

GARRETT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN



(February 2011)

Garrett County Economic Development Strategic Plan

Executive Summary:

In 2010, five major Garrett County institutions, including both public agencies and private nonprofits, initiated a planning process focused on the broad economic development of Garrett County, Maryland. The five major institutions organized into an executive committee that included representatives from the Economic Development Department of Garrett County, the Garrett County Development Corporation, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Garrett County Community Action Committee, and Garrett College. In turn, the executive committee formed a broader steering committee with representatives from major industry sectors in the county. The steering committee (including executive committee members) met over the course of nine months to develop this economic development plan. This process was facilitated by Paige Teegarden of Think Outside.

The group identified the following vision for what it would like Garrett County to look like in 2025: *Garrett County will be known as a growing, thriving, rural community with successful farms and businesses, vibrant towns, and user-friendly public parks and forests. Garrett County will be a rural leader in environmentally and socially sustainable growth. Its economy will include diverse types and sizes of businesses and wages will be increasing.* (More details are contained in the main plan).

In order to fulfill this vision, and based on an analysis of the strategic position of the county, Garrett County will pursue a strategic direction summarized as follows: *Seek a growing population, an increase in visitors, and growth in median wages, business revenue, and profit by focusing on socially sustainable, clean energy ¹ development and growth.* This strategic direction should be used as a guide or strategic filter as new opportunities arise throughout the plan's implementation period.

The strategic direction is made operational through the following six goals, which are in turn further defined by objectives and major actions included in the plan.

- 1. Infrastructure and Facilities:** Garrett County invests in infrastructure (roads, electric, telecommunication, water/sewer) and in community, business, and recreational facilities that facilitate sustainable growth.
- 2. Workforce Development:** Garrett County has a highly competent and well-educated workforce with the skills desired by existing, new, and relocating businesses.

¹ Clean Energy is *energy that can be extracted, generated, and/or consumed without any significant negative impact to the environment. It encompasses renewable energy (a natural energy which does not have a limited supply i.e. geothermal, solar, wind, biomass), also often referred to as alternative energy.*

3. **Business Start-Up and Support:** Garrett County seeks to increase the number and diversity of growing, profitable businesses that are paying ‘head of household’ wages.
4. **Community Planning and Community Leadership:** Garrett County implements community plans and policies which support sustainable business growth, preserve quality of life, and expand community leadership.
5. **Energy and Natural Resources:** Garrett County supports responsible extraction and development of energy resources in the county and environmentally sustainable approaches to the recreational development of public lands, farmland, and waterways.
6. **Promotion and Marketing:** Garrett County institutions promote “the Garrett County experience” in order to increase people living in, visiting, and starting businesses in the county.

Introduction:

In 2010, an economic development steering committee and executive committee embarked on a nine-month process to analyze the resources and position of the county and identify concrete, strategic ideas that would result in the ongoing sustainable economic development of Garrett County, Maryland. The Economic Development Steering Committee consisted of representatives from nine ‘industry’ sectors—retail, manufacturing, real estate and developers/contractors, tourism, agriculture and natural resources, workforce development, services and technology, health and civic, and government.

The plan is written for local leaders and institutions and provides a framework—it helps:

1. coordinate actions of major institutions around economic development priorities;
2. provide a filter for making decisions about new opportunities that arise for economic development;
3. assist in seeking grant funding; and
4. provide a framework for community accountability

It should be noted that the committee took a broad view of economic development, acknowledging that there are many inter-related and sometimes contradictory issues and principles that must be balanced in the approach to economic development. Consequently, the plan is broad in scope. In considering economic development, committee members recognized the following:

- Aspects of a high quality of life—i.e., natural beauty, access to the outdoors, low crime, excellent schools, and outstanding health care—can draw new residents, visitors, and business; therefore, it is important to consider quality of life concerns.
- The regulatory burden can increase costs for businesses and hurt competitiveness, at the same time regulations can protect workers and the environment. Economic development requires smart regulation.

- Infrastructure (roads, internet, electricity, and water/sewer) is often used as threshold criteria for new businesses and can be important in supporting an increase in population without negatively impacting the quality of life.
- A growing population can help drive economic growth; a growing population without forethought and planning could negatively impact quality of life.
- Businesses must be successful and profitable for them to afford to pay 'head of household' wages.
- The workforce must have sufficient competency, education, and experience in order to expect higher wages; further, a lower unemployment rate (scarcity of labor) can help to drive up wages.
- Adequate and affordable childcare, housing, and transportation are critical to our rural labor market.

These inter-related and fluid factors contribute to conditions for a thriving successful community. Because these factors (among others) influence one another and are non-linear, there is always a challenge in writing a plan that must be read in a linear way. In this document we have tried to make cross references to other places where actions and ideas support one another, but there are undoubtedly other ways these objectives and actions could have been divided. Readers should consider the plan in its entirety.

The Garrett County Development Corporation has agreed to convene the steering committee a couple of times each year to review progress on the plan and make decisions about on-going priorities and other adjustments. In this way, the plan can be a 'living,' relevant document.

The plan is organized into the following major sections:

- I. Process Description
- II. County Description
- III. Vision
- IV. Situation Analysis Summary
- V. Strategic Direction
- VI. Summary Goals and Priorities
- VII. Detailed Goals, Objectives, Major Actions
- VIII. Implementation Notes
- IX. Community Measures and Accountability
- X. List of Participants
- XI. Sustainability Addendum

I. Process Description

From May 2010 through November 2010 the Economic Development Steering Committee, which consisted of representatives from nine 'industry' sectors in Garrett County, worked with facilitator Paige Teegarden of Think Outside to develop this Economic Development Strategic Plan. The process was developed by an executive committee made up of representatives from the Garrett County Department of Economic Development, the Garrett County Development Corporation, the Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc., the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, and

Garrett College. Questions about process and the selection of steering committee members were handled by the executive committee.

The process is summarized below. For full agendas and raw notes, see the Process Attachment to this plan.

Two steering committee meetings were held in May and June to review the process, roles, and vision for the future of the county, preliminary information about the current state of Garrett County economy and historical perspectives, and an overview of what 'green' or 'sustainability' means.

Listening Sessions were organized by industry sector and led by the representative(s) of that sector on the steering committee. Listening sessions included:

- Government led by John Nelson
- Retail led by Bill Meagher
- Manufacturing led by Joe Thomas and Gary Ruddell
- Real Estate, Developers, and Contractors led by Ruth Seib
- Tourism led by Mike Dreisbach
- Agriculture and Natural Resources led by Willie Lantz and Cheryl DeBerry
- Workforce Development led by Julie Yoder
- Services and Technology led by Randy Rodeheaver
- Health and Civic led by Rodney Glotfelty

The listening sessions, which were attended by over 100 participants, included discussions about visions for a thriving community, assets/strengths, successes, weaknesses, opportunities, and regional trends and threats, as well as specific ideas for the economic development plan.

The information from these sessions was presented by steering committee members, themes across the sessions were identified, and work groups were formed around groups of action ideas.

Work groups were:

- 1) Infrastructure, Community Facilities, and Community Planning
- 2) Workforce Development
- 3) Marketing
- 4) Natural Resources and Energy
- 5) Business Start-Up and Support

The work groups met between two and three times in order to consider the ideas from the listening sessions, add other ideas, and formulate goals and objectives.

The steering committee then met two times to review and refine the work of the workgroups and to consider overarching issues, including the role of sustainability. The steering committee also prioritized objectives and selected top action items.

Two Garrett County Sustainability Meetings were held to learn about and then consider the types of ideas that had been presented regarding the use of sustainability as a framework for economic development. The first meeting included the following speakers and topics:

University Research and Development — Where do the opportunities lie for fostering new businesses?

Brian Darmody, University of Maryland

Mike Dougherty, West Virginia University

Dr. Oguz Soysal and Hilkat Soysal, Frostburg State University

Maryland Green, Smart and Growing

Kathy Magruder, MD Clean Energy Center

Andrew Gohn, Maryland Energy Administration

Energy: Exploration, Generation, & Efficiency — Transitioning Garrett County's existing industry sectors to the clean energy economy

John Emerick, Allegheny Power

David Yoxtheimer, Pennsylvania State University

Recycling and Sustainability Efforts — What are the new green jobs emerging from this sector?

Barnsley Williams, ORWAK

Lawrence Gingerich, Frostburg State University's Climate Action Plan

In addition, Liz Burdock of DowLohnes Government Strategies developed several preliminary papers on sustainability topics for the group's consideration.

During the second sustainability meeting, volunteers from the steering committee considered the merits of different ideas for using sustainable principles and action ideas to promote economic development. The group confirmed the integration of sustainability as a key element of strategic direction and prioritized several sustainable action ideas. While sustainability and particular ideas promoting and supporting sustainability are found throughout the plan, there is also a Sustainability Addendum to this plan that pulls all of these elements together.

Finally, the committee participants reviewed the draft plan, provided comments, discussed implementation, and identified institutions that would take a lead on priority action items. The executive committee also discussed accountability by planning:

- semi-annual reviews of the plan and progress on the measures for priority action items; and
- community data and a community score card to help identify potentially necessary changes in strategy.

The final draft plan was then reviewed by the executive committee, final changes were made, and the plan was presented to the Garrett County Board of Commissioners and the Garrett County Development Corporation for adoption. It was presented to other institutional boards for their information.

II. County Description

Garrett County, the westernmost county in Maryland, has long been known for its rural lifestyle and natural beauty. It is the state's second largest county in terms of area, as well as the most sparsely populated county in the state. With over 76,000 acres of parks, rivers, lakes, and publicly-owned land, Garrett County has historically been a

haven for outdoor enthusiasts. Unfortunately, the county has also histrionically been known for its high unemployment, low educational attainment, low incomes, and relative remoteness.

Fortunately, a number of relatively recent events have changed perceptions about the county and its residents. The completion of Interstate 68 improved both access and egress to/from Garrett County, making it easier for county residents to access amenities and services available outside the county and improving non-residents' access to the county. With the improved access provided with the completion of I-68, tourism-related industries have grown and flourished over the past 20 years. The completion of I-68 changed the demographics of people visiting the county by providing much improved access to people living in the Baltimore – Washington, D.C. – Northern Virginia area and improved access to those market areas from Garrett County. With this improved access and growth in tourism, vacation home development thrived, driving the real estate tax base to nearly triple over a ten-year timeframe. Currently, over 60% of the county's real estate tax revenues come from the Deep Creek Lake Watershed, which is the center of vacation home development.

While tourism is a very important component of the local economy, the county made progress in diversifying its business base and reducing unemployment during this same timeframe. The county suffered a major economic setback in 1996 when Bausch & Lomb (B&L), the county's largest private employer, announced that it was closing its Oakland-based Ray Ban Sunglass manufacturing facility. As a result, unemployment increased dramatically peaking at nearly 18% in the winter months and averaging almost 14% in 1997. The B&L closing acted as a catalyst that caused the county to undertake a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis and develop the county's first strategic plan for economic development. The B&L crisis also drove the county's leadership to focus on and invest in economic development.

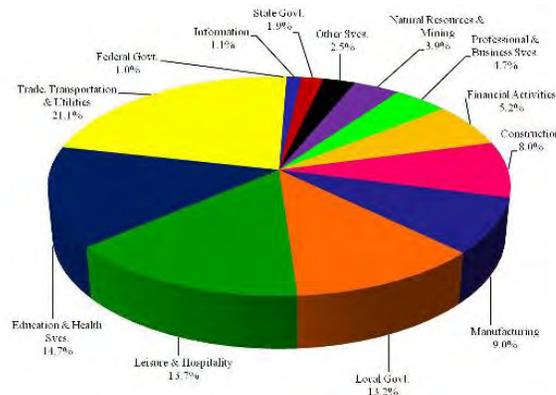
Following this initial plan, the county's leadership made significant progress in developing infrastructure to support business growth, and diversifying and growing the county's economy. This progress is evident in the following series of charts depicting various economic indicators.

