

## Introduction –

The Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council (MOVRC), located in Parkersburg, West Virginia, participates in two regional planning programs to serve an eight county area. The organization is a local development district under the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and an economic development district under the US Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA). The MOVRC provides planning and/or economic and community development assistance to Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Tyler, Wirt and Wood Counties.

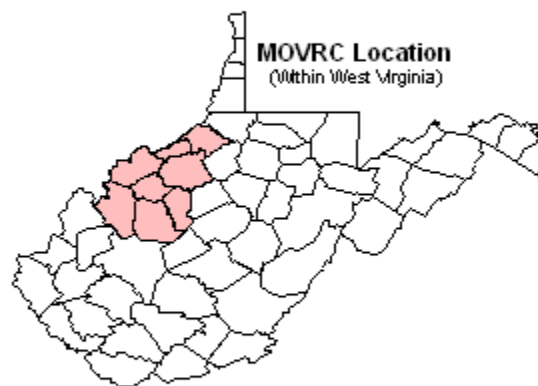
Every five years, the MOVRC formulates a plan of action that will guide the agency through the coming five years. The first step in the planning process is to determine the conditions that currently exist in each of the eight counties. After an assessment of the present situation is completed with input from the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, goals are established for the region. By comparing the present situation with the desired goals, specific strategies for achieving those goals can be formulated into a plan of action. The FY 2008-2012 plan is discussed within this document.

In addition to meeting the EDA requirement for a CEDS, this document also serves as the Regional Development Plan required by the ARC. It will be a guide for the MOVRC staff for the next five years and will be updated annually to highlight progress, and perhaps reflect changes, that occurred within the region after the Plan was prepared.

## The Council Organization –

### Service Area:

The MOVRC was established in 1972 under the aegis of Chapter 8, Article 25 et. Seq. of the Code of the State of West Virginia. The Council was created to operate in the area of Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Tyler, Wirt and Wood Counties



Over time, however, several of its programs have grown and now operate in more than the core eight counties: the WVV Transportation Planning Commission operates in the Metropolitan Planning Area of Wood County and Washington County, Ohio; the Foster Grandparent Program has expanded to include Wetzel, Ohio and Marshall counties; the Workforce Investment Board – Mid-Ohio Valley operates in seven of the MOVRC counties (Tyler is in a different Workforce Investment Area) and in two additional counties, Clay and Mason Counties.

## Mission/Purpose:

The purpose of the MOVRC is to plan comprehensively and perform development in the region, and to promote, through the joint participation of citizens and elected officials, the social, economic, educational, environmental and general welfare of the citizens of this region.

## Structure:

### Membership / Board of Directors

The Council is governed by a Board of Directors which is composed, on an *ex officio* basis, of: the President of the County Commission, or a representative thereof, from each of the eight counties; the Mayor, or a representative thereof, of each of the municipalities within those counties; and a representative from the local development authority of each county. *Ex Officio* members (Mayors, Commissioners) may select “non-elected” Board members for inclusion on the Board. A majority of the board members must be the elected officials. A copy of the current list of the Board of Directors is provided in the Appendix. The following are the current officers:

Chairman	Don Stephens	Secretary	James Mylott
Vice Chairman	Robert Tebay	Treasurer	Kent Spellman



MOVRC Board of Directors 2008

## Executive Director / Staff

The Executive Director is engaged by the Board and is responsible for the daily operations of the agency. Individual programs are administered by a Program Director, who reports to the Executive Director. Jim Mylott has been the Executive Director since 1991. A list of current staff members is included in the Appendix.

## Operational Locations

The Council operates from one principal location:

Administrative & General:  
531 Market Street  
Parkersburg, WV 26101

## Affiliates / Subsidiaries

a) The Mid-Ohio Valley Area Development Corporation (MOVADC) was created as of July 1, 1981 as an incorporated affiliate of the Council. It is important to note that the MOVRP&DC and the MOVADC have interlocking directorates.

b) WWW: This affiliate of the Council serves as a Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Wood and Washington (Ohio) County Area.

c) Workforce Investment Board (WIB): This affiliate of the Council oversees workforce development activities in the region.

## Programmatic Activities:

There have been several changes in the programs operated by the MOVRC. In 2005, the Senior Companion Program joined the Agency to provide volunteer opportunities for low income seniors that want to help keep other seniors citizens and disabled individuals independent in their communities. SCP serves Doddridge, Cabell, Harrison, McDowell, Monongalia, Pleasants, Ritchie, Taylor and Wood. The Retired Senior Volunteer Program has changed its name nationally to RSVP Volunteers to be more inclusive of younger retirees. The USDA-Rural Business Services funded a small revolving loan program for Ritchie County that MOVRC is administering. The MOVRC Loan Review Committee now reviews loans for the Wirt County

Micro-loan Program and the Little Kanawha Area Development Corporation's (LKADC) Micro-loan Program (serving Calhoun and Wirt Counties), the Ritchie County loan fund, a Spencer loan fund, ARC and EDA funded revolving loan pools, and USDA funded IRP loan program.

Over the last five years the Workforce Investment Board – Mid-Ohio Valley budget has fluctuated. As a result both staff and Workforce WV offices have grown and subsequently shrunk again. Affiliate locations or access points were identified in the counties that do not have a Workforce WV site so that customers would be able to access services in each county. The One Stop Committee of the Workforce Investment Board has placed an emphasis on building the Workforce system, responding to the needs of the business and job seeker community. Front line staff has been involved in cross training to ensure customers are aware of the full array of services available. Various training opportunities have been provided to build the capacity of system wide staff. Topics included serving the employer community, integration of services across agency lines, customer service training, and assessment options.

The Employment and Training committee further identified demand and targeted occupations for training funds. This was based on a study of labor market data and input from area employers. Solutions are being developed to assist employers in developing a “pipeline” of future employers. Activities include career fairs for adults but also becoming involved in the secondary schools career exploration activities. Soft skills remain a concern of employers across industries. Training programs, including Hit the Ground Running, have been developed to address the soft skills issue. Future plans include working with the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department on the issues of substance abuse.

The Youth Committee has placed emphasis on serving the most in need and those facing multiple barriers to employment. As with the One Stop committee, development of a system of service delivery is a priority. In the face of shrinking budgets, a goal has been established to identify partners that will assist with the delivery of services.



MOVRC Staff

The MOVRC currently operates the following programs:

**a) Community / Economic Planning & Development**

- ARC Development Grant
- EDA Planning Grant
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Project Administration

**b) Transportation Planning**

- Federal Transit Authority
- Federal Highway Administration

**c) Loan Programs**

- ARC Targeted Revolving Loan Fund
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund
- United States Department of Agriculture –Intermediary Relending Program
- WV SBDC Microloan Program

**d) Job Training**

- National Council on Aging (SCSEP)
- Department of Labor (Workforce Investment Act)

**e) Service**

- Foster Grandparent Program
- RSVP Volunteers

## Progress Assessment -

- A major success in the region is that construction of the final phases of Corridor D of the Appalachian Highway System from the I-77 interchange to the Ohio River was completed in early 2008. This project has been on the Regional Priority List for over 35 years and the only portion remaining to be completed was the Ohio River Bridge. Corridor D now links West Virginia and Ohio at US Route 50, improving access to market for goods produced in the region as well as improving accessibility to the Mid-Ohio Valley for tourists.



- During the past five years there have been significant changes in the local aluminum manufacturing industry, the most significant being the \$27 million investment by Rio Tinto/Alcan Rolled Products in their plant in Ravenswood, Jackson County. The facility, formerly known as Pechiney, significantly increased its plate capacity. The December 2005 announcement of the investment followed an earlier announcement that the company signed a long-term agreement with the Boeing Company to supply the aircraft manufacturer with a variety of high-performance aluminum products. In support of increased production to support Boeing, Alcan upgraded chlorine storage and distribution facilities in Ravenswood, an investment of an additional \$840,000.
- In August 2005 an official groundbreaking ceremony was held in the Silverton area of Jackson County for the new AK of West Virginia Corporation. In less than a year's time, the new facility was completed behind KS of West Virginia in April 2006, a partner in the joint venture with Japanese owned ASKA Corporation. Both firms manufacture small to medium sized components used primarily in the electrical systems of automobiles. The new facility provides an additional 100 new jobs for the community.
- Unfortunately, Cabot Corporation announced the closing of its carbon manufacturing plant in Pleasants County in March 2008. The number of jobs there had been slightly diminishing in recent years and at the time of the closing announcement there were less than 50 employees at the Pleasants County location. Subsequently, the corporation announced a new, similar plant was going to be constructed in China. It seems that this raw materials producer is following the tire manufacturing industry offshore, specifically to the Far East. It appears that the company will raze the plant. Approximately 100 acres will presumably become available. The Pleasants County Development Authority is looking to purchase this valuable property, at least in part as the Pleasants County Industrial Park is fully developed and there is little suitable land available for industrial development in the county.
- Production started at the new Hino Motors plant in Williamstown, West Virginia in November 2007 with just 80 employees in the assembly plant. Production steadily increased along with staffing as the company built up to a formal grand opening in September 2008. Hino Motors has invested \$18M in the Williamstown facility. Its 106 workers assemble 20 trucks a day for total annual production of 5,000 vehicles.

## Clusters identified in the Region

**Polymer/Chemical:** The Polymer Alliance Zone (PAZ) was created to capitalize on the polymer and chemical industry existing in the region. The PAZ currently consists of Mason, Jackson and Wood Counties, although there are additional polymer/chemical operations in Pleasants and Tyler Counties and in adjacent counties in Ohio. The PAZ has been actively promoting the Zone to prospective businesses in cooperation with the local development authority directors. Several new businesses have located in the Zone, while several existing businesses have expanded. Star Plastics' Millwood facility expanded by 50,000 square feet in 2006 and the company added about 40 jobs. Polymer Alliance Services increased its total property investment in the area to nearly 500,000 square feet and received ARC funding to construct a rail spur at the Wood County facility. Expansion of the Polymer Technology Park in Davisville in Wood County is planned and would include space for training, research and production. The PAZ is hopeful that US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration funds will help facilitate that project. The National Center for Electronics Recycling collected more than 230,000 pounds of electronics in 2006 and expanded its program in 2007. The center, located within the Polymer Technology Park in Wood County, holds nine collection events throughout the state each year.

**Wood Products:** Given that quality timber covers much of the eight-county region, exploitation of the existing timber industry to grow a wood products cluster is a natural development strategy. There is an abundance of woodlands in the region; however, most of the timber that is cut is then trucked elsewhere for processing. Besides the numerous sawmills operating in the region (and trucking their product elsewhere), there are several wood production companies in the interior counties. Valued added timber manufacturing operations have played a significant role in the economy of Roane County for years. The local economy took a major hit with the sudden announcement in June 2007 by Spencer Veneer that it would be closing production almost immediately. The announcement came as a surprise to workers since General Woods & Veneer, the parent company to Spencer Veneer, had announced in December 2006 that additional production work was being shifted to the Roane County operation from Canada. At the time operations halted, Spencer Veneer had 132 employees and the local economic

development authority is hopeful it will find another wood processing business to fill the vacant facility. This region also enjoys a large number of skilled woodworkers. Most of them, however, see this as a hobby rather than a skill that can lead to a fulfilling, and profitable, career. Seminars and training in development of entrepreneurial skills, starting a small business, marketing, pricing and other issues related to starting and operating a business can assist those wishing to grow beyond the hobby stage.

