



Prepared by
**Pioneer Valley
Planning Commission**
2015



CEEDS

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Annual Update

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
and Economic Development District

The Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress

*The Region's Comprehensive
Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*

2015 CEDS Annual Update

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The Pioneer Valley region was designated an Economic Development District in 1999 by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. In keeping with this designation, the region prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that is updated annually, providing a means for regional collaboration to define and advance key economic interests of the region and its people. The CEDS features a description of regional economic conditions and sets forth goals and objectives for the future. An appendix to this year's CEDS includes comprehensive information and data about the region's demographics, geography, regional assets, employment, and education system and is available online, along with this document, at <http://www.pvpc.org/plans/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy-ceds>. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), which administers this process, is the designated regional planning agency for the Pioneer Valley region, which includes 43 cities and towns comprising the Hampshire and Hampden county areas in western Massachusetts. In this capacity, the PVPC strives to foster a proactive regional planning process that will help create jobs, support a stable and diversified regional economy, and improve living conditions and prosperity for residents throughout the region.



The Plan for Progress

The Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress is a 10-year blueprint for economic development in the region, crafted by the combined efforts of the region's public, private, and civic sectors. It contains a compilation of economic strategies, supported and advanced by a growing network of leaders from across the region, developed through research and business community participation. These strategies are then incorporated into the CEDS and progress is updated annually. Previous versions of the Plan for Progress were developed in 1994 and 2004, and a new 2015 Plan for Progress is being released this year.

Overview of the Pioneer Valley Region

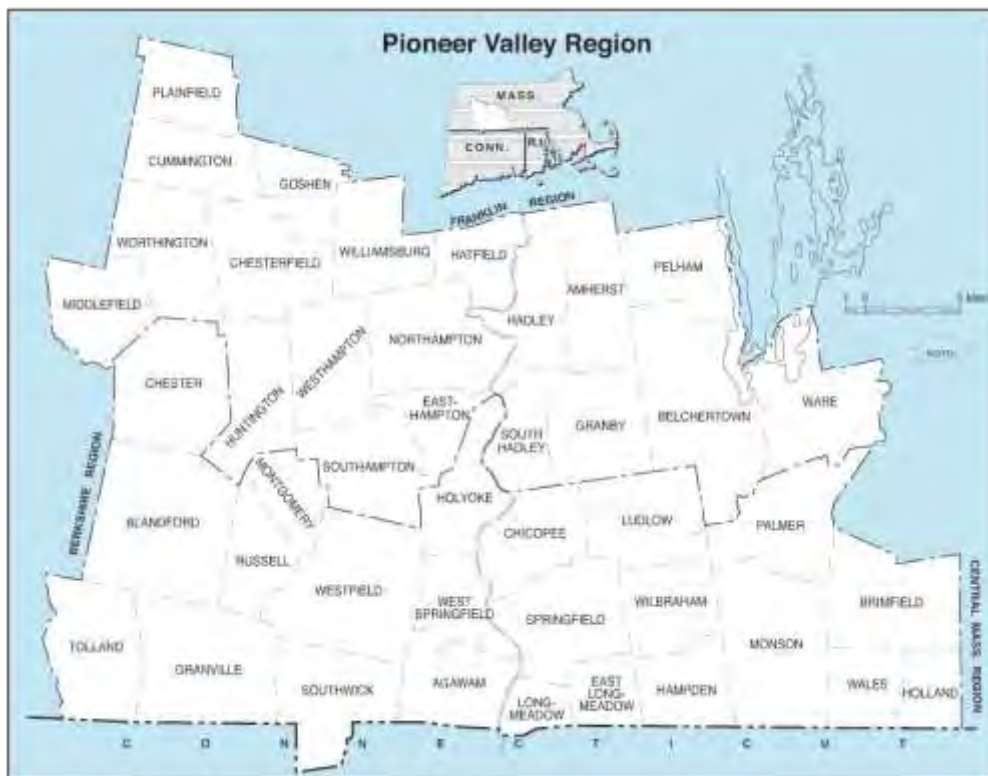
Located in the midwestern section of Massachusetts and covering 1,179 square miles, the Pioneer Valley region and Economic Development District (EDD) encompasses the fourth largest metropolitan area in New England. The Pioneer Valley region, which constitutes the 43 cities and towns within the Hampshire and Hampden county areas, is home to about 625,718 people and the urbanized areas of Springfield, Chicopee, and Holyoke.

Springfield, the third largest city in Massachusetts, is the region's cultural and economic center. Springfield is home to several of the region's largest employers, including Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, Baystate Health, Mercy Medical Center, and Solutia, Inc., a subsidiary of Eastman Chemical. Major cultural institutions include the Springfield Symphony, City Stage, the Mass Mutual Convention Center, Quadrangle Museums, the Basketball Hall of Fame, and the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden.

The cities of Chicopee and Holyoke were the first planned industrial communities in the nation. Merchants built an elaborate complex of mills, workers' housing, dams, and canal systems that evolved into cities. While many of the historic mills and industries are now gone, a number of 19th and 20th century structures are maintained and improved through municipal redevelopment initiatives.

Unique within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Pioneer Valley region contains a diverse economic base, internationally known educational institutions, and limitless scenic beauty. Dominant physical characteristics include the broad fertile agricultural valley formed by the Connecticut River, the Holyoke Mountain range that traverses the region from Southwick to Pelham, and the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains. Prime agricultural land, significant wetlands, and scenic rivers are some of the region's premier natural resources. Choices in life-style range from contemporary downtown living to stately historic homes, characteristic suburban neighborhoods, and rural living in very small communities—a variety that contributes to the diversity and appeal of the region. The unique combination of natural beauty, cultural

amenities, and historical character make the Pioneer Valley region an exceptional environment in which to live, work, and play.