Average Annual Civilian Employment

Year	Employment
2009	15,306
2008	16,078
2007	16,153
2006	16,176
2005	15,846
2004	15,429
2003	12,954
2002	12,822
2001	12,354
2000	12,226
1999	12,364
1998	12,838
1997	12,566
1996	13,099
1995	12,588

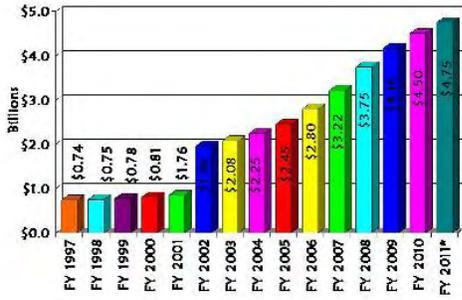
Source: MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, Career & Workforce Information, Annual Employment & Payroll Reports

Employment by Sector



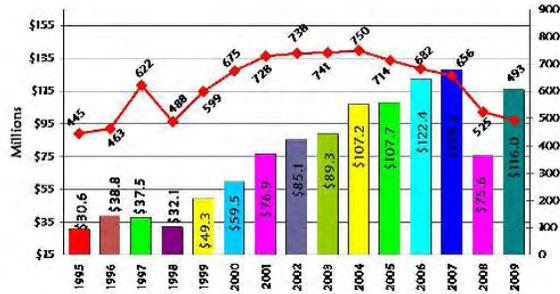
Source: MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, Employment & Payrolls, Third Quarter 2010 (farm wages not available)

Assessable Tax Base



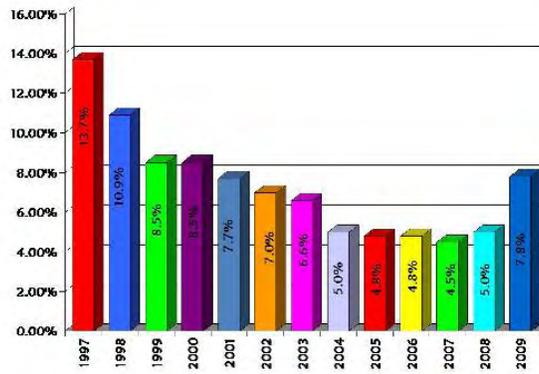
*Estimated
Source: Garrett Co. Finance Office

Building Permits



Source: Garrett Co. Office of Planning & Land Development

Average Annual County Unemployment Rate



Source: MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, Civil Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment, 1997 – 2009

While Garrett County is located in Maryland, it is bordered by only one Maryland county (Allegany) and shares a common border with three Pennsylvania (Fayette, Somerset, and Bedford) and four West Virginia (Preston, Tucker, Grant, and Mineral) counties. Due to its geographical location, geography, and demographics, Garrett County differs significantly from most Maryland jurisdictions – especially those in the Baltimore – DC Metro area. Since economics are regional and do not follow political boundaries, it is prudent to look at the county on a regional rather than a state (Maryland) basis. When one looks at the county in relationship to its neighbors in the region, the county seems to fare well when compared to its neighbors in the tri-state region in most economic indicators as depicted in the following series of charts.

Regional Income

REGION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME	PER CAPITA INCOME	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
MARYLAND				
Allegany County	\$ 36,515	\$ 51,162	\$ 23,100	28,872
Garrett County	\$ 44,908	\$ 58,997	\$ 26,449	12,969
PENNSYLVANIA				
Bedford County	\$ 39,483	\$ 49,932	\$ 20,179	19,983
Fayette County	\$ 32,948	\$ 45,223	\$ 18,774	57,954
Somerset County	\$ 37,754	\$ 47,988	\$ 19,892	30,545
WEST VIRGINIA				
Grant County	\$ 35,455	\$ 45,983	\$ 19,328	5,092
Mineral County	\$ 40,092	\$ 52,032	\$ 22,338	11,346
Preston County	\$ 38,058	\$ 45,997	\$ 18,136	11,838
Tucker County	\$ 33,299	\$ 46,701	\$ 22,005	3,173
9-COUNTY REGION	\$ 37,812	\$ 49,335	\$ 21,133	181,772

Source: Decision Data Resources, Demographic Detail Comparison Report, October 2010

Regional Unemployment

COUNTY	2008 ANNUAL	2009 ANNUAL	3 rd QTR. 2010
MARYLAND			
Allegany County	2,052	3,027	3,066
Garrett County	840	1,297	1,225
PENNSYLVANIA			
Bedford County	1,700	2,700	2,717
Fayette County	4,400	6,200	6,533
Somerset County	2,500	3,400	3,817
WEST VIRGINIA			
Grant County	270	510	557
Mineral County	600	1,020	1,130
Preston County	580	1,100	1,077
Tucker County	180	330	347
9-COUNTY REGION	13,122	19,584	20,469

Sources: MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, WV Bureau of Employment Programs; PA Department of Labor & Industry

Educational Attainment (Population Over 25 Years)

	Less Than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	High School Graduate (Incl. Equivalency)	Some College (No Degree)	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
MARYLAND							
Allegany County	4.2%	10.6%	43.0%	19.3%	7.7%	8.4%	8.8%
Garrett County	4.8%	10.9%	42.0%	17.2%	7.7%	10.6%	6.7%
PENNSYLVANIA							
Bedford County	5.6%	11.3%	51.5%	12.6%	6.7%	8.3%	4.0%
Fayette County	5.3%	11.9%	49.0%	13.1%	7.4%	8.8%	4.6%
Somerset County	6.1%	11.7%	49.2%	12.3%	6.6%	9.1%	5.1%
WEST VIRGINIA							
Grant County	11.6%	10.9%	49.0%	13.4%	3.5%	7.2%	4.4%
Mineral County	3.9%	8.0%	48.4%	17.6%	8.0%	7.8%	6.3%
Preston County	7.4%	10.6%	49.7%	15.2%	4.1%	8.0%	4.0%
Tucker County	6.6%	13.3%	50.6%	12.1%	4.4%	8.2%	5.0%

	Percent High School Graduate or Higher	Percent Bachelor's Degree or Higher
MARYLAND		
Allegany County	85.2%	15.2%
Garrett County	84.2%	17.3%
PENNSYLVANIA		
Bedford County	83.2%	12.4%
Fayette County	82.8%	13.4%
Somerset County	82.3%	14.2%
WEST VIRGINIA		
Grant County	77.5%	11.6%
Mineral County	88.1%	14.1%
Preston County	82.0%	12.1%
Tucker County	80.2%	13.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

One of the biggest challenges facing the county, as well as the tri-state region, is population stagnation and/or decline. Garrett County's population grew at a 6% rate from 1980 to 1990 and another 6% from 1990 to 2000. However, current estimates show that the county lost population (0.25%) from 2000 to 2010. At the same time, the county's population has continued to age. The following series of charts reflect the population trends.

Historical Population

1970 CENSUS	1980 CENSUS	1990 CENSUS	2000 CENSUS	Spring 2010 ESTIMATED
21,476	26,498	28,138	29,846	29,769

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Decision Data Resources, Demographic Detail Comparison Reports, October 2010

Population by Age

AGE	1990 CENSUS	2000 CENSUS	Spring 2010 ESTIMATED
0 - 4	1,951	1,810	1,890
5 - 14	4,334	4,291	3,362
15 - 19	2,172	2,210	2,025
20 - 24	1,786	1,512	1,848
25 - 34	4,415	3,618	3,958
35 - 44	3,978	4,615	3,760
45 - 54	3,052	4,066	4,187
55 - 64	2,585	3,263	3,599
65 - 74	2,242	2,389	2,881
75 - 84	1,236	1,514	1,682
85+	389	558	775

Source: Decision Data Resources, Demographic Detail Comparison Reports, October 2010

The county's declining/stagnant population is one of the biggest challenges to building and growing the local economy. In order to successfully grow the economy, the county must find ways to induce more people to live in and visit the county. The challenge is finding ways to grow the economy and allowing local residents to enjoy the benefits of a growing economy, while preserving the county's charm and natural beauty. The updated strategic plan addresses this and other challenges facing the county in the near and mid-term future.

III. Garrett County Economic Vision 2025

Garrett County will be known as a growing, thriving, rural community with successful farms and businesses, vibrant towns, and user-friendly public parks and forests. Garrett County will be a rural leader in environmentally and socially sustainable growth. Its economy will include diverse types and sizes of businesses, and wages will be increasing.

As a growing, thriving, rural community, Garrett County will have:

- low unemployment and poverty rates;
- satisfying employment opportunities that support a good standard of living (head of household jobs often defined by 'self sufficient wages');
- clean, safe, vibrant, and commercially-diverse towns and growth areas;
- excellent schools and opportunities for life-long learning;
- quality housing affordable to various income levels;
- low residential and commercial vacancy rates;
- healthy, active population which is engaged in the community;
- well-maintained and used public lands and waterways, including a world class trail system;
- low crime rate;
- vibrant, growing, profitable, diverse businesses;

- locally grown and processed foods and products; and
- active and comprehensive recycling opportunities.

Please see Accountability and Measures section for more information on measures of success.

Principles and Beliefs:

This plan applies the following principles and beliefs to its vision and its approach:

Growth and Quality of Life. As an economic development strategic plan, this plan's success (or failure) is ultimately judged by whether there are a sufficient number of 'desirable' jobs providing a good standard of living in the county. However, growth in wages alone is not the only measure of successful development. Economic growth or growth in wages that resulted in a lower quality of life for most residents in the county would not be desired. Over time a lower quality of life would adversely affect the county's ability to attract new businesses and residents. Consequently, growth must be achieved in ways that honor important components of quality of life which include health, recreation, access to nature, sense of community, and time with family and friends.

Regionalism. Economic development requires a regional perspective in our partnerships and approaches. Commerce, businesses, workers, environmental pollution, and social discontent do not stop at state or county jurisdictional lines. We must understand and work within a broad, regional context and understand what productive role the county plays within this larger economic environment.

Partnership. Economic development requires a collaborative effort, including county agencies, citizen groups, and local employers, as well as state, regional, and national entities. Many other formal plans developed by governmental agencies, businesses, and community institutions are important to the success of this economic development plan. Where there is a particularly relevant connection, these other plans are mentioned explicitly as part of this plan. In general, it should be noted that the following local government plans are supported by this plan:

- Health Department Strategic Plan
- Comprehensive Plan
- Workforce Housing Plan
- Heritage Plan

IV. Situation Analysis Summary

The Steering Committee (as well as participants in visioning sessions) examined strengths, weaknesses, and trends that provide opportunities or threaten economic progress. The summary of these key factors is found below.

Strengths:

1. The county is centrally located within one to two days' travel of a significant portion of the population of the United States. Further, there is good East-West Interstate highway access and potential for rail transport connecting Garrett County to large population centers.
2. Natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities make the area a popular vacation destination and an attractive area for residency.
3. The county has significant natural resources—including coal, Marcellus shale natural gas, and forests—which could spur innovative energy production.
4. In general the county has excellent roads and, in business parks, high quality water, sewer, electricity, and high speed Internet are available.
5. The county has a diverse economic base and had relatively low unemployment until the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009.
6. Local government is interested in supporting businesses and is credited with supporting small and large scale entrepreneurs.
7. Public schools are highly rated, and centrally located Garrett College has significant ties to further education, training opportunities, and innovative programming.
8. The Garrett County Scholarship Program is an often-mentioned strength that should be leveraged through greater marketing.
9. Community leadership is collaborative and works well both internally and with regional entities.

Weaknesses:

1. Maryland's business regulation environment is generally written for more urban areas by people with urban experiences. This can put the county at a competitive disadvantage in comparison to nearby West Virginia and Pennsylvania counties.
2. The county has had a stagnant to declining population since the 1980s, which makes it particularly challenging to expand small, locally-oriented businesses.
3. Telecommunications infrastructure is far behind most of Maryland. Cellular telephone service is spotty, and affordable, reliable broadband Internet access is not accessible in much of the county.
4. The North-South Interstate access is not sufficient.
5. There is no central shopping district or mall with large numbers of shops.
6. The population is aging.
7. There is a need to engage younger residents in preparation to take on community leadership positions.
8. The county's adult educational attainment is the lowest in Maryland; fewer residents who remain in the county after age 25 have bachelors or higher degrees than in the rest of the state.
9. Housing prices are high enough that it is difficult for young families and professionals to afford adequate, quality housing.
10. Incomes lag behind the rest of the state.

Trends Providing Opportunities:

1. Growing interest in active lifestyles across the country is a good fit with the county's recreational and outdoor opportunities.
2. Interests nationally in alternative and small-scale clean energy production as a means of supporting good paying jobs and transitioning the country from a dependence on fossil fuels.
3. Destination bike trails are located in close proximity to the county and are a natural fit to be further developed in Garrett County.
4. New technologies making Marcellus shale natural gas accessible.
5. Nearby Morgantown, West Virginia continues to grow.
6. Increasingly, information and communication technology are making the ability to work from home or remote areas more 'normal' and open the possibility of more people living in Garrett County whose jobs are outside of the area.
7. The baby-boomers will soon be retiring in larger numbers; many who live within driving distance to Garrett County are purchasing vacation homes here. Consequently, Garrett County could be well situated as a seasonal retirement destination.

Threats:

1. Casinos regionally could siphon off vacationers.
2. If oil/energy costs rise, it is unclear if the county will benefit as those within a day's drive come to the area to vacation or if it will, over time, be hurt as people want even closer getaways or "staycations."
3. Marcellus Shale natural gas and other energy production could pollute one of the county's largest assets, its natural beauty and environmental sustainability.
4. Ongoing income and economic disparities between full-time residents and those who vacation here or live here part-time could sow seeds of discontent. In turn, this unhappiness could lead to low customer service and 'turning off' those considering relocating here or vacationing here.

V. Strategic Direction

This plan envisions an interlocking and synergistic focus on the following:

- increasing the number of well paying jobs;
- business growth and increased profitability;
- moderate population growth;
- leveraging of the county's natural resources and stewarding its public lands and waterways; and
- ongoing community leadership and regional engagement.

