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Alabama Association of Regional Councils

Alabama Consolidated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Winter

2007

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Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments
West Alabama Regional Commission
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
South Central Alabama Development Commission
Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission
Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
Lee-Russell Council of Governments
North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments
Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

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Alabama Consolidated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

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Introduction

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Introduction and Purpose The Regions in Context The Consolidated CEDS Supplemental Reports for Economic Recovery

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Introduction and Purpose

The task of developing this Consolidated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (ConCEDS) was performed by the Planning Task Force of the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC). The AARC entered into an agreement with the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) in October of 2006. This agreement provided that the twelve Regional Councils of the State of Alabama, working individually and as a group, would: 1) furnish to ADECA a copy of the respective Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for each Region; 2) submit to ADECA a consolidated CEDS representing a statewide summation of the economic development programs contained and described in the twelve Regional CEDS'; 3) provide supplementary reports detailing the extent and nature of information available at the twelve Regional Councils regarding five specified topics; and 4) provide consultation to ADECA on a continuing basis through the life of the agreement. This agreement was conceived in support of ADECA's Statewide Economic Recovery Strategy.

"Authorized by the legislature in 1935, the various Regional Councils were formed at different times over the years, in different forms with different service areas. Their powers and duties evolved through subsequent legislation in 1963, 1969 and 1973. In 1985, the twelve Regional Councils in existence at the time were ratified and confirmed by Act No. 85-757 of the Legislature of Alabama."

The Regions in Context



There are twelve Regional Councils within the State of Alabama. The individual Regional Councils are referred to by a number of different names, such as regional commission, regional planning commission, regional planning and development commission, or regional council of governments. In this report, the generic term "Regional Council" is used to refer to all twelve. Authorized by the legislature in 1935, the various Regional Councils were formed at different times over the years, in different forms with different service areas. Their powers and duties evolved through subsequent legislation in 1963, 1969 and 1973. In 1985, the twelve Regional Councils in existence at the time were ratified and confirmed by Act No. 85-757 of the Legislature of Alabama. The current twelve Regional Councils and the regions they serve are as follows.

Region 1 (NACOLG). The Northwest Alabama Regional Council of Governments serves five counties in northwest Alabama. These counties are Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion and Winston counties. NACOLG's offices are located in Muscle Shoals.

Region 2 (WARC). The West Alabama Regional Commission serves seven counties in west central Alabama. These counties are Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens and Tuscaloosa

counties. WARC's offices are located in Northport.

Region 3 (RPCGB). The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham serves six counties in central Alabama. These counties are Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair and Walker counties. RPCGB's offices are located in Birmingham.

Region 4 (EARPDC). The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves ten counties in east central Alabama. These counties are Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega and Tallapoosa counties. EARPDC's offices are located in Anniston.

Region 5 (SCADC). The South Central Alabama Development Commission serves six counties in south central and southeast Alabama. These counties are Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Macon and Pike counties. SCADC's offices are located in Montgomery.

Region 6 (ATRC). The Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission serves ten counties in west central Alabama. These counties are Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington and Wilcox counties. ATRC's offices are located in Camden.

Region 7 (SEARPDC). The Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves seven counties in southeast Alabama. These counties are Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston counties. SEARPDC's offices are located in Dothan.

Region 8 (SARPC). The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission serves three counties in south coastal Alabama. These counties are Baldwin, Escambia and Mobile counties. SARPC's offices are located in Mobile.

Region 9 (CARPDC). The Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves three counties in central Alabama. These counties are Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery counties. CARPDC's offices are located in Montgomery.

Region 10 (LRCOG). The Lee-Russell Council of Governments serves two counties in east central Alabama. These counties are Lee and Russell counties. LRCOG's offices are located in Auburn.

Region 11 (NARCOG). The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments serves three counties in north central Alabama. These counties are Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan counties. NARCOG's offices are located in Decatur.

Region 12 (TARCOG). The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments serves five counties in northeast Alabama. These counties are DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison and Marshall counties. TARCOG's offices are located in Huntsville.

AARC. The Alabama Association of Regional Councils is an organization representing all twelve Regional Councils within the State of Alabama. Working through the AARC, the Regional Councils form statewide task forces from time to time to accomplish missions of statewide importance. AARC's offices are co-located in Montgomery with SCADC.

The Consolidated CEDS

The Consolidated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (ConCEDS) constitutes Part I of this document. It is a compilation of the efforts of the twelve Regional Councils. It was prepared by reviewing the contents of the twelve Regional CEDS and summarizing them into a single document while emphasizing the focus, mission and strategy of the individual efforts. This ConCEDS is organized into five chapters which reflect the technical requirements for a CEDS as stipulated by United States Economic Development Administration. These chapters are:

"The Consolidated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CONCEDS) is a compilation of the efforts of the twelve Regional Councils. It was prepared by reviewing the contents of the twelve Regional CEDS and summarizing them into a single document while emphasizing the focus, mission and strategy of the individual efforts."

- Chapter 1. Regional Planning for Economic Development. This chapter details the process for engaging the community and community leaders in the economic development process;
- Chapter 2. Economic Development Situation. This chapter presents statistical and other information to present an overall picture of the local economy;
- Chapter 3. Economic Development Assessment. This chapter includes an analysis of local and regional problems and opportunities;
- Chapter 4. Economic Development Strategy. This chapter presents the defined regional program for dealing with the identified problems and opportunities and ways of improving the situation; and
- Chapter 5. Economic Development Performance. This chapter outlines the program for evaluation of performance and accountability.

Significantly, this is not a State CEDS. Although it was prepared under contract with a department of the State of Alabama, there was no authoritative entity making decisions from a State perspective on any overall strategy or overriding policy. And, while Chapter 2 (situation) and Chapter 3 (assessment) can be read from a statewide perspective, in Chapter 4 (strategy) the individuality and distinctiveness of each of the twelve Regional Councils comes through. It has been suggested and discussed that a statewide entity of some form be established. It is recommended that the need for such a statewide entity should be explored further.

Supplemental Reports for Economic Recovery

The Supplementary Reports for Economic Recovery constitute Part II of the document. The topics for the supplementary reports are more fully described at the beginning of Part II and consist of:

- 1) Damage Assessment;
- 2) Economic Recovery;
- 3) Marketing Strategies;
- 4) Hazard Mitigation; and
- 5) Capacity Development.

Upon execution of the agreement mentioned above, the Planning Task Force of the AARC prepared a series of five questionnaires for each of these five topics which were then distributed to each of the twelve Regional Councils. The Regional Councils returned the completed questionnaires to the Planning Task Force. The Task Force was then divided into six committees to complete the reporting process. The damage assessment committee was made up from the staffs of SARPC and ATRC. The economic recovery committee was made up from the staffs of SEARPDC and WARC. The hazard mitigation committee was made up from the staff of EARPDC and NARCOG. The marketing strategies committee was made up from the staffs of SCADC and RPCGB. The capacity development committee was made up from the staffs of CARPDC and LRCOG. And, finally, an editorial committee was made up from the staffs of NACOLG and TARCOG.

Project oversight was performed by Shabbir Olia for ADECA and, for AARC, William (Bill) Curtis, FAICP, of EARPDC. Project management for ADECA was performed by Vickie Jones Locke of the Black Belt Action Commission, and for AARC, project coordination and compilation was performed by Jeffrey Pruitt, AICP, of TARCOG.

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Chapter 1. Regional Planning for Economic Development

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The regional organization and the strategy committee
 Community participation
 Private sector participation
 Regional/State coordination

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The regional organization and the strategy committee

“Over six hundred volunteers have been involved in the regional CEDS processes throughout Alabama.”

Region	Number of Counties	Number of Committee Members
1. NACOLG	5	40
2. WARC	7	13
3. RPCGB	6	68
4. EARPDC	10	84
5. SCADC	6	45
6. ATRC	10	80
7. SEARPDC	6	38
8. SARPC	3	64
9. CARPDC	3	50
10. LRCOG	2	102
11. NARCOG	3	7
12. TARCOG	5	25

The regional organization designated for the development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is, in every region within the State of Alabama, the regional council for each respective region, of which there are twelve. In each of the twelve regions, a strategy committee was formed for the purpose of developing the respective regional CEDS. New requirements for a CEDS strategy committee are set out in §303.6(a) of the Federal Register dated September 27, 2006. These rules call for the development of a strategy committee to represent the main economic interests of the region with a majority of the membership being represented by the private sector. The Federal Register further defines “private sector representative” as any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position with respect to any for-



profit enterprise, or that person's designee. These rules also call for the strategy committee to include public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals.

Membership. Over six hundred volunteers have been involved in the regional CEDS processes throughout Alabama. These volunteers are people who have donated their time to serving on the strategy committee for their area. Each region takes its own approach to the establishment of a strategy committee. Some have as many as 102 members with most committees having about 40 to 80 members. In at least one region, the regional council's board of directors serves as the strategy committee. Some regional strategy committees meet on a regular basis while others meet on an as-needed basis. For a listing of the membership of these committees, the reader should refer to the respective CEDS document for each region.

Community Participation

Community participation and public participation are vital to the development of an effective and relevant CEDS process. The Federal Register, in §303.7(b)(4), calls for a discussion of community participation in the process of developing a CEDS. As with other parts of the process, the various regional councils each take a different course in their community participation activities. During the summer of 2006, most of the Regional Councils throughout the state instituted a series of meetings in furtherance of the development of regional alliances for economic development. Although one region held as many as seventeen meetings and another held twelve meetings, most of the other regions conducted a series of three meetings in the development of their 2006 CEDS or 2006 CEDS Update. Included in this series of meetings was a strategic planning exercise that involved an analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the development of a regional vision which identified goals, strategies and projects. Upon the completion of the meetings and the publication of the CEDS document, the CEDS for each Regional Council was made available for a 30-day review and comment period.

Private Sector Participation

As with community participation described above, the Federal Register, in §303.7(b)(4), calls for a discussion of private sector participation in the process of developing a CEDS. This is in addition to the section that calls for direct private sector membership on the CEDS Strategy Committee.

Regional/State Coordination

In 2006, the regional councils of the State of Alabama, working through the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC), began a process to improve the coordination of the CEDS process with each other and with the State. The Federal Register, in §303.7(b)(10) calls for a regional CEDS to outline the methodology for cooperating and integrating the CEDS with the State's economic development priorities.

The process that was begun in 2006 involved the creation of regional alliances for each region and the development of a concept for state/regional cooperation. Each regional council created a regional alliance and held meetings in conjunction with the development of their respective CEDS or CEDS update. To coordinate the creation and functioning of the regional alliances, the regional councils worked through the Planning Task Force of the AARC.

“Although one region held as many as seventeen meetings and another held twelve meetings, most of the other regions conducted a series of three meetings in the development of their 2006 CEDS or 2006 CEDS Update. Included in this series of meetings was a strategic planning exercise that involved an analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the development of a regional vision which identified goals, strategies and projects..”

The Planning Task Force met monthly throughout 2006 at the offices of the South Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission in Montgomery to discuss the progress of the regional alliances and the development of the respective CEDS. In many of these meetings, state representatives were present to discuss the state's interests and to remain involved in CEDS development.

Late in 2006, the current effort to consolidate the regional CEDS' was begun in order to build on the previous efforts to create and develop the regional alliances while providing a product of use to the state in its economic recovery efforts.

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Chapter 2. Economic Development Situation

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Introduction
 Economy
 Population
 Geography
 Workforce Development and Use
 Transportation Access
 Resources
 Environment
 Infrastructure
 Education
 Economic Support Assets

* * * * *

Introduction

The purpose of this portion of a CEDS is to present a background of the economic development situation of a region with a discussion of the economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources, environment, and other pertinent information. It is intended to paint a realistic picture of current conditions.

“For all five counties in Region 1, the highest percentage of the workforce is in manufacturing with the second highest in education, health care and social services. The major employment groups in Region 2 are government, manufacturing, education, health care and social services. And, in Region 5, Region 9 and Region 10, the government sector was the most critical sector of the local and regional economy.”

This chapter does not constitute a consolidated picture of the economic development situation of the entire State. The twelve Regional Councils often use differing methods and conventions to analyze and report economic facts, resulting in difficulty when comparing one region to another. Alternatively, the following information is a compilation of statements and facts gleaned from the CEDS documents of the twelve regions. It is intended to briefly reflect the gist of those issues of importance to local areas.

Economy

Many areas of the State report that manufacturing remains a critical component of the economy along with education, health care and social services. For all five counties in Region 1, the highest percentage of the workforce is in manufacturing with the second highest in education, health care and social services. The major employment groups in Region 2 are government, manufacturing, education, health care and social services. And, in Region 5, Region 9 and Region 10, the government sector was the most critical sector of the local and regional economy.

One thing that all regions throughout the state seem to have in common is the changing local economy. Region 2 reports continuing decline in agriculture except for Lamar and Pickens counties. Catfish farming in Region 2 has become a major source of income. And, while Region 2 has experienced expansion of the automotive industry, employment in mining and extraction in Region 2 continues to drop and the region has lost almost all of its garment industry. Similarly, the Region 4 economy has been hit hard by plant closings and layoffs, particularly in the textile and apparel industry. Increases in the automotive employment appear to have been largely filled by commuters from other parts of the state. Region 9 and Region 12 have also experienced decline in textile and apparel industries while high technology industries and automotive manufacturers have taken their place.

Region 3 is experiencing employment shift toward the services sector and toward finance, insurance and real estate. Despite the shift away from manufacturing there remain 1,373 manufacturing firms throughout Region 3. Economic output in Region 3 has been increasing in all sectors except mining with financial services experiencing the largest increase at 68.5% between 1990 and 2000. The number of business establishments in the region increased from 27,303 in 2000 to 27,770 in 2004. Likewise, Region 9 has employment shifting to the services sector and with slight increases in finance, insurance and real estate. There are 318 manufacturing firms in Region 9.



The forest products industry is the largest industry in Region 6 with manufacturing being the largest employment sector followed by government and retail trade.

Region 8 employment is primarily in services and retail trade. As expected in a coastal area, tourism and retail trade associated with tourism make up a large part of the local economy for much of the region.

Region 11 reports that they enjoy a diverse economy due to no single industry dominating the regional job market. Industry along the I-65 in Region 11 has grown, particularly with expansions from the high technology center in the Huntsville area and automotive spin off industries throughout the state. Adjacent to Region 11, the growth economy of Region 12 is also centered on the Huntsville area which is dominated by a combination of rising federal anti-terrorism/technology spending, biotechnology and a cyclic high-tech /computer and telecommunications market.

In Region 4, Region 10 and Region 12, new jobs related to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions are expected to bring continuing job and population growth to these regions.

Population

The population of each region throughout the state as of the year 2000 and the projected population increase through 2025 is shown in the following table along with the relative anticipated growth rate for each region. According to the Center for Businesses and Economic Research (CBER), the overall growth rate expected for the state as a whole over the 25 year period is 21.1%.

Migration and population shifts are continuing issues for many regions. Region 2 reports experiencing out migration in the past, however this seems to have been reversed for the most part. In Region 3, in-migration and population shifting within the region is causing the population to increase along major highway corridors. This is having implications for continued sprawl, the rising need for urban redevelopment and additional infrastructure and education needs. As shown in the accompanying table, Region 9 is anticipating an unusually high growth rate for the coming years. Region 9 is concern about this growth rate and the implications it has for the provision for infrastructure and services. The growth in Lee County has been among the fastest in the state. And, while the growth in Russell County has not been quite so dramatic, the recent BRAC decision regarding expansion at Fort Benning will likely cause continued population growth in the future. Likewise, in Region 12, BRAC is expected to have a considerable impact on jobs and growth throughout the foreseeable future.

"The growth in Lee County has been among the fastest in the state. And, while the growth in Russell County has not been quite so dramatic, the recent BRAC decision regarding expansion at Fort Benning will likely cause continued population growth in the future.."

