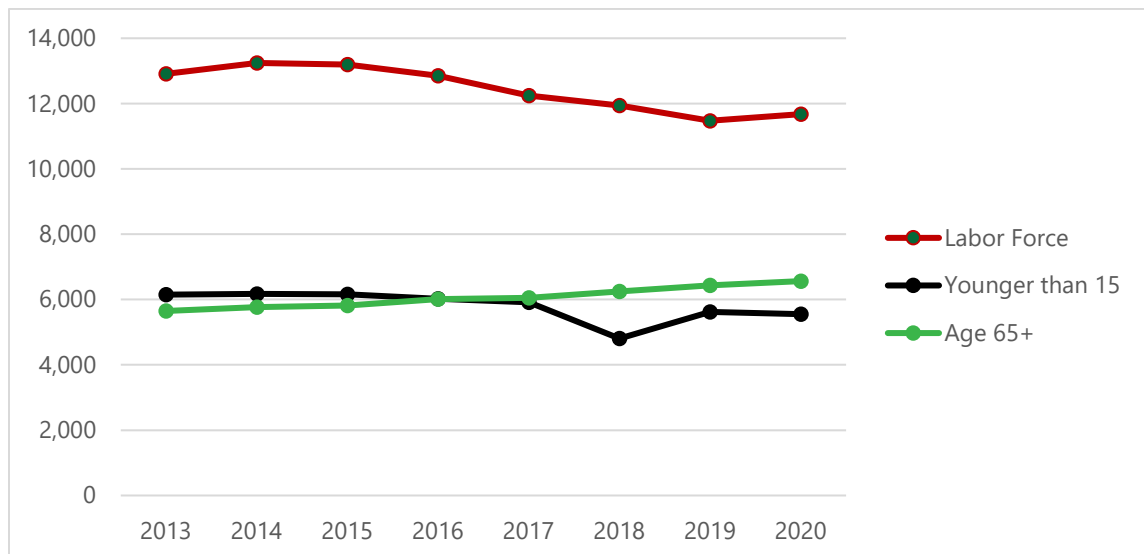


Figure 3: Age and Workforce Trends for Logan County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2016-2020.

It is hoped that these targeted development efforts will increase the number of people living and working in Logan County and reduce the elevated level of poverty that has impacted the county for decades. Like most counties in southern West Virginia, Logan County is a **Persistent Poverty County** according to the Congressional Research Service (CRS). This means that its most recent poverty rate estimate equates to at least 20 percent, while also evidencing poverty rates of at least 20 percent in the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses (i.e., 20 percent or greater poverty over the last 30 years). The CRS also states that areas for which the poverty rate reaches 20 percent experience more acute systemic problems than in lower-poverty areas.²²

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Planning process documents the priorities of Logan County with respect to economic development efforts. These efforts seek to improve work prospects and quality of life for its residents. The plan identifies approaches to build on the existing assets of the county to address barriers to growth and reverse the economic contraction experienced over the last decade.

SCORE Analysis

The strategic planning approach for Logan County was based on a SCORE (Strengths, Challenges, Options, Responses, and Effectiveness) process. The SCORE process lays out these elements and prioritizes where to direct resources by emphasizing areas with the most need and the most ability to be impactful. This plan:

- Addresses the top issues and desired outcomes for the county.
- Is relevant to short, mid-, and long-term timeframes.
- Contains realistic recommendations and action items.
- Contains metrics for measuring success.
- Will be as a guide for integrated economic development efforts for several years.

The SCORE Process

Concurrent Economic Development Efforts

Significant economic development work was well underway in Logan County prior to development of this plan. The participants in that work are strengths for the county and the intention of this strategic plan is to build on those efforts, and the efforts of those that came before them. These primary organizations and some of their efforts are:

- **Logan County Development Authority (LCDA)** – The LCDA is involved with several economic development projects, focusing on recruitment of business and value-added uses of coal and waste coal.
- **Logan County Chamber of Commerce** – A key entity devoted to attracting new businesses to the area and to retaining existing businesses. The organization maintains a networking program called “Leadership Logan” to help emerging leaders understand community issues.
- **Hatfield McCoy Convention and Visitors Bureau** – A key entity dedicated to promoting tourism in Logan County and its surrounding areas. The organization maintains a website promoting destinations and lodging in the county.
- **Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority** – Manages and maintains the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System. The authority is a joint development entity established by the West Virginia Legislature that paved the way for partnerships with private land companies to enable tourist activity on lands occupied by the trails.
- **Appalachian Power** – A significant stakeholder in the future of the region and a key part of the State’s innovative broadband initiative to bring high-speed internet to rural Mingo and Logan Counties. In 2022, the utility hired a consultant to prepare a **regional marketing plan** for a six-county area that includes Logan County.

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- **Coalfield Health Center** – A Federally Qualified Health Center located in Chapmanville that offers many public health, nutrition, and other wellness-related initiatives and is a vocal advocate for personal health.
- **Logan County Health Department** – Provides community health services including personal health monitoring, immunizations, and overall health promotion.
- **Logan County Board of Education** – Prepares students to participate in the workforce and trains workers to meet the needs of industry at Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers at the county’s three high schools.
- **Southern Community & Technical College Main Campus** – Offers a variety of degree and certificate programs emphasizing the needs of area employers. Areas of emphasis include medical professions, business administration, and industrial skills. Programs include an **Entrepreneurism Skill Set** that provides guidance on how to build a business plan and locate the resources to start a small business.
- **Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) at Marshall University** – A designated EDA University Center that assists small manufacturers and agricultural producers with tooling, training, apprenticeships, and start-up business assistance.
- **Region 2 Planning and Development Council** – A lead organization involved in infrastructure grant applications for Logan and other counties in the region.
- **The National Coal Heritage Area** – A National Park Service organization with a goal to “preserve, protect, and interpret lands, structures, and communities associated with the coal mining heritage of southern West Virginia.” The area covers 13 counties in southern West Virginia, including Logan County, and is one of 55 designated national heritage areas in the U.S.²³

Meetings with the Logan County Redevelopment Authority

CBER staff attended a series of meetings with the LCDA Director for the purpose of validating the SCORE process, to create a preliminary list of SCORE elements, and to identify stakeholders.

One-on-One Interviews with Logan County Stakeholders

CBER conducted 25 interviews with Logan County leaders and stakeholders. The objective of these interviews was to understand the key strengths and challenges of the county, to learn about ongoing development efforts and to get ideas for next steps. The results were used to refine the preliminary proposed strategic initiatives and to further develop the list of potential action items.

Individuals interviewed represented a diverse array of establishments within Logan County. These included leaders in economic development, recreation, real estate, education, healthcare, elected officials, business leaders, and other professionals. The strategic initiatives were selected and ranked based on this feedback and used to create a public survey.