**Glass:** At one time, glass manufacturing was a major industry in the region. Production of anything from collectible art glass (Fenton) to marbles has provided jobs within the region. In June 2007 Fenton Glass announced that it would be closing in Willamstown. Sadly, the decision to close production came on the heels of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for the company that is the heart of the community and one of the top tourist attractions in the state of West Virginia. As a testimony to collectors dedication to the Fenton product, orders flooded the company following the announcement. Demand has remained so high, the company has been able to stay open while persuing access to new financing to allow the facility to remain open indefinitely.

While only a handful of glass manufacturing companies remain in the region, these surviving companies have focused on art glass and custom decorating. These companies are attractive to tourists and one economic development strategy is to work with the remaining glass producers to expand their product lines as well as their customer lists. While they may not become “tourist destinations” by themselves, having several similar companies in a small area may make the area in general a tourist destination and build off of Fenton’s loyal following.

**Artisan and Tourism:** There are a vast number of craftspeople within this region. Many of them have had their work accepted into “juried” events and locations, such as the Mountain State Arts and Crafts Festival and Tamarack. Items include anything from wooden ornaments, to homemade jams and salsas, with candles and textile goods in between. The Greater Parkersburg Convention and Visitors Bureau (GPCVB) has taken the lead in launching a coordinated regional marketing effort in coordination with MOVRC, the regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and the county economic development authorities. The marketing project includes business planning, training and capacity building for artisans and hospitality related businesses to build a network of interesting stores, inns, venues and outfitters to capture tourism

dollars. Their first joint initiative, Showcase Mid-Ohio Valley took place over several months in early 2006, culminating with a regional tourism exposition in Parkersburg in May 2006. ARC funding allowed more than forty local hospitality businesses to participate in marketing training, networking opportunities and access to a regional marketing campaign.



Farmer's Markets have sprung up in almost every county of the region in recent years, providing additional outlets for local artisans as well as farmers. The City of Parkersburg launched a weekly farmers market the summer of 2008. The initial response has been so successful that the Wood County Development Authority is now seeking funding for a permanent location.

### Potential Clusters:

This region also contains several manufacturers for the automobile industry. Efforts are under way to explore the possibility of attracting secondary and tertiary auto parts manufacturing

into the area. The opening of Hino Motors and AK of West Virginia since 2004 has greatly strengthen this cluster.

Tyler County is the southernmost part of a group of river counties that has an industry cluster of aluminum processing and recovery/recycling facilities. Much of the economic development activities in Tyler County are directed toward retaining and expanding this cluster. Large investments have been made in the aluminum processing facilities in Jackson County, guaranteeing the vital of this cluster for at least the near future.

Health Care is an emerging cluster within the region. The aging population creates a demand for skilled healthcare at the local level. Representatives from the healthcare industry,



economic development and education have launched a cooperative effort to coordinate the development of this emerging cluster. An example of this is the \$60 million dollar expansion to Camden Clark Memorial Hospital. The new addition to the facility includes an ultra modern surgery center with an 18 bed critical care unit.

## Planning and Economic Development Activities:

As part of the regional planning process, MOVRC values input from the private sector as well as that of local elected officials and the economic development community. To increase private sector involvement, the organization's by-laws were changed in 2006 to modify the composition of the Board of Directors to increase private sector representation. A CEDS Review Committee was created in 2007 of board members to work with MOVRC staff and their input has been incorporated into the document. The Committee is comprised of the private sector members of the Board and its membership is shown in the Appendix.

In addition to involving the CEDS and project list with the MOVRC CEDS Review Committee, MOVRC staff coordinated meetings in each county in the spring of 2008 to gather additional private sector input. Economic and demographic profiles were created for each county, comparing local statistical information with the region, state and country and shared with meeting participants to encourage feedback. Presentations were made to each local development authority board, comprised of private sector business representatives, local elected officials, and community leaders. Frequently, local Chambers of Commerce also participated. Their feedback has been incorporated into the regional strategy for economic development.

In addition to development of the CEDS other staff activities have focused on improving marketing of the area, transportation planning, and technical assistance to local development efforts. Marketing of the region as a business and tourism location has, of late, been a secondary component of the regional economic development efforts, primarily for lack of resources. Steps are underway to encourage and improve a regional marketing campaign. The Convention and Visitors Bureaus in Marietta, OH and Parkersburg, WV formed a successful collaborative marketing effort to create a great tourist attraction. In recent years with the support of MOVRC, that marketing campaign has expanded to include all eight West Virginia counties. By combining efforts to showcase the great opportunities in the area, the businesses create a marketing synergy that is much greater than could have been achieved on an individual basis.

Another major element of the regional development strategy is transportation planning. A county can have the best industrial site in the state, but if it is difficult to reach, no one will want to locate there. The Route 2/Route 68 Planning Authority, the Little Kanawha Parkway Authority and the Blue and Grey Highway Authority all promote the development and

improvement of those routes. Additionally, transportation planning will address improving the movement of goods and people throughout the local transportation network.

As a result of the Certified Development Community program sponsored by the WV Development Office, local economic development authorities are becoming stronger, resulting in more professional development efforts. After considerable effort at the local, regional and state level, all eight of the MOVRC counties are currently certified. Local elected officials recognize the value of a professional development office to their counties and have made the commitment of financial and human resources to support development efforts. In turn, the state provides a match to the funds committed to economic development and offers professional training, workshops and conferences. The Mid-Ohio Valley Area Development Council has also provided support to each county's economic development authority to assist with the local match required to receive state funding.

The LKADC was created in 2000 through a cooperative effort of the Wirt and Calhoun County Commissions and the MOVRC staff to provide a full-time professional development presence in the two counties with the greatest development challenges. The successes of this cooperative strategy lead other adjacent counties to consider combining development efforts. The development authorities in Jackson and Roane Counties share an economic development director as well, although they maintain independent development authorities. Presently, all eight counties in the area have paid development positions, however the Ritchie County position became vacant in late 2008 when Kent Spellman accepted a statewide community development position.

The local development authorities are not the only county supported organizations that have seen the value of regional cooperation. Municipal utilities and public service districts throughout the region have embraced opportunities to extend service across county lines to improve the area's infrastructure. Union Williams PSD provides service in Pleasants County and the Route 16 Water Corporation based in Pleasants County provides water to Ritchie County. Claywood Park PSD in Wood County provides water to the Town of Elizabeth and seeks to provide sewer service to the Newark area in Wirt County, as another example of regional cooperation to open new sections of the region to residential, commercial and industrial development.

With local economic development efforts on solid footing, emphasis can now be placed on strengthening local planning activities. Two of the eight counties have planning commissions and there are planning committees in several area municipalities. Adoption of land use regulations (zoning) is heard with greater frequency in local communities and desire for efficient deployment of public resources may be overcoming historical reluctance to regulate



development. Communities throughout the region are encouraging rehabilitation efforts and are aggressively pursuing issues like elimination of blight. Parkersburg and Vienna in Wood County maintain staff dedicated to planning and code enforcement. Downtown revitalization efforts are underway in essentially every incorporated community in the eight county region. One of the greatest successes for downtown revitalization has been the City of Spencer, where a master plan was broken into at least six phases over the past ten years. As soon as one phase is under construction, the community begins seeking funding for the next phase,

yielding wonderful results.

# Situation Assessment - The Area and Its Economy

## General Description of Area

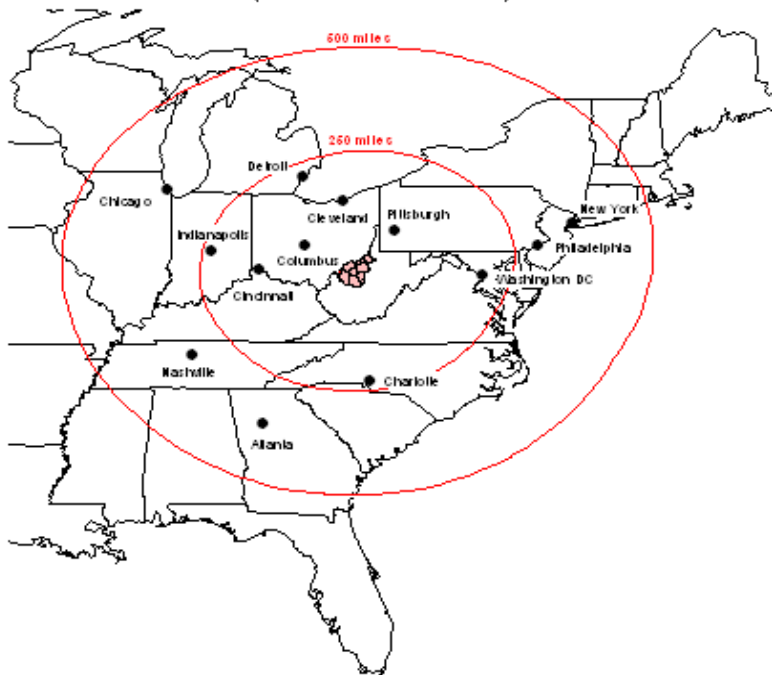
The Mid-Ohio Valley region of West Virginia occupies over twenty-six hundred square miles, representing an area larger than the state of Rhode Island. The region is bordered to the north and west by the Ohio River and stretches to the south to the bedroom communities of Charleston, the state capital. The Ohio River is a unique and valuable asset to the area, providing an abundant water supply, a transportation resource for business and industry as well as a recreation attraction for local residents and tourists alike. The rugged mountain topography that is indicative of Appalachia creates a scarcity of flat land for development and makes it difficult and expensive to construct transportation, utilities, and technology facilities. As a result, even local travel has been historically difficult. However, the terrain can also be a positive attribute as the isolation has resulted in tight knit communities, the challenges of rural life have developed a solid work ethic in the population and the area poses a tremendous physical beauty.

Parkersburg and surrounding communities in West Virginia and Ohio are recognized as a Metropolitan Statistical Area by the US Census Bureau and serves as the market core of the region. In recent years, Parkersburg has edged out Wheeling and other traditional industrial centers to become the third largest city in the state, behind Charleston and Huntington. The region is also close to several major national metropolitan centers that are experiencing a period of positive growth and redevelopment, such as Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. With over half of the US population within a day's drive of the Ohio Valley, the region is well positioned to attract, retain and grow businesses.