This synergy is driven by positioning the county as a rural leader in environmentally and socially sustainable growth and development. Garrett County leaders recognize the critical role that the area's natural resources and beauty play in the ongoing economic development of the county. The county's incredible landscape and outdoor recreational

opportunities are important reasons why visitors and new residents come to the area. Natural resources in the county—coal, natural gas, wood/biomass, and wind—offer an opportunity to position the county to take advantage of broad economic trends toward small-scale clean energy production. Further, the county has existing businesses with expertise in weatherizing homes, construction, manufacturing, and energy production, all of which can be leveraged with a focus on environmentally and socially-sustainable growth. By highlighting environmentally and socially-sustainable growth, this plan seeks to preserve important elements of quality of life.

The strategic direction proposed by this plan could be summarized as follows: *Seek a growing population, an increase in visitors, and growth in median wages, business revenue, and profit by focusing on socially sustainable, clean energy development and growth. This strategic direction should be used as a guide or strategic filter as new opportunities arise throughout the plan implementation time.*

VI. Summary Goals and Objectives

A complete set of goals and objectives is located in the next section of this plan. This section summarizes the goals and topics covered by objectives.

Garrett County will pursue its vision by applying its strategic direction in the pursuit of the following six goals, which are further defined with the objectives. Note that “Garrett County” in these goals refers to a range of partners throughout the community that will take an active role in pursuing the goal, including, but not limited to: county agencies, Garrett College, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, and the Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.

- 1. Infrastructure and Facilities:** Garrett County invests in infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunication, water/sewer) and in community, business, and recreational facilities which facilitate sustainable growth.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. increasing non-satellite broadband Internet accessibility;
2. developing facilities and infrastructure that enhance the county’s arts, heritage, and recreation capacity;
3. maintaining and developing transportation infrastructure;
4. supporting processing, production, and sale of local agriculture products;
and
5. supporting ‘public’ transportation services.

- 2. Workforce Development:** Garrett County has a highly competent and well-educated workforce with the skills desired by existing, new, and relocating businesses.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. developing and offering certification courses for employees to advance;
2. supporting lower income adults to help increase educational attainment of adults in the county;

3. coordinating career coaching and training/education planning;
4. local businesses investing in training and staff development;
5. education or training for agriculture; and
6. reducing barriers to employment and maintaining employment.

3. Business Start-Up and Support: Garrett County seeks to increase the number and diversity of growing, profitable businesses that are paying higher wages.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. supporting leadership and management development in businesses;
2. enhancing capacity to support and attract high performing businesses;
3. providing opportunities to reduce operating costs;
4. encouraging buy local (business to business) arrangements; and
5. recognizing/highlighting environmentally sustainable business efforts.

4. Community Planning and Community Leadership: Garrett County implements community plans and policies which support sustainable business growth, preserve quality of life, and expand community leadership.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. championing the rural perspective on sustainable growth;
2. supporting workforce housing;
3. coordinating policy and county actions that enhance heritage, recreational, and cultural opportunities;
4. facilitating opportunities for business and community leadership to impact regulator framework;
5. planning for infrastructure needs with a regional perspective;
6. supporting development of the next generation of community leaders; and
7. increasing the community capacity to provide and use community-level economic and social/demographic data.

5. Energy and Natural Resources: Garrett County supports responsible extraction and development of energy resources in the county and environmentally sustainable approaches to the recreational development of public lands, farmland, and waterways.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. increasing clean energy businesses;
2. responsibly developing Marcellus shale natural gas and other energy resources;
3. creating a sustainable economic development fund;
4. encouraging weatherization and the use of energy saving technologies;
5. supporting a robust and comprehensive recycling program;
6. maintaining the total current acreage of farmland;
7. maintaining excellent water quality; and

8. accessing and using local and state-owned parks, forests, and other recreational facilities.

6. Promotion and Marketing: Garrett County institutions promote “the Garrett County experience” in order to increase people living in, visiting, and starting businesses in the county.

This goal is further defined and will be met by objectives in the following areas:

1. increasing opportunities for Economic Development Department to pitch Garrett County;
2. creating and promoting the Garrett County brand;
3. increasing ‘shoulder season’ events;
4. promoting locally grown agriculture and locally produced goods;
5. supporting the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce in increasing visitors and potential residents;
6. coordinating promotional messages; and
7. promoting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development – energy in action.

Two times per year the Garrett County Development Corporation will convene the steering committee to review progress on the objectives and action items. As necessary, the committee will select additional action items to be worked on or prioritized. In this way, the plan will remain a living document, and action items that were not prioritized during the original planning process can receive attention.

VII. Detailed Goals, Objectives, Major Actions, and Responsible Institutions

Following are the goals, objectives, and major action items that the steering committee identified during the planning process. The committee also prioritized major action items. Criteria for prioritization included: importance of the action, likelihood that the action would have significant impact, and whether the action could be started (in a substantial way) within the next 24 months. These priority action items have been assigned to a community institution which will lead the work in this area. These details are found in the implementation notes which can be used to guide the steering committee’s review of progress.

<p><u>Infrastructure and Facilities GOAL:</u> Garrett County invests in infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunication, water/sewer) and in community, business, and recreational facilities which facilitate sustainable growth.</p>

Garrett County will pursue the above goal through the following objectives.

Objectives:

1. **Increase non-satellite, broadband Internet availability to at least 90% of the addresses in the county by 2014 (note that prices and speed available should not vary significantly based on location).**

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Department of Economic Development (Economic Development) will have made significant progress in the following major actions necessary to reach this objective:

- a. By the end of 2011, complete and implement a plan identifying the financing, technology, and approach, as well as mapping the areas to be covered by the plan, for meeting this objective.
- b. Create a committee to advise and support the broadband plan.

Note this work is receiving a significant boost from the recent funding for broadband access.

In addition, assuming available resources, Economic Development will:

- c. Participate in the federal and state policy debate about the provision of broadband in rural areas.

2. Develop infrastructure and facilities that enhance the county's arts, heritage, and recreation capacity.

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), Garrett Trails, the Garrett County Community Action Committee (GCCAC), and the Garrett County Office of Planning and Land Development (Planning and Land Development) will actively work to:

- a. Begin implementation of the Heritage Plan.
- b. Support planning and implementation for the Continental Divide Loop Trail System.²

In addition, assuming available resources or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- c. Create at least one Arts and Entertainment District, which includes a venue for the sale of local food, products, crafts, and restaurants.
- d. Seek at least one additional year-round indoor entertainment/recreational destination/attraction for residents and visitors.
- e. Update the feasibility study of a performing arts center. (Garrett College will include a review of this in its master facilities plan.)
- f. Identify priority county and state roads for the development bike lanes and bike route signage.

3. Develop transportation infrastructure which facilitates the efficient and safe movement of goods and people.

In the next 18 months, GCCAC, Garrett County Economic Development Corporation (Development Corporation), and Planning and Land Development will:

- a. Support towns and unincorporated areas in planning and finding grant funding for trails (non-motorized) and sidewalk expansion (creating walkable communities).

² A trail which connects Garrett County to the Allegheny Passage, connects major recreation areas in the county, and is contiguous allowing people to tour the county on bicycles or foot. The Continental Divide Loop includes trails along the Yough River, the Eastern Continental Divide, and the Casselman Rivers.

- b. Identify priority county road projects for safety enhancements (i.e., New Germany Road and MD Route 495, Glendale Road and U.S. Route 219).
- c. Advocate for funding support for the U.S. Route 219-220 North-South Corridor through The Greater Cumberland Committee (TGCC).

In addition, assuming available resources or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- d. Advocate for remaining acquisition of easements for the Oakland Bypass which includes ensuring the Oakland Bypass is included in the State's consolidated transportation program.

4. Develop infrastructure and facilities that support agriculture in Garrett County, particularly local processing, production, and sale of locally grown agriculture products.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development will:

- a. Research and recommend what type of government support or action would best support local processing.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Research the feasibility of a grain drying facility.
- c. Research the feasibility of a structure for small-scale food processing.

5. Enhance existing (and/or create new) transportation service options for people to travel to/from and within the county.

GCCAC plans to begin the following actions in the next 18 months:

- a. Implement a pilot transit service that connects Garrett College and the McHenry area with shopping and entertainment destinations.
- b. Complete a transit feasibility and implementation (if feasible) plan to provide in-county transportation to the Community Aquatic & Recreation Center (CARC) and to link visitors to entertainment and recreational points.³
- c. Report on the new private sector bus connection between Cumberland rail service and Grantsville.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- d. Conduct a feasibility study of seasonal passenger rail (or bus) service to Metro areas—Pittsburgh or Baltimore/Washington, D.C.—and within the county.

³ Based on an interest from the State in funding a feasibility study on transporting residents to CARC and the continued interest among county businesses in getting transit links to Lake entertainment points and State Parks.

Workforce Development GOAL: Garrett County has a highly competent* and well-educated workforce with the skills desired by existing, new, and relocating businesses. **competencies include: general and specific occupational knowledge, positive and customer-oriented attitude, recognized aptitude leading to appropriate career training, and the skills required for businesses operating in the “information age,” such as keyboarding, standard software packages, and online communication and research.*

Objectives:

1. Offer certification courses and other targeted courses (including 'green technologies'), which result in employment or advancement by participants, through Garrett College.

In the next 18 months, Garrett College plans to substantially begin the following actions:

- a. Complete a workforce development study which identifies the following needs and suggests a framework for ongoing evaluation of new needs:
 - workforce development needs of local businesses;
 - 'foundational' learning objectives that any employee needs;
 - the market potential for courses which increase “green jobs” in the area and other needs;⁴ and
 - specifically considers ways to increase knowledge and skills of local contractors in 'green' building techniques.
- b. Create and regularly convene a workforce development advisory group (including Economic Development, Garrett College, the Board of Education, the Department of Social Services, business leaders, and the Western Maryland Consortium) which will provide input on new needs, evaluate effectiveness of results, and provide an opportunity to share information about new business prospects and their needs. This group could also help coordinate services among institutions.
- c. Coordinate and expand weatherization classes offered with Allegany College of Maryland and utilize the weatherization mobile laboratory.
- d. Institute a regional green construction training program at the Career Technology & Training Center (CTTC).
- e. Host a one-day “Green” forum for residents – topic areas could include business sustainability, green building, and home/business energy efficiency.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will

- f. Provide training to help students pass utility company pre-employment tests for maintenance and construction.

2. Increase educational attainment rates in the county for those over 25 years of age with particular focus on improving education and training of existing

⁴ health care industry certifications; mining certification courses; Network Operations Center Technician (modifying computer and IT classes to focus on grid management); Journey Lineman; Construction Foreman; Maintenance Technician; Sheet Metal Worker; Solar Fabrication Technician

residents over the age of 25 who currently do not have training certifications or higher education.

In the next 18 months, Garrett College will:

- a. Determine how to provide career coaching and training/education planning services to the public and agencies who work with families on self sufficiency (particularly in order to assist young adults and families in finding motivation, identifying career paths, and developing training/educational plans).
- b. Publicize the CTTC and scholarship opportunities.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will

- c. Offer scholarships to Garrett College to those working with the career coaching and training specialist; this can be a pilot for Phase 3 of the Garrett County Scholarship Program.
- d. Provide a limited number of scholarship slots to local businesses that apply; the businesses can offer the scholarships as tuition reimbursement to qualified employees.

3. Enhance coordination of career coaching and training/education planning for young adults, including exposure to community leadership roles.

In the next 18 months (assuming that the Leadership and Management Academy mentioned elsewhere in this plan has been created), Garrett College will:

- a. Complete a presentation to academy participants on potential community leadership roles and board opportunities and plan to continue making such presentations. [Cross reference: supporting business start-up and growth objective #2, leadership and management academy].
- b. Support a career and training collaborative that would coordinate career, technical training, and ongoing education among the Consortium, Garrett College, high schools, etc. (This may be completed through the workforce development group formed in 1.b).
- c. Develop events/programs to advise local young people of local career possibilities.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- d. Develop school visits (student and teachers) to local businesses so students better understand local career opportunities and are introduced to the idea of opening their own business. Reinstate teacher visits to local businesses to help teachers better understand existing employment opportunities.
- e. Expand partnerships of Garrett College with Potomac State College of West Virginia University, Allegany College of Maryland, Frostburg State University, and other local schools so that they offer career-oriented programming at Garrett College (like the current nursing program partnership).

- f. Encourage local public and nonprofit boards to invite young adults to serve on boards; (this may be done as part of the leadership and management academy).

4. Increase the number of local businesses that invest in ongoing training and staff development for the purpose of supporting increased wages and sustained career advancement. [Note: this objective and actions are related to the leadership and management academy in the Supporting Businesses Goal.]