Regional Economic Trends 2014-2015

The past year, since the last CEDS update (which was a 10-year update), has seen quite a few positive economic signs in the region. Recovery from the 2008-10 recession has been slow and gradual, but significant investments and initiatives in the region show great promise. The indicators on page 15 provide detailed metrics to support some positive trends. In particular, unemployment continues to decline from its highest point at 9.7 percent for the region in 2010. It has still not returned to pre-recession levels which were in the 5-6 percent range, but has been just over 7% and falling for the past couple of years. Weekly wages continue to rise, and the number of businesses continues to grow steadily. Another impact of the recession was the dramatic housing market crash, but in the past couple of years the housing market has been showing signs of recovery, as prices and sales slowly rise.

Business investment and growth is seeing new levels that have not been experienced in years. Two major companies solidified their investments in the region this year: Changchun Railway Company and MGM Resorts International. The combined investment is \$860 million and will provide over 3,000 new jobs. Meanwhile, support for entrepreneurship, particularly in the urban core, has increased significantly, with the growth of the Valley Venture Mentors program, expansion of services at the Business Growth Center at Springfield Technology Park, the new MassMutual Springfield Venture Fund, and the SPARK initiative in Holyoke.

Long-awaited and game-changing regional rail improvements are nearly completed, with passenger rail service on the Vermonter line now restored to Northampton and Greenfield, with a new station to be completed in Holyoke this year. Track improvements throughout the length of the line have dramatically increased train speeds and reduced trip times both north and south. In Springfield, the Union Station rehabilitation is well under way, with demolition of the baggage building completed and interior renovations begun. The work has been accelerated to one phase instead of two and should be completed in fall of 2016.

Significant accomplishments in the realm of education and talent development have occurred over the past year - the Davis Foundation helped to obtain federal funding for a major Preschool Development Expansion Grant, with Massachusetts as one of only 18 states winning the funding. Springfield will receive nearly \$4.6 million and Holyoke \$1.2 million to develop additional early childhood education facilities and programming. At the same time, UMass Amherst welcomed 300 students to its new satellite center in downtown Springfield for the 2014-15 school year, a very successful beginning to this new venture. Tremendous levels of collaboration between the regional employment boards and community colleges, with significant workforce training efforts under way tailored to meet the future needs of the region. The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center has awarded \$2.6 million in life science funding for western Massachusetts colleges and high schools (most in the Pioneer Valley), and state funding has been allocated to create a National Aeronautics Research, Development, and Training Center at Westover Air Reserve Base, with UMass as the lead institution.

There is much to be optimistic about this year in the Pioneer Valley region. However, efforts to improve must continue and will remain vigorous until prosperity is brought to all parts of the region and all of its residents.

Please note: an appendix to this year's CEDS includes comprehensive information and data about the region's demographics, geography, regional assets, employment, and education system and is available, along with this document, online at <http://www.pvpc.org/plans/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy-ceds>.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES 2014-2015

The New 2015 Plan for Progress

The 2015 CEDS update is based on progress towards goals as outlined in the new 2015 Plan for Progress, which presents a vision of:

A strong, innovative, engaging, and vibrant economy and quality of life that fosters prosperity and sustainability and is driven by collaborative leadership.

This vision is expressed through four major goal areas, each with its own set of strategies and tangible action steps to guide the Plan's implementation. In addition, six major new Decade Declarations lay out the top priorities for the region. The Pioneer Valley Economic Development District (EDD) provides a mechanism by which the strategies in the Plan for Progress can be successfully advanced from planning to implementation. All of the strategies will be periodically revised in order to meet the region's changing economic needs, conditions, and circumstances.

The goals and strategies of the Plan for Progress are described in the following sections. Detailed action steps are outlined, as well. The 2015 Plan for Progress and annual CEDS updates are available from the PVPC or online at www.pvpc.org.



Gateway City Arts, Holyoke, MA
Photo: Ed Cohen

New Decade Declarations

Based on region-wide feedback, the following are the most significant and pressing needs and opportunities to address in the next decade:

The Region's Key Opportunities

Over the next decade encompassing 2015 – 2025, the Pioneer Valley will steadfastly pursue its most promising economic opportunities in the following ways:

1) Leverage New Connections That Significantly Enhance the Region's Economic Competitiveness

Work in concert with government leaders and agencies at all levels, along with the region's business and civic sectors, to complete the reconstruction, reactivation and service expansions along the Pioneer Valley's principal north-south (Knowledge Corridor) and east-west (Inland Route) rail corridors to accommodate both passenger and freight traffic. Simultaneously tackle the remaining "last mile" phase required to build out western Massachusetts' new, "middle mile" high-speed broadband network, thereby allowing the Pioneer Valley to realize the full range of potential economic and job creation benefits while ensuring a favorable return on this substantial investment of public funds.

2) Lead the Commonwealth's Clean Energy Transformation While Moving the Region Toward a Balanced and Diversified Energy Portfolio

Maintain the Pioneer Valley's efforts to lead multifaceted efforts by the Commonwealth to significantly reduce our heavy reliance on fossil fuels and accelerate the region's transition to emerging clean energy sources, broadly employing energy conservation measures and technologies, and overall fostering the creation of a far more balanced, diversified, reliable and affordable energy supply portfolio to support the Pioneer Valley and its regional economy. More specifically, by 2025 strive to achieve parallel goals of: a) realizing over 600 million kWh of new clean energy generation coupled with a cut of 3.2 metric tons of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions emanating from Pioneer Valley sources, and b) growing our clean energy industry, which has approximately 500 establishments and 7,000 workers, as a region-specific initiative that is consistent with the most recent Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

3) Harness the Economic Development Potential of the New England Knowledge Corridor

Realize and tap the impressive and wide range of economic attributes and assets concentrated in the interstate New England Knowledge Corridor (NEKC) encompassing the Greater Springfield, Hartford and New Haven metropolitan areas, an economic region which boasts a population of nearly 3 million; a workforce of more than 1.25 million; 215,000 college students enrolled in 41 colleges and universities; and in excess of 64,000 businesses; thereby making the NEKC the 20th largest market in our nation. Correspondingly, utilize the NEKC with its combination of academic power, strategic location, high productivity workforce and innovative talent pool to elevate the NEKC's visibility, reputation and combined strength to participate and successfully compete in a global marketplace where critical mass, thought leadership, workforce talent and the ability to collaborate are now essential to achieving sustained economic progress.