List of Interviewees

- Rocky Adkins – *Director, Logan County Development Authority*
- Rupie Phillips – *WV State Senator, District 07*
- Patricia Lucas - *Superintendent of Logan County Schools*
- Roger Ramey – *Chairman of the Board of the Logan County Housing Authority*
- Kristen Dial – *Executive Director of Coalfield Health Center*
- Jeremy Farley – *Logan County Board of Education President*
- Wyatt Scaggs – *Business Owner – Baisden Bros Inc.*
- Glenn Yost – *President of McDonald Land Companies*
- Jeff Lusk – *Director of Hatfield-McCoy Trails*
- Margitta Mazzocchi – *WV House of Delegates, District 24*
- Debrina Williams – *Director of the Chamber of Commerce/ Head of Hatfield-McCoy CVB/Owner of Mountain Brook & Company Lodging*
- Danny Ellis – *Logan County Commissioner*
- Danny Godby – *Logan County Commission President*
- Serafino Nolleti – *Mayor of Logan*
- Joel McNeely – *Mayor of Chapmanville*
- David Brash – *CEO Logan Regional Medical Center*
- Rick Abraham – *Owner of Mine Lifeline*
- Ed White – *Optometrist, Owner of White Eye Care, President of Logan County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors*
- Scotty Dingess – *Pastor of West Logan Church*
- Greg Dalton – *Owner of Greg Dalton Insurance*
- Jordan Bridges - *WV House of Delegates, District 24*
- Wally Thornhill – *Owner of Thornhill Auto Group*
- Paul Hardesty – *Former WV State Senator*
- Art Kirkendoll – *Former Commissioner/WV State Senator*
- Gilman Burgess – *McNeely's Do-It Center President*

Online Surveys

The public survey was available from April 25, 2022 to May 12, 2022. Approximately 154 responses resulted in 110 fully completed surveys.

The survey instructed participants to, 1) rank the four Strategic Initiatives in terms of importance to Logan County, 2) rank the three or four desired responses for each initiative, 3) rank the top three out of all 15 desired responses, and 4) for each desired response, mark the top three out of five proposed action items that would be most effective in creating the response.

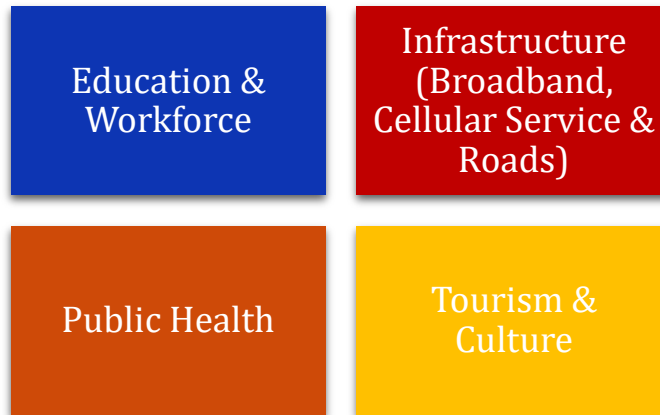
Stakeholder Feedback

The results of the public survey were used to create the Strategic Plan by tallying the choices of the survey takers. This plan identifies and prioritizes economic development needs in Logan County under four Strategic Initiatives representing four areas of need and opportunity. Due to length, the full survey results were provided in a separate report.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The following strategic initiatives are the product of the community and stakeholder engagement described above and listed in order of importance to Logan County.

Figure 4: Strategic Initiatives



1. Education & Workforce

The top ranking of this initiative reflects Logan County’s strong desire to increase the skills of its workforce by leveraging existing educational and employer networks.

Desired Responses:

1. **Increase the supply of workers in skilled trades** – Strengthen existing partnerships with area employers to guide expansion of vocational-technical programs, including more use of apprenticeships for students, and elevate the importance of these occupations. Increasing daycare options is part of this goal. **(#3 priority)**
2. **Improve the quality of education, both public and private** – Work to recruit and incentivize teachers and enhance educational outcomes by incorporating more life skills in school, especially financial acumen. **(#4 priority)**
3. **Increase community support for education** – Offer more adult education programs and get local employers more involved in schools to communicate the importance of being ready to go to work. **(#5 priority)**
4. **Promote leadership and entrepreneurship** – Incorporate more financial literacy into middle and high school curriculum, encourage entrepreneurship, and create new and expand on existing extracurricular programs for youth.

2. Public Health

The top priority is to reduce the impact of substance use disorder (SUD). While many resources to assist individuals with SUD, the challenge persists and is a barrier to economic development. In addition, Logan is one of only four counties in WV with **very low food security** per the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In 2019, 23 percent of Logan County residents, and 29 percent of children were food insecure.²⁴ The USDA’s definition of very low food security is “multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.”²⁵ Logan County is not an agricultural county, but the number of farms dropped by over 75%, from 34 to eight, between 2007 and 2017.

Desired Responses:

1. **Expand recovery assets to support individuals with SUD** – Offer more behavioral and mental health services that focus on preventative care and recovery resources.
2. **Promote a culture of health** – Plan to add more sidewalks to create more walkable communities and expand health education efforts to prevent chronic disease.
3. **Reduce food insecurity and improve access to high quality food** – Work to increase support for local farming with the goal of eventually restarting the Logan County Farmer’s Market. This may include testing of strategies to improve market potential, like adding a cannery operation.

3. Infrastructure

This initiative is ranked 3rd, although improving roads, and expanding broadband and cellular infrastructure, are the top two desired responses of the plan. Due to multiple broadband initiatives already underway, expansion of cellular service has become a more important goal.

Desired Responses:

1. **Improve roads** – Create a plan to induce more frequent and long-lasting repair work. Enforce litter laws more aggressively, and plan to develop scenic routes to encourage visitation to more remote places like Blair Mountain. **(#1 priority)**
2. **Expand cellphone and broadband services** – Collaborate with cellular service providers to expand service, advocate for regulation of broadband, and focus on making broadband more affordable. **(#2 priority)**
3. **Improve housing options and developable real estate** – Work to demolish dilapidated structures.
4. **Expand and repair public sewer service** – Create a plan to extend public sewer service, monitor water quality, and pursue funding to install and repair sewer lines. This is also a public health and visitor perception issue.

4. Tourism & Culture

This ranking reveals a practical focus on the need to improve infrastructure, and to prepare a tourism industry workforce, before working to bring more visitors to the county. However, Logan County’s tourism industry has considerable untapped potential.

Desired Responses:

1. **Create more experiences for visitors** – Promote heritage tourism (EX: the history of the Battle of Blair Mountain, the Hatfield-McCoy Family legacy, mining industry, Native American history) and build a destination event like a mountain coaster.
2. **Increase visibility of tourist destinations** – Conduct or participate in a regional marketing campaign.
3. **Encourage entrepreneurship in provision of services for trail riders** – Food services was identified as a top need, particularly Appalachian-themed food.
4. **Promote river tourism** – Plan to expand and enhance kayaking opportunities, promote fishing resources, and aggressively clean up the Guyandotte.