In the next 18 months, the Development Corporation and Garrett College will:

- a. Promote and incentivize the use of educational/staff development programs by local businesses.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Provide information/coordination to local businesses in utilizing state and federal programs for tuition reimbursement, training grants, and possible tax credits/incentives.
- c. Create awards or other recognitions for businesses participating in tuition reimbursement or for investing in employees in other ways.
- d. Certify local facilitators in process improvement (e.g., LEAN).
- e. Offer County sponsored process improvement courses (e.g., LEAN) locally.
- f. Work with the business leaders' circle (see supporting business goal) to provide information/success stories about staff development to the broader business community.
- g. Conduct a feasibility analysis for a program where local businesses that rely on frontline staff pay those staff members who have completed "customer service" training a higher wage rate.

5. Provide educational or training events for local agriculture businesses.

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Office of University of Maryland Extension (UMD Extension Office) will:

- a. Develop educational opportunities for agriculture businesses based on a needs assessment and a desire to encourage small-scale, local food processing.⁵

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Support collaborative efforts, including engagement of Extension employees in workforce development discussions, between the UMD Extension Office and Garrett College.

⁵ E.g. Offer artisan cheese making courses at Garrett College and in workshops.

6. Reduce barriers to employment by providing emergency transportation (or public transportation) to work and childcare.

In the next 18 months, GCCAC will:

- a. Lead collaborative efforts on childcare options, including meeting with local businesses to see if they would be interested in offering a benefit of \$x/month toward regular childcare, emergency childcare, and transportation as a benefit to their employees.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Complete a feasibility study of options for creating a “drop in” childcare center capacity in the county.
- c. Develop a pilot program which provides comprehensive job support as young people (or new entry level employees) begin jobs. This would include access to emergency transportation and childcare assistance as well as job coaching.

Business Start-Up and Growth Goal: Garrett County seeks to increase the number and diversity of growing, profitable businesses that are paying higher wages, including encouraging a range of businesses using sustainable practices.

Objectives:

- 1. Increase the number of growing and profitable businesses through leadership development and entrepreneur support** (participating businesses will report growth in revenues and/or profits).

In the next 18 months, the Development Corporation will:

- a. Develop and plan for a pilot of a Leadership and Management Academy in which businesses, nonprofits, and/or government departments would participate as institutions and send one or two people per year. This prestigious 12-month ‘academy’ would include: introduction to “process improvement” (e.g., LEAN) principles, touring of other (in or out of area) businesses, management and leadership skills training, and on-the-job leadership or change initiative. The target is ‘up and coming’ leaders and managers. The academy could also include forums for interacting with existing business leaders so that there are mechanisms developed for establishing mentoring relationships.
- b. Financially support training for local “process improvement” techniques/approaches.

In the next 18 months, business leaders will:

- c. Develop a Young Professionals Program where young professionals meet and get to know one another.

2. Enhance local capacity to support and attract high performing businesses by providing support services.

In the next 18 months, Garrett College, GCCAC, and Economic Development will:

- a. Offer courses and consulting support to local businesses to improve their capacity to strategically analyze and increase access to market data.
- b. Develop a succession planning course for small businesses and farms (the UMD Extension Office is taking the lead with farms).
- c. Hire a small business counselor.
- d. Explore SCORE or other programmatic ways to engage retired business executives in an ongoing 'mentoring' or coaching role.
- e. Promote and provide information on the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP).

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- f. Establish a small business support center.
- g. Develop a local "ask the business leader" blog or listserv.
- h. Maintain a database to respond to economic development opportunities.
- i. Identify existing local businesses that would be willing to meet with potential new businesses or relocating businesses.

3. Provide opportunities for local businesses to reduce operating costs through collaborative purchasing, learning efforts, and other means.

Assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Identify a sponsoring agency to support and promote cooperative energy purchases (including providing negotiating support).
- c. Explore feasibility of offering health insurance through a cooperative for local businesses (i.e., rural health insurance cooperative through MD Rural Health Association).
- d. Establish an administrative back-end function for local nonprofits and small businesses, enabling them to share administrative support, bookkeeper, copier, website support, etc.
- e. Conduct a feasibility study for a multi-tenant facility (or facilities) for small-scale manufacturers and small businesses.

4. Develop a cadre of businesses which are committed to environmentally sustainable practices and which are recognized for these efforts.

In the next 18 months, the Chamber and Garrett College will:

- a. Develop a "green business" certification program which educates businesses about a range of environmentally sustainable and cost effective practices and which supports and publicizes green certification.

5. Promote and support “buy local” business-to-business initiatives that will help local businesses grow.

In the next 18 months, the Chamber will:

- a. Develop recommendations for “buy local” incentives which encourage businesses to purchase services and supplies locally.

Community Planning and Leadership GOAL: Garrett County implements community plans and policies which support sustainable business growth, preserve quality of life, and expand community leadership.

Objectives:

1. Advocate for growth policies that include a rural perspective on sustainable growth at local, state, and national levels.

In the next 18 months, Planning and Land Development and Garrett County’s Finance Office will:

- a. Produce or commission a white paper on smart growth/sustainable community frameworks and specific suggestions for policy revisions that will support sustainable rural growth and development.
- b. Increase awareness (public and community leadership) of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), bond offerings, Self-Sustainable Municipal Improvement District (SSMID), or other tools for investment in economic development.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- c. Produce or commission a white paper on local and state policies used to encourage thriving, authentic (meaning reflective of local history and culture), diverse, and walkable town centers.
- d. Develop a specific plan to phase-in countywide zoning.
- e. Respond to policy changes that will impact Garrett County’s competitiveness.
- f. Explore McHenry becoming an incorporated municipality by better defining the boundaries and investigating pros, cons, and other implications.
- g. Create an inventory of all Brownfield and/or redevelopment/abandoned properties in the county and propose a means of prioritizing and/or incentivizing their redevelopment (e.g., potentially waiving landfill fees for taking down these properties).

2. Develop policies which support the development of workforce housing particularly in targeted growth areas.

In the next 18 months, GCCAC will:

- a. Adopt policies and procedures for operating a community land trust for owner-occupied workforce housing.

- b. Prepare and obtain approval for a planned residential development for a workforce housing community land trust subdivision in McHenry.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- c. Create an annual reporting mechanism to detail progress on the workforce housing plan.

3. Develop and coordinate policies and countywide actions that enhance heritage, recreational, and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors to Garrett County.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development and the Chamber will:

- a. Coordinate staffing responsibilities among the following newly proposed positions: Events Coordinator, Heritage Area Manager, and Cultural, Recreation, and Parks Coordinator (to include State Park activities).

GCCAC will support towns in the:

- b. Development of master plans for walking trails in Garrett County municipalities and ensure their inclusion in the revised Recreation Plan for the county (supports goal 1 objective 3, action a).

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett Trails will:

- c. Draft and recommend a policy asking that the Garrett County Roads Department consider including bike lanes when they pave/repave county roads.
- d. Conduct a scan of existing best practices for the integration and development of bike lanes (potentially suitable for family riders) especially when there are limited easements easily available.

4. Provide opportunities and venues for business and community leadership to impact the regulatory framework so that it supports sustainable business development and growth.

In the next 18 months, the Development Corporation will:

- a. Establish and support a business leaders' circle which identifies regulations that inhibit growth or are particularly burdensome in rural communities; identify representative example stories that can become the talking points for these issues; then advocate with the appropriate agencies. (One issue to consider is advocating for health insurance acceptance across state lines).

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Ensure the business leaders' circle hosts a regular forum with regulatory agency staff in an effort to discuss ideas for streamlining processes.
- c. Recommend a fee for expedited processes at the Maryland State Highway Administration on traffic studies and other projects which end up delayed for significant periods.

d. Advocate for local businesses with local and state agencies as necessary.

5. Continue the development of responsible plans that identify future infrastructure needs (water, sewage, landfill, etc.) and consider regional/collaborative approaches to meeting needs.

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Department of General Services (General Services) will:

a. Update the solid waste management plan with the specific goal of creating ways to extend the life of the existing landfill; consider including expanded recycling as a part of this plan.

Garrett County institutions will:

b. Update the water and sewage management plan with consideration of the growth envisioned by this plan.

c. Convene a forum on a regional water authority within the county.

6. Use public planning processes and county policy to create opportunities for the development of the “next generation” of community leaders.

Assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

a. Appoint young adults to public boards and/or commissions.

b. Develop mechanisms for high school and Garrett College students to have a voice in and learn about local politics and community leadership.

7. Increase community capacity to provide and use current economic and social/demographic data.

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Development Corporation will:

a. Establish a set of community level indicators (such as those proposed in the indicators and measures section of this plan) and a plan for how to collect and publicize this information.

Energy and Natural Resources GOAL: Garrett County supports environmentally sustainable approaches to the recreational development of public lands and waterways, preservation of farmland, and the responsible extraction and development of natural resources.

Objectives:

1. Increase clean energy businesses in the county as one element of supporting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development and GCCAC will:

a. Identify appropriate incentives that will encourage private development of a range of alternative, *small scale* power generation.

- b. Identify several pilot projects where the county could demonstrate clean, local energy production and use.
- c. Develop a recruitment strategy for attracting clean energy businesses.
- d. Develop a feasibility study and support business planning for a biomass producer in the county.
- e. Test methods of aggregating wind and other renewable energy credits generated by small scale producers at a community level to provide funds for additional community investments.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- f. Conduct a feasibility study of the development of a gas fired power plant in the county.
- g. Support efforts at valuing and utilizing the carbon credits generated by state forests in Garrett County.
- h. Support the development of a biomass energy production facility using coal, biomass, and municipal solid waste.
- i. Support the development of a woody biomass pellet production industry.⁶
- j. Work with the Maryland Clean Energy Center to promote efforts and recruit clean energy companies.

2. Support responsible Marcellus Shale natural gas development and the development of other energy resources.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development and the Development Corporation will:

- a. Support the formation of a Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Advisory Committee.
- b. Provide input on regulation proposals at state and national levels.
- c. Develop/propose a mechanism for local oversight and problem-solving.
- d. Support best management practices in Marcellus Shale natural gas extraction.

3. Utilize public revenue, which is generated by the development of local energy resources, to support economic development, including energy efficiency, and becoming a rural sustainable community leader.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development will:

- a. Advocate for creating a local economic development fund from Marcellus shale natural gas tax revenue. Specific suggested uses of the fund include, but are not limited to:
 - local tax credit for individuals and businesses using energy saving technologies, including weatherization;

⁶ This has particular potential based on the market being created by legislation requiring eight percent biomass be weaved into the mix at coal plants.

- loans for energy efficiency retrofits; and
- loans for installation of small-scale clean energy production which could potentially be paid back by the difference in energy bills.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- Write and adopt a policy statement reflecting the sentiment that the development of natural resources in Garrett County should benefit Garrett County residents and the importance of public health and safety in the process.

4. Encourage public and private sector adoption of weatherization and energy saving technologies thereby creating financial savings that may be spent on wages and developing human resources.

In the next 18 months, GCCAC and Economic Development will:

- Support a weatherization program for homes and commercial properties that is a leader at state and national levels.
- Hire a Garrett County Energy and Sustainability Manager to manage energy use in government buildings and support small-scale clean energy production.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- Provide an information clearing house to provide advice to individuals and businesses interested in energy efficiency tax credits, utility rebates, grants, and other programs.
- Develop a public education campaign about energy efficiency including promoting the use of MD's Farm Energy Audit Program.
- Adopt a policy on energy efficient and 'green building' standards for county-owned buildings.
- Conduct energy audits on public buildings and selected residential and commercial buildings as a means of encouraging and supporting energy auditing businesses.
- Provide access to a "green consultant" for developing and implementing strategies for reducing business operational costs including energy, water, and administration (includes farms).

5. Develop a robust and comprehensive recycling program consistent with the county's vision of becoming a rural sustainable community leader and which will help lengthen the life of the landfill and support new 'clean' businesses.

In the next 18 months, General Services will:

- Evaluate the wide array of possible technologies and approaches for comprehensive recycling and include ideas for implementation in the solid waste plan for extending the life of the landfill.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Link local industries/manufacturers to close waste loops and develop markets for by-products, leading to fewer materials being considered waste and reducing costs of the materials for buyers.

6. Maintain the 2010 number of acres of farmland in the county while supporting farmers' efforts to use environmentally sustainable practices, improve energy efficiency, and provide locally grown food products.

In the next 18 months, the UMD Extension Office will:

- a. Develop mechanisms and policies that aggregate local produce, products, and services to allow for easier institutional purchasing.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Advocate for funding and policies that encourage local schools and county institutions to purchase local farm products and services.
- c. Advocate for the creation of a year-round farmer's market that would create a year-round outlet for goods.
- d. Support and educate farmers and others about the farmland preservation tax credits.

7. Monitor and maintain excellent water quality and quantity throughout the county.

In the next 18 months, the Garrett County Health Department will:

- a. Work with the Marcellus Shale Advisory Committee and others to determine what institutions will provide oversight on water quality and quantity throughout the county.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Explore sources of cost sharing or incentives for retrofitting existing sedimentation and nutrient runoff contributors with the goal of improving the health of Garrett County's water bodies. Examples could include: adding riparian buffers along streams to reduce sedimentation, fixing leaky septic systems to reduce nutrient runoff, installing water gardens to reduce storm water runoff, etc.
- c. Support acid mine remediation programs.
- d. Develop an action plan to maintain recreational use of Deep Creek Lake.