The Region's Key Economic Challenges

Over the next decade encompassing 2015 – 2025, the Pioneer Valley will act to address its most pressing economic challenges by addressing:

1) Talent Pool and Pipeline Challenges

Pursue a broad array of policy reforms and aggressive program initiatives and interventions that work together to identify and implement actions that both retain and expand the Pioneer Valley's supply of educated, skilled workers by a target of +6% or the equivalent of 25,000 workers, while also striving to mitigate adverse impacts to the region's higher education, manufacturing, health care and technology clusters. Critical to this effort is the improvement of educational outcomes and graduation rates in the region's public school systems, particularly in the urban core's distressed cities.

2) Fragile Infrastructure Systems

Invest and leverage limited federal, state and local financial resources, as well as public-private partnerships where possible, in order to address and resolve an ever-expanding list of the region's critical infrastructure system needs and deficiencies (e.g. roadway, transit, bridge, rail, water and sewer, etc.). Simultaneously advocate for increased and multi-year infrastructure funding commitments by the federal and state governments that are at levels of investment commensurate with maintaining all forms of the Pioneer Valley public infrastructure in a state of good repair.

3) Retention and Growth of Existing Businesses

Proactively respond to the critical importance of small and mid-sized enterprises to the Pioneer Valley economy's strength, vitality and potential for long-term jobs growth by enhancing the system of business support services provided to them and developing new and more flexible sources of growth capital. Provide these services in a way that is highly visible, accessible, coordinated and aligned with the needs of those small and mid-sized firms that demonstrate the potential to innovate, create and grow. As part of this effort, enhance supply chain and vendor opportunities for existing Pioneer Valley businesses, with special attention to connections with new major employers in the region.

Plan for Progress Goals and Strategies

To achieve the Plan's vision and address its top challenges and opportunities, the Plan for Progress sets forth the following four major goals, each of which includes a set of detailed strategies, with short- and long-term action steps. Plan for Progress implementers will:

- 1) Develop and maintain a globally competitive and regionally engaged talent pool.**
- 2) Foster an environment where established, new, and growing businesses and organizations thrive.**
- 3) Implement and enhance the infrastructure that connects, sustains and ensures the safety and resiliency of the region.**
- 4) Conduct economic development activities in a regionally responsible manner, prioritizing collaboration and engagement.**

Goal #1: Develop and Maintain a Globally Competitive and Regionally Engaged Talent Pool

The 2015 Plan for Progress includes a primary focus on the most important factor confronting the Pioneer Valley economy, namely the talent, or human capital, that comprises the current and future workforce for our region. Workforce and talent issues today constitute the most important of all factors for both attracting and retaining businesses and jobs and, thus, are pivotal to the sustained economic success of metropolitan regions across the U.S. – including the Pioneer Valley and its larger, interstate region, the New England Knowledge Corridor. Thus, a significant emphasis will be placed on these efforts and on collaboration among the lead implementers. To this end, Knowledge Corridor leadership worked with the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts to develop detailed strategies and action steps for the interstate region, and the 2015 Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress aligns well with the framework that was developed for that bi-state effort. For more information on the Donahue Institute report, please see the *Knowledge Corridor Talent and Workforce Strategy* report at <http://www.pvpc.org/content/knowledge-corridor-talent-and-workforce-strategy>.

Plan for Progress implementers affirm the importance of a core talent development pipeline that provides an unbroken continuum of preparation for young people in our communities. This “core” pipeline includes pre-K programs, the existing public school system, vocational training, community colleges and four-year colleges. Additional workforce training initiatives that address changing workforce needs are part of the core as well. However, ultimately, a healthy, vibrant and successful core pipeline will mitigate the need for remedial measures at every level. At every stage now in the educational and talent pipeline, including students beginning community college and workers entering their first jobs, full readiness often requires additional instruction, tutoring or training. While remedial actions will be needed for the foreseeable future to meet current workforce needs, we anticipate a gradual reduction in this need as the core programs are strengthened and more and more resources are directed to them.

The strategies below are grouped into traditional educational time periods and systems, while always recognizing the linkages between these elements so that there is a continuum of preparation. There is a need to align each stage of education and training with the previous stage as well as with the programs, schools and workplaces that follow it. In order to accomplish this, it is critical for education and business interests to recognize their common mission. There is also a pressing need for greater engagement by parents, guidance counselors, and others whose responsibility it is to provide support and direction the region’s students. These individuals have a tremendous influence on young people’s perceived choices and long-term prospects.

Our ultimate goals in strengthening this core talent development pipeline are to improve the high school graduation rate, improve workforce readiness, and thus greatly reduce the need for remedial and supplemental tutoring and training at every level. In addition, we endeavor to increase the engagement of talented young workers in their communities and the region. These broad goals will be achieved through the following strategies (See the Donahue Institute report for additional details¹). Also please see the 2015 Plan for Progress for further details of the ten-year action steps.