**Parkerburg, WV/Marietta, OH  
Metropolitan Statistical Area**

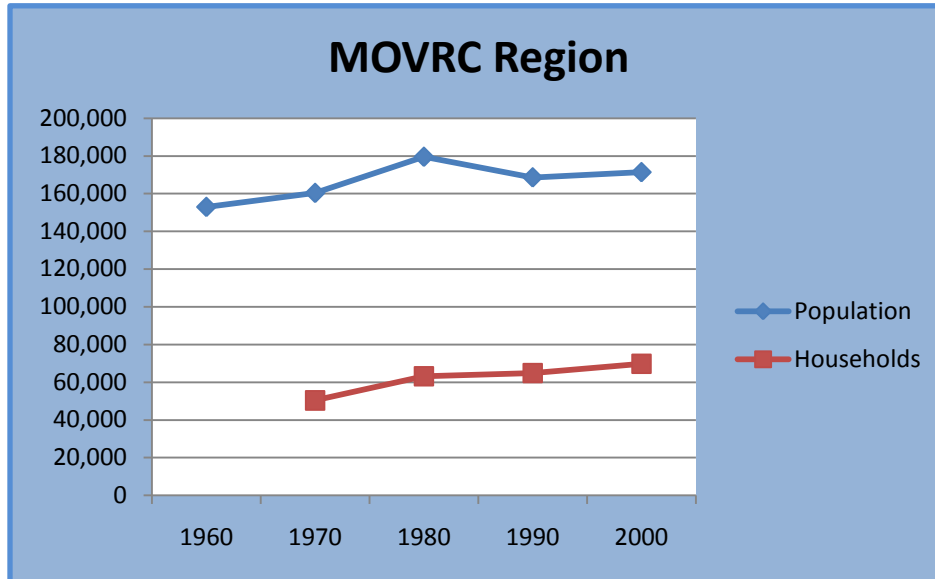


**MOVRC Location  
(Within Eastern United States)**



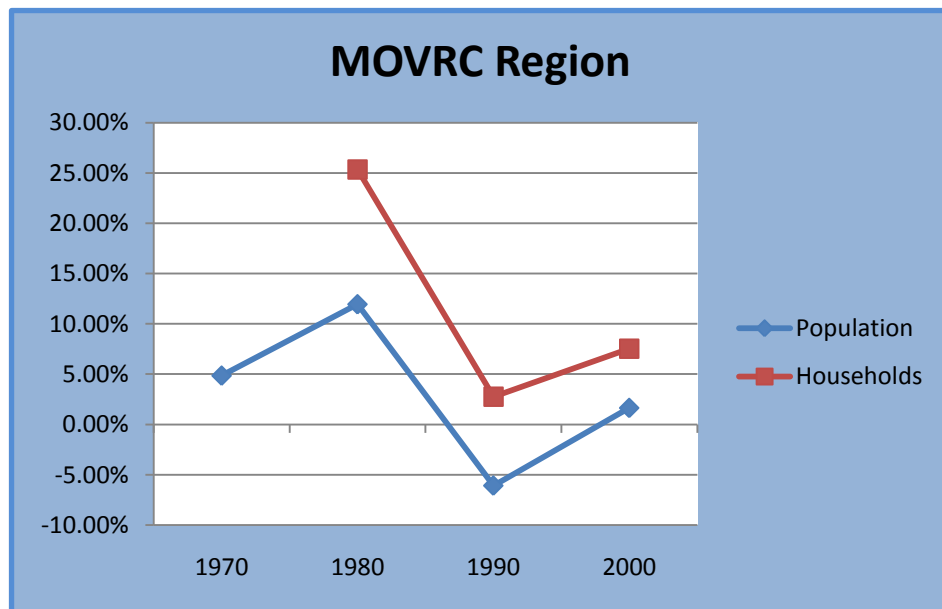
## Demographics –

**Population** – After a rise in population during the 1970s followed by a strong dip the following decade, the population of Mid-Ohio Valley region has leveled off according to the 2000 Census. It has not recovered to its high of 1980. The decrease and then stabilization mirrors the pattern for West Virginia as a whole. Over this same period of time, the number of households has



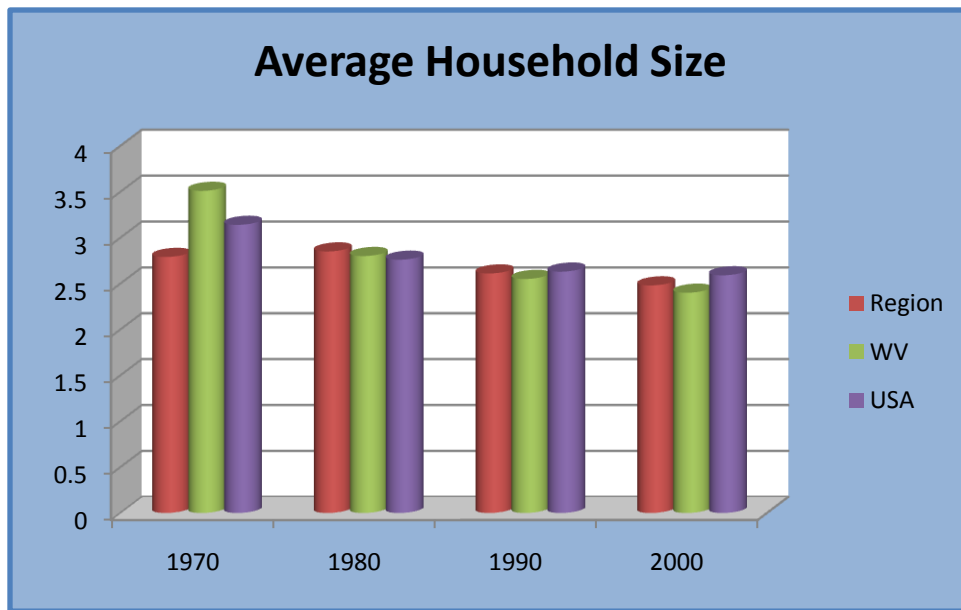
gradually increased. Over the past 20 years, there has been a small increase in the number of households in the region and state. The growth in population and households has been significantly less than the percentage of growth in the country as a whole. Jackson, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt

and Wood Counties have all seen population growth in recent years. Jackson (9.50%) and Wirt (13.56%) have shown the greatest percentage increase in population as they become bedroom communities for Charleston and Parkersburg respectively. Calhoun, Pleasants and Tyler Counties have all seen a decrease in population, with Calhoun being the hardest hit, losing almost 11% of its population since 1980, according to census data.



Households										
	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV
<b>1970</b>	2,177	6,189	2,117	3,357	4,322	3,140	1,323	27,753	50,378	547,214
<b>1980</b>	2,936	8,629	2,718	4,136	5,449	3,944	1,668	33,663	63,143	686,210
<b>1990</b>	2,978	9,645	2,769	3,928	5,740	3,709	1,942	34,168	64,879	688,557
<b>2000</b>	3,071	11,061	2,887	4,184	6,161	3,836	2,284	36,275	69,759	736,481

**Households** – Although the number of households increased slightly over the decades, the composition of those households has changed considerably. In the 1980s, there were almost as many four+ person households as those with only two. By 2000, the majority of households

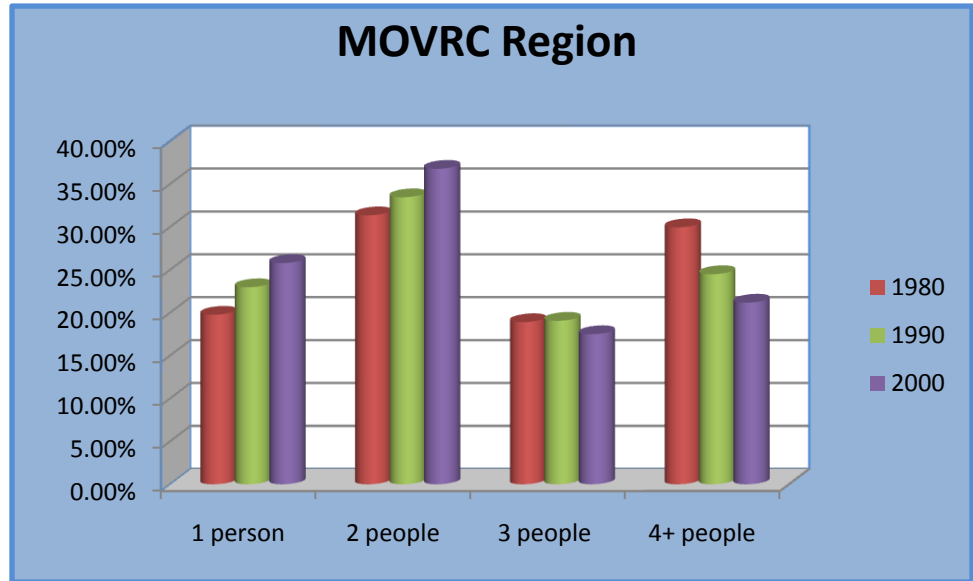


made up of one or two people. In the 1970s, household size in West Virginia was larger than the national average and the Mid-Ohio Valley was the exception. Over time, households across the region, state and country have all gotten smaller. According

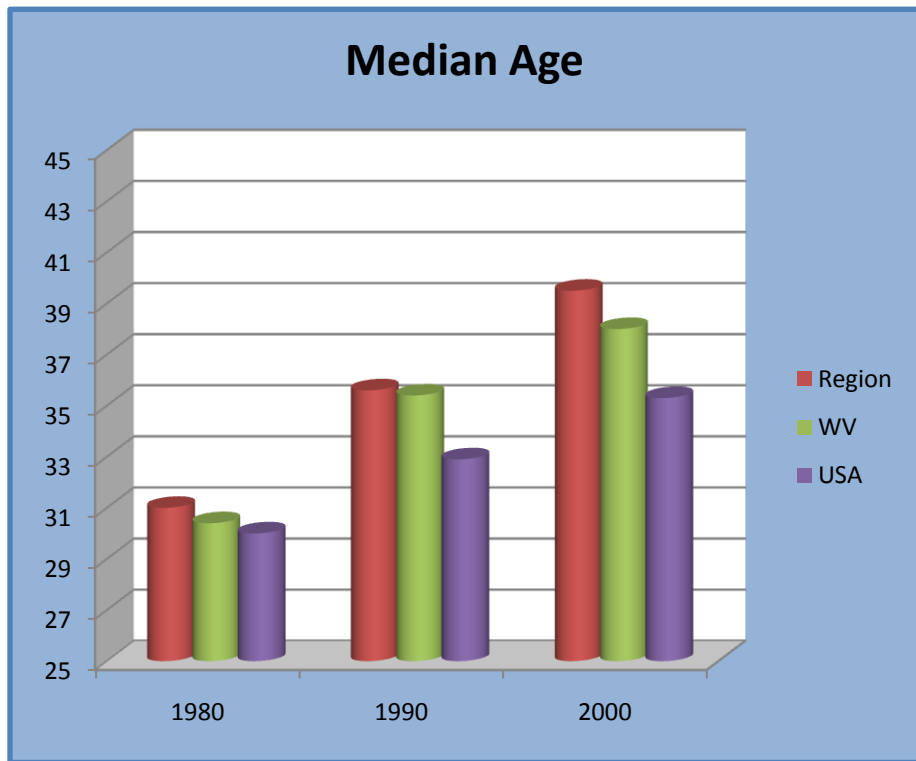
to the 2000 US Census, the average household for the all three demographic areas is slightly higher than two people per household. Households in the region are slightly larger than the state as a whole. The percentage decrease in average size of household holds fairly consistently among all eight counties. In 1970, Jackson County had the largest households with an average size of more than 3 people. By 2000, Wirt County had the largest households with an average of 2.56 people, yet every other county had an average of close to 2.5 people as well.