8. Facilitate the use, expansion, and access to local and state-owned parks, forests, and other recreational facilities in the county.

In the next 18 months, Planning and Land Development, in consultation with Garrett Tails and others, will:

- a. Develop specific recommendations for agreements to coordinate public access and multi-use recreational development of state-owned land (both parks and forests).

Economic Development will:

- b. Begin planning for additional points of public access to Deep Creek Lake (e.g., public access at the dam for non-motorized boats and access at Point View).

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- c. Coordinate access to culture, park, and recreational resources.
- e. Investigate revenue options dedicated to supporting farm preservation, recreation 'facilities,' and countywide marketing.

Promotion and Marketing Goal: Promote "the Garrett County experience" in order to increase people living in, visiting, and starting businesses in the county.

Objectives:

- 1. Increase the number of opportunities the Garrett County Department of Economic Development has to pitch Garrett County to new or expanding/relocating businesses.**

In the next 18 months, Economic Development will:

- a. Conduct a comparative industry growth study and analysis of the business base and identify opportunities for growth.
- b. Update/redesign its website.
- c. Complete an economic development marketing plan which identifies ways to work with and/or meet the needs of site selection consultants and highlights appropriate business incentives.
- d. Continue to work with One Maryland so that Garrett County continues to qualify for the program.

The Chamber will:

- e. Engage in regional forums and processes (i.e., TGCC, Power of 32, etc.) to continue access to regional business networks.

- 2. Develop and promote the Garrett County brand that highlights the area's authentic small town heritage and natural beauty, and utilize this brand to promote and distinguish Garrett County as a great place to live, work, and play.**

In the next 18 months, the Chamber will lead efforts to:

- a. Ensure all major websites and campaigns have some cross-referencing to each other and reflect the "brand" theme consistently throughout all sectors.
- b. Develop the "Garrett County" brand and message.
- c. Redesign Chamber displays to highlight the brand.

Economic Development will:

- a. Develop materials that can be used as a base for recruitment efforts of economic development or specific industries.

3. Support, promote, and help organize additional "shoulder season" events as a means of increasing the number of visitors and potential residents.

In the next 18 months, the Chamber will seek to:

- b. Hire an events' coordinator to develop new events and support existing events⁷

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- b. Develop marketing plans for the Exhibit Hall and the CARC to increase the number of visitors (Garrett College will be promoting the CARC).
- c. Develop economic development marketing pieces specifically targeted to people coming to events.
- d. Ensure that an element of promotion and presence at events is the message that you could live here—i.e., Internet available; skip the traffic-work from here.

4. Promote locally grown agriculture and locally produced goods.

In the next 18 months, Economic Development, in collaboration with the UMD Extension Office, will:

- a. Complete a marketing plan including messages using the "Garrett Made" emblem, media buys, signage, events, etc. to support local agriculture and 'niche'/craft manufacturing.
- b. Coordinate and provide support for outreach to urban markets for agriculture and locally produced goods.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- c. Develop an annual event promoting food and other goods produced locally.
- d. Differentiate, develop, and promote agricultural tourism and eco-tourism.
- e. Develop a Chamber display on locally produced goods.
- f. Use the Fair as an opportunity to highlight locally produced goods and services.

⁷ There will be clear boundaries and criteria about events the coordinator will support.

5. Support the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce in increasing the number of visitors and potential residents to the area through strong promotion and coordination.

In the next 18 months, the Chamber will:

- a. Update/redesign its website.
- b. Maintain a marketing plan, which provides the following information, for area visitors: target audiences, messages, and vehicles for reaching those audiences, the necessary ratio of number of people to see/read/view the measures of success.
- c. Promote a strategy which suggests ways of developing first time visitors into frequent visitors into second home owners into residents.

6. Coordinate promotion messages and marketing campaigns among major institutions and businesses in the county in order to leverage opportunities to promote living or opening businesses in the county.

The Chamber and Economic Development will work together on the following:

- a. Identify a list of “Garrett County Supporters” (i.e., second homeowners or frequent visitors) to target with positive messages about the county and employment opportunities.
- b. Hold meetings to share information and coordinate marketing efforts among major institutions and businesses.
- c. Assign marketing coordination to help support these efforts.

7. Implement an outreach and education plan to highlight Garrett County as a Rural Leader in Sustainable Development—Energy in Action.

In the next 18 months, GCCAC will:

- a. Create a public awareness campaign around the advantages of home and building energy audits.
- b. Highlight green success stories through local media and state green promotional efforts, including Maryland’s Smart, Green, and Growing Campaign.

The Chamber will:

- c. Raise the profile of Garrett County as a forward thinking county through tourism efforts.
- d. Convene a green collar summit to discuss designing and developing partnerships and programs needed to grow the green jobs industry—invite State government, non-profits, academia, and business.

In addition, assuming available resources and/or opportunities, Garrett County institutions will:

- e. Establish a Garrett Green Race (bike, run, triathlon) – the event will adhere to green event management guidelines.

- f. Market green meeting venues to urban outlets and federal and state agencies to attract sustainability (green)-related events and meetings.
- g. Promote a recycled art contest at the Garrett County Fair - modeled after the State contest, but open to all ages.
- h. Recruit technology forums and symposiums from the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) and universities (during the events, market the county as a great place to start a business).
- i. Create a brand for the green efforts that complements other countywide marketing efforts.
- j. Publicize the commitment to establishing an energy efficient construction industry, and use it to recruit energy efficient building component companies to manufacture their products within Garrett County for transport and use within a 0 to 150-mile radius (localized manufacturing/calculation of carbon footprint).

VIII. Implementation Notes

The following charts are intended as a guide for helping to track progress on the actions of the plan. The Major Actions will be changed each year and the narrative explaining progress will be updated each year.

1. **Infrastructure and Facilities GOAL:** Garrett County invests in infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunication, water/sewer), and in community, business, and recreational facilities which facilitate sustainable growth

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Increase non-satellite, broadband Internet availability to at least 90% of the addresses in the county by 2014 (note that prices & speed available should not vary significantly based on location)	# addresses with high speed Internet access (non-satellite) /# addresses in county	a. By end of 2011, complete & implement a plan, identifying the financing, technology, & approach, & mapping the areas to be covered by the plan, for meeting this objective	Economic Development						
		b. Create a committee to advise & support the broadband plan	Economic Development						
2. Develop infrastructure and facilities that enhance the county's arts, heritage, & recreation capacity	# infrastructure projects with heritage funding; miles of trail constructed	a. Begin implementation of the Heritage Plan including infrastructure projects recommended in the Heritage Plan	Chamber of Commerce						
		b. Support planning and implementation for the Continental Divide Loop Trail System which connects Garrett County to the Allegheny Passage, connects major recreation areas in the county, & is contiguous, allowing people to tour the county on bicycles or foot. Continental Divide Loop includes trails along the Yough River, the Eastern Continental Divide, & the Casselman River.	Garrett Trails						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
3. Develop transportation infrastructure that facilitates the efficient & safe movement of goods and people	Feet of new sidewalk construction OR trail construction in towns	a. Support towns and unincorporated areas in planning & finding grant funding for trails (non-motorized) use & sidewalk expansion (creating walkable communities)	GCCAC-circuit rider w/ Garrett Trails						
		b. Identify priority county road projects for safety enhancements (i.e., New Germany & MD Route 495, Glendale Road & U.S. Route 219)	Planning and Land Development						
		c. Advocate for funding support for 219-220 N-S Corridor through TGCC	Development Corporation						
4. Develop infrastructure & facilities that support agriculture, particularly agriculture for local processing, production, & sale, in Garrett County	SQ Feet of local food processing space available in the county Farmer market days SQ feet of retail for locally produced foods	a. Research & recommend type of support & create business plan for appropriate infrastructure project	Economic Development						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
5. Enhance existing (&/or create new) transportation service options for people to travel to/from & within the county	# of riders on College/McHenry Shopping Shuttle	a. Implement a pilot transit service that connects Garrett College & McHenry area with shopping & entertainment destinations	GCCAC						
	# of riders on CARC shuttle	b. Complete a transit feasibility & implementation (if feasible) plan to provide in-county transportation to CARC & to link visitors to entertainment & recreational points ⁸	GCCAC						
		c. Report on the new private sector bus connection between Cumberland rail service & Grantsville	GCCAC						

⁸ Based on an interest from the State in funding a feasibility study on transporting residents to CARC and the continued interest among county businesses in getting transit links to Lake entertainment points and State Parks.

2. Workforce Development GOAL: Garrett County has a highly competent* and well-educated workforce with the skills desired by existing, new and relocating businesses.

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Offer certification courses & other targeted courses (including 'green technologies'), which result in employment or advancement by participants, through Garrett College	# of participants in certification courses (separated by 'green' technology certifications & others) # of certifications granted	a. Complete a workforce development study which identifies the following needs & suggests a framework for ongoing evaluation of new needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workforce development needs of local businesses; 'foundational' learning objectives that any employee needs; the market potential for courses which increase "green jobs" in the area a& other needs;⁹ & specifically consider ways to increase knowledge & skills of local contractors in 'green' building techniques 	Garrett College						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and regularly convene a workforce development advisory group (including Econ Dev, Garrett College, Board of Education, Dept Social Services, Business leaders, & Western MD Consortium) which will provide input on new needs, evaluate effectiveness of results, & provide an opportunity to share information about new business prospects & their needs. This group could also help coordinate services among institutions 	Garrett College						

⁹ health care industry certifications; mining certification courses; Network Operations Center Technician (modifying computer and IT classes to focus on grid management); Journey Lineman; Construction Foreman; Maintenance Technician; Sheet Metal Worker; Solar Fabrication Technician

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and expand weatherization classes offered with AC & utilize the weatherization mobile laboratory 	Garrett College						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute a regional a green construction training program at the CTTC 	Garrett College						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a one-day "Green" forum for residents – topic areas could include business sustainability; green building; & home/business energy efficiency. 	Garrett College						
2. Increase educational attainment rates in the county for those over 25 years of age with particular focus on improving education & training of existing residents over the age of 25 who currently do not have training certifications or higher education	<p># of low income/at risk adults with training & education plans</p> <p># of adults over 25 receiving AA &/or certifications</p>	<p>a. Determine how to provide career coaching & training/education planning services to the public & agencies who work with families on self sufficiency (particularly in order to assist young adults & families in finding motivation, identifying career paths & developing training/educational plans)</p>	Garrett College & Consortium						
		<p>b. Publicize the CTTC & the scholarship opportunities</p>	Garrett College						
3. Enhance coordination of career coaching & training/education planning for young adults including exposure to community leadership roles		<p>a. Complete a presentation to Leadership & Management Academy participants on potential community leadership roles & board opportunities & plan to continue making such presentations. [Cross reference: supporting business start-up & growth objective #2, leadership & management academy]</p>	Garrett College						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
		b. Support a career & training collaborative that would coordinate career, technical training, & ongoing education among Consortium, College, high schools, etc. (maybe workforce development group formed in 1.b)	Garrett College						
		c. Develop events/programs to show local young people their career possibilities	Garrett College						
4. Increase the number of local businesses that invest in ongoing training & staff development for the purpose of supporting increased wages & sustained career advancement	# of participants in college programs being paid for by employers # of employer sponsored participants in other training programs	a. Promote/incentivize the use of staff development programs by local businesses	Development Corporation						
5. Provide educational or training events for local agriculture businesses	# of participants in agriculture courses	b. Develop educational opportunities for agriculture businesses based on a needs assessment and a desire to encourage small-scale, local food processing ¹⁰	UMD Extension Office						
6. Reduce barriers to employment (& maintaining employment) by providing emergency transportation (or public transportation) to work and childcare	# of new 'affordable' childcare slots available in the county	c. Lead collaborative efforts on childcare options including meeting with local businesses to see if they would be interested in offering a benefit of \$x/month toward regular childcare, emergency childcare, & transportation as a benefit to their employees	GCCAC						

¹⁰ E.g. Offer artisan cheese making courses at college and in workshops.

3. Business Start-Up and Support GOAL: Garrett County seeks to increase the number and diversity of growing, profitable businesses that are paying higher wages.