Most regions report considerable differences in median family income when comparing rural counties and more urban and suburban counties. Median family income for 2000 in Region 2 ranged from \$24,604 in Greene County to \$45,485 in Tuscaloosa County. In Region 5, the median family income in 2000 ranged from \$29,700 in the rural areas to \$44,669 in Montgomery County. Median family income relatively low across the board in largely rural Region 6 in 2000 ranging from a low of \$22,200 in Wilcox County to a high of \$37,867 in Washington County.

Median family income in region 7 ranged from \$31,877 in Barbour County to

\$42,437 in Houston County in 2000.

Projected Growth in Population: 2000 to 2025

	2000	2025	Rate
Region 1 (NACOLG)	230,230	264,553	14.9%
Region 2 (WARC)	268,208	308,466	15.0%
Region 3 (RPCGB)	1,031,412	1,283,060	24.4%
Region 4 (EARPDC)	461,034	501,970	8.9%
Region 5 (SCADC)	113,961	118,919	4.4%
Region 6 (ATRC)	209,045	206,183	-1.4%
Region 7 (SEARPDC)	290,274	322,759	11.2%
Region 8 (SARPC)	578,698	734,649	26.9%
Region 9 (CARPDC)	333,055	433,292	30.1%
Region 10 (LRCOG)	164,848	234,693	42.4%
Region 11 (NARCOG)	223,350	269,673	20.7%
Region 12 (TARCOG)	542,985	707,780	30.3%
Alabama	4,447,100	5,385,997	21.1%

The smaller regions display a smaller range of incomes than the larger regions. In Region 8 with three counties, the median household income in 2000 ranged from \$36,085 in Escambia County to \$47,028 in Baldwin County. Similarly, in Region 9 which also has three counties, the median household income ranges from \$35,523 in Montgomery County to \$44,194 in Autauga County.

Finally, the trend of an aging population is occurring across the state of Alabama and the nation as the baby boom generation grows older and longevity increases. Regions 3, 4, 6 and 9, in particular, express concern regarding this trend. In Region 3, the fastest growing age group is 45 to 64 years of age. This is the case in Region 4, as well. In Region 6, about 30% of the population is age 50 and above. Provision of services, housing and job opportunities for the elderly will become increasingly important as the population ages.

"Alabama has 67 counties covering 50,744 square miles. The CEDS documents for the respective regions contain detailed information on the specific geographic, topographic and geologic features of each region."

Geography

Alabama has 67 counties covering 50,744 square miles. The CEDS documents for the respective regions contain detailed information on the specific geographic, topographic and geologic features of each region. Briefly, the state ranges from the mountainous areas in the north eastern portions of the state to the coastal plain in the central and southern portion. Alabama is rich with rivers and streams with three major river basins: the Tennessee River basin in the northern part of the state, the Chattahoochee River basin in the southeast and the Alabama River basin in the central and southwest.

Workforce Development and Use.

The labor force in Region 1 totaled 105,698 in 2006 according to the Alabama Labor Market news, April 2006 edition. Workforce development in the Shoals region is focused on upgrading and retraining of the local labor force, particularly through the University of north Alabama and the Northwest Shoals Community College. In Region 1, NACOLG promotes workforce development partnerships with local governments, schools, community colleges, businesses, Chambers of Commerce, family services centers and other non-profit organizations.

In Region 2, the labor force was 126,465 in 2005 and consisted mostly of manufacturing jobs followed by education, health care and social services.

The Region 3 labor force stood at 630,031 in 2004 with employment shifting toward the services sector and finance,

insurance and real estate. Employment opportunities are reported to be on the increase in Region 3, particularly in healthcare, education, and financial services.

In Region 4, the labor force increased to 215,699 in 2005. Workforce development programs in Region 4 include a consortium formed by Jacksonville and Oxford high schools along with Jacksonville State University and Gadsden State Community college. A new satellite campus is planned in Centre for Gadsden State Community College and a new campus for Central Alabama Community College will house a one stop center featuring a state Employment Office, an Alabama Skill Center, vocation rehabilitation and focused industrial training.

The Region 5 labor force in 2000 totaled 156,102. And, although the labor force was increasing, the increase was largely insignificant in the rural areas with Crenshaw, Lowndes and Macon counties actually experiencing decreases from 1990 to 2000 and with Bullock, Butler and Montgomery counties experiencing declines from 2000 to 2004.

Region 6 total employment in 2004 was 88,381 with the largest employment sectors in manufacturing and government. In addition to the efforts of the Alabama Office of Workforce Development, the area has received a U.S. Department of Labor grant for Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED).

Region 7 has experienced job loss with increased foreign competition to the peanut industry and the virtual elimination of the textile industry in the area. Retraining is necessary. The civilian labor force was estimated at 136,790 in 2000 and at 133,897 in 2005

The regional labor force in Region 10 was 85,884 in 2005. There was a 10% increase in employment in Lee County between 2001 and a decrease in Russell County for the same time period. The region has several training and education programs. The region has embarked on the creation of an integrated workforce development plan in collaboration with the Alabama Office of Workforce Development.

Region 8 reports the civilian labor force in 2002 of 282,430. In Region 9, the labor force was 156,703 in 2000 while total employment was 210,397. Total employment in Region 11 decreased from 113,283 in 2000 to 104,753 in 2004. While the estimated employment in Region 12 totaled 336,462 in 2003.

Transportation Access

Highways. Most regions of the state report having a good network of highways with a few network problems and many maintenance issues.

Located in the center of the state, Region 3 is a transportation hub with Interstates I-20, I-59, I-65 and the future I-22, now known as Corridor X. Also in the future for Region 3 is the northern beltline which will be an extension of I-459. U.S. Highway 280 remains a difficult issue with increasing population growth in the area and traffic congestion.

Region 1 is located along a major east-west corridor (US 72) which connects the region to Memphis on the west and to the I-65 corridor to the east. The southerly portion of Region 1 will also be served by the future I-22. Region 2 has a good network of highways including I-20/59 which traverses the region from east to west. Region 5 and Region 9 both have a good network of highways with two interstate highways, I-65 and I-85. Region 10 is bisected by I-85 and lies midway between Montgomery and Atlanta.

Although both I-20 and I-65 run through Region 6, a vast majority of the region lacks a four lane highway. And, in Region 1, Region 11 and Region 12, a major issue is the promotion of the Memphis to Atlanta highway to fill that gap in the interstate system.

Region 8 has a well developed highway system but reports major deficiencies including the physical condition of most roads, the lack of an adequate highway system to the coastal areas and, like the U.S. Highway 280 in Region 3, a mismatch between the road system and continuing development patterns associated with population growth.



Although the highways in Region 9 and Region 11 are considered generally adequate, there are many segments which need alignment improvements and maintenance.

Airports. In Region 1, Air service is provided at the Northwest Alabama Regional Airport and the Russellville Municipal Airport. Region 2 has eight airports throughout its region and Region 3 has seven airports throughout its region including the commercial air services provided at the Birmingham International Airport. Region 3 has over 15 air cargo shippers in the area. In Region 5, every county has at least one airport and in Region 6, there are fourteen airports, eleven of which are in use. There are a number of public and private airfields throughout the three counties of region 8 with the only commercial service at Mobile Regional Airport. The airport in Auburn, in Region 10, provides service to private and corporate planes. Air service is provided to the Decatur and Huntsville areas as well as all of north Alabama at the Huntsville International Airport which is designated as a U.S. Custom Port of Entry and features a unique cargo inter-modal facility for containerized cargo.

Railroads. In Region 1, rail service is provided by two railroads while Region 2 has four companies are providing rail service. Although rail closings in past years have reduced rail service there are no plans at this time to abandon any more lines in Region 2. Region 3 and Region 5 are served by three Class 1 railroads.

Waterways. The economic catalyst for the Mobile area, The Port of Mobile is one of the largest and best equipped ports on the Gulf Coast. It is connected to the north through the Alabama River and the Tennessee-Tombigbee waterway and along the coast through the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Three navigable rivers, the Alabama, the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior provide access to much of the southern and western regions of the state. The Alabama river is navigable from Mobile to Montgomery with an inland terminal at Montgomery. There are four inland ports on the Tenn-Tom waterway. In addition, there is the State Ports facility at Northport on the Black Warrior River. In the northern part of the state, the Tennessee River is a major transportation asset with the Alabama State Docks, the Port of Decatur and the Tennessee River Valley Terminal.

Natural Resources

Most areas of the state of Alabama have an abundance of natural resources. In this section, the emphasis is on those natural resources that are available for development or extraction. Nevertheless, most areas of the state have numerous rivers, creeks, and lakes that are conducive to outdoor recreation and tourism.

Region 2 has an abundance of natural resources including coal, oil, methane gas, timber. As well, Region 3 contains an abundance of minerals including coal, limestone, sand, shale, and clay. In Region 5, mineral resources range from sand and gravel with brown iron ore and lignite in the southern counties and Region 11 has a wide variety of mineral deposits including clay, limestone, sandstone, sand and gravel.

In Region 5 and Region 6, timber resources are an important part of the local economy with vast areas of loblolly-shortleaf pine forests and with several wood processing plants.

Environment

Region 3 notes that it is currently in attainment for ozone and all other measures of air pollution. This was a major milestone for the Birmingham area which was designated non-attainment in the 1970's.

Region 8 has many significant environmental issues including water pollution in and adjacent to Mobile Bay, the alteration and destruction of saltwater marshes and shallow bay bottoms, loss of natural habitats, and the effects of land utilization and oil and gas exploration. The area contains specific environmentally sensitive areas that warrant the attention of special environmental programs.

Infrastructure

Most regions have generally good access to public water systems, although pockets of need remain in many areas of the state. Sewer services are by far the greater need, particularly in the rural areas of the state.

Region 3 has over 70 water systems with a combined treatment capacity of 305 mgd. Expansion plans exist in several counties. Region 5 has 46 different water systems. Several municipalities in Region 5 will become deficient if current consumption trends continue. In Region 6, there are many residents without access to public water or sewer services. Residents there rely heavily on well water. Region 8 has 42 public water systems. Region 9 has 23 public water systems, and although most residents of the region are served, there remain pockets where service has not yet been extended.

Region 2 has lack of capacity for sewer service. There is increasing demand for sewer services to accommodate growth in Region 3 as well. Aging infrastructure will continue to challenge the sewer capacity of the region. While capacities are adequate with some sewer systems in Region 8, other areas in the region are severely straining system capacity. In Region 9, there is very little sewer service outside of municipal areas. The major concern with infrastructure in Region 10 is keeping up with growth, particularly with regard to sewer service. Although about 90 to 95 percent of the population Region 11 is served by public potable water, about 44% rely on on-site sewage disposal. Region 12 also reports sanitary sewer service needs in many rural areas.

Education

Region 2 reports generally low education levels. The percent of residents in Region 2 without a high school education is two percent lower than the state average. As of 2000, 73.5 % of the population of the region had a high school education. Several schools in the region are on the States School Board warning list. As for higher education, Region 2 has 1 university, 1 college, 2 junior colleges and eleven trade schools. In Region 3, 79.4% of the population age 25 or older, are high school graduates and nearly 22% have had some college. Region 3 reports declining dropout rates.

Compared with the state of Alabama and the nation, educational levels for the rural areas of Region 5 are fairly low. However, educational levels have continued to rise and there are institutions of higher education fairly well distributed throughout the region. As of 2000, about 67.3 % of the population over 25 had completed high school. In all ten counties in Region 6, there is at least one quarter of the population that does not have a high school diploma. And, as with many rural areas around the state there is needed improvement in educational facilities.

Region 7 has seen general improvement in educational attainment of its citizens from 1980 through 2000 but still is behind the statewide average. In Region 8, educational attainment is slightly higher than the national average. With regard to higher education, Region 8 has three degree granting institutions which makes it the major center of higher education between New Orleans and Tallahassee.

Educational attainment in Region 9 has been fairly stable with about 27.7 % of the population 25 or older with an high school diploma. As in Region 3, dropout rates in Region 9 have been declining.

Education is considered a great strength of Lee County in Region 10 and a concern for Russell County. The dropout rate in Russell County is considerably higher than in adjacent Lee County. Overall, average educational attainment in the region is well above national averages.

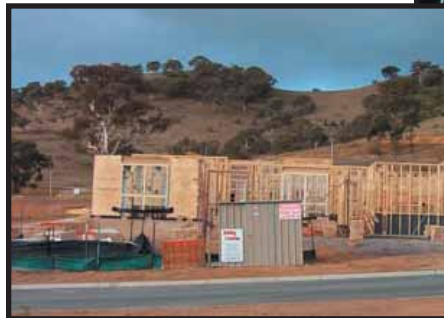
Educational attainment in Region 11 is generally lower than the average for the state with about 70.7 of the population over age 25 having a high school diploma compared with 75.3 % for the state. Region 11 has two community colleges. Region 12 considers itself fortunate to have a wealth of institutions of higher learning. Nevertheless, only one of five counties exceeds the state average in educational attainment.

Economic Support Assets (Industrial parks)

Economic support assets can be many things. For the purposes of this report, the focus is on industrial parks, sites and incubators. This is not an exhaustive listing of facilities. One should refer to the CEDS of the respective region in order to obtain a better picture of available sites in an area. In particular, though, Region 2 reports that it has at least nine industrial parks throughout the region. Three of these parks are adjacent to navigable rivers with port facilities and one is adjacent to the Tuscaloosa Municipal Airport. Region 3 has business incubators including the Office for the advancement of Developing industries and the Bessemer Business Incubation System. Region 4 has

numerous industrial sites and parks including the McClellan Research Park at the former Fort McClellan which was closed following a prior round of BRAC. Approximately 57 major industrial parks or sites are scattered throughout Region 5. Region 6 lists 55 industrial parks and/or sites. Region 7 lists 27 available buildings and 40 industrial parks. Region 9 lists two business incubators. Region 10 has ten industrial and technical parks. Also in Region 10, there is a proposal to develop a Research Park at Auburn University. Region 11 reports 216 industrial parks throughout its region. Region 12 contains numerous industrial parks of various sizes including Cummings Research Park which is one of the largest high technology parks in the nation.

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Chapter 3. Economic Development Assessment

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Problems and opportunities
 Review of other studies
 Identification of investments
 Economic clusters

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A regional CEDS is to include an in-depth analysis of economic development problems and opportunities that identify strengths and weaknesses in the region. The analysis is to incorporate relevant material from other government-sponsored or supported plans and show consistency with applicable State and local workforce investment strategies. The analysis is also to include an identification of past, present and projected future economic development investments in the region covered as well as a section identifying economic clusters within the region, focusing on those that are growing or in decline.

“The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 176 strengths with regard to economic development among the twelve regions.”

Problems and opportunities

Problems and opportunities are discussed by most regions in terms of their relative strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is sometimes referred to as a “SWOT” analysis. Space doesn’t permit an exhaustive review of all of the problems and opportunities for each and every area of the state. All regions have their own perspective, that is, their own way of looking at issues and their own way of reporting what they find. Some regions look at issues in terms of physical assets. Others are more concerned with cultural and human capital, while still others are concerned with the programs and institutions that are in place to deal with the problems and issues at hand. Some regions see things in terms of specifics, particularly local assets, while others speak in more general, regionwide terms. Nevertheless, there are a number of common themes, or cross-cutting issues that come up time and again. Each of the twelve CEDS from the respective Regional Councils was reviewed to find these common themes that have statewide relevance.

Common themes: Strengths



The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 176 strengths with regard to economic development among the twelve regions. Common themes among strengths are as follows.

Transportation and infrastructure. Transportation and infrastructure in its various forms is most often mentioned as the greatest strength of the regions of the state when it comes to those assets that impact economic development. In addition to roads and highways, many regions mention their airports as well as ports, navigable waterways and inter-modal facilities in those regions that have access to those facilities.

Education and workforce development. The higher education system is a statewide asset that obviously brings considerable pride from local people. Many areas mention their public schools, but it the colleges, universities and workforce development programs that are most mentioned as assets throughout the State.

Natural Resources. Timber, agriculture, forestry, raw materials, and environmental assets, particularly rivers, are consistently listed by the regions as strengths.

Health and medical infrastructure. Although there appears to be some disparity in this area, healthcare, hospitals including university based facilities such as UAB are listed among many regions as strengths.