Average Household Size										
	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV
<b>1970</b>	2.81	3.08	2.81	2.66	2.74	2.79	2.93	2.74	2.79	3.51
<b>1980</b>	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9	3	2.7	2.85	2.8
<b>1990</b>	2.66	2.64	2.61	2.56	2.58	2.65	2.68	2.5	2.61	2.55
<b>2000</b>	2.46	2.5	2.51	2.45	2.49	2.47	2.56	2.39	2.48	2.4

The vast majority of households in the Mid-Ohio Valley now have less than three people. According to the 2000 US Census, almost 63% of the households in the region have two or less members. In the 1980s, almost half of the region's households had



more than two members. This trend is being seen around the country, where almost 65% of all US households have fewer than three members.



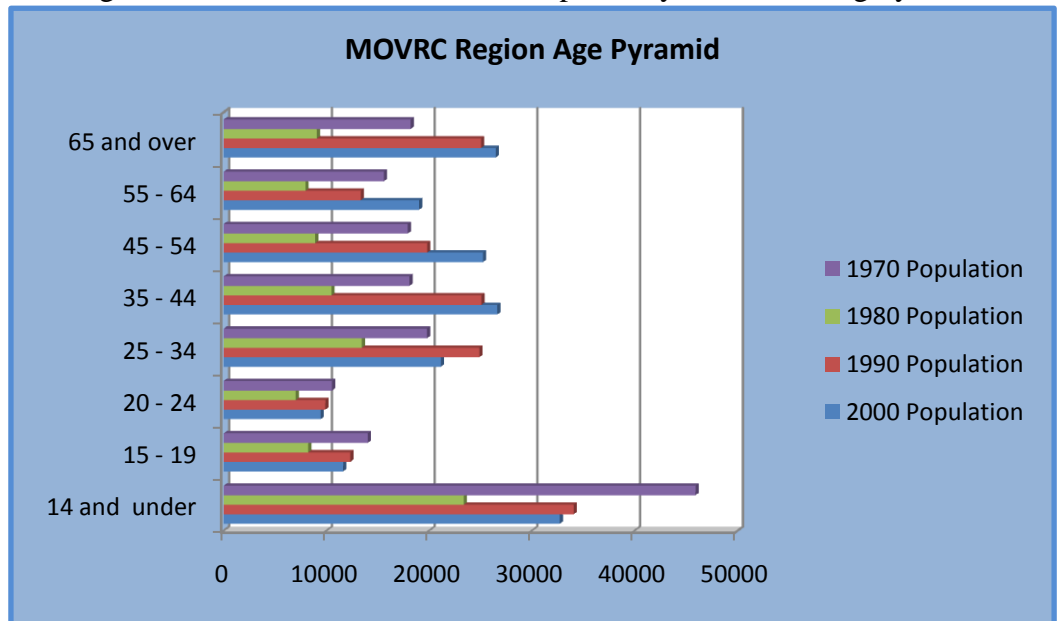
**Age** - The median age of the citizens of the Mid-Ohio Valley has jumped considerably over the past three census periods. Even in 1980, the population of the region was slightly older than that of the state and nation as a whole. Over the past three decades, the average age of the citizens of the Mid-Ohio Valley has grown even older, widening the difference between the state and nation. In 1970, the local

population was 3% older than the nation as a whole. By the 2000 US Census, the regional population was 11% older than the median age of the country. Calhoun and Tyler County have the highest median ages. The national median age is slightly older than 35 years old. The median ages in Calhoun and Tyler counties are over 40 years old.

**Median Age**

	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV	USA
<b>1980</b>	31.2	30.6	29	32.4	32	30.9	30.7	31.2	31	30.4	30
<b>1990</b>	35.6	35.6	34.9	36.4	36	36.3	34.3	36	35.6	35.4	32.9
<b>2000</b>	41.3	38.3	38.9	39.9	39.5	40.8	37.9	39.3	39.5	38	35.3

Obviously, this aging of the population with limited population growth has economic impacts on the communities. According to the 2000 US Census, there are almost as many people of retirement age (65+) in the region as children under 14. More importantly, there are roughly as many people of working age as there are of retirement age, if 65 years old continues to be the age of retirement. Using the most recent census figures, there is 1.16 persons of employment age for every 1 child, student or retiree in the region.

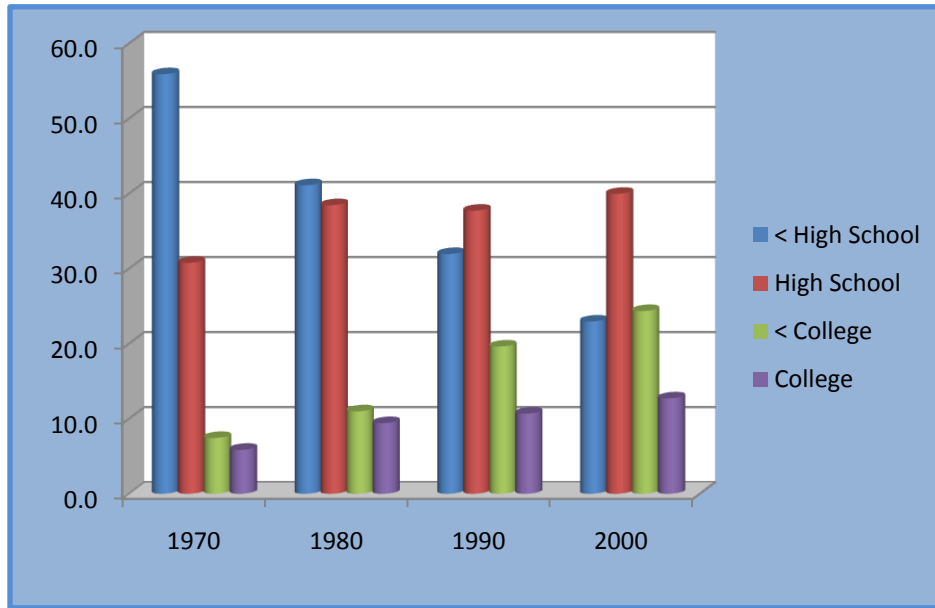


**Age Pyramid - 2000**

Age	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region
<b>&lt; 15</b>	1309	5555	1449	1911	2872	1809	1191	16628	32724
<b>15 - 19</b>	592	1863	507	723	1157	619	447	5724	11632
<b>20 - 24</b>	405	1542	413	540	928	427	300	4887	9442
<b>25 - 34</b>	783	3464	952	1242	1809	1141	713	11042	21146
<b>35 - 44</b>	1178	4299	1206	1649	2306	1437	1025	13540	26640
<b>45 - 54</b>	1203	3858	1106	1538	2343	1470	778	12947	25243
<b>55 - 64</b>	848	3126	759	1164	1749	1110	656	9610	19022
<b>65 +</b>	1264	4293	1122	1576	2282	1579	763	13608	26487

**Education** - One place where the communities of the Mid-Ohio Valley have seen improvements over the past four census periods is in the area of education and educational attainment. In 1970,

less than half of the population had a high school degree, according to census records. During that same period, less than 6% of the regional population had a college degree. The regional



economy relied heavily on manufacturing, so an education beyond high school wasn't necessary to earn a good income. According to the 2000 US Census, the percentage of the population with less than a high school degree dropped to 23%. The largest percentage of the

local population has only a high school diploma (40%), but the percentage of the population with at least a college degree has more than doubled since the 1970 US Census. The most recent census data reports that 12.7% of the regional population has earned a college degree. An additional 24.4% has some education beyond high school. Wood County, the location of West Virginia University- Parkersburg, has the greatest percentage of college graduates with 15.2% and Ritchie County has the lowest percentage with 7.1%. Despite the low figure, 7.1% represents an increase of 38% in the percentage of population with a college degree since 1970.

## The Economy –

### Labor Force –

No community can prosper without a strong available labor force. While the aging of the population in recent years presents an economic challenge, the regional labor force is better educated than at any time in the past. The size of the available labor force grew steadily between 1980 and 2000, almost doubling. Growth of the available labor force in the Mid-Ohio Valley greatly outpaced the rest of West Virginia that saw an anemic 6% growth in its workforce over the same period of time. Ritchie County has done the best job of retaining its workforce while neighboring counties have seen slight decreases in available workers since 2000.

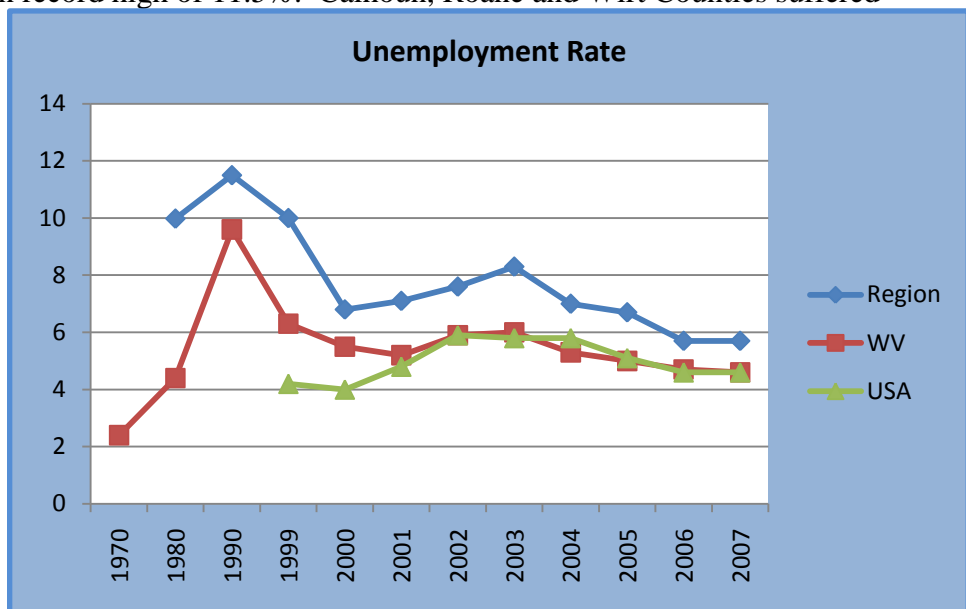
**Labor Force**

	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV
<b>1980</b>	2,825	6,911	2,983	4,384	4,593	3,734	1,763	13,110	42,283	754,250
<b>1990</b>	2,815	10,756	3,071	4,251	5,778	3,991	2,147	40,446	75,245	744,032
<b>2000</b>	2,940	12,740	3,330	4,610	6,210	3,840	2,560	44,220	80,450	792,344
<b>2001</b>	2,860	12,520	3,310	4,540	5,960	3,750	2,530	41,820	77,290	801,000
<b>2002</b>	2,910	12,230	3,330	4,540	5,690	3,780	2,540	41,920	76,940	796,000
<b>2003</b>	2,940	11,890	3,320	4,510	5,530	3,710	2,570	42,250	76,720	790,000
<b>2004</b>	2,830	11,690	3,260	4,490	5,470	3,620	2,500	41,530	75,390	786,000
<b>2005</b>	2,710	11,740	3,250	4,630	5,480	3,630	2,500	41,330	75,270	794,000
<b>2006</b>	2,710	11,870	3,170	4,740	5,520	3,660	2,540	41,150	75,360	821,773
<b>2007</b>	2,750	11,980	3,190	4,640	5,580	3,680	2,550	41,240	75,610	809,000