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Increase number of growing & profitable businesses through leadership development and entrepreneur support (participating businesses will report growth in revenues and/or profits)	# of leadership & management academy participants # of businesses participating in academy # of participants in process improvement courses	a. Develop & pilot a Leadership & Management Academy where businesses, nonprofits, or government departments would participate as institutions & send 1 or 2 people per year. This prestigious 12-month 'academy' would include: introduction to "process improvement" (e.g., LEAN) principles, touring of other (in or out of area) businesses, management & leadership skills training & on the job leadership or change initiative. The target is up & coming leaders & managers. The academy could also include forums for interacting with existing business leaders so that there are mechanisms developed for establishing mentoring relationships.	Development Corporation						
		b. Financially support training for local "process improvement" techniques/approaches	Economic Development						
		c. Develop a Young Professionals Program where young professionals meet & get to know one another	Chamber of Commerce with Development Corporation						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
2. Enhance local capacity to support & attract high performing businesses by providing support services	# of participating businesses in courses on topics identified.	a. Offer courses and consulting support to local businesses to improve their capacity to strategically analyze and increase access to market data	Garrett College						
	# of courses offered	b. Develop a succession planning course for small businesses & farms	Garrett College & UMD Extension Office						
	# of businesses that successfully "graduate" from the incubator	c. Hire a small business counselor	Economic Development						
		d. Explore SCORE or other programmatic ways to engage retired business executives in an ongoing 'mentoring' or coaching role	Garrett College						
		e. Promote and provide information on the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	GCCAC						
3. Provide opportunities for local businesses to reduce operating costs through collaborative purchasing, learning efforts, & other means	# of businesses participating in joint efforts that reduce operating costs	No priority action items. Actions are suggested in the main plan	Economic Development						
4. Develop a cadre of businesses which are committed to environmentally sustainable practices & which are recognized for these efforts	# of green certified businesses in the county	a. Develop a "green business" certification program which educates businesses about a range of environmentally sustainable & cost effective practices & which supports & publicizes green certification	Chamber of Commerce & Garrett College						
5. Promote & support "buy local", business to business initiatives that will help local businesses grow	# of businesses participating in 'buy local' initiatives	a. Develop recommendations for "buy local" incentives which encourage businesses to purchase services & supplies locally	Chamber of Commerce						

4. Community Planning and Community Leadership GOAL: Garrett County implements community plans and policies which support sustainable business growth, preserve quality of life, and expand community leadership.

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Advocate for growth policies that include a rural perspective on sustainable growth at the local, state, & national levels	Garrett County's rural perspective (as determined by Development Corp.) is included in Plan MD	a. Produce or commission a white paper on smart growth/sustainable communities framework & specific suggestions for policy revisions that will support sustainable rural growth & development (adopted by Development Corp)	Planning and Land Development						
		b. Increase awareness (public & community leadership) of TIF, bond offerings, SSMID Self-Sustainable Municipal Improvement District, or other tools for investment in economic development	Finance Department						
2. Develop policies which support the development of Workforce Housing particularly in targeted growth areas	# of units of housing built that are affordable to the target income identified by the workforce housing plan	a. Adopt policies & procedures for operating a community land trust for owner-occupied workforce housing	GCCAC						
		b. Prepare & obtain approval for a planned residential development workforce housing community land trust subdivision in McHenry	GCCAC						
3. Develop & coordinate policies & countywide actions that enhance heritage, recreational, & cultural opportunities for residents & visitors to Garrett County	MOUs among agencies on this staff coordination & plan coordination adopted	a. Coordinate staffing responsibilities among the following newly proposed positions: Events Coordinator, Heritage Area Manager, & Cultural, Recreation, & Parks Coordinator (to include State Park activities)	Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Garrett College						
		b. Development of master plans for walking trails in Garrett County municipalities & ensure their inclusion in the revised Recreation Plan for the county	GCCAC-Circuit Rider						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
4. Provide opportunities & venues for business & community leadership to impact the regulatory framework so that it supports sustainable business development & growth	# of issues identified that need regulatory reform/change # of issues addressed through regulatory change	a. Establish & support a business leaders' circle which identifies regulations that inhibit growth or are particularly burdensome in rural communities; identify representative examples that can become the talking point for these issues; then advocate with appropriate agencies. (one issue to consider is advocating for health insurance acceptance across state lines)	Development Corporation						
5. Continue the development of responsible plans that identify future infrastructure needs (water, sewage, landfill, etc.) & consider regional/collaborative approaches to meeting needs	# of plans updated &/or adopted	a. Update the solid waste management plan with the specific goal of creating ways to extend the life of the existing landfill including recycling options	General Services and Public Utilities						
6. Use public planning processes & county policy to create opportunities for the development of the "next generation" of community leaders	# of people under age 35 on community boards	No priority action items. Actions are suggested in the main plan.	Development Corporation						

5. Energy and Natural Resources GOAL: Garrett County supports responsible extraction and development of energy resources in the county and environmentally sustainable approaches to the recreational development of public lands, farmland, and waterways.

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Increase clean energy businesses in the county as one element of supporting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development	# of clean energy businesses in the county Watts of power produced by alternative clean energy efforts (small and large)	a. Identify appropriate incentives that will encourage private development of a range of small-scale clean power generation	Economic Development						
		b. Identify several pilot projects by which the county could demonstrate clean, local energy production & use (i.e., biomass, solar, geothermal, wind)	GCCAC						
		c. Develop a recruitment strategy for attracting clean energy businesses	Economic Development						
		d. Develop a feasibility study & support business planning for a biomass producer in the county	Economic Development						
		e. Test methods of aggregating wind & other renewable energy credits generated by small-scale producers at a community level to provide funds for additional community investments	GCCAC						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
2. Responsibly develop Marcellus Shale natural gas & other energy resources	Revenue (private & public) generated from energy resource development # of jobs created from energy resource development # of MDE verified incidents linked to energy resource development	a. Support the formation of a Marcellus Shale natural gas Advisory Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input at state & national level on regulation proposals • Develop/propose a mechanism for local oversight & problem-solving • Support best management practices in Marcellus Shale natural gas extraction 	Economic Development & Development Corporation						
3. Utilize public revenue, which is generated by the development of local energy resources, to support economic development, including energy efficiency & becoming a rural sustainable community leader	\$ in loans &/or credits from the fund	a. Advocate for creating a local economic development fund from Marcellus shale natural gas tax revenue. Specific suggested uses of the fund include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local tax credit for individuals & businesses using energy saving technologies including weatherization; • loans for energy efficiency retrofits; & • loans for installation of small-scale clean energy production which could potentially be paid back by the difference in energy bills 	Economic Development						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
4. Encourage public & private sector adoption of weatherization & energy saving technologies thereby creating financial savings that may be spent on wages & developing human resources	# homes weatherized # of square feet of business space weatherized	a. Support a weatherization program for homes & commercial properties that is a leader at the state and national levels	GCCAC						
		b. Hire a Garrett County Energy & Sustainability Manager to manage energy use in public buildings & support alternative clean energy production	General Services						
5. Develop a robust & comprehensive recycling program consistent with the county's vision of becoming a rural sustainable community leader & which will help lengthen the life of the landfill & support new 'clean' businesses	Total lbs of recycling monthly in the county	a. Evaluate the wide array of possible technologies & approaches for comprehensive recycling & include ideas for implementation in the solid waste plan for extending the life of the landfill	General Services						
6. Maintain the 2010 number of acres of farmland in the county while supporting farmers' efforts to use environmentally sustainable practices, improve energy efficiency, & provide locally grown food products	# of acres of farmland	a. Develop mechanisms & policies that aggregate local produce, products, & services to allow for easier institutional purchasing	UMD Extension Office						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
7. Monitor & maintain excellent water quality & quantity throughout the county	Water quality readings	a. Work with Marcellus Shale Advisory Committee & others to determine what institutions will provide oversight on water quality & quantity throughout the county	Health Department						
8. Facilitate the use, expansion, & access to local & state-owned parks, forests, & other recreational facilities in the county	# of trail users Sq feet of public access to lake	a. Develop specific recommendations for agreements to coordinate public access & multi-use recreational development of state-owned land (both parks and forests)	Planning & Land Development w/ Garrett Trails						
		b. Begin planning for additional points of public access to Deep Creek Lake (i.e., public access at the dam for non-motorized boats & access at Point View)	Economic Development						

6. Promotion and Marketing GOAL: Garrett County institutions promote “the Garrett County experience” in order to increase people living in, visiting and starting businesses in the county.

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
1. Increase the number of opportunities the Economic Development Department has to pitch Garrett County to new or expanding/relocating businesses	# of “pitches” Economic Development Department makes to new &/or expanding businesses	a. Conduct a comparative industry growth study & analysis of the business base & identify opportunities for growth	Economic Development						
		b. Update/redesign Economic Development Department website for Garrett County	Economic Development						
		c. Complete an economic development marketing plan which identifies ways to work with &/or meet the needs of site selection consultants & highlights appropriate business incentives	Economic Development						
		d. Continue to work with One MD so that Garrett County continues to qualify for the program	Economic Development						
		e. Engage in regional forums & processes (i.e. TGCC, Power of 32, etc.) to continue access to regional business networks	Chamber of Commerce						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
2. Develop & promote the Garrett County brand that highlights the area's authentic small town heritage & natural beauty, & utilize this brand to promote & distinguish Garrett County as a great place to live, work, & play	# of brand related messages in the public sphere monthly	a. Ensure all major websites & campaigns have some cross referencing to each other & reflect the "brand" theme consistently throughout all sectors	Chamber of Commerce						
		b. Develop the "Garrett County" brand & message	Chamber of Commerce						
		c. Redesign chamber displays to highlight the brand	Chamber of Commerce						
		d. Develop materials that can be used as a base for recruitment efforts of economic development or specific industries	Economic Development						
3. Support, promote, & help organize additional "shoulder season" events as a means of increasing the number of visitors & potential residents	# of events	a. Hire an events' coordinator to develop new events & supporting existing events; note: assumes discussions on boundaries of what this person will do	Chamber of Commerce						
4. Promote locally grown agriculture & locally produced goods	Lbs of food locally processed	a. Complete a marketing plan including messages, "Garrett Made" emblem, media buys, signage, events, etc. to support local agriculture & 'niche'/craft manufacturing	Economic Development						
		b. Coordinate & provide support for outreach to urban markets for agriculture & locally produced goods	UMD Extension Office						

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
5. Support the Chamber of Commerce in increasing the number of visitors & potential residents to the area through strong promotion & coordination	# of visitors to the county each month	a. Update/redesign Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center website	Chamber of Commerce						
		b. Maintain a marketing plan for area visitors which provides the following information—target audiences, messages & vehicles for reaching those audiences, the necessary ratio of number of people to see/read/view the material in order to get x number coming to area, & identifying 3 to 5 measures of success	Chamber of Commerce						
		c. Promote a strategy which suggests ways of developing first time visitors into frequent visitors into second home owners into residents.	Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development						
6. Coordinate promotion messages & marketing campaigns among major institutions & businesses in the county in order to leverage opportunities to promote living or opening businesses in the county	# of businesses participating in coordinating efforts	a. Identify a list of "Garrett County Supporters ¹¹ " to target with positive messages about the county & employment opportunities	Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development						
		b. Hold meetings to share information & coordinate marketing efforts among major institutions & businesses	Chamber & Economic Development						
		c. Assign marketing coordination to help support these efforts	Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development						

¹¹ E.g. 2nd home owners or frequent visitors

Objective	Proposed Progress Measure	Major Actions 2011	Lead Institution	2011 Progress Narrative	2011 Progress Measure	2012 Progress Measure	2013 Progress Measure	2014 Progress Measure	2015 Progress Measure
7. Implement an outreach & education plan to highlight Garrett County as a Rural Leader in Sustainable Development—Energy in Action	# of 'public messages' including ads, articles, etc. that highlight environmental & sustainable efforts in Garrett County	a. Create a public awareness campaign around the advantages of home & building energy audits	GCCAC						
		b. Highlight green success stories through local media & state green promotional efforts including Maryland's Smart, Green & Growing Campaign	GCCAC						
		c. Raise the profile of Garrett County as a forward thinking county through tourism efforts	Chamber of Commerce						
		d. Convene a green collar summit to discuss designing & developing partnerships & programs needed to grow the green jobs industry—invite State government, nonprofits, academia, & business	Chamber of Commerce						

IX. Community Measures and Accountability

Overall Accountability:

There are two feedback loops suggested as a means of keeping this plan up-to-date, judging progress, and providing data for making changes in strategy.

The first feedback/accountability loop is achieved by the Garrett County Development Corporation calling semi-annual meetings of the steering committee to review progress and make updates to priorities. Prior to this meeting, lead institutions as identified in the Implementation Notes would provide data on the Progress Measures suggested in the Implementation Notes. The steering committee would then discuss the progress, consider if additional action items will be worked on over the next 12 months, and make adjustments to the plan.

The second feedback loop is at the community level and is intended to help monitor important data about community conditions. This information, when viewed over time, can help to identify new needs and areas where a different approach may be needed. The second feedback loop is called the Community Data Scorecard and is further defined below. There are several institutions which could be involved in this data collection – the Economic Development Department, the Planning and Land Development Office, the Garrett County Development Corporation, and Garrett College. It may also be combine with efforts of the Chamber of Commerce to create a “Dashboard”.

Community Data Scorecard:

Below are a set of key macro indicators of a thriving community. This plan recommends that these indicators be the core of a set of community level data collected and made available to government and business leaders in order to help businesses, governmental agencies, and nonprofits plan more effectively. These indicators could be monitored in order to help gauge the need for shifts in a range of strategies, including those in this plan as well as potentially in other institutions’ plans. Note: these are not evaluation measures for the plan itself; the activities of the plan itself are only likely to have limited impact on any these. However, if these indicators do not move in the desired direction, someone should ask the question, ‘why’? And if that answer shows the need for changes in strategies or activities, then adjustments can be made.