¹ The *Knowledge Corridor Talent and Workforce Strategy* report is available at <http://www.pvpc.org/content/knowledge-corridor-talent-and-workforce-strategy>

Strategy #1: Strengthen Regional Engagement and Coordination in Talent Development Initiatives

Strategy #2: Make the Implementation of High Quality Early Education an Essential Element of the Region's Economic Development

Strategy #3: Improve K-12 High School and Vocational School Achievement and Graduation Rates

Strategy #4: Improve Community and Four-Year College Programs and Graduation Rates

Strategy #5: Enhance Career and Workforce Training

Implementation Team for Goal #1:

Regional Employment Boards*

Community Colleges (STCC, HCC and GCC)*

Major Regional Employers

Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation

Institutions of Higher Education

K-12 Superintendents

Leadership Pioneer Valley

**Potential lead implementer*

Selected progress on this goal area during 2014-15 includes:

- The Hampden Regional Employment Board expressed interest in serving as lead implementer on this goal area. The PVPC and other partners will pursue this and develop an agreement and plan of action with them.
- The Davis Foundation helped to obtain federal funding for a Preschool Development Expansion Grant. Massachusetts was one of 18 states winning this funding. Springfield will receive nearly \$4.6 million and Holyoke \$1.2 million to develop additional early childhood education facilities and programming.
- UMass Amherst welcomed 300 students to its new satellite center in downtown Springfield in the fall of 2014.
- State funding has been allocated to create a National Aeronautics Research, Development, and Training Center at Westover Air Reserve Base, with UMass as the lead institution.

Specific objectives for 2015-16 include:

- Focus on "Top Three" Decade Declaration and economic challenge of the talent pool and pipeline. Work together with lead implementers to identify and implement actions that retain and expand the region's supply of educated, skilled workers.
- Work to improve educational outcomes and graduation rates in the region's public school systems, particularly in the urban core's distressed cities.
- Fund and initiate construction of Holyoke Community College's Center for Hospitality and Culinary Excellence in Holyoke's Innovation District.

Goal #2: Foster an Environment Where Established, New, and Growing Businesses and Organizations Thrive

The number of businesses in the Pioneer Valley continues to grow – consisting predominantly of small enterprises of less than 50 employees – and despite the “Great Recession” of 2008-09, some industries have been expanding, developing new products and services, and hiring more employees. An enhanced entrepreneurial ecosystem is coalescing, with new and expanded business mentorship programs, co-working spaces, innovation centers, and incubators. This goal of the Plan for Progress focuses on providing the essential ingredients for businesses of all sizes to thrive, from the sole proprietor to the largest corporations, with special emphasis on increasing coordination and outreach to entrepreneurs of all ethnicities. The Plan also strongly encourages impact investments into companies, organizations and funds with the intention to generate measurable social, environmental and employment impact as well as strong financial return.

These results cannot be achieved without also bolstering the strength of the urban, suburban and downtown employment centers in communities throughout the Pioneer Valley. In particular, as we look ahead, the Pioneer Valley must increasingly focus on its urban core area comprised of three of the region’s four state-designated “Gateway Cities,” namely Springfield, Holyoke, and Chicopee. The urban core is a crucial part of our region’s economy since it is a primary source of the Pioneer Valley’s business capital, labor force, work sites and buildings, mobility assets, power and communications infrastructure, innovation capability and jobs. Other urban areas, including Northampton, Easthampton, Greenfield and the fourth Gateway City of Westfield, must also be strengthened so that all parts of the region have strong employment and commercial centers. Finally, we must leverage the strength of the business ecosystem in other parts of the state, particularly the Greater Boston area, by making lasting connections for providers and businesses; these established networks are crucial to the growth of this region.

The following strategies will address these needs:

Strategy #1: Retain, Attract, and Grow Businesses and Priority Clusters

Strategy #2: Advocate Efficient Regulatory Processes at All Levels of Government

Strategy #3: Market Our Region

Implementation Team for Goal #2:

EDC of Western MA*

New England Knowledge Corridor Partnership

Economic Development Partners

Chambers of Commerce

Regional Tourism Councils

MA Office of Business Development

MA Small Business Development Center

Business Growth Center at Springfield Technology Park

Common Capital

**Potential lead implementer*

Selected progress on this goal area includes:

10 ❖ Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Economic Development District

- Two major companies solidified their investments in the region this year: Changchun Railway Company and MGM Resorts International. The combined investment is \$860 million and will provide over 3,000 new jobs.
- Support for entrepreneurship, particularly in the urban core, has increased significantly, with the growth of the Valley Venture Mentors program, expansion of services at the Business Growth Center at Springfield Technology Park, the new MassMutual Springfield Venture Fund, and the SPARK initiative in Holyoke.

Specific objectives for 2015-16 include:

- Focus on “Top Three” Decade Declaration and economic challenge of supporting existing small and mid-sized enterprises, particularly working to enhance the supply chain and vendor opportunities.
- Increase focus on social entrepreneurship in area-wide entrepreneurial support programs.
- Support and align with efforts of the New England Knowledge Corridor Partnership to proactively market the Knowledge Corridor regionally, including celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2015.

Goal #3: Implement and Enhance the Infrastructure that Connects, Sustains and Ensures the Safety and Resiliency of the Region and its Economy

Without a modern, high quality network of infrastructure, a region cannot sustain economic activity, retain its students and workers, or attract visitors, tourists and investment. The Pioneer Valley's infrastructure includes its transportation, broadband and energy networks; public health and safety resources; housing supply; and natural resources including water supplies, agricultural land and open space/recreational areas. Both local and regional efforts are necessary to ensure consistency, resiliency, and sufficient redundancy to withstand disruptions. The following strategies are meant to achieve these goals:

Strategy #1: Enhance High-Tech and Conventional Infrastructure

Strategy #2: Increase Use of Clean Energy to Reduce Business Costs and Improve the Environment

Strategy #3: Enhance Regional Approaches to Public Safety, Public Health and Disaster Resilience

Strategy #4: Develop an Array of Housing Options that Foster Economic Competitiveness

Strategy #5: Revitalize and Protect the Connecticut River and its Watershed

Implementation Team for Goal #3:

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission*

Franklin Regional Council of Governments*

Connecticut River Clean-up Committee

WMA Connect/MBI

Valley Development Council

Pioneer Valley Regional Housing Advisory Committee

**Potential lead implementer*

Progress on this goal area includes:

- Passenger rail service on the Vermonter line has been restored to Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield, with significant speed increases. Trip times both north and south from Springfield have been decreased due to track improvements throughout the length of the line.
- Union Station rehabilitation is well under way, with demolition of the baggage building completed and interior renovations begun. The work has been accelerated to one phase instead of two and should be completed in fall of 2016.