**Unemployment Rate –**

During the 1980s, unemployment in the Mid-Ohio Valley was double the unemployment rate for the rest of the state. Unfortunately, unemployment in the state as a whole jumped considerably in the 1990s, to a modern record high of 11.5%. Calhoun, Roane and Wirt Counties suffered

most during this period. From that high point, when more than one person in ten could not find suitable employment, the unemployment rates have fallen steadily. Since 2000, regional unemployment figures have held within two points of the national average. No county in the Mid-Ohio Valley has seen double digit unemployment since 2003. Wirt County



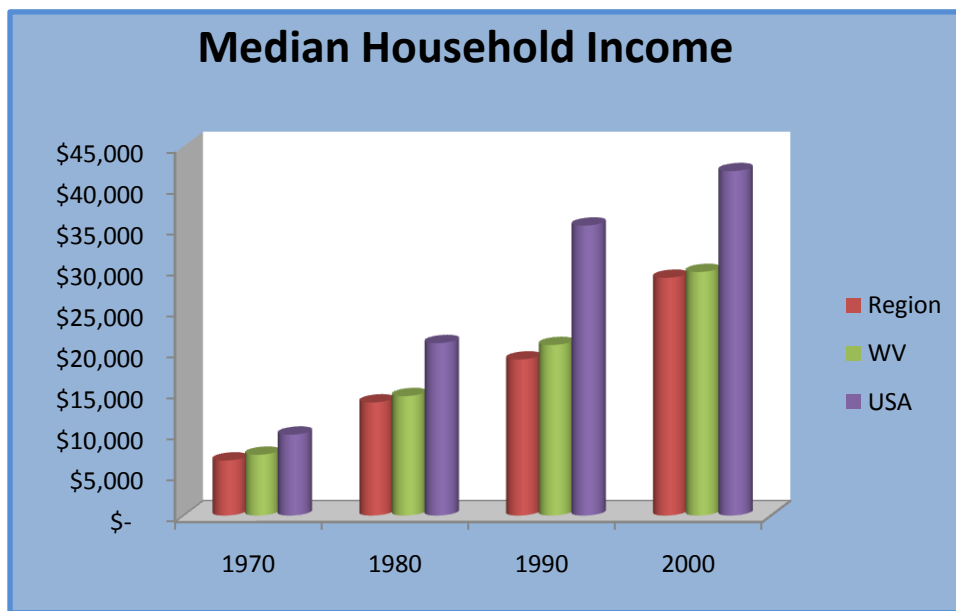
has seen the greatest improvement in employment over the past two census periods. In 1990, Wirt County had an unemployment rate of 13.3%. According to the most recent unemployment figures, only 5.8% of the residents of Wirt County were unemployed in 2007, virtually the same rate as for the entire region and only one point above the state and national averages.

### Unemployment Rate

	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV	USA
<b>1980</b>	14.2	12.2	8.3	8	11.5	8.6	9.5	7.5	9.98	4.4	
<b>1990</b>	13.9	10.1	9	11.9	16.2	11.2	13.3	6.5	11.5	9.6	
<b>2000</b>	10.3	5.9	5.8	6.2	9	5.9	7	4.5	6.8	5.5	4
<b>2001</b>	10.5	5.6	5.9	6.8	10.1	6.1	6.6	4.9	7.1	5.2	4.8
<b>2002</b>	11	6.5	6.9	7.1	9.1	6.8	7.9	5.6	7.6	5.9	5.9
<b>2003</b>	11.6	8.2	7.6	7.8	8.8	7.4	9.3	6	8.3	6	5.8
<b>2004</b>	9.4	6.3	6.1	6.6	7.9	7.4	7	5.4	7	5.3	5.8
<b>2005</b>	8.5	5.8	6.2	5.7	7.3	7.2	7.3	5.4	6.7	5	5.1
<b>2006</b>	6.9	5	5.4	4.8	6	6.8	5.8	4.7	5.7	4.7	4.6
<b>2007</b>	7	4.8	5.5	5.1	6.4	6.2	5.8	4.6	5.7	4.6	4.6

### Income –

As employment has increased in the region, so has the median household income of its residents. Household incomes have also increased over a thirty year period in the state and country. In



1970, the median household income of the Mid-Ohio Valley (\$6,714) was 32% of the national median household income (\$9,687). Although household incomes in the region rose to a median of \$28,989 in 2000, according to census information, the national median household income for the same period

rose to \$41,994. After forty years, households in the Mid-Ohio Valley still earn 31% less than households across the nation. Per capita income has shown greater gains. In 1980, per capita income in the region was \$5,741. The national per capita income for the same period was 64% greater at \$10,183. According to 2000 US Census figures, the per capita income of the region increased to \$18,188 and the national per capita income rose to \$29,469. Using those figures, residents of the Mid-Ohio Valley earned 59% of the national per capita income.

### Median Household Income

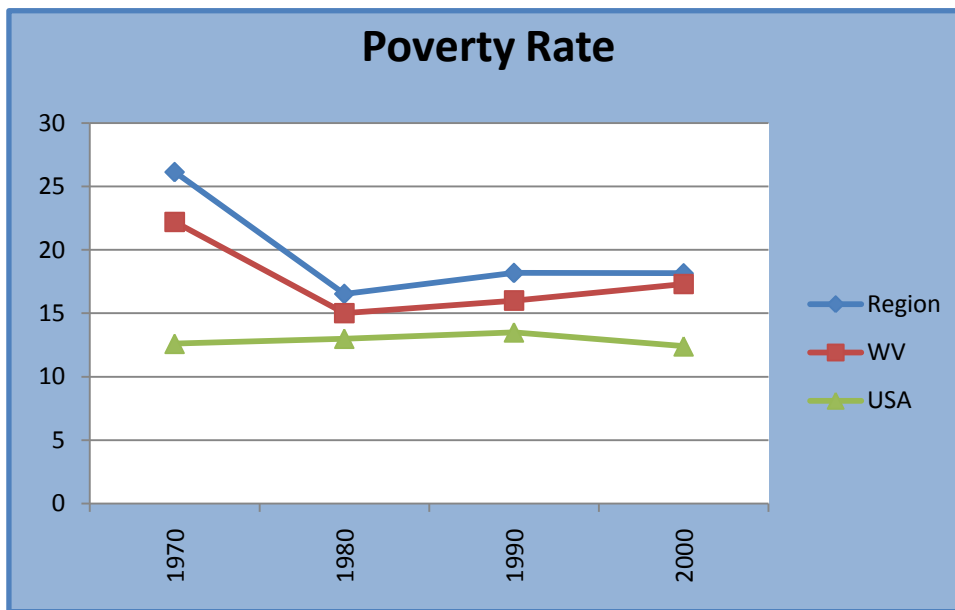
	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV	USA
<b>1970</b>	\$4,504	\$7,959	\$8,235	\$5,681	\$5,517	\$7,362	\$5,688	\$8,766	\$6,714	\$7,415	\$9,867
<b>1980</b>	\$10,000	\$17,223	\$16,182	\$11,381	\$11,623	\$15,107	\$12,222	\$16,583	\$13,790	\$14,564	\$21,028
<b>1990</b>	\$14,496	\$21,655	\$20,910	\$17,333	\$15,375	\$20,360	\$16,951	\$25,161	\$19,030	\$20,795	\$35,353
<b>2000</b>	\$21,578	\$32,434	\$32,736	\$27,332	\$24,511	\$29,290	\$30,748	\$33,285	\$28,989	\$29,696	\$41,994

### Per Capita Income

	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV	USA
<b>1970</b>	\$1,658	\$2,225	\$2,308	\$1,836	\$1,754	\$2,204	\$1,811	\$2,743	\$1,817	\$1,489	
<b>1980</b>	\$5,189	\$8,587	\$7,337	\$6,282	\$6,453	\$5,867	\$5,897	\$8,905	\$5,741	\$8,172	\$10,183
<b>1990</b>	\$10,167	\$12,719	\$14,452	\$11,169	\$10,473	\$9,692	\$10,251	\$16,644	\$10,796	\$14,579	\$19,572
<b>2000</b>	\$15,109	\$19,688	\$21,222	\$17,545	\$16,519	\$15,216	\$16,022	\$24,185	\$18,188	\$21,738	\$29,469

### Poverty –

In 1970, more than a quarter of the residents of the Mid-Ohio Valley lived in poverty compared to 13% in the nation as a whole. Although the poverty rate of the state was also higher than the



at 22%, the region was even worse off with a poverty rate of 26%. Economic conditions improved considerably between the 1970 and 1980 census and the poverty rate for the region fell to 16.5%, only slightly higher than the national poverty rate of 13%.

Over the past two decades, unfortunately the percentage of people living in poverty in the region and the state has increased slightly, but the percentage remains under 20%. In 2000, the national percentage of people living in poverty was 12.4% and the regional percentage was 18.2%.

Poverty Rate (percentage of people)											
	Calhoun	Jackson	Pleasants	Ritchie	Roane	Tyler	Wirt	Wood	Region	WV	USA
<b>1970</b>	44.5	19.8	17.3	29.2	30.3	22.4	33.4	12.1	26.13	22.2	12.6
<b>1980</b>	25.3	13.3	13.8	17.8	18.5	14.7	17.7	11.1	16.53	15	13
<b>1990</b>	27.4	16.6	16.3	20	22.5	14.5	16.7	11.4	18.18	16	13.5
<b>2000</b>	25.1	15.2	13.7	19.1	22.6	16.6	19.6	13.3	18.15	17.3	12.4

## Infrastructure and Services –

One of the region’s strongest attributes is the high quality of life that residents and visitors enjoy. A strong regional infrastructure system is essential to preserving and improving the living standards for citizens as well as retaining and expanding local business. This includes developing, expanding and maintaining access to safe drinking water and sanitary sewer and waste-disposal systems for residential, commercial and industrial customers. Upgrades in the telecommunications network to support current technology are also vital to families and business growth. Improvements in the physical infrastructure, including highways, airports, railroads and river ports, open the area to residential and commercial development while bringing the rest of the world closer for trade and tourism.