Industrial parks and sites. Most regions reported positively on the availability of developed industrial parks, available land, speculative buildings and incubators.

Other common strengths. Other common themes include business and industrial diversity for particular areas of the state, the generally low crime rate along with fire protection, police and public safety issues, the general quality of life and other cultural assets.

Common themes: Weaknesses

The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 138 weaknesses with regard to economic development among the twelve regions. Common themes among weaknesses are as follows.

Transportation and infrastructure. Interestingly, transportation and infrastructure is considered among the most common weaknesses as well as among the most common strengths. With regard to weaknesses, though, the specific concerns regard rural transportation, public transit and workforce transportation along with rural sewer service, telecommunications and technological infrastructure.

Education and workforce development. Low education levels, low levels of literacy, lack of a consistently good work ethic, and the lack of vocational/technical training are commonly listed as weaknesses. A particular concern is the aging workforce and the retraining of older workers.

Crime and public safety. A common concern among the regions is crime and public safety issues. These concerns typically include substance abuse along with general littering and dumping of trash along roadsides creating an unappealing environment.

Population shifts. Some regions are concerned with population shifts including a general decline of population, jobs and manufacturing. These concerns are particularly with regard to the rural areas and among older industries such as coal mining and textile manufacturing.

Planning. It is generally acknowledged that the State lacks a pro-active culture of community and regional planning. Home rule and the weakness of effective land development regulations are frequently mentioned. Although there are isolated bright spots, there is concern for the general lack of vision for the future at both the community and regional level.

Other common weaknesses. Another common weakness is funding and the inability of some communities to match state and federal programs. A few regions also report weaknesses regarding housing and the availability of industrial sites and incubators.

“The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 190 opportunities with regard to economic development among the twelve regions.”

Common themes: Opportunities

The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 190 opportunities with regard to economic development among the twelve regions. Common themes among opportunities are as follows.

Transportation and infrastructure. Transportation improvements are the most common opportunity listed by the regions. Mentioned are the waterways, water ports, airports, railroad upgrades and potential high speed rail with multi-modal facilities being mentioned as an opportunity to make use of these resources. Traffic management plans are needed in some areas as well as better public and mass transit. Infrastructure opportunities include the consolidation of water and sewer systems and advances in communications technology.

Tourism. Tourism and associated recreation opportunities are frequently mentioned opportunities along with the

numerous attractions throughout the State.

Industrial parks and sites. Most regions reported positively on the availability of developed industrial parks, available land, speculative buildings and incubators.

Planning and leadership development. Mentioned above as a weakness, planning and leadership development is also seen as an opportunity to build for the future. In addition to the traditional planning activities, this includes also better intergovernmental cooperation, youth mentoring, and the general development of a collective vision for the future.

Other common opportunities. Other commonly mentioned opportunities include those related to education and workforce development, retiree attraction and agribusiness.

Common themes: Threats

The Regional Councils listed a cumulative total of 125 threats to economic development among the twelve regions. Common themes among threats are as

follows.

Growth and sprawl. One of the most commonly mentioned threats is continued growth and its effects on urban sprawl and the demands it places on infrastructure. These demands on infrastructure are most often tied to transportation and sewer services. Concerns include the cost of land, the cost of development, the increasing cost of infrastructure, and generally, unplanned growth that leads to overly costly short-term decision-making.

Planning and leadership development. Related to growth and sprawl, the lack of planning and leadership was the most commonly mentioned threat to the economic future of the state. There is the fear that the quality of life will be diminished without better planning for the future, particularly for the rural areas. Issues include urban redevelopment, annexation, rural planning, poor long range planning, the failure to actually implement strategic plans, and fragmented funding for coordinated planning efforts. Leadership is stagnant and there is a need to develop leadership among the youth of the state.

Education and workforce development. Education and workforce development is seen as a threat if education levels are not maintained and improved, and if the general perception of education in Alabama is not improved. There is a continuing need for quality workers, in particular for technical workers. There is a concern that many students are guided away from technical careers

Other common threats. More so than for strengths and opportunities, threats and perceived threats seem to be more wide ranging and more local in nature. Other commonly mentioned threats include funding and taxation issues, air quality and environmental issues, the aging population, old and decaying infrastructure, and the rise of petroleum prices.

Cross-cutting issues.

Regardless of the area of the State or whether an issue is seen as a strength, a weakness, an opportunity or a threat, there are three issue categories that cut across all lines and keep coming up again and again. When combined with the closely related issue of growth and sprawl, transportation and infrastructure is easily the most significant issue of concern with regard to the continued economic development of the state. This is closely followed by education and workforce development. Few opportunities were identified in this issue category but, significantly, it is seen as a strength for the state, particularly with regard to workforce development. In contrast to education and workforce development, planning and leadership within the state is not seen as a strength at all. It is consistently listed as a weakness and a threat to the future of the state. Nevertheless, it is also seen as an area of great opportunity if steps are taken to improve and institutionalize the processes necessary to assure better decision-making in the future.

In summary, the three primary cross-cutting issue categories that impact all areas of the State of Alabama and require

“Regardless of the area of the State or whether an issue is seen as a strength, a weakness, an opportunity or a threat, there are three issue categories that cut across all lines and keep coming up again and again. When combined with the closely related issue of growth and sprawl, transportation and infrastructure is easily the most significant issue of concern with regard to the continued economic development of the state.”

the most attention to assure the continued economic development of the state are:

- 1. Transportation and infrastructure;**
- 2. Education and workforce development; and**
- 3. Planning and leadership development.**

Review of other studies

In the course of developing the CEDS documents of the various Regions of the State, other efforts, plans, and documents were reviewed, discussed and consulted. These efforts, plans and documents include previously prepared CEDS documents as well as the Statewide Appalachian Regional Development Plan, the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans for the various counties of the State, the Statewide Transportation Plan of the Alabama Department of Transportation, and various regional and local plans and strategies. Interested persons should refer to the specific CEDS of a particular region for more information regarding specific studies and reports.



Identification of investments

Investments are drawn from a multitude of sources. In addition to local sources of investment, programs such as the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) are typically tapped for industrial infrastructure needs. Other commonly used programs include the programs of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Some regions, such as the Montgomery area, report having experienced unprecedented levels of investment by public and private resources in recent years. Much of this has been driven by automotive manufacturing and supply.

With respect to reporting on the level of investment for economic development, there is quite a variance in the way the different regions report. Some regions, while reporting on the level of investment for economic development in their respective CEDS documents, discuss the level of investment in considerable detail, while others report in more general terms. In some cases, both public and private investment is discussed while others focus on public investment only. It is recommended that the regions, working with the State, begin a consistent manner of reporting economic development investment and a continuing program of “benchmarking” in order to develop a clearer picture of statewide impact.

Economic clusters

Economic clusters are defined as the geographic convergence of related industries through the exchange of goods. These goods are interconnected by service providers and related fields that enhance the success and profitability of the particular industry in the economic cluster. The identified industries are strong employers when compared to other regions. Using the concept of economic clusters, strategies can be developed through the CEDS process to accomplish local goals for establishing new connections among existing industry sectors.

In the Northwest portion of the State, agriculture/forestry, automobile manufacturing related suppliers, and health assistance have been identified as economic clusters.



In the area around Birmingham, the automotive industry is expected to continue to grow along with biotechnology and medical research activities linked to UAB. In fact, according to the National Institutes for Health (NIH), Birmingham ranks fourth in the southeast and 25th in the nation for medical and behavioral research allocations, including AIDS, cancer and heart research. Technology is a rapidly growing sector in the Birmingham area with over 400 technology companies.

As in other areas of the state, automotive supply has been identified as an economic cluster in area of Dallas, Montgomery, and Autauga counties. Also in central Alabama, agriculture and forest products, manufacturing, commerce and government are identified as clusters.

Tourism is a distinct economic cluster in the extreme Southern portion of the State with the beaches and coastline of Baldwin and Mobile counties.

In Northeast Alabama including the Huntsville area, aerospace and defense industries is a significant economic cluster centered on Marshall Space Flight Center and Redstone Arsenal. With the recent decisions of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), these clusters are expected to expand in this area along with automotive supply, biomedical research and genetic research. A declining economic cluster in Northeast Alabama is the production of textile and apparel products.

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Chapter 4. Economic Development Strategy

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Goals and objectives: regional expectations
Projects and programs: suggested projects
Projects and programs: vital project priorities
Plan of action

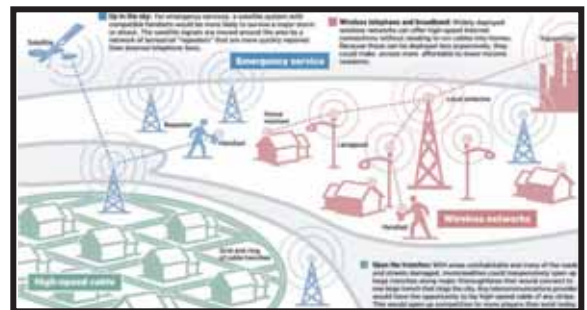
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A regional CEDS is intended to define regional expectations by detailing the goals and objectives necessary to address the regions economic issues and following these up with projects and programs of implementation along with a plan of action to see that it is done. This economic development strategy is to include:

- 1) a section setting forth goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the region;
- 2) a section listing all suggested projects and the projected number of jobs to be created as a result of thereof;
- 3) a section identifying and prioritizing vital projects, programs and activities that address the region's greatest needs or that will best enhance the regions competitiveness, including sources of funding for past and potential future investments; and
- 4) a plan of action to implement the goals and objectives of the CEDS

The plan of action to implement the goals and objectives may contain any number of areas of focus depending on the particular needs of the particular region. However, according to the Economic Development Administration, there are seven strategies that should be included in any plan of action. Any plan of action should include strategies to:

- 1) Promote economic development and opportunity;
- 2) Foster effective transportation access;
- 3) Enhance and protect the environment;
- 4) Maximize effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable state or local workforce development strategy;
- 5) Promote the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications;
- 6) Balance resources through sound management of physical development; and
- 7) Obtain and utilize adequate funds and other resources.



Regional expectations are generally stated in terms of goals and objectives. Goals are broad, primary regional expectations while objectives are more specific. They are clearly measurable, and they generally consider those strategies that can be accomplished over the five-year timeframe of the CEDS.

Space does not permit the exhaustive listing of all of the goals and objectives of all twelve regions throughout the

state. However, in the same way that it was helpful to review issues statewide in terms of issue categories, it is likewise helpful to review regional goals in terms of goal categories. In fact, in most cases, the regional CEDS reports itemize goals in terms of goal categories. Goals are supported by objectives and implementing activities, projects or strategies. In some cases, goals are designed to support an overall vision for the area. The goal categories for the several Regional Councils are itemized and compared below.

Seven of the twelve regions have developed a vision statement and include it or an overall goal to set out the general direction of their efforts. The respective vision statements for these regions are included below. And, although they highlight similar approaches to the various issues, they also bring out the distinctions between the various areas of the State as well. The Regional Councils that developed an overall vision statement were:

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham;
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission;
South Central Alabama Development Commission;
Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission;
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission;
Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission; and
Lee - Russell Council of Governments.

Strategy for Region 1 - NACOLG

Goals and objectives: regional expectations

The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments organizes its goals into four categories and further details these by county. These four goal categories are:

- 1) Access and Linkage;
- 2) Comfort and Image;
- 3) Sociability; and
- 4) Use and Activities.

Projects and programs: suggested projects

The goals in these categories are supported by sixty one (61) activities for implementation. Of the 61 activities, 14 address access and linkage, 17 address comfort and image, 6 address sociability and 24 address use and activities. Of the 61 activities, 16 address the Shoals, Colbert County and Lauderdale County, 12 address Franklin County, 9 address Marion County, 13 address Winston County and 11 activities address regional goals.

Projects and programs: vital project priorities

The 11 activities that address regional goals are as follows.

- 1) Install publicly operated wireless internet within a CBD in the region.
- 2) Explore the development of a regional "mega" industrial park.
- 3) Complete the corridors leading to the Patton Island Bridge.
- 4) Widen U.S. 43 from Killen to the Tennessee State line.
- 5) Fund the U.S. 278 Corridor Study from Cullman to the Mississippi State line.
- 6) Complete the widening of Alabama 157 from Moulton to Cullman.
- 7) Study a mass transit system for the four cities in the Florence/Muscle Shoals MSA.
- 8) Complete the Shoals Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- 9) Develop municipal cultural heritage symbology in conjunction with the Shoals Area Wayfinding Plan.
- 10) Update officials quarterly regarding the National Heritage Designation for the Shoals.
- 11) Prepare a detailed five-year work program.

Plan of action

The goals and objectives act as a plan of action for the communities of the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments. The strategies and projects contain elements addressing issues within each county within the region. NACOLG oversees the implementation and advancement of regional goals while acting as one of many catalysts within the local communities.

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Strategy for Region 2 - WARC

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The West Alabama Regional Council organizes its goals into twelve categories and further details these by county. These twelve goal categories are:

- 1) Potable Water, supported by 11 identified projects;
- 2) Sanitary Sewer, supported by 19 identified projects;
- 3) Transportation, supported by 20 identified projects;
- 4) Education, supported by 7 identified projects;
- 5) Recreation/Culture, supported by 19 identified projects;
- 6) Housing, supported by 2 identified projects;
- 7) Health Care, supported by 2 identified projects;
- 8) Historical/Cultural Facilities, supported by 7 identified projects;
- 9) Government, supported by 1 identified project;
- 10) Tourism, supported by 7 identified projects;
- 11) Industrial Development, supported by 6 identified projects; and
- 12) Public Safety, supported by 10 identified projects.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

The goals in these categories are supported by one hundred ten (110) projects and activities for implementation supporting the goals for Region 2 as noted above. Of these 110 projects, 16 address issues in Bibb county, 9 in Greene County, 14 in Lamar County, 23 in Tuscaloosa County, 12 in Fayette County, 11 in Hale County, 17 in Pickens County, and 23 activities for implementation are regional in scope.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

The 22 activities that address regional goals are as follows.

- 1) Upgrade potable water lines to six inches.
- 2) Construct a north-south corridor.
- 3) Upgrade the road and bridge systems.
- 4) Investigate rural transit systems.
- 5) Support construction of new schools and additions.
- 6) Develop leadership training programs for youth and adults.
- 7) Provide vocational training as needed by existing industry.
- 8) Promote tourism.
- 9) Promote public housing.
- 10) Encourage private developers to construct more affordable housing.
- 11) Promote restoration of historic buildings.
- 12) Study events to attract tourists.
- 13) Promote festivals held in the region.
- 14) Utilize all possible agencies to promote development.
- 15) Promote commercial development as possible.
- 16) Promote vacant industrial/commercial buildings.
- 17) Improve equipment of fire departments.
- 18) Recruit additional personnel for fire departments.
- 19) Install fire hydrants for fire protection in rural areas.
- 20) Provide adequate equipment for police departments.
- 21) Construct community storm shelters.
- 22) Upgrade railroad crossings.

Plan of Action

The goal areas listed above were developed for use as a guide in the development process. The CEDS for Region 2 is designed for changing local conditions and the goals are established to cover all areas, not just those that might be eligible for funding from the Economic Development Administration. The goals are intended to be broad enough that any local government can put a priority project for its local use in one or more categories.

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Strategy for Region 3 – RPCGB

The CEDS vision for the Greater Birmingham Region is to work in a transparent cooperative effort to establish and sustain programs and initiatives to increase economic opportunities and enhance quality of life.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Regional Planning Council of Greater Birmingham organizes its goals into seven categories. These seven goal categories are:

- 1) Education;
- 2) Environment;
- 3) Infrastructure;
- 4) Economic Development;
- 5) Quality of Life;
- 6) Funding and Leadership; and
- 7) Land Use Planning.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

The RPCGB suggested 187 individual projects to implement their goals. Seventeen of them are regional in nature and 170 projects are specific to individual counties, including 41 projects for Blount County, 12 for Chilton County, 73 for Jefferson County, 17 for St. Clair County, 20 for Shelby County, and 7 projects for Walker County. While not specifically referring to them as vital projects, a review of the suggested projects reveals ten projects that are both regional in nature and short term in scope.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

The ten projects that are both regional in nature and short term are the following.