Specific objectives for 2015-16 include:

- Focus on “Top Three” economic opportunity to expand rail access; in particular, pursue the implementation of expanded shuttle runs along the Amtrak Vermonter corridor in Massachusetts to provide daily commuter service between Springfield and Greenfield and more frequent service to other destinations linked to the Vermonter line, including New York City and Washington, D.C.
- In addition to the above efforts, continue feasibility analysis and advocacy for expanded high-speed passenger rail from Springfield to Boston (the “inland route”).
- Focus on “Top Three” economic challenge of increasing the region’s energy distribution capacity for a variety of energy sources.
- Address “Top Three” economic opportunity of a completed broadband network by building out the last mile of broadband through public-private partnerships.
- Support and advocate for expanded service at Bradley International Airport, including direct flights to Europe.
- Complete I-91 Viaduct Alternatives Study.

Goal #4: Conduct Economic Development Activities in a Regionally Responsible Manner, Prioritizing Collaboration and Engagement

The new Plan for Progress celebrates our pioneering history of innovation, social responsibility, freedom and collaboration. However, there remain economic disparities in the region (as well as across the state) which must be addressed if the region is to fully embrace success and long-term prosperity. The recent success of the Leadership Pioneer Valley program is an indication of the need and desire to sustain and improve broad collaboration and develop a succession strategy for regional leadership. This leadership must engage with those it serves on a regular basis to ensure that needs are being met. Furthermore, responsible economic development includes a regular and honest evaluation of progress through measurable benchmarks, intended to guide us as well as demonstrate progress to those outside our region.

Strategies to address these issues include:

Strategy #1: Foster Equity and Economic Opportunity through Public Policy Decisions, Educational Opportunities and Advocacy

Strategy #2: Engage, Convene and Collaborate with Diverse Groups to Maximize Regional Success

Implementation Team for Goal #4:

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission*
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation
Community Foundation of Western MA
Leadership Pioneer Valley
**Potential Lead Implementer*

Selected progress on this goal area includes:

- Leadership Pioneer Valley, the region's new leadership program, will graduate its fourth class this June 2015. The program has expanded to offer Leadership 2.0, workshops and seminars available to alumni and the general public.
- For the development of the 2015 Plan for Progress, a broad range of participants was sought to provide feedback on the four goals in the form of feedback groups, focus groups and Coordinating Council meetings.

Specific objectives for 2015-16 include:

- Focus on "Top Three" Decade Declaration and economic challenge of enhancing the system of business support services, particularly to traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Promote the Plan for Progress and engage lead implementers and partners in defining action plans.
- Review and revise the accountability measures and dashboard metrics for the Plan for Progress.
- Conduct a City2City Pioneer Valley trip to learn about best practices in other regions.

2015 CEDS Projects

The Project Proposal Process

On an annual basis, the Pioneer Valley Economic Development District that has been designated by the U.S. Economic Development Administration solicits proposals from the region for projects that may seek funding under the EDA's Public Works Economic Development Program. The region has been successful in prior years in receiving substantial EDA funding awards for projects that create jobs and stimulate private investment in distressed communities of the Pioneer Valley region. Among these awards and accomplishments are the following:

- In 2014, the City of Springfield was awarded \$1.3 million for the Springfield Job Creation/Technical Training Facility, an 11,400-square-foot facility that will provide space to conduct work skills training in the precision manufacturing and construction trades industry.
- In 2011, the Holyoke Gas & Electric Company was awarded \$2.1 million for hydroelectric infrastructure improvements that will support the development of the Holyoke Innovation District anchored by the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center.
- In 2011, EDA awarded the Caring Health Center in Springfield \$500,000 for a new community health center in downtown Springfield, in renovated historic buildings.
- In 2010, the Western Massachusetts Enterprise Fund was awarded \$500,000 from the EDA towards a Western Massachusetts Revolving Loan Fund.
- In 2008, EDA awarded the City of Northampton and MassDevelopment \$750,000 for the Village at Hospital Hill Business Park, a redevelopment of a former state hospital site.
- In 2006, EDA awarded the City of Springfield \$1 million for the Memorial Industrial Park II project adjacent to the Smith and Wesson facilities.
- Holyoke Health Center and Medical Mall was awarded a \$1 million grant by EDA in August 2002 to complete Phase II of the project.
- STCC received the EDA's National Award for Excellence in Urban Economic Development in 2001.
- The Latino Professional Office Center in Holyoke was awarded \$700,000 in 1999.
- STCC's Springfield Enterprise Center received close to \$1 million in 1999.

Summary of Project Proposals

This year, proposals were submitted from four Pioneer Valley communities – Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, and Ludlow – for inclusion in the 2015 CEDS. After a review of the projects, 10 proposed projects have been included on the 2015 CEDS listing. Several of the projects are located in communities that meet EDA Distress Criteria, and several may meet EDA eligibility criteria due to their potential for providing jobs to residents of distressed communities. All 10 projects are shown in Table 1. Projects included in this list may be applying for EDA Public Works funding during the upcoming year.