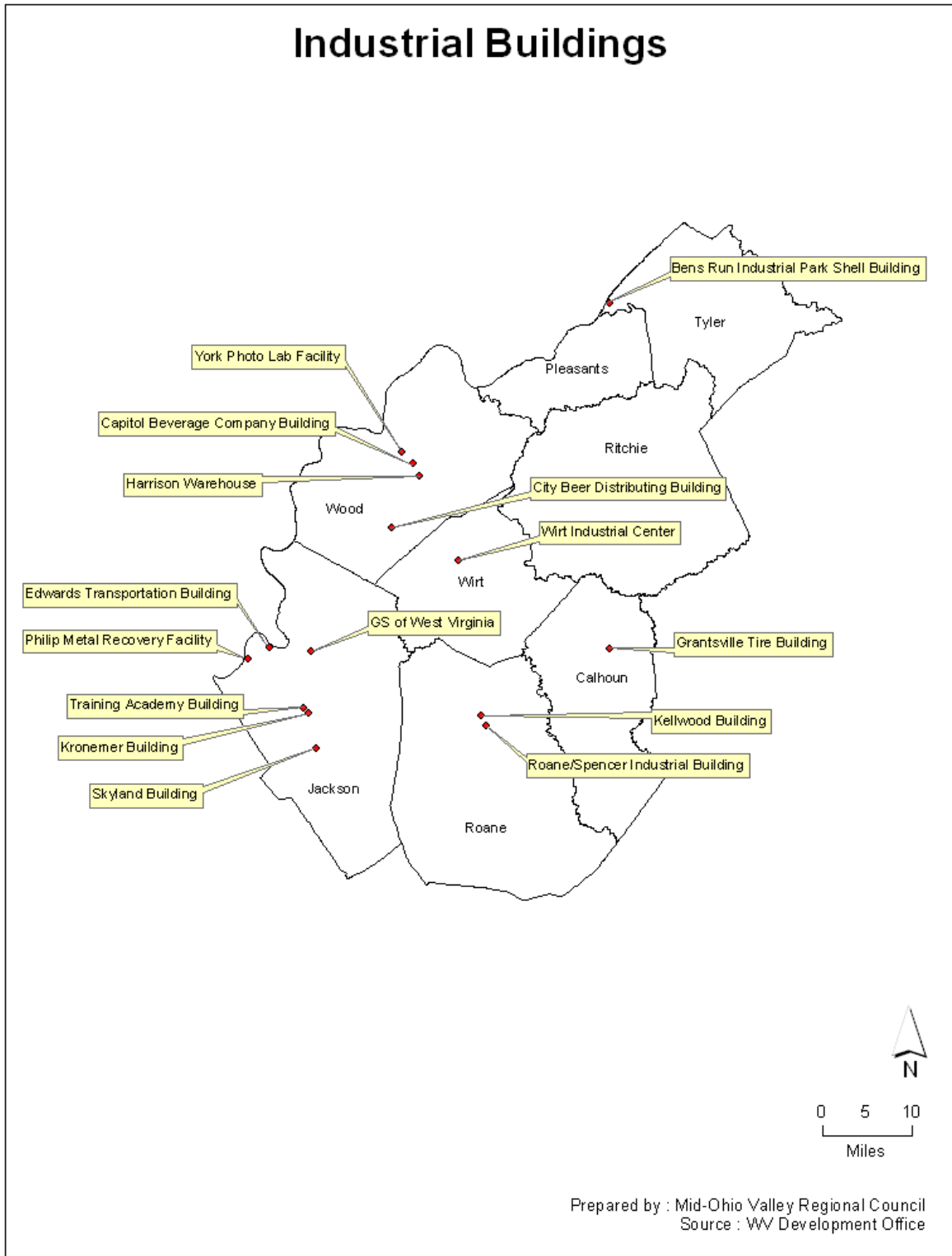
Over the past five years (FY2004-2008), 22 water projects have been successfully completed, or are funded and under construction, bringing or upgrading public water service to over 17,000 households throughout the MOVRC region. This represents a \$51.5M investment in municipal and county water systems. During the same period, 7 sewer projects have been successfully completed, or are funded and under construction, bringing or upgrading public sewer service to over 7,100 households throughout the MOVRC region. This represents a \$40.2M investment in municipal and county wastewater systems. An additional 29 water and sewer projects are in some stage of planning and development, representing an additional \$52.5M in public utilities improvements. As one example of the commitment of locally elected officials to this goal, in 2001 the Pleasants County Commission with the support of local municipalities, commissioned a feasibility study to expand water service to all residents of the county. The Comprehensive Water Study resulted in the creation of a countywide public service district, approval of a general obligation bond issue to help fund the project and a realistic expectation that more than 70% of the county’s residents will have access to public water service

by 2010. Creating and maintaining a pro-business climate is the cornerstone of the regional economic development strategy. Providing high quality, reliable public utilities to existing industries as well as developing fully serviced industrial parks, buildings and sites suitable for business growth and expansion is paramount to this effort. Jackson, Pleasants, Ritchie, Tyler and Wood Counties have all either completed construction or have projects under construction to extend water and wastewater services to existing industries and county supported industrial properties. Both Ritchie and Jackson Counties, with the support of MOVRC, are actively pursuing funding for public utilities projects in partnerships with private developers to support industrial and commercial development. Each project is a priority short-term goal (3-5 years) for the region.

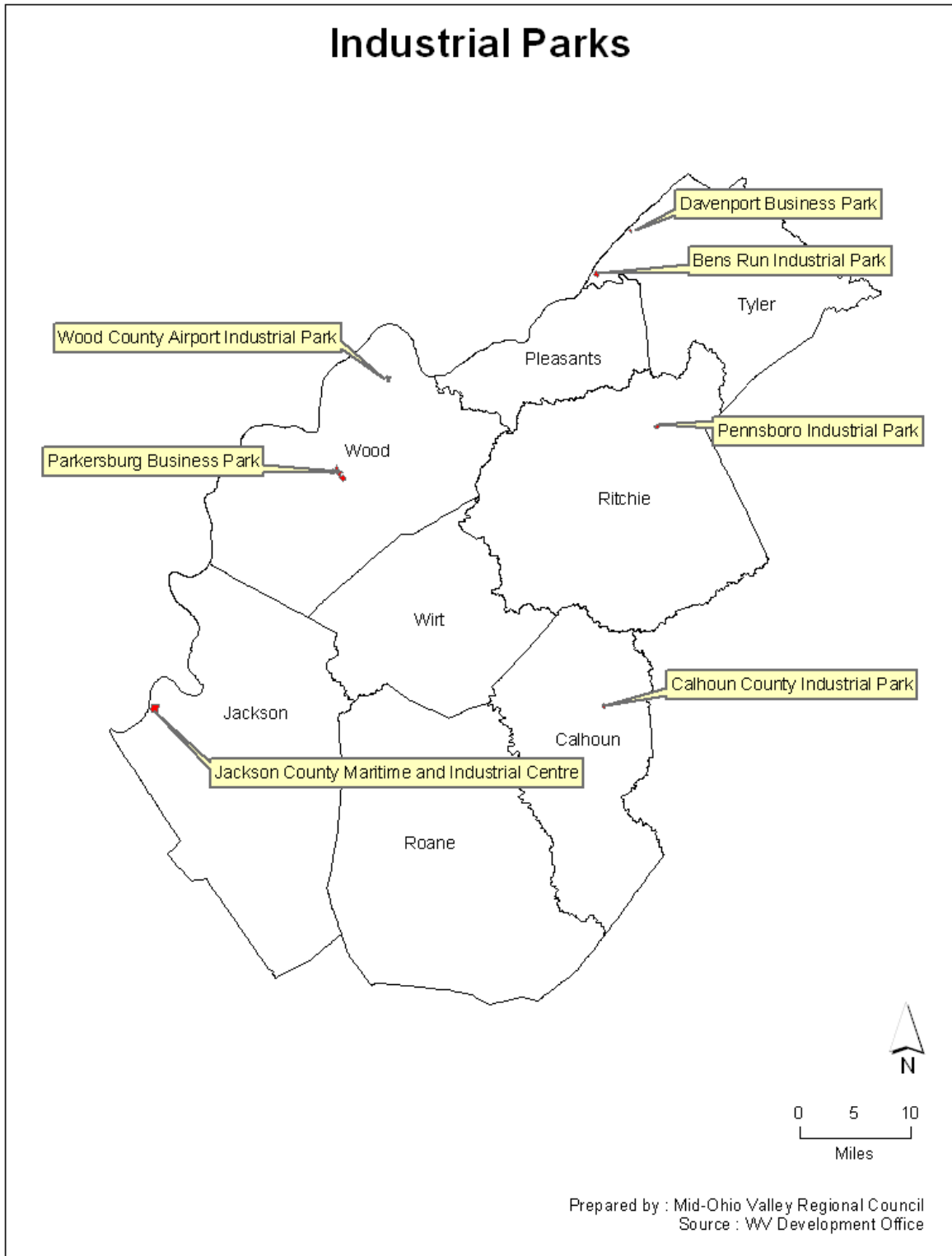
All eight counties support industrial recruitment and retention activities by maintaining and promoting an inventory of industrial parks, buildings and sites. Several of the region's counties have successfully filled existing parks and are developing additional property suitable for industrial development. The Industrial Park in Ritchie County has been full for years. As part of the Ritchie Industrial and Commercial Center project, a private developer donated 10 prime acres along US Route 50, halfway between Parkersburg and Clarksburg to the Ritchie County Economic Development Authority. Development of the site is a high priority project for Ritchie County.

MOVRC encourages each county to maintain an inventory of available commercial properties for small businesses as part of a regional strategy to create and promote an entrepreneur friendly economy. Improvements and upgrades have been made to the regional website to support a searchable database of industrial and commercial sites. Adding this function to the agency's website supports a regional strategy of optimizing marketing efforts through a coordinated site, rather than each county attempting to market itself individually.