1. Median income (particularly in comparison to Maryland and other areas in the region) and a decrease in the number of people living below the poverty line
2. Number and percentage of people with health insurance
3. High school graduation rates
4. Garrett College graduation rates
5. Average Days Vacant for commercial store fronts in towns and targeted growth areas

6. Number of business entities in the following categories: manufacturing (particular growth in niche manufacturing) and distribution, education and health services, leisure/hospitality, information technology and business/professional services, and construction, and number of retail businesses in town center zoning areas
7. Total revenues for businesses in the county
8. Acres of farmland
9. Full-time resident population
10. Median age in the county
11. Median house price of primary residential homes is affordable (see note for formula) to families with median income¹²
12. Unemployment
13. Number of lodging nights by season
14. County healthy life expectancy
15. Total visitor counts for all parks in the county and trail user counts in the state forests
16. Water quality measures of Deep Creek Lake - as the biggest recreationally used lake
17. Acres of publicly accessible park/forest land
18. Acreage of habitat for endangered species

¹² [excerpted from Workforce Housing Plan] **Affordable** means that the principle and interests payments (on a mortgage) OR rent is no more than 25% of gross household income. However in order to provide some cushion for working households, allow some flexibility in the market served, and more closely mirror actual working families' budgets, the calculations from income to house prices and back again uses 20% of gross household income (the calculations assume a 90% loan to value ratio).

X. List of participants

Executive Committee:

- Bishoff, Joyce (Garrett Co. Chamber of Commerce)
- Hinebaugh, James C., Jr. (Garrett Co. Dept. of Economic Development)
- Kepple, Cristine A. (Garrett Co. Development Corporation)
- MacLennan, Richard (Garrett College)
- Yoder, Duane (Garrett Co. Community Action Committee)

Economic Development Steering Committee:

- Christian, Nicole (Garrett Co. Chamber of Commerce representative)
- DeBerry, Cheryl (Agriculture & Natural Resources sector representative)
- Dreisbach, Michael (Tourism sector representative)
- Glotfelty, Rodney (Health & Civic sectors representative)
- Lantz, Willie (Agriculture & Natural Resources sectors representative)
- Meagher, William (Retail sector representative)
- Nelson, John (Government representative)
- Rodeheaver, Randy (Services & Technology sectors representative)
- Ruddell, Gary R. (Manufacturing sector representative)
- Seib, Ruth (Real Estate, Developers & Contractors sectors representative)
- Thomas, Joseph (Manufacturing sector representative)
- Yoder, Julie (Workforce Development & Education sectors representative)

Other Participants:

- Angle, Cheryl L. (MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation)
- Aspinall, William (Appalachian Crossroads)
- Bailey, Shirley (GCC Technologies, LLC)
- Battistella, Lou (Deep Creek Property Owners' Assn.)
- Beitzel, Wendell R. (MD House of Delegates)
- Bishoff, Bill (Gap Run Farms)
- Boyer, Ron
- Burch, Michael (Mettiki Coal)
- Cedro, Matt (Firefly Farms)
- Conroy, Kimberly (Susquehanna Bank)
- DeBerry, Charles (DeBerry Farm Fresh Produce)
- Doerr, Tony (Doerr Construction)
- Durst, Kim (Garrett Co. Dept. of Economic Development)
- Ellis, Meg (Garrett Co. Dept. of Economic Development)
- Fearer, James
- Folk, Mark (Keystone Lime)
- Franklin, Bill (Thousand Acres)
- Gibson, Kathy
- Gnegy, Ronald (Rigidply Rafters)
- Goodfellow, Lisa
- Gosnell, Jeff
- Hamilton, Brooks (Hamilton Farms)

Other Participants (continued):

- Hauser, Terry & Jill
- Heilig, Rob (Heilig's Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning)
- Helbig, Eugene (First United Bank & Trust)
- Terry Helbig, Helbig Insurance Agency
- Herdering, Linda (Husky Power Dogsledding)
- Hunt, Justin (UMD Extension)
- Kessler, Jonathan (Smiley's)
- Lantz, Steve (First United Bank & Trust)
- Lear, Kurt (Garrett Co. Board of Education)
- McClive, Doug
- Miller, Ray (Pleasant Valley Dream Rides)
- Morin, Don (Garrett Container Systems)
- Morin, Liz (Garrett Container Systems)
- Neff, Jeanne (Interim Garrett College President)
- Nelson, Pam (Garrett Co. Community Action Committee)
- Nimmich, Nancy Elizabeth (Honey Grace Farm)
- Orr, Richard
- Paugh, Matthew (Susquehanna Bank)
- Powell, Charlie
- Reiser, Lydia (Garrett Information & Enterprise Center)
- Rodeheaver, Carissa (First United Bank & Trust)
- Roth, David (Silver Knob Pallet)
- Russell, Jan (Savage River Lodge)
- Shap, Frank (Garrett Co. Dept. of Economic Development)
- Shogren, Paul
- Sines, Kevin (Rigidply Rafters)
- Sisler, Larry (ProCom)
- Smith, Larry
- Terlizzi, David & Darlene (Sunnyside Wools)
- Thomas, Brian (Clear Mountain Bank)
- Valach, Michael (Wisp Resort)
- Vitez, Frank (Phenix Technologies)
- Watkins, Nathaniel (Garrett Co. Dept. of Information Technology)
- Wynn, Jonathan (Western MD Consortium)
- Yoder, Chester (HPG Windows & Doors)

XI. Sustainability Addendum

Introduction:

This economic development plan envisions a central role for sustainability in the future economic growth of the county. In fact, the plan suggests that Garrett County should become a rural leader in demonstrating sustainable communities because this will position the county for the kind of economic growth that protects the county's natural beauty and yields real growth in median incomes. Consequently, sustainability has been interwoven throughout the plan. In order to help understand the breadth of sustainability throughout the overall Economic Development Strategic Plan, this addendum collects all the objectives and action steps from the plan that directly relate to sustainability.

The Sustainability Plan (this addendum) uses the triple bottom line concept of sustainability: The pursuit of the goals and strategies in this plan take into consideration their impact on 1) the physical environment (the environmental health bottom line), 2) social costs and benefits (the community impact bottom line), and 3) potential economic costs and benefits (the economic bottom line).

Long-term sustainability of cities, counties, states, corporations, and industries depends on a careful balancing of economic, social, and environmental goals and objectives. By balancing these goals and objectives, entities should be able to create and/or retain jobs resulting in the long-term sustainment of the local economy and an overall positive quality of life of residents. The long-term existence and maintenance of a vibrant and dynamic local economy is achieved by investing and supporting programs and projects that reflect community values and social equality, preserving the environment, promoting energy efficiency and conservation, and prioritizing fiscal responsibility. The long-term benefits achieved from these investments and support is responsive and intelligent community economic development, poverty reduction, and prolonged use of natural resources

The plan also uses the following definitions:

Sustainability—*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Green Jobs—*work in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development (R&D), administrative, and service activities that contribute(s) substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality.*

Clean Energy—*energy that can be extracted, generated, and/or consumed without any significant negative impact to the environment. It encompasses renewable energy (a natural energy which does not have a limited supply, i.e., geothermal, solar, wind, biomass), also often referred to as alternative energy. The clean energy definition used in this plan also includes technologies that improve energy efficiency and generate energy without producing CO₂ (also known as sustainable energy and/or green energy).*

Those institutions implementing the sustainability action items should keep in mind the following principles about sustainability and economic development:

- Increase competitiveness and produce economic benefits: attract and support the development of clean energy and recycling industries; improve opportunities for green jobs by promoting cooperation and collaboration between businesses and government in the county and region.
- Develop healthier communities and social equity: allocate resources to activities that improve residents' quality of life, including access to and adoption of broadband; preserve and create additional public green space, including trails, alongside environmentally responsible and sustainable development that promotes active lifestyles.
- Lead by example: serve as a model for the state and region by exploring, utilizing, and sharing best practices with the community; meet all environmental mandates while striving to exceed them to the extent practical.

Description of the Process:

The Garrett County Sustainability Addendum is the culmination of a four-step process. First, a knowledge base of existing efforts was developed through research and interviews. Stakeholders representing public and private sectors, including key leaders from academia, business, government, and public utilities, were interviewed. Interviews were conducted to learn about efforts they were undertaking and to solicit ideas that the County should undertake. Results are summarized in the profile below.

Second, state and national policies, activities, and best practices that could shape and have an impact on activities that the County may want to undertake were identified. Efforts were then proposed which would 1) best position the County to take a leadership role and capitalize on opportunities resulting from societal trends and public policies at the state and federal levels, 2) compliment existing activities, and 3) fit into the cultural fabric of Garrett County. As part of the process, two meetings on sustainability were held.

Third, a one-day meeting was held with regional stakeholders who shared insights and thoughts on the appropriate actions the County can undertake during the next 5-10 years to develop a green economy. The purpose of the meeting was to educate and inform the steering committee members and to determine if there were significant ideas and/or activities missing from the plan. In sum, it was a tool to generate new ideas and reaffirm the need for proposed goals, objectives, and action items. During this meeting, five priority action items were developed.

Finally, this addendum was developed based on each of the previous steps.

Garrett County Green Profile:

Currently, Garrett County is undertaking several efforts that provide a solid foundation for expanding sustainability efforts and growing a local economy that capitalizes on clean energy production, green building, weatherization, sustainable farming, and comprehensive recycling.

There are two large-scale wind projects under development in Garrett County. In March 2010, the installation of 28 Clipper 2.5 megawatt (MW) Liberty wind turbines on Backbone Mountain began, and the project known as the Criterion Wind Project is nearing completion as this plan is being finalized. When complete, the project will produce 70 MW of wind energy for the Mid-Atlantic Region. These wind farms will deliver renewable power to a region with a large and growing demand for clean energy and increasing environmental awareness. The wind farm sites and surrounding areas will also benefit from environmental and recreational improvements.

In October 2010, the Garrett County Community Action Committee received over \$1 million to install wind, solar, or geothermal systems for low and very low-income residents. This grant will also help build capacity of local contractors and staff to do installation of residential wind, solar, and geothermal systems. The money was awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Garrett County Community Action Committee has been a leader in weatherizing homes for low-income families and to date has weatherized hundreds of homes. It received \$2M in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding and has tripled the number of home energy auditors as well as hired and trained contractors. As stated in the Economic Development plan, the natural resources' present and existing experience in energy efficiency and weatherization position the county to take advantage of broad economic trends toward small-scale and alternative clean energy production. There is also a base of experience in high-end construction, technical skills, weatherization, and energy production which can act as a foundation for the higher skill and higher wage jobs often touted as a part of transitioning to a low carbon economy. Currently, there are two private home energy-auditing companies and 16,761 existing homes in Garrett County. There are three new construction green building projects: Our Cool House, Ridge View Valley, and Liberty Mews.

Agriculture remains an important sector to Garrett County and its residents. The preservation of farmland and working farms is an important component to Garrett County's social and economic structure. Garrett County is poised to take advantage of the locally sourced food movement sweeping across the nation. The county has a farmer's market system in place. It has several sustainable farming operations, including artisan cheese making and alpaca farming. The University of Maryland Extension Office has been able to increase the growing season by working with farmers to use high tunnels and other mechanisms. In addition, UMD has been able to establish a dialogue between farmers and restaurant owners for local food purchasing.

One Garrett County company, Beitzel Corporation, is currently manufacturing solar towers for use in the mining and railroad industries. Beitzel is exploring uses in other industries. The company is also developing a plug-in electric mining vehicle that could have other applications.

There is substantial interest within the Garrett County business community to understand what it means to be a green business and how it can reduce costs and increase business. To meet the interest of members, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce has established a Green Committee and has created a pool for group purchasing of bio-degradable food service products. In addition, Garrett College has self-listed on the Maryland Green Business Registry committing to establish an environmental team, adopting an environmental policy statement, purchasing environmentally preferable products and services, participating in community environmental projects, incorporating stormwater management and site design, and recycling.

One area in which the business community felt that it could do more was in the area of recycling. Owners believe there are major business advantages to a comprehensive recycling program. There is a countywide recycling collection site system in place; however, it is based on 100 percent individual voluntary efforts. There are no government mandates to recycle. According to the General Services Department, Solid Waste and Recycling Division, major business and institutions participate, and there is a 47.9 percent recycling rate.

Strengths and Weaknesses:

Garrett County has an advantageous electric grid location with many high voltage and medium voltage lines, providing opportunities for additional electricity generation in various locations.

Although agricultural demonstration efforts to develop a biofuels' industry are occurring in surrounding counties, scale is a problem for creating a viable biofuels' industry in Garrett County. However, biomass energy production may be a fit for Garrett County, especially if it could be mixed with coal.

Given the considerations of geography, availability of natural resources, scalability, and access to transmission lines, small-scale wind farms, solar, and geothermal are viable clean energy technologies. All of these technologies would provide construction and installation jobs.