Table 1: Summary of EDA Public Works Project Proposals for 2015 CEDS Annual Update

Community	Proposed Project Title	Project Type	2014 Project Re-Submittal?	EDA Funding Needed in 2015-16?	Total Est. Project Cost	Local \$ Match in Place?	# Perm. Jobs Created
Springfield	Union Station Regional Intermodal Transportation Center	Redevelopment as regional transportation facility w/office and commercial space	Yes	Yes	\$84 million	Yes	500-1,000
Springfield	Gunn Block Redevelopment	Redevelopment of a vacant historic building	Yes	TBD	\$2.8 million	Yes	15-20
Springfield	Mason Square Supermarket	Development of a full-line grocery store in an urban food desert	Yes	TBD	\$21 million	Yes	65
Springfield	Lower Maple Business Park	Rehabilitation of 3 historic buildings for commercial/office uses	No	TBD	\$3 million	Yes	Up to 20
Springfield	Springfield Innovation Center	Rehabilitation of 2 historic buildings into business accelerator and other commercial uses	No	TBD	\$2.7 million	Yes	20
Holyoke	Center for Hospitality and Culinary Excellence	Redevelopment of mill building in Holyoke Innovation District for workforce development.	No	Yes	\$3.9 million	Yes	4
Holyoke	Victory Theater	Redevelopment of historic theater in downtown	Yes	TBD	TBD	No	To be determined
Ludlow	Riverside Drive at Ludlow Mills	Infrastructure to access mixed use development	Yes	Yes	\$5.9 million	Yes	50
Chicopee	Westover Air Park South	Infrastructure improvements for 88-acre industrial park	No	To be determined	\$73.5 million	No	50

REGIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Summary

In order to provide a highly objective, measurable method of accountability, the Plan for Progress has a quantitative system to complement the qualitative assessments discussed above. The system uses a series of data-based benchmarks to measure progress toward goals of each of the strategies. Called the “Plan for Progress Performance Indicators,” the system is public and online at www.stateofthepioneervalley.org. It does not attempt to evaluate current year statistics in isolation (e.g. judging whether a specific unemployment rate is “good” or “bad”), but rather looks at changes over time and the general trend, indicating whether a situation is improving or not (e.g. observing whether the unemployment rate is increasing or decreasing). The Plan for Progress Performance Indicators are a set of quantitative benchmarks that assist in identifying economic trends and measure progress towards the Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress Strategic Goals and Action Steps.



Rating Scale

Each indicator was assigned a rating from 1 to 3, with a 1 assigned for a negative trend, 2 for a neutral trend, and 3 for a positive trend. Once benchmark data was collected for the most recent year available, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) staff calculated percentage changes from one year prior (or the most recent previous year possible if prior year data is not available). An improvement of at least one percent is considered a positive trend, while a decline of at least one percent is considered a negative trend. Between one percent improvement and a one percent decline is considered a neutral trend.

Regional Geography

Because the Plan for Progress was completed in conjunction with our neighbors to the north in Franklin County, ratings for each indicator represent the current trend in the given indicator for the greater Pioneer Valley which includes Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties.

This evaluation section includes a chart of all performance indicators with the current and previous data as well as the percent change in data and the rating that this change warranted. Following this chart is a list of all the performance indicators organized by strategy grouping with a summary of the data and data source for each indicator.

PIONEER VALLEY PLAN FOR PROGRESS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**PIONEER VALLEY (3 counties)**

Indicator	Current Data	Year	Prior Data	Year	Change	Rating
Strengthen and Expand the Region's Economic Base						2.5
The Annual Unemployment Rate	7.3%	2013	7.5%	2012	-0.2%	2.0
The Total Number of Jobs (Monthly average)	284,766	2013	282,885	2012	0.7%	2.0
The Average Weekly Wage	\$839	2013	\$823	2012	1.9%	3.0
Growth of the Private Sector Payroll	\$9,747,183,929	2013	\$9,539,762,395	2012	2.2%	3.0
Total Number and Net Annual Change in the Number of Business Establishments	22,897	2013	22,205	2012	3.1%	3.0
Manufacturing as a Percent of All Employment by Number of Establishments	3.5%	2013	3.7%	2012	-0.2%	2.0
Foster Means of Regional Competitiveness						1.0
Number of Pre-Permitted Sites or Buildings Within the Region that are ready for Development	N/A	2013	18	2012	-	-
Number of Shovel Ready Sites or Buildings Within the Region that are ready for Development	N/A	2013	10	2012	-	-
Annual Dollar Value of Transportation Improvement Projects Advertised for Bid that Rely on Federal and/or State Financial Resources	\$47,501,021	2013	\$94,429,067	2012	-49.7%	1.0
Broadband Indicators	N/A	2013	N/A	2012	-	-
Supply the Region with an Educated, Skilled and Adequately Sized Pool of Workers						1.9
Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Above on MCAS Reading Test (3rd grade)	48.1%	2013	54.6%	2012	-6.5%	1.0
Percent of Students Passing MCAS Math Test (Grade 10)	88.7%	2013	89.0%	2012	-0.3%	2.0
Percent of Students Passing MCAS English Test (Grade 10)	97.0%	2013	96.3%	2012	0.7%	2.0
The Dropout Rate of High School Students (Grades 9 through 12)	3.4%	2013	4.1%	2012	-0.7%	2.0
Educational Attainment of the Workforce 25 or older as Measured by the Percentage of High School Graduates	87.3%	2013	87.8%	2012	-0.5%	2.0
Educational Attainment of the Workforce 25 or older as Measured by the Percentage of College Graduates	30.2%	2013	30.6%	2012	-0.4%	2.0
The Percent of Older Workers (55 to 75 years old) Who Remain Engaged in the Workforce	54.0%	2013	54.1%	2012	0.1%	2.0
The Median Age of The Region's Workforce Encompassing Ages 16 to 64	40.6	2013	40.9	2012	-0.8%	2.0
Economic Enhancements Fostering The Region's Business Climate and Prospects for Sustainable Economic Growth						1.9
The Total Number of Combined Sewer Over Flow (CSO) Sites on the Lower Connecticut River and Tributaries	N/A	2013	67	2012	-	-
The Amount of Non-School Local Aid Per Capita Received by the Region's Cities and Towns	\$169	2013	\$158	2012	7.4%	3.0
The Rate of Property and Violent Crimes Reported per 100 Persons	3.2	2013	3.0	2012	5.9%	1.0
The Percentage of Housing Units that are Owner-Occupied	64.8%	2013	64.1%	2012	0.7%	2.0
Percentage of Owners with Mortgages Paying more than 30% of their Income on Selected Monthly Owner Costs	31.8%	2013	31.4%	2012	0.4%	2.0
Percent of Renters paying more than 30% of their income on rent	56.0%	2013	53.6%	2012	2.5%	1.0
The Median Sale Price of a Single Family Home	\$190,750	2013	\$177,095	2012	7.7%	3.0
Building Permits Issued for New Residential Construction	544	2013	561	2012	-3.0%	1.0