# Industrial Buildings

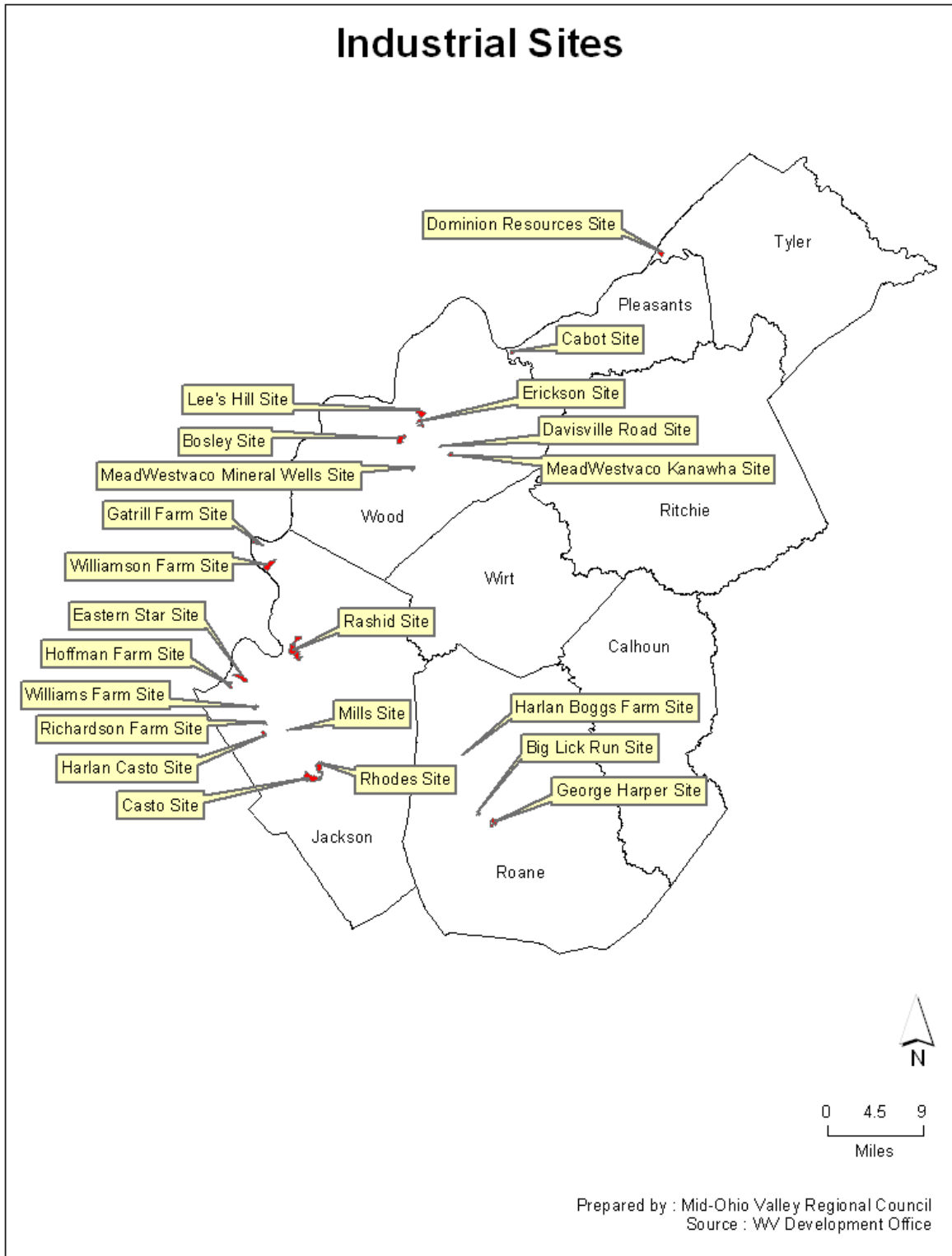


# Industrial Parks



Prepared by : Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council  
Source : WV Development Office

# Industrial Sites



Natural and Cultural Resources –

The striking natural beauty, abundant wildlife and extensive system of rivers and creeks that exist throughout the Mid-Ohio Valley make it a prime for tourism development. All eight counties have adopted economic development strategies that recognize and promote the value of the local hospitality industry. Private restoration and preservation of several Victorian area inns and homes throughout the area into bed & breakfast accommodations, a strong artisan community, a wide variety of museums and historical attractions coupled with a unique selection of restaurants and stores, a full calendar of area fairs, festival and live entertainment events and friendly communities all contribute to the areas value as a tourist destination.

Tourism has been identified as a growth industry for the region and local counties have included tourism promotion as part of their development strategies. The Greater Parkersburg Convention and Visitors Bureau (GPCVB) has taken the lead in launching a coordinated regional marketing effort. As the only local tourism bureau with full time professional staff, the GPCVB looks to form partnerships with the local county development offices and the MOVRC. In their first joint initiative, Showcase Mid-Ohio Valley took place over several months in early 2006, culminating with a regional tourism exposition in Parkersburg in May 2006. ARC funding allowed more than forty local hospitality businesses to receive marketing training, networking opportunities and access to a regional marketing campaign.

To follow up on the success of Showcase Mid-Ohio Valley, a series of marketing workshops were offered throughout the region from February – May 2007 to increase awareness with local businesses about the support available through the technology initiative, to network and to introduce the SBDC staff to spark individual counseling.

The unique topography that makes the area so attractive for outdoor activities, contributes to natural hazards. Flooding in particular is a significant factor due to the steep hillsides and narrow valleys. In a proactive move to lessen the impact of natural disasters, a regional hazard mitigation plan has been developed for the Mid-Ohio Valley. The staff of the MOVRC worked with local planning teams on this effort that emphasizes flood mitigation. Each plan outlines specific steps, such as acquisition of repetitively flooded homes. Over the past three years, repetitively flooded homes in three counties have been acquired at fair market value and demolished, removing families from physical harm and placing them in safe housing outside of the floodplain. Unfortunately, the counties did not receive sufficient funding to relocate all the qualified families interested in a federal buyout, so MOVRC will continue to work with

communities to secure more money. Flood mitigation planning will be a continuing process resulting in an annual update to the implementation measures.

In addition to the obvious natural resources visible above ground, the region holds treasures below the ground as well. Rich oil and gas reserves brought tremendous wealth to the Mid-Ohio Valley at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the energy industry has the potential of bringing renewed employment and prosperity in this century. The skyrocketing price of oil and natural gas has made reserves once considered too expensive to exploit attractive to energy producers. An incredible amount of new gas production has been put into service throughout the region since 2005 with a rush by energy companies to secure additional leases for future production. In addition to infusing capital into the region, the new oil and gas boom is providing new employment in well drilling and maintenance. WVU-P is developing a new curriculum specifically focused on helping older, displaced workers develop the skills necessary to fill new energy positions and to exploit better entrepreneurial opportunities in the energy industry. The boom is providing significant ancillary employment opportunities associated with oil and gas production, like deed abstracting.

## Strategic Evaluation -

Through the focus groups and committee process several themes began to develop regarding the economy of the region. Energy, particularly oil and gas exploration, is seen as an important factor. The opening of Hino Motors, West Virginia's first vehicle assembly plant, was as a landmark event in the region. Despite its current downturn the wood products industry is still considered a vital part of the economic future of the area. Other areas of interest include the polymer industry, tourism, retirees, healthcare, education and job training.

Nationally energy independence and global climate change are major issues. Given its long history in the energy industry Mid-Ohio Valley must chart a course that takes advantage of existing situation, but also positions the region to deal with the changing landscape of alternative energy. With two coal fired power plants, a natural gas "peaking" power plant, a hydro-electric dam, substantial oil and natural gas exploration and a proposed additional hydro-electric facility, energy is a major economic engine that provides both challenges and opportunities in the near term.

When Hino Motors announced that it was locating a truck assembly plant in Williamstown, Wood County it was a major milestone not only in the region, but the state as well. Although West Virginia has many suppliers to the automotive industry, Hino is the first final assembly plant in the state. Production began utilizing supplier, from Japan and from the US that were already supplying Hino's California facility. Now that the decision has been made to consolidate their assembly in West Virginia it opens the local market for suppliers. Local businesses have an opportunity to establish a relationship with Hino. Additionally, the Wood County Roundtable sees an opportunity to market the area to existing suppliers that might want to locate near their customer.

The economic downturn has had a devastating impact on the timber and wood products industry. However, over three-quarters of the land area of the region is forested, mostly hardwoods. Therefore, this industry will remain a local development target when the market rebounds.

An emphasis on the polymer industry, particularly value added recycling, is still a high priority for the region. Currently, there is no space available for immediate occupation for new businesses at the 156 acre Polymer Alliance Zone industrial park. Administrative offices for the PAZ take up space in a building occupied by a polymer business, prohibiting their ability to expand. Although West Virginia University-Parkersburg supports the PAZ and existing polymer businesses through specialized workforce development training, there is no facility at the park to accommodate classes. Training must be done offsite which is not optimal.

PAZ proposes to improve its ability to attract and retain polymer businesses, creating new employment and guaranteeing current employment through the development of part of the acreage it already owns. The Polymer Technology Park project proposes to construct access roads and a large parking area, site preparation to create footprints for several building sites, extension of public water and sewer service to building sites and construction of a 40,000+ square foot building. The new facility will include permanent office space for the PAZ staff and the National Center for Electronics Recycling and training space for WVU-P. Most of the new facility will be unfinished warehouse/industrial space ready to accommodate new polymer businesses. This will make the PAZ location more competitive nationally to attract green industry to the region.

Another essential element of this strategy is to professionalize the marketing of the region's attributes for economic development and tourism promotion. The MOVRC is uniquely positioned to take the lead the effort by enhancing and improving the regional website was a launching point for a cooperative campaign. The Technology initiative was to be a first step in a strategic plan to strengthen county development sites, encourage the creation of county and municipal sites and increase the number of local businesses capitalizing on e-commerce opportunities. By offering specialized hospitality training to professionalize existing service industry workforce and then cross-training workshops to familiarize tourism professionals with the region's attractions, MOVRC supports local efforts to grow the emerging tourism industry.

With the input of the local business community and the economic development community, the Workforce Investment Board-Mid Ohio Valley has developed training programs to upgrade the skills set of the existing workforce while striving to create a pool of potential employees with appropriate skills in high need and identified growth job categories. In support of local industry and employers, resources are available to provide specialized training through local educational institutions for existing employees. Augmenting, supplementing and upgrading the skills of an already dedicated, reliable and motivated workforce is essential to the economic development strategy of the region. Having a pool of potential employees with specialized skills is key to successfully growing emerging industrial clusters, like the PAZ. The growing demand for healthcare also means an increase in the need for healthcare workers. MOVRC works in conjunction with WIB-MOV to develop and fund training programs to increase the number of available nurses, nursing aides, technicians and home health care providers to sustain and promote the emerging healthcare sector.

Although manufacturing is waning throughout the region, it is still a major source of employment and revenue. As the workforce ages, many unskilled workers in the various manufacturing plants throughout the region are reaching retirement age and will need to be replaced. Over the past two decades, young people have been encouraged to attend college and develop a higher skill set making them overqualified for the anticipated openings for millworkers, pipefitters and other less skilled manufacturing positions as more and more Baby Boomers take their retirement. The boom in the oil and gas industry has also created the need for unskilled workers as oil riggers and field hands. Part of the region's economic development

strategy must take into consideration ensuring that there are qualified, reliable workers to fill these essential positions.