Garrett County's most predominant resource for clean energy is wind. It has the best wind resource in the state and has the potential for hundreds of small wind projects. Currently, there are only 68 wind projects in the State of Maryland with most of them located on agricultural sites in Harford County and on the Eastern Shore. Wind seems to be a good opportunity to do more – production, manufacturing, and installation.

Small residential power may be a promising sector to develop. The credits could be aggregated and county-owned for some period of time as a source of funds to provide rebates or low interest loans to homeowners/businesses.

A small-scale, community-owned, "gas fired" power plant may also be a viable opportunity.

Energy efficiency and conservation also present a good opportunity to create jobs in Garrett County. However, Garrett County residents are not taking advantage of federal, state, and utility rebates. Participation in the EMPower MD program, focusing on energy star appliances, recycling, and home performance among Garrett County residents has been low.

A financial opportunity exists with recycling.

Sustainability with the Economic Development Strategic Plan:

The Garrett County vision: to be known as a growing, thriving rural community with successful farms and businesses, vibrant towns, and user-friendly public parks and forests. Garrett County will be a rural leader in environmentally and socially sustainable growth. Its economy will include diverse types and sizes of businesses and wages will be increasing. The Garrett County Economic Development Strategic Plan places an emphasis on developing a healthier community, a more robust and diverse local economy, and greater social equity to create an environment in which businesses can grow and thrive, and in which the quality of life of people living and visiting the area is protected. This is expressed through its strategic direction, which can be summarized as: *seek a growing population, an increase in visitors, and growth in median wages, business revenue, and profit by focusing on socially sustainable, clean energy development and growth.*

Garrett County will pursue its overall economic vision by applying its strategic direction to the pursuit of the six (6) goals. Each of these goals has an element of sustainable development and growth as we describe below.

The Infrastructure and Facilities goal and objectives support the development of the infrastructure necessary for people to drive private vehicles less and allow for local food production and consumption, thereby requiring less fuel in the transportation of goods.

The Workforce Development goal and objectives increase training and education opportunities for residents in the area of clean energy and energy efficiency, thus expanding training in green jobs and the existing economy into new areas. It also focuses on transitioning the local construction industry to a retrofit market where homes are more energy efficient. By creating a need for less power, there would be a reduction in the need for energy generation which would reduce greenhouse gases both in the building environment and power production sector.

The Business Start-Up and Support goal and objectives create a support system for locally owned businesses in order to have a sufficient number of growing, profitable businesses that are able to pay 'living wages' and offer benefits. This is achieved by developing and implementing strategies for reducing business operational costs, including utilities and water, and educating businesses about a range of environmentally sustainable cost efficient practices. Second, the system is strengthened by "buy local" incentives that encourage residents and businesses to purchase services and supplies locally, thus reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) output through decreased vehicle miles traveled and/or other transportation costs.

The Community Planning and Leadership goal and objectives focus on preserving and creating additional public green space, including trails, alongside environmentally responsible and sustainable development that promotes active lifestyles.

The Energy and Natural Resources goal and objectives focus on the community's commitment to broaden its energy development portfolio to include both clean energy production and natural gas extraction, but to do so in an environmentally responsible manner. This goal and its objectives most directly fit the most popular and globally accepted definition of sustainability: *"meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainable means using methods, systems and materials that won't deplete resources or harm natural cycles"* (Rosenbaum, 1993).

The Promotion and Marketing goal and objectives fully maximize Garrett County institutions' commitment to sustainability by generating resident and visitor goodwill, turning environmental strategies into profit strategies, and elevating the County's rural leadership role.

Major Sustainability Initiatives:

Explicitly, the goal of the Garrett County sustainability efforts will be to position Garrett County as a rural leader in environmentally and socially sustainable growth. In order to achieve this goal, five priority initiatives were specifically identified during the two sustainability meetings. All of these initiatives support the six goals in the economic development strategic plan, and two are specifically referenced as action items in the plan.

1. Create a biomass industry by developing a technology roadmap.

Garrett County, along with its neighboring counties, has the ideal natural resources available to create a biomass industry. In order to establish an industry, a technology-led, economic development strategy should be undertaken. The county would align with other regional jurisdictions to conduct a technology-led road map exercise which would explore the types of jobs and applications that could be created by the industry, as well as identify resources necessary and recognize barriers. Developing a roadmap has three major uses: it would help the jurisdictions reach a consensus about a set of needs and the technologies required to satisfy those needs; it would provide a mechanism to help forecast technology developments; and it would provide a framework to help plan and coordinate technology developments. Opportunities in the biomass sector that should be explored include wood pellets, waste-to-energy generation, and coal mixed with biomass.

This initiative should be carried out by the Garrett County Department of Economic Development in collaboration with Garrett College. It would fall under the Energy and Natural Resources Goal, Objective 1: Increase clean energy technology businesses in the county as one element of supporting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development. It would also support the overall work of the Workforce Development Goal and Business Start-Up Support.

2. Create an aggregator industry by establishing carbon and renewable energy credit projects and developing a virtual food hub.

Clean energy, recycling, and agricultural efforts benefit from creating an aggregator network in Garrett County. The need for financing clean energy and trading carbon credits and Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) present an opportunity to develop a financing industry. Carbon credits and Renewable Energy Credits can be aggregated and sold on clean energy trading markets. Proceeds from these sales can be designated for a revolving fund where the county could provide low interest loans or rebates for clean energy projects.

FoodHub is an aggregator model designed by the nonprofit Ecotrust. The FoodHub's marketplace is its most successful function, making it easy for regional food buyers and sellers to find each other, connect, and do business. The virtual market allows providers to quickly unload inventory surpluses and buyers to find bargains of regionally produced foods. Producers range from farmers selling extras from their backyards to incorporated distributors. The requirements for success include backers to establish a platform and avid participants. Garrett County may benefit from a forum similar to the FoodHub marketplace. The limiting factor will be whether there is sufficient, underused agricultural production. The goal is to re-route locally produced healthy food to local buyers. This aggregator model is low cost if incorporated into an already existing internet structure, i.e., if there is already a website where the FoodHub could be added. Funds can be raised by subscription fees to pay for employee salaries.

This initiative should be carried out by the Garrett County Office of University of Maryland Extension, in collaboration with the Garrett County Department of Economic Development and the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, with assistance from Garrett College. This work falls under the Energy and Natural Resources Goal, Objective 1: Increase clean energy technology businesses in the county as one element of supporting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development; and Objective 6: Maintain the 2010 number of acres of farmland in the county while supporting farmers' efforts to use environmentally sustainable practices, improve energy efficiency, and provide locally grown food products. It also supports the overall work of the Workforce Development Goal and Business Start-Up Support.

3. Conduct a feasibility study for a comprehensive recycling program in the public sector and business community.

Rural communities are finding economic opportunity in recycling. Recycling programs require organization and collaboration from restaurants, hotels, schools, etc. Implementing a system starting with the business community, K-12 schools, higher education facilities, and park and recreational facilities would be the logical first step. However, a feasibility study needs to be conducted to determine the volume of recyclable materials available and the financial potential in the county. The aggregator role will be an important component in making the recycling program successful.

This initiative is listed as an action item under the Energy and Natural Resources Goal Objective 5: Develop a robust and comprehensive recycling program in the county consistent with the county's vision of becoming a rural sustainable community leader which would help lengthen the life of the landfill and support new 'clean' businesses. It will be carried out by the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce.

4. Establish a Garrett Green Business Certification Program.

The purposes of the Garrett Green Business Certification Program are to market local businesses and create jobs by supporting the buy local effort. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, tourism is becoming increasingly important to the U.S. economy. The goal of the program is to help businesses reduce operating costs while concurrently creating greater awareness and marketing opportunities to increase sales. The program will operate smoothly with minimal cost upon satisfaction of three conditions:

- 1) the establishment of an authority to certify compliance and audit business participants' performance;
- 2) the establishment of unambiguous criteria and guidelines to promote unencumbered participation by local businesses; and
- 3) marketing and community involvement at the grass roots level.

The program model works as follows: a business participant checks off the initiatives from an enumerated list to be provided by the Community. It is important to communicate to participants that it is neither vital nor expected that any given business will check off all of the enumerated criteria. Each initiative receives a point value used to calculate participants' scores. Participants receiving specified point totals will receive certification as a "Garrett Green Business."

This initiative is listed as an action item under the Business Start-Up and Support Goal Objective 4: Develop a cadre of businesses which are committed to environmentally sustainable practices and which are recognized for these efforts. It will be carried out by the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce.

5. Establish a Garrett County Energy and Sustainability Office.

This office would be responsible for implementing energy efficiency initiatives within the county starting with all Garrett County schools and expanding to all county-owned buildings. The office would be responsible for energy management within the county and could help make publicly-funded buildings more energy efficient, thus helping to reduce energy demand and saving money. This office would also be responsible for clean energy projects and aggregating the credits from publicly-funded projects. It would also be charged with implementing sustainability measures across the county and would be required to develop a work plan.

This initiative falls under the Energy and Natural Resources Goal Objective 4: Encourage public and private sector adoption of weatherization and energy saving technologies thereby creating financial savings that may be spent on wages and developing human resources. This initiative should be carried out by Garrett County Government and the office would report directly to the County Commissioners.

Other Sustainability Objectives:

In addition to the way broad goals support sustainability and the five specific sustainability initiatives, the Economic Development Strategic Plan includes action items which directly support Garrett County becoming a leader in clean energy development and growth. These have been extracted from the overall plan and listed below under the corresponding six goals.¹³

Goal 1: Infrastructure and Facilities

Garrett County invests in infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunication, water/sewer) and in community, business, and recreational facilities to facilitate sustainable growth.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Increasing broadband Internet, which will increase tele-commuting options (Objective 1.1)
- Development of a trail and sidewalk system that allows residents and visitors to move around the county without driving (Objective 1.2, 1.3)
- Increasing public transportation options for residents and visitors (Objective 1.5)
- Facility for small scale food production (Objective 1.4)

Goal 2: Workforce Development

Garrett County has a highly competent and well-educated workforce with the skills desired by existing, new, and relocating businesses.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Offer certification courses and other targeted courses (including 'green technologies') through Garrett College which result in employment or advancement by participants (Objective 2.1)
- Provide educational or training events for local agriculture businesses (Objective 2.5)

Goal 3: Business Start-Up and Support

Garrett County seeks to increase the number and diversity of growing, profitable businesses that are paying higher wages.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Provide opportunities for local businesses to reduce operating costs through collaborative purchasing and learning efforts (Objective 3.3)
- Develop a cadre of businesses which are committed to environmentally sustainable practices and which are recognized for these efforts (Objective 3.4)

¹³ The concept of sustainability as defined previously and the three principles stated at the beginning of this document were used to determine the specific objectives that would fall under the section. In addition, the strategic direction was also used as a filter.

Goal 4: Community Planning and Community Leadership

Garrett County implements community plans and policies which support sustainable business growth, preserve quality of life, and expand community leadership.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Advocate for growth policies that include a rural perspective on sustainable growth at the local, state, and national levels (Objective 4.1)
- Develop and coordinate policies and countywide actions that enhance heritage, recreational, and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors to Garrett County (Objective 4.3)
- Continue the development of responsible plans that identify future infrastructure needs (water, sewage, landfill, etc.) and consider regional/collaborative approaches to meeting needs (Objective 4.5)

Goal 5: Energy and Natural Resources

Garrett County supports responsible extraction and development of energy resources in the county and environmentally sustainable approaches to the recreational development of public lands, farmland, and waterways.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Increase clean energy technology businesses in the county as one element of supporting the county as a rural leader in sustainable development (Objective 5.1)
- Responsibly develop Marcellus shale natural gas and other energy resources (Objective 5.2)
- Utilize public revenue, which is generated by the development of local energy resources, to support economic development including energy efficiency and becoming a rural sustainable community leader (Objective 5.3)
- Encourage public and private sector adoption of weatherization and energy saving technologies thereby creating financial savings that may be spent on wages and developing human resources (Objective 5.4)
- Develop a robust and comprehensive recycling program in the county which is consistent with the county's vision of becoming a rural sustainable community leader and which will help lengthen the life of the landfill and support new 'clean' businesses (Objective 5.5)
- Maintain the 2010 number of acres of farmland in the county while supporting farmers' efforts to use environmentally sustainable practices, improve energy efficiency, and provide locally grown food products (Objective 5.6)
- Monitor and maintain excellent water quality throughout the county (Objective 5.7)
- Facilitate the use, expansion, and access to local and state-owned parks, forests, and other recreational facilities in the county (Objective 5.8)

Goal 6: Promotion and Marketing

Garrett County institutions promote “the Garrett County experience” in order to increase people living in, visiting, and starting businesses in the county.

Following are the objectives that reflect the concept of sustainability under this goal:

- Promote locally grown agriculture and locally produced goods (Objective 6.4)
- Implement an outreach and education plan to highlight attention to Garrett County as a Rural Leader in Sustainable Development—Energy in Action (Objective 6.7)