Strengths & Challenges
Education & Workforce

Strengths	Corresponding Challenges
<p>Existing industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional industries of mining, wood products manufacturing, hunting, fishing • Mining industry not in decline like it is in nearby counties, due to metallurgical coal assets • Technical skills of mine operators and contractors • Tourism industry is growing • Recreation industry has lots more potential • Several economic development efforts underway via State and local government entities, AEP, and landowners 	<p>Economic options are limited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional industries have shrunk over the years e.g., coal mining and wood products • Employment and population are in decline • Volatile employment opportunities • Difficult to start own business venture • Lose economic value from workers who do not live in Logan County and commute from Charleston
<p>Existing educational efforts and career facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step by Step school mentoring programs (StrengthsCorps, WV Dreamers) • High school CTE curriculum • Parochial school options • Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College (SWVCTC) in Logan (medical tech, nursing +) • Logan PRIDE Community Services BuildJobs Initiative for displaced coal miners 	<p>Poor Education Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low math and reading scores on standardized tests • Declining school enrollment • More vocational instruction needed/too much emphasis on college prep • Parental support for education is low • Lack of resources for home school families • Poverty is pervasive
<p>Many resources available to assist business startups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Capital Investment Fund (NCIF) • Country Roads Angel Network • First Microloan of WV – for physical assets • BlueTree Allied Angels • Mountain State Capital • Robert C. Byrd Institute at Marshall University 	<p>Barriers to Starting Businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to access resources to start a business • Time required to operate a business • Having enough working capital to maintain a business • Lack of entrepreneurial mindset

Infrastructure

Strengths	Corresponding Challenges
<p>Key infrastructure assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan County Airport • Rt 119 from Charleston • Rt 10 (expanded to 4-lane between Logan and Man) • Water service is very good and widespread • Earl Ray Tomblin Industrial Park • Post-mined lands (1000s of acres) and shared-use partnerships with land companies on HMT trails <p>Drive Forward WV road upgrade projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple road and bridge repair projects in recent years. <p>Other active and planned infrastructure upgrades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan-Mingo middle mile broadband pilot with AEP – to be completed by the end of 2023 • Logan-Mingo “Fiber to the Premises” Project with Gigabeam – funding announced in 2022 • Upper Huff Creek sewer extension – announced in 2022 • Buffalo Creek PSD Sewer extension – under construction • Northern Logan County PSD regional water treatment plant upgrade – application submitted • City of Logan alternate source water project – application submitted 	<p>Needed improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer system expansion and renovation is badly needed • Poor cellphone service in some areas • Degraded back roads • No broadband services in some areas • Inadequate public lighting at some key intersections <p>Status of industrial properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-mined sites are not "shovel-ready" for development in terms of utilities and access roads • Few development sites in city limits • Many dilapidated /abandoned properties <p>Housing issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of mid-range options for purchase • Dilapidated housing is prevalent • Roads enable people to work in Logan County and live elsewhere

Public Health

Strengths	Corresponding Challenges
<p>Existing healthcare facilities and professional programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan Regional Medical Center • Logan-Mingo Area Mental Health, Inc. • Coalfield Health Center in Chapmanville • OVP Health in Logan • Family Healthcare Associates in Man • Southern WV Health Systems in Logan & Chapmanville • SWVCTC's nursing and allied health technician programs 	<p>Underused/Shrinking/at-risk healthcare assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting/retaining healthcare professionals • Competition from regional facilities/ reluctance to use local facilities by some (EX: go to Charleston instead) • Expansion of telemedicine hampered by poor broadband access
<p>Existing public health and wellness organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public services: County Health Dept, 911 system, Day Report Center (behavioral health services, employment services), family treatment court • PRIDE Community Services • Quick Response Team for overdose intervention • Pretera Center: behavioral health and addiction services • Peer recovery services (EX: residential services) • Fresh Start Recovery to Work program at SWVCTC 	<p>Poor health outcomes/conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addiction • Obesity • Smoking • Mental health • Chronic disease – diabetes in particular • Poverty and inadequate living conditions for many
<p>Existing assets/efforts to improve fitness and nutrition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild, Wonderful and Healthy Logan County initiative at Coalfield Health Center to promote nutrition and create greenspace • Logan Regional's diabetes education classes • Logan County Family Nutrition Program - WVU Ext. • Hungry Lambs Food Initiative and other area food banks • PRIDE (Meals on Wheels, farmers markets) • Sports Clubs: Coalfields Youth Soccer, Archery Club • Chief Logan rec facilities – archery, hiking, Olympic pool • Grow Appalachia - gardening and food preservation 	<p>Nutrition and exercise-related health problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsafe pedestrian conditions/lack of sidewalks • 1 of 4 counties in WV with maximum food insecurity per the USDA • Lack of transportation to access facilities and resources • Obesity and diabetes are prevalent and increasing. • Soccer complex needs modernization • Lack of health-oriented mindset

Tourism & Culture

Strengths	Corresponding Challenges
<p>History and Legends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native American history • Coal Mining and Labor History Heritage • Hatfield & McCoy Family history • Traditional music and dance <p>Recent Developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New lodging for HMT trail riders in Man and Chapmanville • Listing of the Blair Mountain Battlefield on the National Register of Historic Places • Mapping and naming of motorcycle routes within the HMT system (Rt 10, Rt 17, Rt 14/16, and Rt 44) • Boar hunting (on private land) <p>Events & Venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coalfield Jamboree Theater in Logan • Chief Logan State Park facilities: Conference Center, Liz Spurlock Amphitheater, Pickin’ in the Park • Great Guyandotte River Regatta (circa 2019) • Appalachian Heritage Days (circa 2019) <p>Existing recreation areas and parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Logan State Park – indoor/outdoor archery facilities, Olympic-size pool, hiking, elk viewing, fishing • Rockhouse Lake Park near Sharples • Shawnee Island Park in Logan • Twin Branch Motorsports Complex in Mingo County • Guyandotte Water Trail – kayaking, tubing, regatta 	<p>Inadequate infrastructure to serve visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband is limited • Cellphone service not uniformly available • Rural roads unimproved in some areas • Not enough lodging <p>General barriers to expansion of tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilapidated industrial, commercial, and residential properties • Not enough restaurants or food service • Need more entertainment options to extend visitor stays • Reputation for poor water quality in primary rivers and streams • Litter and trash repel visitors • Remote location of some assets (EX: Blair Mountain) <p>Undeveloped or poorly maintained assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guyandotte River has potential as a water trail, but access is limited and water quality is poor, particularly in the Lower Guyandotte • Shawnee Island Park could use some maintenance • Heritage tourism in general not well developed, including traditional music heritage • Blair Mountain lacks interpretive signage

Opportunities

By understanding the assets of Logan County, its barriers to economic growth, and the extent of current development efforts, this plan positions the county to prioritize use of resources to build on these assets and address challenges. The end goal is economic expansion e.g., more jobs and more income, and reversal of population loss.

Synergies

The action items identified in this plan complement each other due to the connections between economic activity, household income, education, and individual health. The many initiatives already underway can be leveraged to further the goals of this plan.

Education & Workforce

Workforce preparedness is at the top of the list of Logan County's economic development priorities. Although local employers already work with the Logan County career center (the **Ralph R Willis Career Technical Center**) to recruit workers, this type of partnership was identified as a top action item to help achieve desired outcomes in this area. Formal initiatives may be able to assist.

The **West Virginia Chapter of the Workforce Development Industry Alliance** was announced in May 2022. The organization exists to educate students about alternatives to college degrees, focusing on jobs in construction and manufacturing. A specific goal is to expand remote access to technical skills training and education programs to help communities that don't have access to brick-and-mortar CTE programs.²⁶

Regarding entrepreneurship, there are many resources to assist. Locally, the Logan County **Chamber of Commerce**, with a mission "to improve the quality of life and the business climate in the Logan County area." The Chamber works to attract new business, while retaining existing businesses and industries and helping them to expand."