- 1) Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan.
- 2) Regional Economic Development Recruitment Initiative.
- 3) Regional Existing Business Assistance Program.
- 4) Regional Water and Sewer Plan.
- 5) Technology Entrepreneurial Center Expansion and Program Enhancement.
- 6) Regional Tourism Plan.
- 7) ERISS Job System (US Works).
- 8) Regional Technology Initiatives.
- 9) Northern Beltline.
- 10) Improvement and Preservation Planning of Park Space.

Plan of Action

Integrated into its listing of regional and local initiatives and projects, RPCGB lists for each project, the estimated cost, funding source, responsibility for implementation, performance measures and the proposed timeframe for completion. In this way the project list serves as the plan of action.

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Strategy for Region 4 - EARPDC

To develop an economic base within the East Alabama Region which efficiently and effectively utilizes the region's natural and human resources in order to provide full employment for the regions citizenry and improve the area's quality of life.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission established three goals organized into eight goal categories. These three goal categories are:

- 1) Economic base and human resources, including:
 - a. Industrial Development;
 - b. Education/Labor Training; and
 - c. Human Services.
- 2) Physical Infrastructure, land use and growth management, including:
 - a. Community Facilities;
 - b. Transportation;
 - c. Housing; and
 - d. Recreation and Culture.
- 3) Natural Resources and Conservation.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

EARPDC lists approximately 1,217 individual projects detailing for each project the location, estimated cost, anticipated funding source and program year for development.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

EARPDC has identified six vital projects for Region 4. These projects are:

- 1) Widen U.S. Highway 431 to four lanes between I-20 and I-85;
- 2) A new regional airport for Cherokee County;
- 3) Water and sewer infrastructure at Lake Martin Regional Industrial Park;
- 4) Infrastructure to expand the Honda Plant in Lincoln;
- 5) Expansion of the Gadsden Airport Industrial Park; and
- 6) Roadway access from Alabama 21 into Fort McClellan industrial areas.

Plan of Action

The responsibility for implementing the goals for Region 4 rests with individual local governments and agencies. EARPDC, along with local governments and agencies, assumes responsibility for initiating interest in these projects and pointing out priorities to groups and individuals attempting to implement goals at the local level.

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Strategy for Region 5 – SCADC

SCADC envisions a region with a viable, self sustaining economy that is capable of supporting the highest possible quality of life for every current and future resident.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The South Central Alabama Development Commission organizes its goals into six categories. These six goal categories are:

- 1) Economic Development;
- 2) Transportation Access and Infrastructure;
- 3) Education and Workforce Development;
- 4) Planning for Balanced Development, Conservation and Environmental Protection;
- 5) Quality of Life; and
- 6) Organization, Funding and Leadership Development.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

SCADC lists 151 projects for Region 5 detailing the location, anticipated funding source, responsibility for implementation and timeframe for accomplishment. Of the 151 projects listed, 28 address economic development, 66 address transportation access and infrastructure, 15 address education and workforce development, 20 address planning, 15 address quality of life and 7 address organization, funding and leadership development.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

SCADC has identified 25 vital regional projects for Region 5. These projects are:

- 1) Development along I-65 Corridor South.
- 2) Development along I-65 North.
- 3) I-85 Extension from Montgomery to Selma.
- 4) Development along I-85 Corridor North.
- 5) Montgomery Outer Loop.
- 6) Regional Lake/Reservoir.
- 7) Improvement to US 31, US 231, US 331, US 80 and AL 110.
- 8) Regional Workforce Development Program.
- 9) Develop tourism industry to make region a destination.
- 10) Recapitalize the Revolving Loan Fund.
- 11) Add industrial parks in every county/recruit new industry.
- 12) Improve/increase sewer and water capacities and high speed telecommunications.
- 13) Retail development strategy and distribution industry.
- 14) Rural transportation planning (Rural Planning Organization).
- 15) United We Ride coordinated social service program.
- 16) Regional Alliance formation and other visioning programs.
- 17) Regional and local existing industry programs, cluster plans.
- 18) Regional Housing Plan, affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization.
- 19) Downtown development in Montgomery and other communities/centers.
- 20) Riverfront Development Program.
- 21) Continue to improve Montgomery and other regional airports.
- 22) Regional framework for growth and development.
- 23) Regional incubators, technology centers, etc.
- 24) Major “mega” industrial site on US 231 corridor.
- 25) Public/private funding study.

Plan of Action

Working under the six basic strategies that reflect the goals listed above, SCADC will continue to emphasize implementation of CEDS projects and strategies through the Action Plan and Annual Work Program. SCADC will also help to facilitate a Regional Alliance and an updated Strategy Committee with “Action Teams” considered as a possible means for implementation. SCADC will promote the increased use of public/private partnerships to leverage investment and maximize benefits and use of public resources. SCADC will coordinate CEDS activities with ADECA and Statewide Plans for Economic Recovery, DELTA Regional Authority, ARC and other statewide/regional initiatives and plans.

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Strategy for Region 6 - ATRC

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission organizes its goals into five categories.

- 1) Economic Development;
- 2) Education;
- 3) Infrastructure;
- 4) Leadership; and
- 5) Quality of Life.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

ATRC lists 174 suggested projects detailing the location and estimated cost for each. Included are 24 projects addressing business and industry, 14 projects addressing housing, 57 projects addressing governments facilities and services, 25 projects addressing transportation, 36 projects addressing recreation, 9 projects addressing healthcare and 9 projects addressing education and manpower.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

ATRC has identified 5 vital regional priorities for Region 6. These priorities are:

- 1) Infrastructure improvements including promotion of multi-county parks, i.e., water and sewer.
- 2) Transportation, including: a) Complete four-laning of US 80; b) Four lane US 43 in Clarke and Marengo counties; c) Four lane US 84 in Monroe, Clarke and Choctaw counties; and d) Support I-85 extension from Montgomery to Meridian.
- 3) Develop targeted workforce development efforts to provide a trained, quality workforce in the region.
- 4) Provide better housing through private and public sources.
- 5) Provide better healthcare in rural areas.

Plan of Action

ATRC will continue to support and promote economic expansion within the ten counties of Region 5 by following a ten point program. ATRC will: 1) continue to provide economic and industrial planning; 2) continue to provide technical assistance to local governments; 3) help the State address problems of rural transportation; 4) participate in leadership develop programs; 5) support tourism efforts; 6) support and participate in organizations that address both community and economic development issues; 7) support and participate in workforce development issues; 8) continue to house the Alabama Entrepreneurial Network; 9) promote the use of technology in economic and community development and 10) promote balancing resources through the sound management of physical development.

* * * * *

Strategy for Region 7 – SEARPDC

The Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission envisions a regional comprehensive economic development strategy that emphasizes regional cooperation and collaboration, supports existing businesses, encourages development of new technologies, and promotes the regional workforce. This will be accomplished by strengthening local community capacity for planning and management in greater opportunities for meaningful employment and improved quality of life.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission organizes its goals into eleven categories. These eleven goal categories are:

- 1) Water supply;
- 2) Business retention and expansion;
- 3) High quality job opportunities;
- 4) Highway Infrastructure;
- 5) Technical Training;
- 6) Education and Workforce Development;
- 7) Public and Private Partnership;
- 8) Agricultural Diversification;
- 9) Air Transportation;
- 10) Rural Medical Services; and
- 11) Retiree Retraining.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

SEARPDC lists 486 suggested projects for Region 7, detailing them by location, estimated cost, proposed funding source and timeframe. These projects are categorized as 221 for community facilities, 65 projects for industrial development, 17 projects for natural resource conservation, 23 for education, 26 for housing, 66 for transportation, 64 for recreation, and 4 for human services.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

SEARPDC has identified 6 vital regional priorities for Region 7. These priorities are:

- 1) Regional Water Authority and Plan;
- 2) Regional Workforce Development Plan;
- 3) Airport Enhancements;
- 4) Regional Agricultural Assessment and Plan;
- 5) Human Development Investments; and
- 6) Economic Development Support.

Plan of Action

The CEDS process in Region 7 is driven by the CEDS Committee and is a continuing process designed to guide the economic growth of the region. The CEDS Committee is supported by the staff of the SEARPDC who is responsible for periodically evaluating the CEDS process to ensure that regional economic development goals and objectives are being accomplished.

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Strategy for Region 8 – SARPC

To assist the South Alabama Region and its communities, agencies, and citizens in planning and achieving sustainable development and related community and regional goals.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission organizes its goals into six categories. These six goal categories are:

- 1) Education/Manpower training;
- 2) Economic Development;
- 3) Infrastructure and Community Services;
- 4) Government/Community Leadership;
- 5) Quality of Life; and
- 6) Environmental.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

SARPC suggests one statewide project, eight regionwide projects and sixteen local projects for a total of 25 projects and programs for implementation of its six goals for Region 8. The projects are listed with indication of the location, funding source, responsibility for implementation, timeframe and the issues addressed. The issues addressed by the projects are categorized as economic development, quality of life, education, land use and planning and infrastructure.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

SARPC has identified 5 vital regional priorities for the accomplishment of a Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan for Region 8. These priorities are:

- 1) Funding for Technology Centers.
- 2) Regional Workforce Development Plan.
- 3) Regional Economic Development Recruitment and Support.
- 4) Regional Transportation Plan.
- 5) Regional Infrastructure Plan.

Plan of Action

SARPC is to form an implementation team that will assign responsibilities to appropriate local agencies that are best suited to monitor and accomplish the plan's various community and economic development goals, objectives and strategies. One primary agency plus other secondary agencies may share this oversight responsibility. This team will also oversee the formation of projects and programs needed to implement goals.

* * * * *

Strategy for Region 9 - CARPDC

The Central Alabama Region will be a cooperative and unified region offering facilities, services and opportunities that can maintain a stable and prosperous population through a diverse economy while becoming a destination for visitors.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission organizes its goals into seven categories. These seven goal categories are:

- 1) Economic Development;
- 2) Education;
- 3) Infrastructure;
- 4) Environment;
- 5) Quality of Life;
- 6) Funding and Leadership; and
- 7) Land Use Planning.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

CARPDC lists 72 suggested projects for Region 9, detailing them by location, proposed funding source, responsibility for implementation and timeframe. Of these 72 projects, 26 are regional in scope, 7 address issues in Autauga County, 26 address issues in Elmore County, and 13 address issues in Montgomery County. While not specifically referring to them as vital projects, a review of the suggested projects reveals 21 projects that are both regional in nature and short term in scope.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

The 21 projects that are both regional in nature and short term are the following.

- 1) Northern Outer Loop.
- 2) Southern Outer Loop.
- 3) Sanitary Sewer.
- 4) Workforce Development Training Center.
- 5) Develop and enhance industrial parks.
- 6) Provide public access to rivers.
- 7) Upgrading of senior centers.
- 8) Regional Unified Marketing Program.
- 9) Regionwide Planning.
- 10) Car pool/rideshare program.
- 11) Rural transportation.
- 12) Rural waste collection.
- 13) Construction landfill.
- 14) Protection of natural resources.
- 15) Promote infill development.
- 16) Small Business Development Assistance Center.
- 17) Develop and promote regional asset based opportunities.
- 18) I-65 interchange at County Road 40.
- 19) Development of Blue Bird trail.
- 20) Develop drug treatment programs.
- 21) I-85 extension.

Plan of Action

CARPDC will work through its CEDS Strategy Committee to develop a work program. For the process to succeed, the Committee should take advantage of technical and financial assistance available from public and private sources. These sources include Federal, state and local governments, foundations, educational institutions, local organizations, and major corporations. Under their planning and technical assistance, support may be used to help organize or carry out the CEDS and for updating or refining strategies.

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Strategy for Region 10 - LRCOG

To promote and maintain a healthy environment for growth and development in Lee and Russell Counties.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Lee-Russell Council of Governments organizes its goals into ten categories by county. These ten goal categories are:

- 1) Infrastructure;
- 2) Planning;
- 3) Environment;
- 4) Law Enforcement;
- 5) Managed Growth;
- 6) Regional Economic Development;
- 7) Education Funding;
- 8) Increased Revenue;
- 9) Visual Image; and
- 10) Community Involvement and Participation.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

In their 2006 CEDS update, LRCOG identified 24 projects for implementation in furtherance of the goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS. There were 14 projects listed for Lee County and 10 projects listed for Russell County.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

LRCOG has noted that most of the projects identified for the region involve two particular priorities. These priorities are:

- 1) The development of a skilled workforce; and
- 2) The expansion and improvement of infrastructure.

Plan of Action

LRCOG includes an implementation schedule in the CEDS for Region 10 that lists responsibilities for implementation and a timeframe for completion. LRCOG maintains a separate schedule for Lee County and for Russell County.

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Strategy for Region 11 - NARCOG

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The North-central Alabama Regional Council of Governments organizes its goals into seven categories. These seven goal categories are:

- 1) Transportation;
- 2) Infrastructure;
- 3) Economic Development;
- 4) Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Recreation;
- 5) Government and Finance;
- 6) Education and Workforce Development; and
- 7) Quality of Life/Human Resources.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

NARCOG lists 98 projects in furtherance of the goals outlined above. Of these 98 projects, 14 are regional in scope, 29 address issues in Cullman County, 8 address issues in Lawrence County, and 47 address issues in Morgan County. While not specifically referring to them as vital projects, a review of the suggested projects reveals 10 projects that are short term in scope.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

The 10 projects listed by NARCOG as short term projects are the following.

- 1) Develop a neighborhood watch program.
- 2) Assist Retired persons in updating employment skills.
- 3) Seek funding to increase sewage treatment capacity to handle industrial discharge.
- 4) Convert low level 10" loop to high level.
- 5) Industrial park sewer extension.
- 6) Thompson Road sewer- Phase I.
- 7) New gas station and upgrade existing mains.
- 8) Extend service into west Morgan County for agricultural and residential service.
- 9) Cast iron main replacement.
- 10) System expansion.

In addition to the short term projects are listed specific transportation and infrastructure improvements.

- 1) I-565 extension to Decatur
- 2) Corridor V (Memphis to Atlanta Highway)
- 3) I-65 interchange at County Road 222 in Cullman County
- 4) Construct Cullman by-pass
- 5) Widen I-65 to six-lanes from the southern Cullman County line to I-565
- 6) Extend sewer service along Highway 157 in Moulton
- 7) Complete widening of Highway 157 to Moulton
- 8) Construct Veterans Parkway
- 9) Widen Highway 36 in Hartselle
- 10) Beltline widening in Decatur

Plan of Action

NARCOG lists its suggested projects by detailing for each one, the county, estimated cost, proposed funding source, responsibility for implementation and timeframe.

* * * * *

Strategy for Region 12 – TARCOG

The mission of TARCOG is to be an effective, active, innovative and catalytic regional agency, delivering planning, economic and community development services to improve the quality of life to all sectors of its five-county membership. To that end, TARCOG provides local governments and citizens with a regional forum to identify social and economic issues and opportunities; and, its Development strategy is to provide leadership in prioritizing and implementing and evaluating projects and programs to respond to constantly evolving needs and economic forces.

Goals and Objectives: Regional Expectations

The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments organizes its goals into seven categories. These seven goal categories are:

- 1) Land Use;
- 2) Environmental Management;
- 3) Natural Resources;
- 4) Public Facilities;
- 5) Housing;
- 6) Transportation, Communications and Utilities; and
- 7) Population and Economic Development.

Projects and Programs: Suggested Projects

TARCOG lists 75 projects in furtherance of the goals for Region 12. Of these 98 projects, 10 address issues in DeKalb County, 18 address issues in Jackson County, 15 address issues in Limestone County, 19 address issues in Madison County, and 13 address issues in Marshall County. These projects are listed indicating their location and estimated cost. Of these 75 projects, 12 are listed as priority projects.