Rating: **1** = negative trend, **2** = neutral trend, **3** = positive trend

* sites listed at Westmass Development Corporation only

Data sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics; MA Department of Labor and Workforce Development; MA Department of Education; Department of Revenue; Pioneer Valley Connect; The Warren Group; PVPC

Summary of Plan for Progress Performance Indicators by Strategy Grouping

Following are summaries of each performance indicator currently being measured through this accountability system. Performance indicators are organized by strategy groupings and each summary includes a brief description of what is being measured, a description of what the data is showing for the most recent year(s), as well as the data source for that indicator. *Please note: For 2015, the strategy groupings remain unchanged although the CEDS strategy groups have changed. A full re-evaluation of the groupings will take place over the next year.*

Strategy Grouping I: Strengthen & Expand the Region's Economic Base

Annual Unemployment Rate

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Description:

Percent Change	Rating
-0.2%	2

The annual unemployment rate is calculated as the percent of all people in the labor force who are not currently employed. Between 2012 and 2013, the unemployment rate for the Pioneer Valley declined slightly from 7.5 to 7.3. This trend remained consistent for each of the three Counties of the Pioneer Valley. Hampden County saw the largest decrease in unemployment at -1.7%, from 8.5% to 6.8%. Franklin County (6.3% to 5.6%) and Hampshire County (5.6% to 5.2%) experienced more modest decreases of 0.7 and 0.4 percent, respectively.

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Labor Force and Unemployment Data

Total Number of Jobs

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Description:

Percent Change	Rating
0.7%	2

The total number of jobs includes all types of company ownership and all industries, as derived from reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment compensation laws, both state and federal. The number of jobs in the Pioneer Valley remained fairly stable throughout the region, increasing just slightly from 2012 to 2013, from 282,885 to 284,766 (a 0.7% change). Change was most positive in Hampden County where jobs increased 1.1%, while Hampshire and Franklin Counties experienced very slight decreases of 0.3% and 0.2% respectively.

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment and Wage (ES-202) data

Average Wage Earned by Workers

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
1.9%	3

Description:

The average wage earned by workers includes employees in all types of company ownership and all industries, as derived from reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment compensation laws, both state and federal. The average weekly wage earned by workers in the Pioneer Valley increased by 1.9% percent, rising from \$823 to \$839. Franklin County had the largest percent increase of 3.3%, while Hampden County increased by 2.1% and Hampshire County saw a modest increase of 0.6%, from \$790 in 2012 to \$795 in 2013.

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment and Wage (ES-202) data

Growth of the Private Sector Payroll

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
2.2%	3

Description:

The private sector payroll includes the total of all wages paid from companies with private ownership for all industries, as derived from reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment compensation laws, both state and federal. The private sector payroll for the Pioneer Valley increased from \$9,539,762,395 in 2012 to \$9,747,183,929 in 2013, an increase of 2.2 percent. Franklin and Hampden Counties experienced positive trends, with gains of 3.2% and 3% respectively, while Hampshire County experienced a slight loss –of 1.6%.

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment and Wage (ES-202) data

Total Number of Business Establishments

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
3.1%	3

Description:

The total number of business establishments includes businesses with all types of company ownership and all industries, as derived from reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment compensation laws, both state and federal. In the Pioneer Valley, the total number of business establishments increased 3.1% from 22,205 in 2012 to 22,897 in 2013. This trend remained consistent for each of the three Counties in the Pioneer Valley. The largest increase in the number of establishments was in Hampden County (by 3.9%), followed by Franklin County (1.7%) and Hampshire County (1.2%).

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment and Wage (ES-202) data

Manufacturing as a Percent of All Employment by Number of Establishments

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.2%	2

Description:

This measure was calculated by dividing the total number of establishments in the manufacturing sector by the total number of establishments. These numbers include companies with all types of ownership, as derived from reports filed by all employers subject to unemployment compensation laws, both state and federal. Overall, manufacturing remained fairly stable as a percentage of all establishments in the Pioneer Valley, decreasing from 3.7% in 2012 to 3.5% in 2013. The trend was consistent throughout the region, with manufacturing remaining relatively stable throughout all three county areas. Hampden (-0.3%), Hampshire (-0.2%) saw slight decreases while Franklin County experienced the least change (-0.1%).

Data Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development's Employment and Wage (ES-202) data

Strategy Grouping II: Foster Means of Regional Competitiveness**Number of Pre-Permitted & Shovel-Ready Sites or Buildings within the Region that are ready for Development**

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Pre-Permitted Sites

Percent Change	Rating
100%	1

Shovel-Ready Sites

Percent Change	Rating
150%	3

Description:

Pre-permitting and shovel-ready designations are made to increase the expediency of development on properties by reducing the amount of work necessary between the purchase of land and the start of construction. Sites with pre-permitting need only the final site plan review and permitting related to environmental preservation (if applicable). This process can take up to 90 days to complete. Sites are designated shovel-ready after all permits have been acquired and a complete build out analysis has been completed. The only steps still necessary are acquiring a building permit and making minor amendments to prior permits if necessary. This process takes up to 30 days.