Infrastructure

The **Roads to Prosperity** program resulted in 19 road and bridge repair projects in Logan County starting in 2017.²⁷ Although in 2022 many survey respondents still expressed complaints about road conditions. This means there is still work to be done to improve the county's roads.

Hatfield McCoy's Devil's Den is a mapping project that is a series of motorcycle routes based on destinations in Logan County including **Horsepen Mountain**, the highest point in the county. With more maintenance and litter prevention these roads can become even more scenic routes and increase visitation to more remote destinations like the Blair Mountain Battlefield or the Hatfield Family Cemetery.

Recent actions by the **WV Broadband Enhancement Council** and the **WV Office of Broadband** are enabling provision of high-speed internet service in rural Logan County. Much of this is due to provisions to allow flexible partnerships to install infrastructure.²⁸

In 2021 the WV Public Service Commission approved a **middle-mile broadband expansion pilot project** with AEP in Mingo and Logan Counties. This initiative takes advantage of electricity distribution assets that are already in place to install fiber. The plan includes provision of both wireless and wired internet services via GigaBeam. As of February 2022, construction had begun on the Logan County part of the line.²⁹ The project is expected to be completed at the end of 2023.

Also in 2022, the Logan and Mingo Counties **Fiber to the Premises Project**, a project of the Logan County Commission in partnership with the Mingo County Commission, ApCo, and GigaBeam Networks, was awarded an additional \$19.7 million from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration.³⁰ This project is expected to provide high-speed broadband access to 12,859 unserved residences, 218 unserved businesses, 16 unserved educational institutions, 32 unserved government buildings, 6 unserved health care facilities, 11 unserved utility sites, and 130 unserved churches in Logan and Mingo Counties.³¹

A complementary project, the Federal Communications Commission’s **Affordable Connectivity Program**, subsidizes the cost of internet services for households. There are about 70 participating West Virginia providers including Comcast, Frontier, Gigabeam, and Suddenlink. Eligible households include those with income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, as well as recipients of Pell Grants, Medicaid, SNAP, SSI, public housing, WIC, National School Lunch program, and veteran pensions.³²

The FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program helps low-income households pay for internet service, complementing efforts underway to extend access to broadband.

The existence of these projects, addressing both the access and affordability aspects of broadband services, may make expansion of **cellular service a higher priority** for concentration of future efforts for the county.

The **Region 2 Planning and Development Council** is heavily involved in many of Logan County’s grant-funded infrastructure projects, assisting in proposal design and submission. Current proposals for **water and sewer extension or repair** include applications in the northern part of Logan County and in the City of Logan. In 2022, the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council announced an extension project for the community of Huff Creek.³³ As of 2022, a sewer extension project is under construction in the Buffalo Creek Public Service District (PSD).

Public Health

Health is a major factor in economic growth. According to a health economist “Health affects GDP directly through productivity gains and indirectly through educational gains.”³⁴

Substance use disorder (SUD) is a persistent public health issue for Logan County even though many resources are already devoted to it. These resources include the new **Family Treatment**

“Health affects GDP directly through productivity gains and indirectly through educational gains.” – Dr. Dora L. Costa (2015)

Court, a program that allows parents recovering from addiction to reunite with their children after completion. The program includes milestones regarding drug use, daily contact with a case coordinator, receipt of counseling, and community service.³⁵

Another resource is the Logan County **Quick Response Team** (QRT), which has been in place since 2019. The QRT intervenes with an individual within 72 hours of an overdose to try to convince them to accept recovery services. The team is comprised of a law enforcement deputy, medical personnel, a pastor, and a trained support specialist. The effort is funded via a grant from the WVDHHR.³⁶

The **Fresh Start Program** at the Southwestern Regional Day Report Center has three phases: 1) intensive group and individual therapy, 2) work with Fresh Start staff to build a foundation for a life of recovery via mentoring and community connectedness, and 3) apply skills learned by enrolling in college or vocational courses, serving as team leaders, and continuing work with a case manager, mentor, and therapist. The program also gives recovery patients the opportunity to tend a community garden.

Food Insecurity and **Access to Healthy Foods** is a top priority for **Coalfield Health Center** in Chapmanville. The organization is a Federally Qualified Health Center that offers nutrition education to its patients through its **Wild, Wonderful and Healthy Logan County** program, a partnership with area food pantries and community service groups.

Logan County currently does not have a farmer's market, although it has in the past. The market was closed due as demand was not enough to sustain it. This is likely due to declining population and numbers of local farms. However, the public survey showed strong interest in reviving the market, and resources exist to promote this. The **West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition** is a key organization devoted to preservation of local farms. Its placemaking efforts include a conceptual idea for a **Hatfield-McCoy Heritage Food Dinner Series**.

Tourism

Several efforts inform visitors about Logan County's tourism destinations. Both the **Hatfield-McCoy Convention & Visitor's Bureau** and the **Hatfield-McCoy Trail Authority** maintain websites to assist visitors. These sites are <https://hatfieldmccoycvb.com/about/> and <https://trailsheaven.com/>. The CVB hosts the **Appalachian Heritage Days** at the Chief Logan Lodge & Conference Center.

Efforts to expand recreational use of the Guyandotte River are accelerating. The **Guyandotte Water Trail** is one of 26 officially designated water trails in West Virginia, a status tied to ongoing cleanup efforts and existence of clear access points.³⁷ The **Guyandotte Water Trail Alliance** is a non-profit that promotes clean-ups and kayaking on the river and organizes the annual Great Guyandotte River Regatta and Float. The group also produces maps of the river, with marked access points.³⁸

The **West Virginia Flatwater Trails Commission** was created during the 2020 West Virginia Legislative Session to help add value to flatwater rivers. The commission will assist with water quality monitoring, promotion, and funding of clean-up work.³⁹

The need to clean up the Guyandotte has numerous economic development synergies with respect to public health, kayaking, and fishing. This issue was cited frequently in the stakeholder interviews for this plan, which revealed embarrassment over the condition of many streams that feed into the river. The pollution is caused largely by inadequate or non-existent household wastewater systems. Trash is also commonly disposed of in creeks, with much ending up in the Guyandotte.

In 2021, the **West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP)** submitted a restoration plan for the **Lower Guyandotte River Watershed**, which was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in February 2022.⁴⁰ The plan focuses on Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) of pollutants, which are plans of action required by federal law to restore streams not meeting water quality standards. Per the WVDEP, select streams in the watershed do not meet fecal coliform bacteria, total iron, selenium, pH, dissolved aluminum, and/or dissolved oxygen water quality standards. The existence of this plan is an opportunity to accelerate cleanup strategies.

Efforts to preserve **Blair Mountain Battlefield** as a cultural resource have been underway for decades prior to the site being listed on the NRHP. In 1992, the Institute for the History of Technology and Industrial Archaeology was contracted to identify cultural resources and sites relevant to events that occurred during the battle. The report included a series of recommendations to preserve the integrity of historic physical resources related to the battle along with plans for a Coal Heritage Exposition Center along Rt 17. Three suggested themes for interpretation were: 1) military history, 2) labor history, and 3) coal heritage.⁴¹ As of 2022, more archaeological work is still needed in several sections of the battlefield, in addition to interpretive signage.⁴²

Sources of Funding

Several federal agencies are devoted to economic development in rural places like Logan County. The foremost of these are the **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** and the **Economic Development Administration (EDA)** within the U.S. Department of Commerce. Special funds have been set aside for economic development in coal-impacted communities like Logan. The **US Department of Agriculture (USDA)** also maintains several grant opportunities.