Projects and Programs: Vital Project Priorities

TARCOG has identified 12 vital projects and priorities for Region 12. These priorities are:

- 1) NuStart/TVA nuclear initiative at Bellefonte.
- 2) Water system interconnect infrastructure at Stevenson.
- 3) Alabama Highway 35 four laning and bridge replacement at Scottsboro.
- 4) Wastewater treatment capacity upgrade at Athens.
- 5) Sewer extension to Limestone Creek and Limestone Correctional Facility.
- 6) Industrial site development at Tanner.
- 7) BRAC Impact Planning.
- 8) Huntsville Southern Bypass.
- 9) Workforce development and education.
- 10) Widen US 431 from Guntersville to Etowah County.
- 11) Upgrade local sewer systems at Grant, Douglas, Guntersville, and Albertville.
- 12) Develop spec ID building at Connors Island.

Plan of Action

TARCOG will continue to support and promote economic expansion within the five counties of Region 12 by following a nine point work program outline. TARCOG will: 1) coordinate the CEDS process; 2) provide project status report/information; 3) coordinate/broker/network between and among federal, state, regional and local agencies; 4) assist local governments; 5) promote the expansion of existing industry and the attraction of

new industry; 6) support local retail and service entrepreneurship; 7) provide support for community services infrastructure; 8) provide technical assistance to the public and private sectors regarding local planning and management programs; and 9) continue to serve as a regional clearinghouse.

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Chapter 5. Economic Development Performance

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Introduction
Regional Methods of Performance Evaluation
Benchmarking

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Introduction

A comprehensive economic development strategy is to contain a list of performance measures used to evaluate successful development and implementation of the CEDS. It may include but is not limited to: 1) the number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS; 2) number and types of investments undertaken in the Region; 3) number of jobs retained in the Region; 4) amount of private sector investment in the Region after implementation of the CEDS; and 5) changes in the economic environment of the region. These are not meant to be the only performance measures for the CEDS.

Each of the twelve regions uses its own methods to ascertain progress and performance towards the accomplishment of their respective CEDS goals. All EDD designated regions must prepare an annual update report for submission to the Economic Development Administration listing their accomplishments. Some regions tie performance criteria to their goals and objectives while others tie their criteria to specific project accomplishment. Some regions include their listing of prior year accomplishments in their updated CEDS. Two regions use a rating scale to grade their progress toward completing their projects and grading their CEDS process. Although many regions include projected cost estimates or list the costs associated with active projects, Region 7 includes an overall performance summary that quantifies dollars of public and private investment and the number of jobs created, retained and projected.

Regional Methods of Performance Evaluation

The following is a brief description of the individual Regional CEDS evaluation methods.

Region 1 (NACOLG). NACOLG uses an evaluation system to make a quantifiable assessment of the success of the CEDS process. A numerical average is calculated to offer a general evaluation of the EDD's performance in meeting CEDS goals. Implementation items are scored on a scale as to whether the project or program has seen no discernable progress up to project completion. A score lower than five indicates either: a lack of suitable progress; or, the goals were too ambitious in relation to the resources available. The assessment triggers a re-evaluation of the CEDS process, staffing and priorities and serves as a catalyst for an improved CEDS process for the following year.

Region 2 (WARC). WARC lists its accomplishments for the prior year in relation to its CEDS goals as an indication of performance. In its current update, WARC reports 35 accomplishments during the past year.

Region 3 (RPCGB). RPCGB specifies individual performance measures for each project listed in its CEDS. At the end of each year, RPC evaluates progress made on each task to remove completed tasks, revise ongoing tasks, and add new tasks. Progress is reported in the Annual Plan of Work and reflected in the annual CEDS update.

Region 4 (EARPDC). EARPDC specifies individual performance measures for each objective contained in its development strategy. Performance measures range from one criterion for measurement in some cases to as many as ten criteria in others. EARPDC also provides a status report on active projects. Twenty six active projects were listed through June 30, 2006 with eleven project being closed within the last year.

Region 5 (SCADC). SCADC specifies individual performance measures for each project listed in its CEDS. SCADC

performs regular review of progress towards objectives and projects and consideration of action or implementation teams to share responsibility for implementation and the leveraging of resources. A separate report reflects progress toward individual projects. The progress report is reviewed by the CEDS Strategy Committee and the SCADC Board of Directors as part of the CEDS update process.

Region 6 (ATRC). Each year, ATRC and the CEDS Strategy Committee comes together to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the CEDS. Individual projects and the CEDS as a whole is examined by asking the following questions: 1) is the current CEDS addressing the Region's current economic state; 2) is the current CEDS implementation meeting expectations; and 3) what changes or modifications could be made to the CEDS to make it more effective for the region?

Region 7 (SEARPDC). SEARPDC periodically evaluates the CEDS to ensure that regional economic development goals are being accomplished. The CEDS evaluation is completed on an annual basis and recommendations are incorporated into the annual CEDS update. SEARPDC also provides information on the status of individual, active projects and accomplishments. SEARPDC goes one step further to provide an evaluation summary that measures the total performance of the CEDS process. For example, for the current CEDS, SEARPDC reports:

1) Total number of grants and loans:.....	71
2) Total grant and loan dollars:.....	\$23,452,264
3) Total public and private sector investment:.....	\$33,227,528
4) Total jobs created/retained:.....	602
5) Total jobs projected:.....	701

Region 8 (SARPC). SARPC specifies individual performance measures for each project listed in its CEDS. The evaluation process includes meetings with the SARPC Commission and public meetings prior to updates. Annual reports are prepared to outline the progress achieved on development activities and to report on changing economic conditions.

Region 9 (CARPDC). CARPDC specifies individual performance measures for each project listed in its CEDS.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG prepares an update reports that contains all necessary information for evaluating and monitoring the progress of reported goals and objectives. An annual review of the report allows the staff to make necessary changes and recommendation to officials and citizens of the region.

Region 11 (NARCOG). NARCOG specifies individual performance measures for each project listed in its CEDS. At the end of each year, NARCOG evaluates progress made on each task to remove completed tasks, revise ongoing tasks, and add new tasks. Progress is reported in the Annual Plan of Work and reflected in the annual CEDS update.

Region 12 (TARCOG). TARCOG specifies individual performance measures for active projects listed in its CEDS. TARCOG conducts an annual review to determine regional progress and report findings to the EDA as part of its ongoing CEDS process. In addition, TARCOG has developed an evaluation plan for the CEDS that is based on four overall performance measures which are rated on a scale from 1 to 7 with 7 being "best performance." The performance measures are scored by the CEDS Committee with the results used to determine which activities to keep, which ones to modify and which possible new activities to be developed.

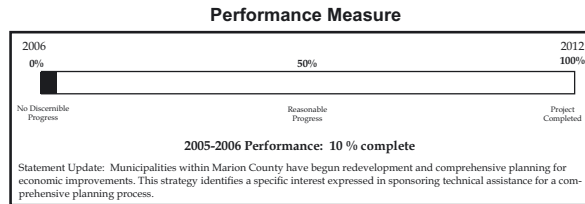
"Region 7 (SEARPDC). SEARPDC periodically evaluates the CEDS to ensure that regional economic development goals are being accomplished. The CEDS evaluation is completed on an annual basis and recommendations are incorporated into the annual CEDS update. SEARPDC also provides information on the status of individual, active projects and accomplishments. SEARPDC goes one step further to provide an evaluation summary that measures the total performance of the CEDS process."

Benchmarking

All of the CEDS reports of all Regions include demographic and economic statistics while describing their economic development situation. In some cases, certain of these statistics are alluded to as benchmarks. But, no Region has established and institutionalized an ongoing and consistent benchmarking program as a part of its performance

evaluation. This is not stipulated by the requirements of the Economic Development Administration. However, whereas reiteration of accomplishments, rating scales and summations of metrics may provide an indication of performance relative to an economic development strategy, it is a sound and ongoing benchmarking system that brings the economic development process full circle back to the fundamental economic situation of the Region or of the State.

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Part II

Supplemental Reports for Statewide Economic Recovery

Contents

Chapter 6. Damage Assessment

Damage and needs assessment(s) to identify, quantify and qualify the location and extent of damage to infrastructure, capacity and/or economic impacts, and other purposes.

Chapter 7. Economic Recovery

Assessment, analysis and creation of strategic and tactical studies and activities required for long-term economic recovery which may include cluster analysis, comprehensive economic development strategies, feasibility analysis, technical assistance, and other purposes consistent with long-term economic recovery.

Chapter 8. Marketing Strategies

Development and implementation of marketing strategies for the purpose of image restoration, targeted marketing, communications, public relations supporting business retention, new business creation, and other purposes.

Chapter 9. Hazard Mitigation

Development of mitigation strategies that encourage the development of disaster resistant communities, infrastructures, capacity to support business continuity and economic security, and other purposes.

Chapter 10. Capacity Development

Support long-term economic recovery through capacity development, technical assistance, training and administrative activities consistent with this scope of work.

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Chapter 6. Damage Assessment

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Damage Assessment and Response Activities by Regional Councils
Damage Assessment and Response Activities by Other Organizations

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Damage Assessment and Response Activities by Regional Councils

Four Regional Councils report performing work directly related to hurricane damage assessments for the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons. These were Region 1 (NACOLG), Region 5 (SCADC), Region 6 (ATRC) and Region 10 (LRCOG). The following is a brief description of the work performed.

Region 1 (NACOLG). NACOLG directly participated in flood plain buyout, update of hazard mitigation plans, safe center development applications, storm siren placement proposals, and natural hazard mitigation plans for Colbert, Lauderdale, Marion and Winston counties.

In addition, NACOLG partnered with the American Red Cross by creating maps of Hurricane Katrina food and shelter locations.

For more information, contact:

Joseph Holt, GIS Coordinator at 256-389-0517.

Region 5 (SCADC). SCADC directly participated in natural hazard mitigation plans for Bullock, Lowndes, Macon and Pike counties.

For more information, contact:

Stacey Webb, SCADC Planning and Economic Director, 344-244-6903;
Fred Holland, Bullock County EMA Director, 334-738-3883;
Walter Hill, Lowndes County EMA Director, 334-548-2569;
Larry Davis, Pike County EMA Director 334-566-8272.

In addition, SCADC participated with the Alabama Community Action Program, Inc. to coordinate disaster response for Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Macon, and Pike Counties due to the devastating damage caused by Hurricane Ivan on September 16, 2004. Services included Operation of Staff Disaster Recovery Centers, Public Education and Outreach, Information and referral, Case Management, Crisis Counseling, Service coordination with federal, state, and community agencies and businesses. Application assistance was provided to individuals who are 60 years of age or older, residents of a declared county, and who were victims of Hurricane Ivan.

For more information, contact:

AARC, 334-277-2221 / info@alarc.org;
Sylvia Allen Bowers, Alabama Community Program, Inc., 334-284-3046.

Region 6 (ATRC). ATRC reported that after Hurricane Ivan, the Area Agency on Aging at the Alabama Tombigbee



Regional Commission assisted in preparing damage assessments in areas that affected the senior citizens of the region. This included seniors' housing and senior nutrition sites. After Hurricane Katrina, the Area Agency on Aging received no money to provide assistance, but helped perform intakes for seniors in need. These clients were then referred to Alabama DHR and the United Way of Alabama.

In addition to the direct assistance provided by ATRC, ATRC's Area Agency on Aging contracted with Long-term Recovery Committees in four counties after Hurricane Ivan. These committees were based in Conecuh, Washington, Clarke and Monroe counties. Money was received from the Administration on Aging. These committees performed damage assessments in the counties in which they originated. Senior home repair was the main objective of this effort. Beneficiaries of this program had to be over 60 years of age and registered with FEMA for assistance. ATRC also contracted with Mr. Willford Oakes on the same project.

For more information, contact:

Thelma McCall at 334-682-4234.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG (Region 10) operates public transit systems in Lee and Russell Counties. During hurricanes Katrina and Ivan, Lee County Transit Authority (LETA) and Phoenix City Express (PEX) provided emergency transportation services for volunteers and evacuees. LRCOG also served on-site at the Lee County Emergency Management Agency as a part of VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters), assisting with service delivery to evacuees. LRCOG Area Agency on Aging staff assisted senior citizens affected by the disaster with food, emergency prescriptions, and needs assessment.

Damage Assessment and Response Activities by other Organizations

Organizations listed by the Regional Councils that are likely to have performed work related to hurricane damage assessments include all of the county Emergency Management Agencies throughout the State, particularly in those areas that are especially vulnerable to hurricanes. In addition, the following organizations were reported by some Regional Councils to have likely performed such work.

Region 4 (EARPDC). EARPDC listed the American Red Cross, Insurance Groups and private risk analysis groups that may contract with state or federal entities.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG specifically reported that the EMA's in Lee County and Russell County and the Lee County Chapter of the Red Cross conducted initial damage and needs assessments. During Hurricane Katrina, emergency shelters were open for 33 days. Social workers from the Department of Human Resources (DHR) worked with the Red Cross and volunteers to staff the shelters. Christian Care, Second Harvest, Food Bank of East Alabama, the Salvation Army and the Faith-based Community provided food, clothing and personal items for evacuees.

For more information on these other organization in the Region 10, contact:

Marty Nelson of the American Red Cross, 334-749-9981;
Cindy Keith of Christian Care Ministries, 334-705-0505;
Jan Burke of the Department of Human Resources (DHR), 334-737-1100;
Martha Faupel of the Food Bank of East Alabama, 334-821-9006; and
Wayne Burnette of the Salvation Army, 334-745-6459.

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"Region 6 (ATRC). ATRC reported that after Hurricane Ivan, the Area Agency on Aging at the Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission assisted in preparing damage assessments in areas that affected the senior citizens of the region. This included seniors' housing and senior nutrition sites. After Hurricane Katrina, the Area Agency on Aging received no money to provide assistance, but helped perform intakes for seniors in need."

Chapter 7. Economic Recovery

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Introduction and Overview
Economic Recovery Activities by Regional Councils
Economic Recovery Activities by Other Organizations

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Introduction and Overview

The Economic Recovery outlined in this document is the result of monthly meetings of the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) and analysis of each region to determine new, existing and on-going efforts to become more resistant to future disasters. This document aims to boost economic recovery today and to strengthen our economy for the future.

Economic Recovery includes assessment, analysis and creation of strategic and tactical studies and activities required for long-term economic recovery which may include cluster analysis, comprehensive economic development strategies, feasibility analysis, technical assistance, and other purposes consistent with long-term economic recovery.

Economic Recovery Activities by Regional Councils

“Municipalities throughout the State of Alabama have prepared comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization plans and economic development strategies. These documents act as local and regional development plans for focusing infrastructure improvements and redevelopment strategies that include directing grant requests and private development.”

All of the Regional Councils have directly performed work related to economic recovery as described above through the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning process. The process includes information and analysis of the region’s existing conditions (including demographic, geographic, economic and infrastructure characteristics), strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, identification of regional issues, goals and strategies, and projects that have EDA funding potential. In addition, each of the twelve Regional Councils have small business loan programs that can be utilized by businesses during the economic recovery process. These funds can be utilized to replace depleted or damaged inventory, to assist with relocation efforts and provide working capital assistance for the loss of manpower during down time.

All of the Regional Councils provide technical assistance to municipalities and counties, ranging from grant preparation to grant project administration, some of which is done on a contractual basis. Regional Councils have worked

with municipalities and counties in the development of industrial sites to accommodate new industries, which in turn, create job growth. Citizens of the areas affected by industrial growth reap the benefits of new employment opportunities as well as a significantly expanded tax base, which in turn will allow for improved services statewide.

Many municipalities throughout the State of Alabama have prepared comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization plans and economic development strategies. These documents act as local and regional development plans for focusing infrastructure improvements and redevelopment strategies that include directing grant requests and private development.

Listed below are descriptions of additional work performed by specific Regional Councils related to economic recovery.

Region 1 (NACOLG). NACOLG has recently prepared and developed the following studies and plans related to

economic recovery.

Hodges Economic Development Strategy and Asset Based Economic Development Study;
Sheffield Revitalization and Redevelopment Plan;
Tuscumbia Comprehensive Plan;
Music Heritage Trail Study; and
Shoals Area Entertainment Industry Study.