## Goals, Objectives and Strategies

**Goal/Objective      Increase Job Opportunities and Per Capita Income in Appalachia to Reach Parity with the Nation.**

### **Strategies:**

#### **Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

- Create and distribute an inventory of existing small businesses and entrepreneurial programs and support systems operating in the region. Work with local communities to encourage business start-ups.
- Develop and publish a survey of the region's schools, libraries and other public facilities with distance learning equipment such as videoconferencing and other resources available for business use.
- Develop and maintain MOVRC website to include information of interest to local small business and potential entrepreneurs, such as a schedule of local business seminars, career fairs and short courses on business skills.

#### **Diversify the Economic Base**

- Support small business marketing initiative to promote opportunities for entrepreneurship and hospitality employment through a regional effort directed by the Small Business Development Center and MOVRC.
- Encourage expansion, creation and location of suppliers to the new Hino Motors truck assembly plant.
- Secure funding for the Polymer Technology Park in the Polymer Alliance Zone, headquartered in Wood County, including upgrading Claywood Park PSD's sewer system to serve the expanding needs of the Park.

#### **Enhance Entrepreneurial Activity in the Region**

- Increase awareness among business startups that state of the art technology hardware and business support software is available in each county Economic Development office through the Mid-Ohio Valley Technology Initiative. Increase use by local entrepreneurs, encourage proper maintenance and upgrades to equipment and software by development offices to guaranty its usefulness.
- Pursue appropriate business incubator development.
- Continued and expanded operation of the EDA funded Regional Revolving Loan Fund and the USDA-RUS Intermediary Relending Program.

- Recapitalized and continued ARC funded targeted loan programs that provide additional loan funds in the four counties that are the most economically depressed: Calhoun, Ritchie, Roane and Wirt.

#### **Develop and Market Strategic Assets for Local Economies**

- Build upon efforts by Greater Parkersburg Tourism and Visitors Bureau to complete asset mapping and regional strategy – Region wide
- Provide technical assistance in developing, defining and obtaining funding for downtown beautification projects like the continuing project in St. Marys in Pleasants County, Middlebourne in Tyler County and the Newtown neighborhood in Jackson County.
- Provide technical assistance in developing, defining and obtaining funding for park and public facilities improvements like the rehabilitation of the Sistersville Ferry Landing in Tyler County, the construction of swimming pools in Ripley in Jackson County and Williamstown in Wood County, the Courthouse Square project in Wirt County and the Pennsboro Depot project in Ritchie County.

#### **Increase the Domestic and Global Competitiveness of the Existing Economic Base**

- Increase the capacity of existing water and sewer systems to serve existing industrial parks and industries in order to retain and expand jobs. Current projects include the Union Williams PSD Sewer Upgrade for Pleasants County Industrial Park in Pleasants County and extension of sewer service to the KS of West Virginia facility and AK of West Virginia facility outside of Ravenswood in Jackson County
- Improve transportation infrastructure at existing industrial parks through increased access to rail and river transportation through completion of projects like the Rail Spur- Phase IV in Jackson County and support of the rehabilitation of the port facility at Bens Run.

#### **Foster the Development and Use of Innovative Technologies**

- Continued to seek funding for the Polymer Alliance Zone Technology Park – Wood County

#### **Capitalize on the Economic Potential of the Appalachian Development Highway System**

- Work with the City of Parkersburg and the Wood County Economic Roundtable to encourage “smart” development near interchanges on the newly completed portion of Appalachian Corridor D in Wood County.
- Support projects that exploit improved access to markets like the water and sewer extensions are under construction at the proposed site of the Ritchie County Industrial/Commercial Centre located strategically along US 50 and the Kenna Industrial Park in southern Jackson County along I-77

- Encourage efforts to open additional areas to development through construct of additional roads like the proposed Blue & Gray Highway and upgrades to WV Route 2.

**Goal/Objective      Strengthen the Capacity of the People of Appalachia to Compete in the Global Economy**

**Strategies:**

**Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

- Support local community capacity building efforts like the Possibilities Forum and the C4D programs

**Enhance Workforce Skills through Training**

- Administer programming through the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Board to provide job-readiness training and support services to displaced workers.
- Develop and administer innovating programming, like the BREATH project, to expose disadvantaged youth to career opportunities through the Youth Advantage Program.
- Support ongoing efforts at WVU-P to enhance the campus and improve its student experience to attract and retain more students.
- Strengthen the partnership between the business community and labor organizations through the support of apprenticeship programs.

**Increase Access to Quality Child Care and Early Childhood Education**

- Secure funding for a Child Development Center at WVU-P to provide daycare service to children of students, many of whom are re-entering the workforce and looking to upgrade skills. Center will also provide hands on training for early childhood development students, many of whom are low income.

**Increase Educational Attainment and Achievement**

- Support efforts to ensure local children have a competitive learning environment comparable to national peers in less rural areas through the construction of state of the art facilities, like a new high school for Pleasants County to replace aging St. Marys High School facility or the new public library in Harrisville, Ritchie County.
- Work with educational system to develop youth entrepreneurship training.

**Provide Access to Health-Care Professionals**

- Support communities with rehabilitation, expansion and new construction projects to bring state of the art technology and medical services to rural areas

with the expansions of existing facilities in Wood County and construction of a new facility for Sistersville General Hospital, bringing additional medical services to residents of Tyler and Pleasants Counties.

- Assist with efforts to place doctors in medically under-served areas through the state's Rural Health Training Program and other physicians' recruitment programs.

#### **Promote Health through Wellness and Prevention**

- Encourage programs to strengthen prenatal and neonatal health care programs in counties with higher than national infant mortality rates.
- Assist with efforts to locate satellite health centers, co-located with other essential community services.
- Assist with efforts to develop programs to improve women and child healthcare and parenting skills.
- Promote projects that will lead to healthier communities like safe routes to schools projects and walkable communities initiatives in the Town of Elizabeth in Wirt County and in the City of Sistersville, Tyler County.

### **Goal/Objective      Develop and Improve Appalachia's Infrastructure to Make the Region Economically Competitive**

#### **Strategies:**

##### **Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

- Work to see the citizens of region have access to public services in government facilities that are safe, secure handicapped accessible through projects like the replacement of the municipal building for the Town of Grantsville, courthouse security projects various counties and ADA improvement projects in Calhoun, Ritchie and Tyler Counties.

##### **Build and Enhance Basic Infrastructure**

- Encourage communities and public service districts to recognize the value of investment in existing systems and seek funding for upgrading and rehabilitation projects that will maximize current resources. Encourage and facilitate preventative maintenance programs for municipal and public service district systems to comply with existing permits.
- Upgrade non-complying systems to meet permit requirements. Assist communities like Pennsboro in Ritchie County and Sistersville in Tyler County to bring their systems into compliance with state regulatory agencies.
- Increase the percentage of residents served by water in the area by 10% over 5 years through support of projects like the Countywide Water Project in Pleasants

County, the Riser Ridge Project in Wood County and the Burning Springs project in Wirt County.

- Increase the percentage of residents served by sewer systems in the area by 5% over 5 years through support of projects like the Cottageville and Silverton projects in Jackson County and the Newark and Spring Valley project in Wirt County.
- Increase the capacity of existing water systems in the area by 25% over 5 years through support of projects like the upgrade projects in Sistersville and Friendly PSD in Tyler County and Spencer in Roane County.
- Increase the capacity and security of existing sewer systems in the area by 10% over 5 years through support of projects like the upgrade projects planned by St. Marys in Pleasants County and the Claywood Park PSD in Wood County.

#### **Increase the Accessibility and Use of Telecommunications Technology**

- Improve the knowledge of educators, officials and businesses about technology.

#### **Build and Enhance Environmental Assets**

- Provide technical assistance in developing, defining and obtaining funding for park and public facilities improvements that enhance the region's natural beauty like riverfront development projects in Sistersville in Tyler County, St. Mary's Marina in Pleasants County, Parkersburg in Wood County and Ravenswood in Jackson County.

#### **Promote the Development of an Intermodal Transportation Network**

- Pursue funding for improvements and upgrades to transportation facilities like the Jackson and Roane County airports.

## PROJECT PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

The CEDS/RDP Committee is comprised of a representative from each local development authority in Region V, plus representatives from the private sector. Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month in Parkersburg. The Finance Committee meets on the third Wednesday of each month in Parkersburg. The meetings are well attended and there is generally a good mix of county commissioners, mayors and local development officials who all actively participate.

The staff of the MOVRC collects and analyzes data on economic conditions, changes in federal and state regulations, unemployment information and infrastructure needs. This information is used to prepare the plan of action that includes a list of priorities for Region V.

By providing a list of prioritized projects the committee is indicating the relative importance of projects in meeting the goals and objectives identified in the Regional Development Plan. Four categories of priority measures, weighted to reflect the committee's concerns, are used in the process. The four measures are; 1) economic impact, 2) health/safety threat, 3) benefit analysis of project cost to households benefitted and 4) project status (readiness to proceed to construction).

Economic Impact - Both the direct and indirect impacts of a project will be evaluated. Factors considered include but are not limited to the number of jobs created, payrolls, taxes generated and purchases in the community. In accordance with EDA guidelines the following seven factors will also be considered:

- The proposed investments are market-based.
- The proposed investments are proactive in nature and scope.
- The proposed investments look beyond the immediate economic horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify the local and regional economy.
- The proposed investments maximize the attraction of private sector investment and would not otherwise come to fruition absent public investment.
- The proposed investments have a high probability of success.

- Level of local, state and private matching funds.
- High degree of commitment of local political “capital” by elected officials.
- Commitment of human resources talent to project outcomes.
- The proposed investments result in an environment where higher skill, higher wage jobs are created.
- The proposed investments maximize Return on Taxpayer Investment.

Health/Safety Threat - The committee will evaluate the seriousness of the threat, the project’s impact on the situation and the availability of local funding to address emergency situations.

Benefit Analysis - Traditional cost/benefit ratios will be employed as an analytical tool. However, the committee will also consider socio-economic characteristics of the proposed beneficiaries and will assess the relative degree of need for the project.

Project Status - Priority will be given to projects which leverage other funds, are multi-jurisdictional in nature and which exhibit a readiness to proceed.

Every project receives a rating for each of the priority measures; the sum of the four measures determines the project ranking. Projects with the same number of points receive the same ranking. (See Consolidated Project Priority List.) Projects are ranked on a regional basis; however, a list has been prepared ranking the projects within each of the eight counties. (Project Priority List by county follows the Consolidated Project Priority List.)

## Consolidated Project Priority List

### Project Priority List by County

## APPENDIX

MOVRC Board Members

MOVRC Staff

Minutes from MOVRC Board Meetings

Attendance and Minutes from CEDS Stakeholder Meetings