Federal funding is available for economic development projects of all sizes and smaller grants are available from non-profits like **Benedum Foundation**. Large projects will be public-private-partnerships, particularly infrastructure projects involving water/sewer, road building and utilities. **AEP/Appalachian Power** is a key private sector partner.

For broadband, funding opportunities like E-Rate, USDA, the **Rural Digital Opportunity Fund**, the CARES Act, and the **American Rescue Plan** have enabled several innovative expansion projects. The WV Broadband Enhancement Council is distributing \$138 million

in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for this purpose,⁴³ and additional funds via the 2021 **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**.

Funding to expand the county's career center programs may be available via **the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act**, established for States to award in development and implementation of CTE programs.⁴⁴

Generation WV's High POWER Impact Project is a new ARC award in 2022. The **Impact Fellowship** is a professional development program that helps employers "recruit and retain next generation leaders and rebuild coal-impacted economies" across West Virginia. The program provides "matchmaking" services to employers and jobseekers via the **GWV Career Connector**.

The **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has Community Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant programs for activities to prevent and treat substance use disorder.⁴⁵ The **Marshall University Center of Excellence in Recovery** provides training, technical assistance, and support services to regional initiatives.⁴⁶

For the goal of reviving the Logan County Farmer's Market, the USDA's **Agricultural Marketing Service** supports these types of initiatives.⁴⁷ The WV Department of Agriculture also has an **Ag Business** program that markets WV grown and made products.⁴⁸ The **WV Farmers Market Association** has funds to support ecommerce platforms, to do a Rapid Market Assessment, and to support sanitation stations at markets. RCBI's **Agricultural Innovations** is an initiative to improve opportunities for the agricultural economy.⁴⁹

The **Tamarack Foundation for the Arts** is a local organization with interest in funding local artists.⁵⁰

Funding for start-ups is available via several financiers including **Natural Capital Investment Fund, Country Roads Angel Network, First Microloan of WV, BlueTree Allied Angels, Mountain State Capital**, and **RCBI**. Some of these entities are willing to assist businesses unable to procure capital through traditional lenders. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) makes **SBA 504 Loans**, which are long-term, fixed rate loans available for existing and new facilities, equipment, and the improvement of land, streets, utilities, parking lots and landscaping.⁵¹ The 504 loans may be helpful for businesses looking to improve their public appearance.

A notable step taken by the West Virginia Legislature in 2022 is the establishment of the **Reclamation of Abandoned and Dilapidated Property Program Fund** to tear down abandoned and neglected housing stock across the State. The fund contains \$10 million for this effort. Senate Bill 722 authorizes the program using money from the American Rescue Plan and is held in a fund within the WVDEP. Senate Bill 552 revamped the tax sale status to speed up the process and reduce the time it takes for properties to be transferred by deeds.⁵²

Desired Responses

The planning process began with a set of 15 desired responses that reflect changes that leaders and stakeholders in Logan County would like to see. Survey respondents were asked to select the top three of the 15 desired responses. These selections were used to rank the desired responses as “All-in” votes. A total of 152 survey participants completed this question.

Within each strategic initiative, survey respondents were also asked to rank the importance of each desired response. The number of votes for 1st (most important) are shown along with the “All-in” votes to compare relative priorities, and to break ties in the case of equal numbers of votes.

Table 1: Rank of Desired Responses from Survey Respondents

Rank	Desired Response	# Votes 1 st in SI	# All-in Votes	% All- in	Strategic Initiative (SI)
1	Improve roads	47	53	34.9%	Infrastructure
2	Expand cellphone and broadband service	40	53	34.9%	Infrastructure
3	Increase the supply of workers in skilled trades	36	51	33.6%	Education & Workforce
4	Increase the quality of education	40	49	32.2%	Education & Workforce
5	Increase community support for education	36	30	19.7%	Education & Workforce
6	Expand recovery assets to support individuals w/ substance use disorder	34	26	17.1%	Public Health
7	Promote a culture of health	49	24	15.8%	Public Health
8	Reduce food insecurity and improve access to high quality food	38	22	14.5%	Public Health
9	Improve housing options and developable real estate	22	18	11.8%	Infrastructure
10	Identify more experiences for visitors	61	14	9.2%	Tourism & Culture
11	Promote leadership and entrepreneurship	13	14	9.2%	Education & Workforce
12	Extend and repair public sewer service	15	13	8.6%	Infrastructure
13	Provide more services for trail riders	22	8	5.3%	Tourism & Culture
14	Increase visibility of tourist destinations	26	5	3.3%	Tourism & Culture
15	Promote river tourism	16	4	2.6%	Tourism & Culture

Action Items

A total of 75 action items were initially proposed and reduced to 30 based on survey results. Survey respondents selected the Top 3 action items for each Desired Response.

Table 2: Overall Top 12 Action Items

Rank	Action Item	Strategic Initiative	Desired Response	# Of Votes
1	Create a plan to revamp the vocational-technical programs at area schools to elevate the importance of these skills.	Education & Workforce	Increase the supply of workers in skilled trades	105
2	Strengthen partnerships with the business community to guide vo-tech programs, give students more hands-on experience.	Education & Workforce	Increase the supply of workers in skilled trades	101
3	Expand behavioral & mental health services as preventative and recovery resources.	Healthcare & Public Health	Expand recovery assets to strengthen support for individuals w/ SUD	95
4	Create a plan to aggressively demolish dilapidated structures.	Infrastructure & Site Readiness	Improve housing options and developable real estate	93
5	Incorporate more business and finance education in middle and high schools, including exposure to startups	Education & Workforce	Promoting leadership and entrepreneurship	91
6	Conduct aggressive cleanup efforts on the Guyandotte and its tributaries.	Tourism & Culture	Promote river tourism	90
7	Create a plan to recruit and incentivize teachers	Education & Workforce	Improve the quality of education, both public and private	89
8	Get employers more involved in schools to communicate the importance of being ready to go to work.	Education & Workforce	Increase community support for education	86
9	Enforce litter laws more aggressively.	Infrastructure & Site Readiness	Improve roads	85
10	Create a plan to communicate with cellular providers and develop a plan to expand service where it is most needed.	Infrastructure & Site Readiness	Expand Cellular Service and Broadband	81
11	Create more adult education options at SWVCTC including basic skills like cooking.	Education & Workforce	Increase community support for education	78
12	Advocate for regulation of broadband so that consumers get quality service.	Infrastructure & Site Readiness	Expand Cellular Service and Broadband	77

The final **Top 30 action items** are listed below. Potential lead organizations are listed along with a timeframe and potential measures to track success. Implementation will be the responsibility of LCDA and the lead entity, with assistance of partner organizations.