Region 5 (SCADC). The South Central Alabama Development Commission secured grant funding for a number of projects for the purpose of developing infrastructure. By doing so, the goal of developing vital infrastructure for "Tier 1" automotive suppliers and various other industries to locate within Black Belt communities was achieved. Infrastructure developed included: the expansion and/or improvement of water and sewer systems, site preparation, industrial access roads and municipal/county facilities. These projects include those listed below along with the appropriate contact person.

1. Daehan, LLC. Charlie King, Lowndes County Commission Chair, 334-548-2331;
2. Hwashin Corp. Dexter McClendon, Mayor of Greenville, 334-382-7111;
3. Hysco, Inc. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director, 334-382-7111;
4. Dongwon, LLC. Doni Ingram, ADECA Acting Director, 334-335-4468;
5. Halla Climate Control, Inc. Harold Powell, City Clerk-City of Shorter, 334-727-9298;
6. Torch Truck Stop. Earl Hinson, Mayor of Union Springs, 334-738-2720;
7. Anderson's Peanuts. Jesse Upshaw, Macon County Commission, 334-727-4760;
8. Carter Brother's Manufacturing. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director, 334-382-7111;
9. HB&G Inc. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director, 334-382-7111;
10. Bullock County Correctional Facility. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director;
11. Wayne Farms, LLC. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director, 334-382-7111; and
12. Mobis Inc. of Alabama. Stacey Webb, SCADC ED Director, 334-382-7111.

SCADC also noted that the Regional CEDS process provides strategies for economic development, infrastructure and transportation, workforce and education, planning, quality of life, and leadership, funding and cooperation. SCADC's CEDS Strategy Committee and proposed regional alliance will assist in implementing the CEDS. The concept of "action teams" has been introduced to the Regional Alliance and Strategy Committee. Significantly, an agreement to incorporate specific provisions for economic recovery into the CEDS process in future years was added to SCADC's 2006 plan update.

Although not a specific cluster study, the SCADC's 2006 CEDS Update includes a review of industry strengths and the suggestion that emerging clusters be studied further in future updates of the CEDS. Specifically, the planning process has identified the strength and importance of the agricultural and timber industries in the continued economic recovery of the region. This is easily overlooked in popular economic development thinking.

Workforce programs at the state level and in various counties in the SCADC region have adopted workforce development as, perhaps, the highest priority for economic recovery, transitioning from the need to recover from the loss of certain industry sectors to the training requirements demanded by new and emerging industry (higher technology requirements).

Region 6 (ATRC). The Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission organized GoZone initiative meetings in the five designated counties in the ATRC region.

Region 7 (SEARPDC). Among the efforts of the SEARPDC is the development of the Ozark Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Region 9 (CARPDC). The Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission has prepared and developed:

Elmore County Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) and Development Feasibility Study;
Autauga Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP); and
Wetumpka Annexation Feasibility Study.

The Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission also has a contractual partnership with the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, the Autauga Chamber of Commerce and the Elmore County Economic Development Authority.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG reports that because the region served as an evacuation point and sustained little physical damage, economic recovery as a result of a natural disaster has not been a priority for the region. The city governments of Auburn and Opelika have very active Economic Development Departments that continually work to attract new businesses to the area. Efforts at this time are focused on attracting automotive industries to support Hyundai and Kia and supporting the BRAC expansion of Fort Benning.

Region 12 (TARCOG). TARCOG has a nascent Brownfields program. While still in the early stages, it is expected that in the future this will be a vital tool for economic recovery.

For more information on economic recovery activities by Regional Councils, contact the following individuals.

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Economic Recovery Activities by Other Organizations

A number of other organizations were reported by the Regional Councils to have likely performed work related to economic recovery or, are capable of performing such work. This is an indication that there is ample opportunity to form partnerships in all regions of the State to accomplish regional goals. Eight regions reported other organizations that may have performed work related to economic recovery. The organizations listed are shown below by region.

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Chapter 8. Marketing Strategies

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Introduction

Cooperation with other statewide, regional and local development organizations
Coordination of marketing with CEDS
Marketing of revolving loan programs, incubators and business finance assistance
Marketing of grants and technical assistance
Comprehensive planning and marketing
Special marketing studies and plans
Information support for marketing
General marketing of Regional Councils
Contacts

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Introduction

“All of Alabama’s twelve Regional Councils report some activity in marketing to restore image and improve communications and public relations. Although marketing is not the primary role of most Regional Councils, they serve in this capacity as part of their economic and community development support to recruit and retain business.”

All of Alabama’s twelve Regional Councils report some activity in marketing to restore image and improve communications and public relations. Although marketing is not the primary role of most Regional Councils, they serve in this capacity as part of their economic and community development support to recruit and retain business.

Marketing activities of the Regional Councils themselves, or in partnership with others, include:

1. Cooperation and working with other statewide, regional and local economic development organizations;
2. Coordination of marketing with comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDS);
3. Marketing of revolving loan funds and other business assistance;
4. Marketing of grant and technical assistance;
5. Comprehensive planning as marketing and public relations for communities;
6. Special marketing studies and plans;
7. Information for regional and local marketing; and
8. Marketing the Regional Councils.

Cooperation with Other Statewide, Regional and Local Development Organizations

Because marketing is not always their primary responsibility, the Regional Councils often partner, contract or work with economic development authorities, industrial development boards and chambers of commerce to support marketing approaches. The Regional Councils also work closely with ADO and ADECA, the Alabama Department of Tourism and Travel, Alabama Advantage for Retiree Attraction and Relocation, the Economic Development Association of Alabama and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama. In many cases, marketing activities are conducted by, or in conjunction with, these or other agencies or organizations.

Coordination of marketing with CEDS

Regional Councils work with stakeholders and Strategy Committees to incorporate marketing activities for the region into their respective Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS).

Marketing of Revolving Loan Programs, Incubators and Business Finance Assistance

Regional Councils market business financing assistance, especially the revolving loan funds operated by the regions. These programs provide gap financing with equity and bank financing for new and expanded business. Several Regional Councils are also working with others to start and maintain business incubators and to provide existing business assistance as a contribution to economic and community development marketing. Examples include:

Region 2 (WARC). The West Alabama Revolving Loan Fund is available throughout the region and is promoted through the use of brochures and meetings with the banks in the region.

Region 3 (RPCGB). RPCGB, as do all of the regional councils, markets its RLF on a continuous basis to banks, chambers of commerce and economic development agencies. RPCGB runs ads in chamber publications, describing in a nutshell the RLF program and providing contact information about gap financing to new or expanding businesses.

Region 4 (EARPDC). EARPDC participates in the Synchronist Foundation for Existing Businesses program, as do several of the Regional Councils. Synchronist is an interview/database tool used to monitor existing industries in order to help local governments stay abreast of local conditions that may hamper or assist in the growth of local companies. This is a part of a statewide effort to monitor and improve the economic health of the state.

Region 5 (SCADC). The South Central Alabama Development Commission, in a joint effort with the Pike County Economic Development Authority, secured funding via USDA and ADECA for the development of a small business incubator. The Pike County Center for Economic Development (Business Incubator), which is located at the Troy Industrial Park South, opened in late Spring of 2006. Business incubators nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies, helping them survive and grow during the start-up period when they are most vulnerable. These programs provide their client companies with business support services and resources tailored to young firms. The most common goals of incubation programs are creating jobs in a community, enhancing a community's entrepreneurial climate, retaining businesses in a community, building or accelerating growth in a local industry, and diversifying local economies. The Pike County Incubator offers its clients shared use of a copier and fax machine, use of a conference room, access to business consulting, and affordable lease rates to assist in lowering overhead costs.

SCADC also participates in the Synchronist Foundation for Existing Businesses program.

Region 7 (SEARPDC). SEARPDC markets small business loan programs (including RLF, IRP, Microloans) on a continuous basis including news releases, conducting lender meetings, and mail outs to potential customers. Programs are available for new & expanding businesses, as well as business retention.

SEARPDC is working with the Southeast Alabama Council of Economic Developers in an effort to form a Wiregrass Incubator Alliance in southeast Alabama. The purpose of the incubator alliance is to combine efforts in marketing the incubators to new businesses. SEARP&DC also partnered with the South Alabama Aviation Advantage group to market youth Alabama to aviation related businesses in order to recruit higher wage, higher skill jobs to south Alabama.

Region 12 (TARCOG). TARCOG has developed a comprehensive strategy to market the Revolving Loan Program. TARCOG has been instrumental in establishing a business incubator in Arab, and is currently involved in efforts to establish incubators in Athens, Scottsboro, and Fort Payne.

Marketing of Grants and Technical Assistance



Regional Councils market state and federal grants and provide technical assistance for counties and communities through ADECA (CDBG and LWCF), ALDOT (Enhancement Funds), ADEM, EDA, USDA and other programs that help recruit, expand and retain business and jobs.

Comprehensive Planning and Marketing

Regional councils work with communities and counties to utilize comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization plans, the Alabama Communities of Excellence program, and others as part of a marketing strategy for economic and community development, downtown revitalization and historic preservation. All of the regional councils assist communities with comprehensive planning in such a way that serves a marketing purpose in addition to a planning purpose.

A few examples include the following.

Region 3 (RPCGB). The RPCGB has established a Building Communities Program.

Region 5 (SCADC). Communities in the SCADC region are using their comprehensive planning process to create a vision/image for their community. An example is Shorter, Alabama where the Small Town Design Initiative has established such a vision. A marketing strategy is being completed in conjunction with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Other planning initiatives include:

- Mosses Comprehensive Plan;
- Notasulga Comprehensive Plan;
- Tuskegee Downtown Revitalization Plan;
- Greenville Comprehensive Plan;
- Macon County Comprehensive Plan, and others.

Region 9 (CARPDC). The Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission has conducted several plans and documents that increase aesthetic value and increase the attraction of local municipalities and the region, such as:

- Tallassee Master Street Tree \Plan;
- Millbrook Main Street Corridor Study;
- Prattville Main Street Corridor Study;
- Master Recreation Plan for Montgomery County;
- Region wide Recreation Plan; and
- Catoma Creek Environmental Park and Brochure.

Region 12 (TARCOG). TARCOG has recently prepared, or has under development, a number of downtown revitalization plans and comprehensive plans. These include:

- Ardmore Comprehensive Plan;
- Scottsboro Strategic Plan;
- Arab Plan for Downtown and Environs;
- Fort Payne Downtown Revitalization Plan;
- Gurley Comprehensive Plan; and
- Valley Head Downtown Revitalization Plan.

In addition, TARCOG has a continuing marketing program in conjunction with its efforts regarding the Little River Watershed including the West Fork and East Fork sub-watersheds.

Special marketing studies and plans

Regional Councils often conduct special studies or plans to address specific industry clusters or special marketing

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needs. For example, several of the regional councils are working with ADECA and others to provide support to the Black Belt Action Commission addressing the needs for recovery from natural and other serious economic crises in this part of the state. In addition, the Regional Councils have all worked with the Alabama Scenic Byways Advisory Council to identify, map and promote scenic byways as a way of improving image and attraction to Alabama. The following are some other examples of many such initiatives.

Region 1 (NACOLG). NACOLG has developed a Women & Minority Business Owners Conference. The conference encourages and promotes the development of women and minority businesses within the Shoals Area. This conference is supported and developed by the Regional Council, the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and private sector sponsors.

Region 2 (WARC). WARC prepares and distributes the West Alabama Directory of Manufacturing which is a listing of industries in the region that is distributed at no cost to promote trade among the region's industries.

Region 4 (EARPDC). EARPDC partners in the Mountain Longleaf Business Assistance Network. This network, which is a voluntary association of support organizations, has produced its own website and marketing materials in order to provide small businesses one place to access all the small business support organizations in the area. The concept put forth by the MLBAN offers a replicable template that allows multi-county areas to jointly "brand" an area and create a joint marketing program.

Region 5 (SCADC). SCADC has completed a Tuskegee Tourism Plan. The tourism development plan will be used to assist the City of Tuskegee and Macon County in planning and program development. The purposes of the tourism development plan are as follows.

Provide an analysis of the existing tourism situation in the city and county. This includes the identification of primary tourist sites and attractions, local demographic and economic trends, and tourism economic trends.

Provide an analysis of the potential to increase the number of tourists to the area. This includes increasing visitation to existing sites, potential development of new attractions, and examination of marketing strategies.

Examine the tourist related services currently available in the community to include determining the extent to which existing services meet the needs of visitors, and identification of new services which should be provided.

Identify opportunities for local businesses and individuals to become part of the community's tourism economy. This includes identification of training and educational workshops needed, physical improvements required to the downtown area, sources of potential assistance, and methods of delivering the required assistance.

SCADC has also completed a Fort Deposit Industrial Recruitment brochure as a marketing tool for local officials to use when recruiting new businesses and industry. Information provided in the folder includes utilities, tax structure, education, government, transportation and land use.

SCADC, like other Regional Councils, has participated in regional visioning programs to support improvements in quality of life and attraction to the region. The Montgomery Area Chamber of commerce markets the Montgomery metropolitan area, and has just completed a marketing oriented economic development strategy, "Imagine a Greater Montgomery", for the Montgomery MSA.

Envision 2020 is a grassroots organization focusing on Montgomery and the surrounding region. Among the purposes of Envision 2020 is the image of the general Montgomery area and working with others to take advantage of the state capitol and tourism opportunities in the region. These initiatives in the Montgomery area have been incorporated into the SCADC and CARPDC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies thereby increasing participation and reinforcing marketing and private sector investment. Region 2020 is a similar regional visioning effort in the greater Birmingham region.

SCADC and other regional councils have participated in an I-85 Corridor planning process that includes the corridor from Montgomery to Atlanta. Marketing this corridor, which is really larger than the original study area, will provide

a “big picture” opportunity for improving the image of the region and providing access to larger markets, especially when considered in conjunction with the extension of I-85 to the west, into Mississippi.

Region 6 (ATRC). The ATRC has implemented Black Belt Treasures, an innovative entrepreneurial project to market the craftsmen and artisans in the region, as well as, a Regional Tourism Plan.

Region 7 (SEARPC). SEARPC has been as long time supporter for Alabama Advantage Retiree Attraction and Relocation.

Region 8 (SARPC). SARPC has worked on The Mobile Area Renewal Community. The Mobile Area Renewal Community is designated by the US Congress and is limited to parts of the City of Mobile, Prichard, Saraland and Chickasaw. This area qualifies for various tax credits. SARPC meets with businesses looking to locate or expand in the renewal area and explain the tax incentives and/or credits.

“Region 6 (ATRC). The ATRC has implemented Black Belt Treasures, an innovative entrepreneurial project to market the craftsmen and artisans in the region, as well as, a Regional Tourism Plan.”

Region 9 (CARPDC). Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission joined other regional councils as Appalachian Regional Commission agencies to identify tourist sites and Tourism Committees as part of the ARC tourism and assets based marketing project that was performed in conjunction with the National Geographic Society. In the CARPDC region, input from citizens representing tourism interests are being considered in comprehensive plans for various municipalities.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG has completed a Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) brochure for evacuees that contained essential contact information of agencies providing emergency relief as well as clothing, food, housing, prescription, rent and utility assistance. The brochure was distributed by Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) during Katrina. The brochure is updated continuously and will be distributed and printed in the Opelika Auburn News during any future disasters.

Because LRCOG did not suffer significant damage physically or economically as a result of recent natural disasters, there has been limited need for image restoration, targeted marketing, or business retention efforts. Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) in both Lee and Russell Counties have taken advantage of speaking engagements and media contacts to keep disaster preparedness and the role of the EMA in the public eye.

Information support for Marketing

Regional Councils serve as Census affiliates and maintain other economic and demographic data and information used for marketing of regions and communities. This information is often provided to chambers of commerce, development agencies, ADO, ADRCA and others. The Center for Business and Economic Affairs (CBER) at the University of Alabama acts as the State Data Center and provides Census information and training for staff. CBER also generates its own data on Alabama and makes it available to affiliates for distribution.

Regional Councils often utilize EDPA’s site inventory for access to data on industrial sites and provide information to ADO and ADECA on prospective projects.



EARPDC and many of the regional councils participate in Synchronist Foundations for Existing Businesses program, as part of statewide business development.

General Marketing of Regional Councils

Many of the Regional councils publish material on their region and organization which often includes information on state and federal programs, local programs and events. The Regional Councils also conduct annual or quarterly meetings which are open to the public and other meetings and events that include a broad spectrum of the economic development community and the community in general.

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) holds an annual statewide training conference which draws persons from throughout the state and includes federal, state and national participants.

The AARC and most of the Regional Councils are members of, and participate in activities and meetings of, the National Association of Regional Councils, the National Association of Development Organizations, the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Delta Regional Authority. Through these organizations, the AARC and the Regional Councils provide continuing exposure for Alabama and its programs.

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Chapter 9. Hazard Mitigation

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Introduction
Statewide Overview
Hazard Mitigation Activities by Regional Councils
Hazard Mitigation Activities by Other Organizations
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Introduction

For the purposes of AARC's Support of ADECA's Statewide Economic Recovery Strategy, *hazard mitigation* is defined as "the development of mitigation strategies that encourage the development of disaster resistant communities, infrastructures, capacity to support business continuity and economic security, and other purposes."

Statewide Overview

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) has been heavily involved with disaster mitigation efforts in Alabama over the last several years through the active work of the All Hazards Task Force (AHTF). Ms. Ellen Austin of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) has served as the Chair of the AHTF since its inception. The AHTF was created shortly after the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) Interim Final Rule was published in February of 2002. Each individual Region has had, and continues to have, active representation participating in the AHTF.

The DMA2K loosely set guidelines for the development of State and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. These plans were a requirement to continue eligibility for State and Local receipt of Hazard Mitigation funds. The AHTF worked closely with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) in the development of these plans by coordinating monthly meetings at which status reports were issued on each plan in development by the individual regions. Also, the AEMA provided guidance and interpretation of the requirements of DMA2K so that uniformity would exist throughout various plans. The AEMA served as the communication link between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and AARC. During plan development, FEMA had changed the status of several requirements in the planning guidance. Without the AHTF working closely with the AEMA these changes would not have been communicated as effectively and much plan development time may have been wasted.

In 2004, the AARC was directly responsible for the development and preparation of over 40 Countywide Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans across Alabama. *This action set Alabama ahead of all other states in the planning development requirements of DMA2K.* These plans were approved in 2005. The remaining county plans were prepared by private consultants such as Jim Lehe and Lee Helms and the individual local Emergency Management Agencies.

"In 2004, the AARC was directly responsible for the development and preparation of over 40 Countywide Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans across Alabama. This action set Alabama ahead of all other states in the planning development requirements of DMA2K."

Following on the heels of this success and realizing that the plans could be improved upon and that regular maintenance was critical to plan implementation, the AHTF submitted a joint HMGP grant application in early 2005 on behalf of all

the regions and participating county EMA's to AEMA and FEMA. In late 2006, the AHTF learned that the application had been funded for 34 counties in Alabama and proceeded to schedule meetings in order to begin performing the work called for in the application.

Hazard Mitigation Activities by Regional Councils

Region 1 (NACOLG). NACOLG prepared natural hazard mitigation plans for four counties. These documents contain identified hazards within each county as well as the means to mitigate these hazards during disasters. In conjunction with local comprehensive development plans that aid in planning appropriate development to mitigate natural disasters, hazard mitigation plans identify needs assessments and contain disaster activation plans. These four plans are:

Colbert County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Marion County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Winston County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

For more information, contact:

Benjamin Farmer, NACOLG, 103 Student Drive, Muscle Shoals, AL 35622, (256) 389-0551, bfarmer@nwsc.cc.al.us

Region 2 (WARC). WARC prepared seven natural hazard mitigation plans in addition to other mitigation grant activities. These plans include:

Lamar County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Fayette County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Pickens County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Tuscaloosa County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Bibb County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Hale County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Greene County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Other activities include a FEMA Grant to construct community shelters in Bibb County. Additionally WARC reports that all county EMA directors have received grants for storm shelters, warning sirens, and various equipment

For more information, contact:

Gene Smith, WARC, 4200 Highway 69 N., Suite 1 Northport, AL 35476, (205)333-2990, gene.smith@adss.alabama.gov

Region 3 (RPCGB). The RPCGB prepared hazard mitigation plans for two of the six counties in Region 3. These plans were prepared in 2004 and approved in 2005. The plans contain hazard identification, risk assessment, plan implementation and mitigation strategies and were built upon Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee and public participation. These plans include:

Chilton County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Walker County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

For more information, contact:

Kay Argo, RPCGB, 1731 1st Ave. N., Suite 200 Birmingham, AL 35203, (205)264-8421, kargo@rpcgb.org

Region 4 (EARPDC). The EARPDC has directly performed work related to disaster mitigation in the form of preparing eight Multi-Jurisdictional County Hazard Mitigation Plans. The counties that the Commission prepared plans for are: Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega and Tallapoosa Counties. The

documents contain the planning process, existing plan and study incorporation, hazard identification and profile, vulnerability assessment, mitigation strategy and plan implementation process.

The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission has contractually partnered with the State of Alabama Emergency Management Agency in the past for the preparation and development of the Clay, Coosa and Cleburne County Hazard Mitigation Plans. Contractual partnerships were also made with the Calhoun, Etowah, Talladega and Randolph County Emergency Management Agencies for the development and preparation of those county plans as well. Through the Alabama Association of Regional Councils, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission also contracted with the State of Alabama Emergency Management Agency for the development and preparation of the Tallapoosa County Hazard Mitigation Plan. These documents include:

Calhoun County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Clay County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Cleburne County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Coosa County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Etowah County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Randolph County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Talladega County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Tallapoosa County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Commission has also contracted with several municipalities to administer Hazard Mitigation Grant Program projects. These projects were for the acquisition of properties in the floodway and floodplain of municipalities in the Region. In addition, EARPDC has initiated the development of:

Areawide and Individual County Pandemic Influenza Plan

For more information, contact:

Robin Caler, EARPDC, P.O. Box 2186 Quintard Tower, Suite 300 1130 Quintard Ave. Anniston, AL 36202,
(256)237-6741, robin.caler@adss.alabama.gov

Region 5 (SCADC). SCADC worked with AARC to provide funding from FEMA to prepare hazard mitigation plans for four counties in its region. These plans were prepared in 2004 and approved in 2005. The plans contain hazard identification, risk assessment, plan implementation and mitigation strategies and were built upon Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee and public participation. These plans include:

Lowndes County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Bullock County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Macon County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

SCADC also administered the City of Greenville Buyout Project. For more information, contact:

Stacey Webb and/or Lucas Blankenship, SCADC, 5900 Carmichael Place Montgomery, AL 36117, (334)244-6903, stacey.webb@adss.alabama.gov

Region 6 (ATRC). The Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission prepared five multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans. These plans address hazard risk factors, past occurrence documentation, and proposed mitigation projects. These plans include:

Clarke County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Marengo County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Perry County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Sumter County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Wilcox County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission also prepares and administers Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

applications for several member governments. For more information, contact:

Brandy Wilkerson, ATRC, 107 Broad Street, Camden, AL 36726, (334)682-4234, bphillips@adss.state.al.us

Region 7 (SEARPDC). SEARPDC prepared three multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans in response to DMA2K. These include:

Barbour County Multi-jurisdictional Mitigation Plan;
Covington County Multi-jurisdictional Mitigation Plan; and
Henry County Multi-jurisdictional Mitigation Plan.

For more information, contact:

Scott Farmer, SEARPDC, 462 N. Oates Street - 4th Floor Dothan, AL 36303, (334)794-4093, scott@sanman.net

Region 8 (SARPC). The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) prepared two (2) multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans in 2003 and 2004. These include:

Baldwin County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Unincorporated Mobile County Hazard Mitigation.

These documents address the planning process, hazard identification, vulnerability assessment, mitigation strategies, and plan implementation. In addition, SARPC partnered with the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program to facilitate the planning process and prepare plans. For more information, contact:

Tina Sanchez, SARPC, 651 Church Street, Mobile, AL 36602, (334)433-6541, tsanchez@sarpc.org

Region 9 (CARPDC). With regard to hazard mitigation, CARPDC was involved in the following activities:

Elmore County Mitigation Plan and Update;
Federal Appropriations for Emergency Management;
Emergency management grant for 10 Storm Warning Systems totaling \$495,000. These funds will be used to purchase emergency equipment such as GPS and GIS equipment and will ensure 95% county coverage for storm warning; and
CARPDC worked with AARC to provide funding from FEMA to prepare Hazard Mitigation Plans in all CARPDC counties.

For more information, contact:

Kindell Anderson, CARPDC, 125 Washington Ave. 3rd Floor Montgomery, AL, 36104, (334) 262-4300, kanderson@carpdc.com.

Region 10 (LRCOG). LRCOG took the lead in writing disaster mitigation plans for the region following 9/11. Those mitigation plans were completed in 2003 prior to the hurricane seasons of 2004 and 2005. In order to apply for FEMA funding following Hurricane Ivan, mitigation plans were updated. Russell County, Lee County and the cities of Auburn and Opelika all applied for Hazard Mitigation funding from FEMA. Additionally, LRCOG has applied in conjunction with several other regional councils for assistance from FEMA for funding to completely update Hazard Mitigation Plans as a result of lessons learned during Katrina. Hazard mitigation plans prepared by LRCOG include:

Russell County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Lee County Hazard Mitigation Plan;
Auburn Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
Opelika Hazard Mitigation Plan.

For more information, contact:

Erin Stephens and Barbara Scott, LRCOG, 2270 Gateway Drive, Opelika, AL 36801, (334)749-5264, estephens@adss.state.al.us, bscott@adss.state.al.us.

Throughout the region a great deal of time and effort has gone into “after action” assessments of the impacts of a natural disaster like Katrina. The goal is to prepare Lee and Russell counties for any future disaster when physical damage, loss of property and jobs might be more significant. The following strategies are being implemented or will be implemented in the near future:

City of Auburn Department of Public Works is hoping to align their communication systems with police and EMA communication systems.

Detailed written staff descriptions for emergency response are being developed for City of Auburn personnel. The City of Auburn is augmenting FEMA flood plain maps with layers.

Lee County EMA is holding 3 disaster preparation exercises per year.

Lee County EMA is establishing and credentialing a Medical Reserve Corp that can be mobilized in the event of a disaster.

Lee County Chapter Red Cross is developing disaster leadership by providing training and experience to staff and volunteers.

New Memorandums of Understanding and Mutual Aid Agreements are being finalized between agencies and vendor/suppliers to expedite response.

In both Auburn and Opelika, back up generators to support critical infrastructure are being purchased.

The Russell County EMA is recruiting and training Volunteer Preliminary Damage Assessment Team to assure future damage assessments can be completed within 24-hours.

A public relations/ information campaign is underway to inform citizens when and how to report flood and storm damage to the county EMA.

Weather sirens are being installed in portions of the county. Funding has been requested for additional sirens and weather alert radios.

A central distribution site for donations has been selected.

Other contacts include:

Robert Smith, City of Auburn Department of Public Works, (334)501-3000

Faith Aguilar, Lee County EMA, (334)749-8161

Marty Nelson, American Red Cross, (334) 749-9981, mnelson@leeredcross.org

Chance Corbett, Russell County EMA, (334)291-5079, Corbett@rcema.us

Region 11 (NARCOG). The North-central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) prepared three (3) multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans in 2003/2004. These documents address the planning process, hazard identification, vulnerability assessment, mitigation strategies, and plan implementation. These documents are:

Cullman County Hazard Mitigation Plan;

Lawrence County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

Morgan County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

For more information, contact:

Joey Hester, NARCOG, 216 Jackson Street S.E. Decatur, AL 35601, (256)355-4515, jhester@adss.state.al.us

Region 12 (TARCOG). TARCOG prepared natural hazard mitigation plans for three of its five counties. These plans include:

DeKalb County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan;

Jackson County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

Limestone County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

For more information, contact:

Jeffrey Pruitt, TARCOG, 5075 Research Drive NW, Huntsville, AL 35805, (256) 716-2483, jpruitt@adss.state.al.us

Hazard Mitigation Activities of Other Organizations

A number of other organizations were reported by the Regional Councils to have likely performed work related to hazard mitigation, or, are capable of performing such work. Please refer to the following Alabama County EMA Directory Table for a list of County EMA's. Additionally, the following private consultants, universities and federal agencies have provided hazard mitigation planning services in various areas of the state.

Jim Lehe, AICP, Lehe Planning LLC, Urban and Environmental Planning, 205-940-9214, jelehe@leheplanning.com.

Derrick C. Hill, P.E., The Hill Engineering Group LLC, 205-661-9996, derrickhill@charter.net

Lee Helms

Dr. Barry Cox, Jacksonville State University, Institute for Emergency Preparedness , 256-782-5925, bcox@jsu.edu

TVA Corporate Headquarters, 400 W. Summit Hill Drive, Knoxville, TN 37902-1499, 865.632.2101, tvainfo@tva.com

TVA Police, Western District, 800.839.0003, Browns Ferry Information

John Moens, US Department of Energy, 202.287.1976, John.Moens@eia.doe.gov

Alabama County EMA Directory

County	Contact	Phone	Address	CitySTZip	Email
Autauga	Randy Taylor	334-361-3758	826 Gillespie Street	Prattville AL 36067	randy.taylor@prattville.com
Baldwin	Leigh Anne Ryals	251-947-1011	23100 Mcauliffe Drive	Robertsdale AL 36567	lryals@co.baldwin.al.us
Barbour	Webster Hugh Boyd	334-687-1521	Courthouse, Room 108	Eufaula AL 36027	hboyd@barbourcountyefaula.com
Bibb	Wayne Hayes	205-926-3113	157 S W Davidson Drive	Centreville AL 35042-1240	bcema@dbtech.net
Blount	Max Armstrong	205-625-4121	220 2Nd Avenue East	Oneonta AL 35121	blt911@otelco.net
Bullock	Fred Hollon, Acting Director	334-738-3883	P. O. Box 472	Union Springs AL 36089	coeng@bullockco.com
Butler	Bob Luman	334-382-7911	201 South Conecuh Street Suite	Greenville AL 36037	bobw4mpq@aol.com
Calhoun	Daniel Long	256-435-0540	507 Francis Street, West	Jacksonville AL 36265	dlong@ema.co.calhoun.al.us
Chambers	Donald A. (Donnie) Smith	334-576-0911	3507 Veterans Memorial Parkway	Lanett AL 36863	dsmith@chamberscounty911.com
Cherokee	Beverly Daniel, Director	256-927-3367 or 927-3911	260 Cedar Bluff Road, Ste. 104	Centre AL 35960	cherokeema@wavemasters.com
Chilton	Bill Collum	205-755-0900	506 1St Avenue	Clanton AL 35046-1523	ccema@dbtech.net
Choctaw	Bill Gibson	205-459-1135	816 West Pushmataha Street	Butler AL 36904	wjgibson@tds.net
Clarke	Robert Clay Larrimore, Jr	251-275-8775	West Main Street	Grove Hill AL 36451	ccema@mygalaxyexpress.com
Clay	Theresa Daugherty	256-396-5886	86838 Highway 9	Lineville AL 36266	direma@acs-isp.com
Cleburne	Steve Swafford	256-463-7130	118 Emergency Lane	Heflin AL 36264	swafford@cleburnecounty.us
Coffee	John C. Tallas	334-894-5415	1065 East Mckinnon Street	New Brockton AL 36351	jtallas@co.coffee.al.us
Colbert	Mike Melton	256-386-8558	120 West 5Th Street	Tuscumbia AL 35674	colema@hiwaay.net
Conecuh	Heather Walton	251-578-5911	434A Rural Street	Evergreen AL 36401	e911c@bellsouth.net
Coosa	Lester Sellers	256-377-2418	Corner Of State Hwy 22 & Hwy 23	Rockford AL 35136	coosaadm@webshoppe.net
Covington	Kristi Stamnes	334-427-4911	300 West Watson Street	Andalusia AL 36420	kstamnes@alaweb.com
Crenshaw	Anita T. West	334-335-4538	118 East Third Street	Luverne AL 36049	ccema@troycable.net