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Top 30 Action Items by Rank Desired Response

1. Improve Roads	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a plan to get roads maintained more frequently.	Mid-term	# of road complaints, # of scenic byways	County Commission, WV DOT, HMT Authority
Enforce litter laws more aggressively.	Short-term		
Create a plan to develop scenic routes to encourage visitation to more remote places (EX: Rt 17 to Blair Mountain).	Long-term		
2. Expand Cellular Service and Broadband	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a plan to work with cellular providers and develop a plan to expand service in the locations where it is most needed.	Mid-term	# of internet subscribers	County Commission, service providers, FCC
Advocate for regulation of broadband so that consumers get quality service.	Mid-term		
Find opportunities to make internet services more affordable and increase adoption by households and small businesses.	Short to mid-term		
3. Increase the Supply of Workers in Skilled Trades	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a plan to revamp the vocational-technical programs at areas schools to elevate the importance of these occupations.	Mid-term	# of programs, # enrolled	Chamber of Commerce, UMWA, PRIDE Community Services, BOE, employers, Workforce WV
Strengthen existing and build new partnerships with the business community to guide vocational programs and give more hands-on experience /apprenticeships for students.	Short to mid-term	# businesses offering apprenticeship	
Increase daycare options for working parents.	Long-term	# daycare centers	
4. Improve the Quality of Education, both Public and Private	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a plan to recruit and incentivize teachers.	Mid-term	Teacher pay/ turnover	MU and WVU Schools of Education, BOE
Add more business and finance education in middle and high schools, to promote personal and business financial acumen.	Short to mid-term	# of classes offered	

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5. Increase Community Support for Education	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Get employers more involved in schools to communicate the importance of being ready to go to work.	Short-term	# events, # classes offered	Chamber of Commerce, BOE, SWVCTC
Create more adult education options at SWVCTC, including basic skills like cooking.	Mid to long-term		
Create a campaign to have more workers and teachers live in Logan County.	Mid to long-term	Population of county	
6. Expand Recovery Assets to Strengthen Support for Individuals with SUD Action Items	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Expand behavioral & mental health services as preventative and recovery resources.	Mid to long-term	# overdoses	Logan County Health Department, Chamber of Commerce, Coalfield Health
7. Promote a Culture of Health	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create more walkable communities focusing on adding more sidewalks to connect communities and improve pedestrian safety.	Long-term	# of rural sidewalks	County Commission, towns, Public Safety, Chamber of Commerce
Expand health education efforts to help prevent chronic disease and promote healthy lifestyles.	Mid-term	Health data	Health Department, Coalfield Health
8. Reduce Food Insecurity and Improve Access to High Quality Food	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Plan to restart the county farmer's market.	Long-term	# of markets	Coalfield Health, Chamber of Commerce, area food banks, SWVCTC, CVB
9. Improve Housing Options and Developable Real Estate	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a plan to aggressively demolish dilapidated structures.	Mid-term	# of demolitions	County Commission, City of Logan, towns

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10. Promote Leadership and Entrepreneurship	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Incorporate more business and finance education in middle and high schools, including exposure to startups.	Mid to long-term	# courses offered	Board of Education, Step by Step (StrengthsCorps), churches, sports venues, and clubs
Extend the entrepreneur program at SWVCTC and emphasize the service industries (EX: culinary skills, tour guiding).	Mid-term		
Create more youth groups and youth extracurricular programs.	Short-term		
11. Create More Experiences for Visitors	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Develop a destination event like mountain coaster park.	Long-term	# of new destinations, # signs or exhibits	Chamber of Commerce, Coalfield Jamboree, Friends of Blair Mountain, Hatfield Family Foundation
Promote heritage tourism (EX: Battle of Blair Mountain, Hatfield-McCoy Family legacy, mining industry, Native American history).	Short to mid-term		
12. Extend and Repair Public Sewer Service	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Create a county-wide plan to extend public sewer service and intervene in areas with failing septic systems.	Mid-term	# of unserved communities, Water quality data	Logan County Health Department, Chamber of Commerce, PSD, WVDEP
Monitor water quality actively and inform the public of the status of water quality in creeks and rivers, and progress made to reduce contamination.	Mid to long-term		
13. Encourage Entrepreneurship in Services for Trail Riders	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Restaurants, particularly Appalachian-themed food.	Mid to long-term	# food trucks/ restaurants	Chamber of Commerce, CVB
14. Increase Visibility of Tourist Destinations	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Conduct a regional marketing campaign to promote the county.	Long-term	# visitors	Chamber of Commerce, CVB
15. Promote River Tourism	Timeframe	Measure	Possible Lead Entities/Partners
Conduct aggressive cleanup efforts on the Guyandotte and its tributaries.	Short to mid-term	# of trash complaints	Chamber of Commerce, CVB, Guyandotte Water Trail
Create a plan to expand and enhance kayaking opportunities.	Mid-term	# of events	

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of these actions is a function of 1) the resources required to complete the action; 2) the certainty of achieving the desired response; 3) the implementation timeframe; 4) the complexity of the action; and 5) buy-in from stakeholders. Implementation decisions will be made by the LCDA, its Board members, partners, and stakeholders.

The plan can be separated into short, medium, and long-term actions. Short-term actions may have higher effectiveness than longer-term actions because they are less expensive and require less time to implement. These actions are opportunities for early successes for this plan. The longer-term actions, while more impactful, require greater resources and more time.

The resources required to complete the proposed actions include human resources. Having key projects in place, led by entities eligible for funding, enables more action as these projects become building blocks for larger-scale work.

Short-term actions (1 to 2 years):

- Enforce litter laws more aggressively.
- Find opportunities to make internet services more affordable and increase adoption by households and small businesses.
- Strengthen existing and build new partnerships with the business community to guide vocational programs and give more hands-on experience /apprenticeships for students.
- Add more business and finance education in middle and high schools, to promote personal and business financial acumen.
- Get employers more involved in schools to communicate the importance of being ready to go to work.
- Create more youth groups and youth extracurricular programs.
- Promote heritage tourism (EX: Battle of Blair Mountain, Hatfield-McCoy Family legacy, mining industry, Native American history).
- Conduct aggressive cleanup efforts on the Guyandotte and its tributaries.

Mid-term actions (3 to 5 years):

- Create a plan to get roads maintained more frequently.
- Advocate for regulation of broadband so that consumers get quality service.
- Create a plan to revamp the vocational-technical programs at areas schools to elevate the importance of these occupations.
- Create a plan to recruit and incentivize teachers.
- Create more adult education options at SWVCTC, including basic skills like cooking.
- Create a campaign to have more workers and teachers live in Logan County.
- Expand behavioral & mental health services as preventative and recovery resources.
- Expand health education efforts to help prevent chronic disease and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Create a plan to aggressively demolish dilapidated structures.

- Extend the entrepreneur program at SWVCTC and emphasize the services industries (EX: culinary skills, tour guiding).
- Create a county-wide plan to extend public sewer service and intervene in areas with failing septic systems.
- Monitor water quality actively and inform the public of the status of water quality in creeks and rivers, and progress made to reduce contamination.
- Promote entrepreneurship in restaurants, particularly Appalachian-themed food.
- Create a plan to expand and enhance kayaking opportunities.

Long-term actions (5+ years):

- Create a plan to develop scenic routes to encourage visitation to more remote places (EX: Rt 17 to Blair).
- Increase daycare options for working parents.
- Create more walkable communities focusing on adding more sidewalks to connect communities and improve pedestrian safety.
- Create a plan to restart the county farmer's market.
- Develop a destination event like mountain coaster park.
- Conduct a regional marketing campaign to promote the county.

INTEGRATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The elements of economic development are highly interconnected. In Logan County there is a great need for more stable, modern, good-paying jobs to stop and reverse population loss and disinvestment caused by out-migration and downsizing of traditional extraction industries. The circular effects of beneficial economic activity, and conversely detrimental job loss, are reflected in the health of individuals and the community.

Figure 5: Integrated Economic Development Benefits

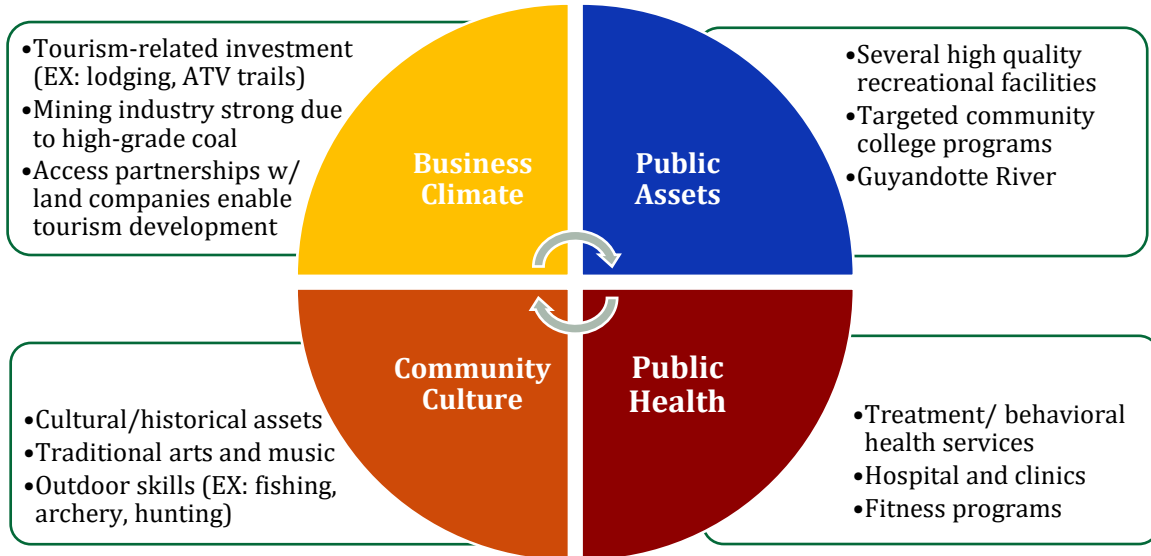
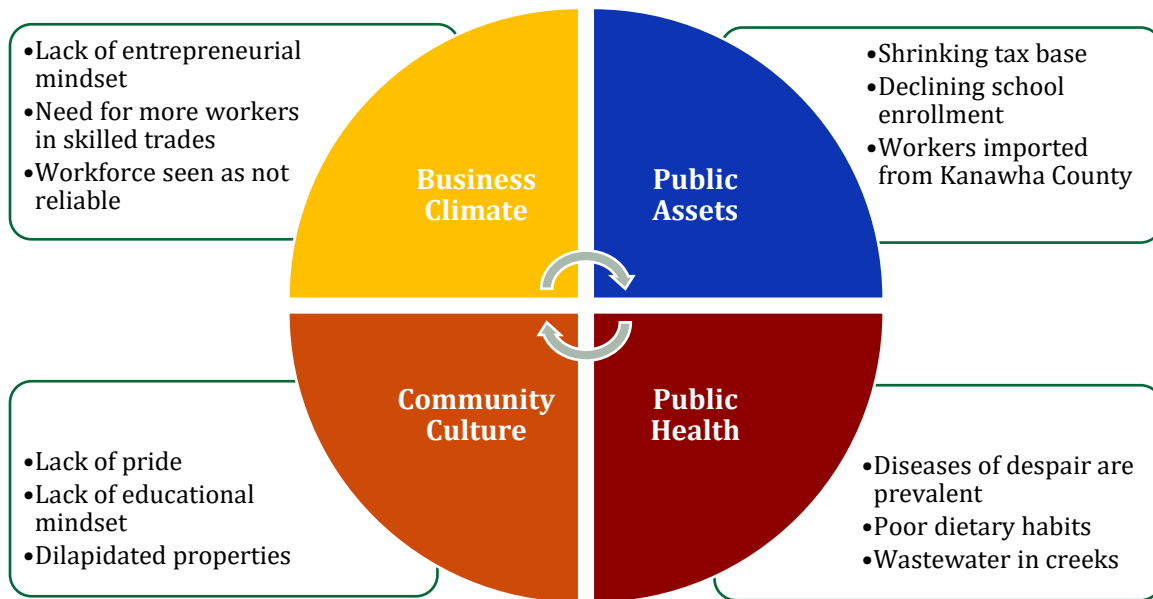


Figure 6: Integrated Economic Development Detriment



OTHER LOGAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

This strategic plan is well-aligned with recommendations from other recent economic development studies. Most applicable plans are regional as few strategy studies have been conducted that are specific to Logan County.

The ARC's latest strategic plan, for fiscal years 2022 through 2026, echoes many of the challenges and desired responses identified in this plan. The plan highlights strategic goals in the following categories:

- Building Appalachian businesses,
- Building Appalachia's workforce ecosystem,
- Critical infrastructure development,
- Natural and cultural asset cultivation, and
- Leadership and community capacity development.

A key point is the view that access to reliable and affordable broadband is an equity issue essential to improving lives.⁵³ The report also states that "a singular focus on job creation does not fix or address underlying challenges like generational poverty and lack of internet access faced by some areas of Appalachia" and that "stakeholders prefer growing their own jobs through entrepreneurship and small business development rather than the traditional approach of business recruitment and new job creation."

The ARC's 2019 study "Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachia" provides a broad overview of best practices for economic development based on an extensive literature review. Some of the key best practices listed are⁵⁴:

- Invest in education, technology, infrastructure, and broadband.
- Engage the community over the long term.
- Create communities where people want to live.
- Grow youth engagement and next-generation leadership.
- Build networks and foster collaboration.

The Region 2 Planning & Development Council's most recent **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** (CEDS) is for the years 2020 through 2024. The overarching focus of the CEDS is to help the area transition away from being an extraction economy and become "a vibrant business climate characterized by a balance of new investment, supporting existing businesses, and fostering local entrepreneurship."⁵⁵

The CEDS report include a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for Region 2. The most relevant components of that analysis are included in the table below.

Table 3: CEDS Report Region 2 SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character of the people - Tourism assets - Short commuting times - Low cost of living - Low energy costs - Cost effective labor - Worker loyalty 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of developable sites - Transportation via highways - Lack of innovation - Declining population - Brain drain/out-migration - Quality of life deficiencies - Dilapidated structures
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agritourism - Coal research - Downtown revitalization - Hemp production - Emerging tech/IT sector - Healthcare sector 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opioid epidemic - Environmental hazards (flooding) - Regulatory issues/challenges - Lack of available capital - Aging population - Foster care system

Logan County has **AEROready Certification**, due to the presence of the Logan County Airport and the associated support skills, workforce training, and infrastructure that can support potential aerospace companies. This certification validates the area is ready for an aerospace industry, that there is an ample supply of labor and quality sites, opportunities to customize the training of labor, and the utility and transportation infrastructure is in place.

In 2019, PRIDE Community Services assessed in detail the county’s public health and social services challenges. PRIDE published a Community Needs/Health Assessment Report for Logan County that prioritized categories for improvement in the following order: 1. Health, 2. Education, 3. Employment, 4. Housing, 5. Transportation, and 6. Child Care.

This report points to obesity, smoking, and tobacco usage rates that are all at least 40 percent above national averages. It also highlights the prevalence of opioids in the county, and states that **half (49.6 percent) of Logan County residents have a prescription for a controlled substance**. Other challenges noted are **healthcare staffing shortages, high disability rates, and poor health literacy**.⁵⁶

The PRIDE study notes that education outcomes are poor as **high school graduation rates are 10 percent below the national average**. It also ties the decline of the coal industry to a **reduction in public transportation services** and states that “as young people leave the area, there are fewer individual supports to aid older, disabled or low-income persons in accessing necessary travel.” It also highlights a lack of childcare options as Logan County has only one child development center.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Benchmark data are essential to measuring the success of these initiatives. The following data are reference points for the status of targeted economic development areas of employment, income, health, and education.

Employment

In 2020, there were about 8,042 full- and part-time jobs in Logan County, a decline of 31 percent from 2010. Totals in Tables 4 and 5 do not match due to rounding.

Table 4: Total Jobs in Logan County - 2010 to 2020

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
11,663	12,252	11,598	11,005	10,827	10,031	9,922	9,836	10,034	9,029	8,042

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW. Average of monthly data submitted to Workforce WV.

Table 5: Industry of Employment for Logan County in 2020

Industry Description	# Jobs
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	1,437
Utilities	67
Construction	114
Manufacturing	314
Wholesale trade	237
Retail trade	1,485
Transportation and warehousing	205
Information	133
Finance and Insurance	186
Real estate and rental and leasing	49
Professional, scientific, and technical services	170
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	274
Educational services	21
Health care and social assistance	1,950
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	55
Accommodation and food services	933
Other services (except public administration)	405
Total Jobs	8,035

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020.

Table 6: Key Agricultural Data for Logan County

	2007	2012	2017
# of Farms	34	11	8
# of Farms <180 acres	33	10	7
# Farms 180+ acres	1	1	1
# of Farm Operations	55	13	12
Average Operator Age	65	60	67

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Census of Agriculture.

Labor Force Participation

Demographics strongly influence Logan County’s labor force participation rate. These include: 1) a growing number and share of individuals who are 65 and older, 2) a declining number of individuals of prime working age (16-64), and 3) a declining number of individuals under 15.

As shown in table 5, 44% of the county’s population is in the labor force which is comparable to the State but lower than national levels. Twenty percent of the county’s population is comprised of individuals 65+ compared to 16% for the United States.

Table 7: 2020 Labor Force Breakdown

	Logan County		West Virginia		United States	
Total Population	32,593		1,807,426		326,569,308	
Working Age (15+)	26,751	82%	1,485,332	82%	261,649,873	80%
Labor Force	11,672	44%	798,208	44%	165,902,838	51%
Employed	10,025	37%	744,272	41%	155,888,980	48%
Unemployed	1,647	6%	52,031	3%	8,870,516	3%
Age 65+	6,564	20%	360,246	20%	52,362,817	16%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Health

Table 8: General Health Outcomes in 2020

Measure	Logan County	West Virginia
Life Expectancy	70.1	74.8
Food Insecurity	16%	15%
Limited Access to Healthy Food	2%	7%

SOURCE: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, County Health Rankings (based on CDC data).

Table 9: Mortality Statistics in 2020

Mortality Rates by Cause	Logan County	West Virginia	United States
Heart Disease (per 100,000/ 35+)	222.7	197.8	211.5
Stroke (per 100,000/ 35+)	61.0	36.7	48.6
Drug Overdose (per 100,000/all ages)	159.0	52.8	21.6
Cancer (per 100,000/all ages)	244.9	177.0	182.8
Injury (per 100,000/all ages)	116.5	122.2	61.0
Diabetes (per 100,000/all ages)	66.5	41.3	31.0

SOURCE: Center for Disease Control (CDC), NCHS, 2020. Age-adjusted, spatially smoothed.

Table 10: Behavioral Health (2020)

Benchmark	Logan County	West Virginia	United States
Depression Prevalence	17%	26.4%	19.5%
Suicide Mortality	19	19%	14%
Excessive Drinking	12%	12%	16%

SOURCE: WV Health Statistics Center, Vital Statistics System

Table 11: Lifestyle and Diabetes Statistics

LIFESTYLE AND DIABETES	Year	Logan County	West Virginia	United States
Leisure-time Physical Inactivity Prevalence (%)	2013		33.0	22.9
	2020	38.0	29.0	22.4
Obesity Prevalence (%)	2013		33.0	30.8
	2020	42.0	37.0	31.9
Diagnosed Diabetes Prevalence (%)	2013		13.0	9.7
	2020	21.0	15.0	10.6
Mentally Unhealthy Days (%)	2013		4.4	3.6
	2020	5.8	5.5	4.2

SOURCE: CDC National Health Interview Survey and County Data Indicators.

Table 12: Child Health (2020)

Indicator	Logan County	West Virginia	United States
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	7	7	5.6
Low Birth Weight	11%	9%	8.24%
Teen Birth Rate (per 1,000)	54	34	16.7

Source: U of WI, County Health Rankings

Table 13: Clinical Care (2020)

Measure	Logan County	West Virginia
Total Uninsured	12%	16%
Uninsured Adults	10%	9%
Uninsured Children	2%	3%
Primary Care Physicians	2,060:1	1,290:1
Dentists	8,150:1	1,810:1
Mental Health Providers	1,210:1	770:1
Preventable Hospital Stays	14,383	6,149

Source: U of WI, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2020)

Logan County is a “Persistent Poverty County” according to the Congressional Research Service (CRS). This means that its most recent poverty rate estimate equates to at least 20 percent, while also evidencing poverty rates of at least 20 percent in the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses (i.e., 20 percent or greater poverty over the last 30 years). The CRS also states that areas for which the poverty rate reaches 20 percent experience more acute systemic problems than in lower-poverty areas.⁵⁷

Table 14: Social and Economic Factors (2020)

Factor	Logan County	West Virginia
High school completion	91%	89%
Some college	45%	55%
Unemployment	7.0%	5.3%
Children in poverty	31%	23%
Income inequality	5.5	4.9
Children in single-parent households	32%	34%
Violent crime (# reported /100,000)	558	330
Median household income	\$36,250	\$48,037

Source: U of WI, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2020).

Education

Table 15: Logan County School Enrollment

School Year						
14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21
6,132	5,948	5,887	5,770	5,517	5,422	5,175

Source: West Virginia Department of Education.

Table 16: Logan County Education Proficiency Rate by Subject

School Year						
	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	20-21
Math	19.50%	23.69%	28.03%	30.20%	33.71%	18.24%
Reading	34.30%	38.10%	39.78%	40.42%	40.65%	32.80%
Science	-	-	-	28.41%	23.53%	19.02%

Source: West Virginia Department of Education.

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