County	Contact	Phone	Address	CitySTZip	Email
Cullman	Phyllis Little	256-739-5410	402 Arnold Street N.E., Suite G-	Cullman AL 35055	ccema@co.cullman.al.us
Dale	Ray Phillips	334-774-2214	168 South Merrick Avenue	Ozark AL 36360 (Physical) 36361	dcema@snowhill.com
Dallas	Brett Howard	334-874-2515; Voice Mail: 334-8	102 Church Street	Selma AL 36701 (Physical) 3670	brett.howard@dallascounty-al.org
Dekalb	Susan Battles	256-845-8569	111 Grand Ave. SW, Suite 21	Fort Payne AL 35967	sbattles@wavemasters.com
Elmore	Bryant Duncan	334-567-6451	100 East Commerce St., Ste. 300	Wetumpka AL 36093	bryant.duncan@elmoreco.org
Escambia	David Jennings	251-867-0232	314 Belleville Ave	Brewton AL 36427	djennings@co.escambia.al.us
Etowah	Marie Bankson	256-549-4575	90 Broad Street, Police Building	Gadsden AL 35902-0267	ecema@ecema.co.etowah.al.us
Fayette	Scott Porter	205-932-4510	103 1St Ave. N.W.	Fayette AL 35555	
Franklin	Carole Frederick, Director	256-332-8890	12951 Highway 187	Russellville AL 35653	fcem@hiwaay.net
Geneva	Margaret Mixon	334-684-5677	200 S. Commerce	Geneva AL 36340	mixonm@genevacoboe.org
Greene	J. D. Smith	205-361-1203	P.O. Box 656	Eutaw AL 35462	
Hale	Russell Weeden	334-624-8160	998 Church Street	Greensboro AL 36744	hce911@westal.net
Henry	Paul Brown	334-585-6702	101 North Doswell St	Abbeville AL 36310	henryema@ala.net
Houston	Shelby Womack	334-794-9720	114 North Oates	Dothan AL 36302	sgwomack@houstoncounty.org
Jackson	Victor Manning	256-574-9344	102 E. Laurel St	Scottsboro AL 35768	ema@hi-jackson.net
Jefferson	Elwood "Woody" Odom	205-254-2039	709 N. 19Th Street	Birmingham AL 35203	odomw@jccal.org
Lamar	Johnny Bigham	205-695-7105	P.O. Box 711	Vernon AL 35592	lamarema@bamacomm.com
Lauderdale	George M. Grabryan Jr.	256-760-6363	110 W. College St.,Room B25,P.O	Florence AL 35630	ggrabryan@florenceal.org
Lawrence	Hillard Frost	256-974-7641/256-974-7911	555 Walnut Street	Moulton AL 35650	suewhite@charter.net
Lee	William T. (Bill) Meadows	334-749-8161	908 Avenue B	Opelika AL 36803	leecoema911@mindspring.com
Limestone	Spencer Black	256-232-2631	1011 W. Market Street	Athens AL 35611	ema@limestoneema.com

County	Contact	Phone	Address	CitySTZip	Email
Lowndes	Fannie L. Davis	334-548-2569/334-548-5375	105 Tuskeena St. E	Hayneville AL 36040	lowndesema@htcnet.net
Macon	William E. Gunn	334-724-2626	210 N. Elm Street, Suite 006	Tuskegee AL 36083-1731	emamacon@bellsouth.net
Madison	John "Rusty" Russell	256-427-5130 (24 Hrs.)	320 Fountain Circle	Huntsville AL 35804-0308	john.russell@hsvcity.com
Marengo	Kevin McKinney	334-295-2227	101 Dunn St.	Linden AL 36748-0057	kevinm_msco@hotmail.com
Marion	Matthew McCracken	205-921-4555	280 Winchester Drive	Hamilton AL 35570	mmccracken@marionsoal.com
Marshall	Julie Brown	256-571-7329	424 Blount Avenue	Guntersville AL 35976	jbrown@marshallco.org
Mobile	Paulette Williams	251-460-8000	348 N. McGregor Avenue	Mobile AL 36608	pwilliams@mcema.net
Monroe	Charles Murph	251-575-8154	65 North Alabama Avenue	Monroeville AL 36461	monroeema@frontiernet.net
Montgomery	Anita Patterson	334-241-2820	934 N. Ripley Street	Montgomery AL 36104	apatterson@ci.montgomery.al.us
Morgan	Eddie Hicks	256-351-4620	302 Lee Street	Decatur AL 35602	ehicks@hiwaay.net
Perry	Daniel G. Overton	334-683-2236	Rt. 1, Box 287	Marion AL 36756	perryeng@bellsouth.net
Pickens	Ray Elmore	205-367-2009/205-367-9804	100 Phenix Avenue	Carrollton AL 35447	ema@pickens.net
Pike	Larry Davis	334-566-8272	110 South Three Notch Street	Troy AL 36081	ema@troycable.net
Randolph	Donnie Knight	256-357-0014	809 Main Street	Wedowee AL 36278	ChiefKnight2002@yahoo.com
Russell	Chance D. Corbett	334-291-5080/291-5079	311 Prentiss Drive	Phenix City AL 36868	corbett@rcema.us
Shelby	Don Greene	205-669-3999	504 Highway 70	Columbiana AL 35051	dgreene@shelbycountyalabama.net
St Clair	Ellen Haynes	205-884-6800	1610 Cogswell Ave., Ste. B-10	Pell City AL 35125	ehaynes@scema.co.saint-clair.al.us
Sumter	Margaret A. Bishop	205-392-2001/205-392-2013	607 2Nd Ave	York AL 36925	ema@sumternet.com
Talladega	Nelson Bates	256-761-2125	1 Court Square	Talladega AL 35161	nelsonb@tcema.co.talladega.al.us
Tallapoosa	Joe Paul Boone	256-825-1078	125 N. Broadnax Street	Dadeville AL 36853	jpboone@tallapoosacountyal.com
Tuscaloosa	David Hartin	205-349-0150	2201 University Blvd.	Tuscaloosa AL 35401	dhartin@ci.tuscaloosa.al.us

County	Contact	Phone	Address	CitySTZip	Email
Walker	Johnny Burnette	205-384-7233	1801 3Rd Ave	Jasper AL 35501	walkerema@bellsouth.net
Washington	Deborah Nichols	251-847-2668	One Court Street	Chatom AL 36518	dnichols@millry.net
Wilcox	Joyce Williams	334-682-4843	119 Hawthorne Street	Camden AL 36726	wilcoxema@frontiernet.net
Winston	Thomas Grubbs	205-489-3422	595 County Road 3135	Houston AL 35572	tgrubbs@direcway.com

Source: Alabama Rural Water

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Chapter 10. Capacity Development

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Introduction
Statewide Initiatives
Region Specific Initiatives
Initiatives Directly Related to Natural Disasters
Contractual Agreements and Partnerships
Additional Capacity Development Contacts

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Introduction

Economic recovery following natural disasters ultimately depends upon already established capacities for economic growth and development. For this report, capacity development is defined as technical assistance, training, programs and administrative activities designed to build and sustain long-term economic recovery.

The twelve Regional Planning and Development Councils throughout the state were asked to report on capacity development activities performed by themselves and in concert with other entities. They included both capacity development activities that are undertaken on a day to day basis and capacity development activities undertaken in response to natural disaster recovery and planning. Regional Councils also provided contact information for other capacity development activities in their regions.

Statewide Initiatives

There are a wide variety of capacity building programs made available throughout the state by the members of the AARC.

For more than 30 years the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) has been addressing the issue of statewide capacity building with the formation of regional alliances and the development of regional economic development strategic plans/comprehensive economic development strategies.

Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) are administered across the state. Revolving Loan Funds provide low-interest loans for new and expanding businesses. These loans facilitate job retention and creation. Other loan programs available in the state include Intermediary Re-lending Programs and Micro-loans.

Community Development Block Grant, Delta Commission, Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA, and FEMA funding is secured for communities across the state by Regional Councils. Once funding is secured, the commissions assist communities by administering these grants to assure compliance with state and federal regulations and submitting required program and financial reports.

GIS Mapping is an essential component of community planning for planning commissions and city and county governments. Most Regional Councils can provide member governments with specialized mapping services.

AARC members also serve as affiliates of the State Data

“For more than 30 years the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) has been addressing the issue of statewide capacity building with the formation of regional alliances and the development of regional economic development strategic plans/comprehensive economic development strategies.”



Center, providing citizens and member governments with access to regional census and demographic data.

Region Specific Initiatives

Workforce Development. The Executive Director of NACOLG chairs the Regional Workforce Advisory Committee in northwest Alabama. WARC staff members actively participate on the West Alabama Workforce Development Board. In the Dothan area, SARPDC facilitates the Southeast Council of Economic Developers.

Training. In Region 4, EARPDC holds monthly seminars to update local governments on grant opportunities, new regulations and practices and partners with Jacksonville State University to provide business seminars. SCADC also provides training to keep local governments informed of grant opportunities. In Region 6, ATRC partnered with the University of Alabama's Center for Economic Development to sponsor a series of seminars across the region on capacity development and leadership.



Personnel Assistance. Regions 9 and 12 assist local governments with staffing and personnel issues including job performance, job descriptions, inventory, and staffing readiness.

Small Business Assistance Networks. In east Alabama, EARPDC formed the Mountain Longleaf Business Assistance Network. The network has its own website and marketing materials and provides a formal support network for small business owners. In Region 5, SCADC has established a Small Business Incubator for the City of Troy and Pike County.

Comprehensive Community Planning. Region 3 has assisted more than 16 communities in the Birmingham metropolitan area to develop comprehensive plans, subdivision and zoning ordinances, and downtown revitalization plans. Additionally, region 3 has completed Corridor Studies for I-20, I-65, Highway 280, and Corridor X. Region 5 assisted Macon and Lowndes Counties as well as the cities of Shorter and Greenville with comprehensive planning.

Initiatives Directly Related to Natural Disasters

In August and September of 2005, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was felt across the state of Alabama. Twenty-two counties were declared disaster areas, suffering severe wind and flood damage. However, the effects of Hurricane Katrina extended beyond the southwestern areas of the state. Evacuees from the coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama crowded into shelters across the state expecting to return to their homes within a few days. Instead, many evacuees were unable to return to homes and businesses and remained in their evacuation communities long after the emergency shelters closed. Across Alabama, the enormity of the tragedy that unfolded in New Orleans caused many communities to re-assess their capacity to prepare for and recover from natural disasters.

"In August and September of 2005, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was felt across the state of Alabama. Twenty-two counties were declared disaster areas, suffering severe wind and flood damage. However, the effects of Hurricane Katrina extended beyond the southwestern areas of the state. Evacuees from the coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama crowded into shelters across the state expecting to return to their homes within a few days."

In Region 5, SCADC acquired FEMA funding to complete a land acquisition and buyout package.

In Region 10, LRCOG assisted Russell County and the City of Hurtsboro by writing several grants to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to improve disaster response, preparedness and resistance. Russell County proposals included weather sirens for rural areas of the county, weather alert radios for schools and child care programs, individual safe shelters, a safe shelter for the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA), and a back-up generator for potable water. Funding for four home buy-outs in flood-prone areas was requested on behalf of the City of Hurtsboro.

Contractual Agreements and Partnerships

In Region 1 (NACOLG), preventive health maintenance is provided in conjunction with academic institutional providers in regional nursing programs. Documentation is maintained through units of service to senior centers and senior populations. NACOLG also partners with the University of Alabama Geography Department in its Field Placement Program.

In Region 2, WARC Contracted with the University of Alabama Cartography Lab to digitize maps for two corridor studies along I-20/59 and with the Center for Business and Economic Research for population projections for areas in the Region.

In Region 3, RPC is a member of the Regional Growth Alliance, a partnership for working across city and county lines, and across three sectors of the region. RPC also was an active participant in Region 2020. In the Region 2020 process, citizens in the Birmingham metropolitan area set forth a clear vision for enhancing and preserving the unique physical character of Central Alabama. The RPC partners with Region 2020 in many of the projects and initiatives that arose from the regional visioning process. Alabama Partners for Clean Air (APCA) is an affiliation of 20 public, private and nonprofit organizations working to implement voluntary strategies that improve air quality in Jefferson and Shelby counties. APCA's goals are to achieve and maintain compliance with national air quality standards, to protect and improve public health, to minimize the economic impacts on existing businesses and support economic growth consistent with clean air goals. The CAWACO RC&D Council encourages and improves the capacity of volunteer, local, elected and civic leaders to plan and implement projects for resource conservation and community development. Such activities lead to sustainable communities, prudent land use and sound management and conservation of natural resources. RPC is also involved with the Regional Cultural Alliance and Your Town Alabama initiatives.

Additional Capacity Development Contacts

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Region 3 (RPCGB)

Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce
www.birminghamchamber.com

Blount County/Oneonta Chamber of Commerce
Charles Carr; Sarah Payne
205-284-2153
cvbridge@otelco.net
www.blountoneontachamber.org

Blount County Chamber of commerce
www.blountchamber.com

Blount County Economic Development Board

Chilton County Chamber of Commerce
www.chiltoncountychamber.com

Chilton County Industrial Development Board

Economic Development Partnership of Alabama
www.edpa.org

Fairfield Chamber of Commerce
205-257-5788
ronjefferson@bellsouth.net

Gardendale Chamber of Commerce
Cathy W. Edwards, Executive Director
205-631-9195
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www.gardendalechamberofcommerce.com

Greater Pell City Chamber of Commerce
Lynn Batemon, Executive Director
205-338-3377
Email: pellcitychamber@centurytel.net
Web: www.cityofpellcity.com

Greater Shelby County Chamber of Commerce
www.shelbychamber.org

Hoover Chamber of Commerce
Bill Powell, Executive Director
205-988-5672
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www.hooverchamber.org

Jefferson County Development Authority
<http://www.jeffcoeida.com/>

Metropolitan Development Board
www.mdb.org

Mountain Brook Chamber of Commerce
205-871-3779
mtnbrookchamber@bellsouth.net
www.mtnbrookchamber.com

Operation New Birmingham
www.onb.org

South Shelby Chamber of Commerce
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www.southshelbychamber.com

Springville Area Chamber of Commerce

Tarrant/Pinson Valley Chamber
lkeith@cityoftarrant.com

Trussville Area Chamber of Commerce

Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce
chamber@vestaviiahills.org
www.vestaviiahills.org

Shelby County Economic & Industrial Development Authority
www.sceida.org

St. Clair Chamber of Commerce
www.stclairchamber.com

St. Clair County Economic Development Council
www.stclairedc.com

Walker County Chamber of Commerce
www.walkercochamber.com

Walker County Economic and Industrial Development Authority
www.wceida.com

Region 4 (EARPDC)

Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce
1330 Quintard Avenue
P.O. Box 1087
Anniston, AL 36202
www.calhounchamber.com

Small Business Development Center
Jacksonville State University
700 Pelham Street N; 114 Merrill Hall
Jacksonville, AL 36265
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www.jsu.edu/depart/sbdc

North East Alabama Entrepreneurial System
1400 Commerce Blvd. Suite 1
Anniston, AL 36207
256-831-8728
www.neaes.org

Spirit of Anniston Program
1215 Noble Street
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Region 6 (ATRC)

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Region 7 (SEARPC)

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Region 8 (SARPC)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Region 9 (CARPDC)

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Mr. Victor Cross
Phenix City Russell County Chamber of Commerce
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Region 12 (TARCOG)

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Greater Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
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Greater Limestone County Chamber of Commerce
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Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County
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Madison Chamber of Commerce
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Boaz Area Chamber of Commerce
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Lake Guntersville Chamber of Commerce
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Alabama Industrial Development Training
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North Alabama Industrial Development Association
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