There was a 100% increase in the number of sites that were pre-permitted and a simultaneous 150% increase in the number of shovel ready projects in the Pioneer Valley between 2011 and 2012. Of the three Counties in the Pioneer Valley, the increases in pre-permitted sites occurred entirely in Hampden County. Additionally, only Hampden County contained shovel ready sites with a total of 10 sites ready for development.

Data Source: WestMass Development Corporation

Annual Dollar Value of Transportation Improvement Projects Advertised for Bid that Rely on Federal and/or State Financial Resources

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-49.7%	1

Description:

Transportation Improvement Projects included in this value are highway improvement projects identified through the Transportation Improvement Program report by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and advertised by Mass Highway. Between 2012 and 2013, the total value of transportation improvement projects advertised for the Pioneer Valley decreased from \$94,429,067 to \$47,501,021, representing a -49.7% change. This substantial decrease was consistent throughout the region. Franklin County saw the greatest decrease at -81.9%, Hampden County a -46.4% decrease, while Hampshire County saw a -27.6% decrease.

Data Source: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Access to High Speed Internet Service for Business & Residents

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
0.0%	2

Description:

To measure high speed internet access, municipalities are broken down into three levels of available service which are those where 10% or less of households have broadband access, towns and cities where 11%-50% of households have broadband access, and those places where greater than 50% of households have broadband access. Progress is measured by the number of municipalities that increased their access enough to be categorized at least one level higher. Measurements for the previous years of 2007 and 2008 were based on estimates made by WesternMA Connect with the data available at that time. As of 2009, the accuracy of broadband access data has improved through survey and service modeling work conducted by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI). The MBI will continue to monitor the status of broadband access over the next five years. Level of access did not change in the Pioneer Valley between 2008 and 2009.

Data Source: Western MA Connect Inc. and Massachusetts Broadband Institute

Strategy Grouping III: Supply the Region with an Educated, Skilled, and Adequately Sized Pool of Workers**Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Above on MCAS Third Grade English Language (Reading) Test**

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-6.5%	1

Description:

The percent of students scoring proficient or above on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Third Grade English Language test includes all students scoring "Proficient" or "Above Proficient," and was calculated by dividing the percent of students who received these scores on the test by the total number of students in the region who took the test. Between 2012 and 2013 the Pioneer Valley saw a decrease of 6.5% in students who scored proficient or above on the MCAS third grade English language test. The three Counties followed the trend with Hampden County decreasing by 5.4%, Hampshire County by 7.9% and Franklin County seeing the largest decrease in proficiency of 8.7 percent.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Education

Percent of Students Passing the MCAS Tenth Grade Math Test

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.3%	2

Description:

The percent of students passing the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tenth grade math test was calculated by dividing the percent of students who passed the test by the total number of students in the region who took the test. Overall, between 2012 and 2013, the Pioneer Valley remained relatively stable, with a slight decrease of 0.3% (from 89.0% to 88.7%) in the number of students who passed the MCAS tenth grade math test. Hampshire and Franklin Counties both experienced increases (0.6% and 3.0%, respectively, while Hampden County had a decrease, with 0.9% fewer students passing the MCAS tenth grade math test.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Education

Percent of Students Passing the MCAS Tenth Grade English Test

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
0.7%	2

Description:

The percent of students passing the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tenth grade English test was calculated by dividing the percent of students who passed the test by the total number of students in the region who took the test. Overall, between 2012 and 2013, the Pioneer Valley saw a slight increase of 0.7% (from 96.3% to 97.0%) in the number of students who passed the MCAS English test. Franklin County saw the largest increase in the percentage of students passing the test (2.0%), Hampden County experienced a slight increase of 0.7%, while Hampshire County saw a slight decrease of 0.1%.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Education

Dropout Rate of High school Students

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.7%	2

Description:

Dropout rates are the percentage of all 9th through 12th grade students who drop out of high school in a single year (the annual dropout rate). The Pioneer Valley saw a decrease in the dropout rate between 2012 and 2013; from 4.1 percent to 3.4. Franklin County increased by 0.5 percent, while Hampden and Hampshire Counties experienced decreases of 0.9 and 0.4 percent, respectively.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Education

Educational Attainment of the Workforce 25 or older as Measured by the Percentage of High School Graduates

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.5%	2

Description:

Educational attainment is calculated by determining the percentage of high school graduates above the age of 25 who have a high school diploma, including those who have attained more advanced degrees (Associate's, Bachelor's, Graduate, or Professional). Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of the Pioneer Valley workforce who are high school graduates decreased just slightly (0.5%) from 87.8% to 87.3%. While Hampden and Hampshire Counties remained fairly stable, there was a 3% drop in Franklin County.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

Educational Attainment of the Workforce 25 or older as Measured by the Percentage of College Graduates

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.4%	2

Description:

Educational attainment is calculated by determining the percentage of the population above the age of 25 who have at least an Associate's degree, including those who have attained more advanced degrees (Bachelor's, Graduate or Professional). Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of the Pioneer Valley workforce who are college graduates also remained stable, decreasing just 0.4% from 30.6 to 30.2 percent. Hampden County's trend reflected the region with a decrease of 0.5% while Hampshire County experienced a 1.2%. At the same time, Franklin County experienced an increase of 2.0 percent.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

The Percent of Older Workers (55 to 75 years old) Who Remain Engaged in the Workforce

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.1%	2

Description:

The percent of older workers who remain engaged in the workforce is calculated by dividing the number of people between the ages 55 to 75 years old who are in the labor force by the total number of people between the ages of 55 to 75 years old. Between 2012 and 2013, the percent of older workers who remain engaged in the workforce in the Pioneer Valley remained quite stable, decreasing only slightly from 54.1 %to 54.0%. Trends varied across the region. While Franklin County saw an increase of 3.2%, Hampshire County decreased by 1.4% and Hampden County remained stable, decreasing just 0.3 percent.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

The Median Age of the Region's Workforce Encompassing Ages 16 to 64

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-0.7%	2

Description:

The median age of the regions workforce is the middle age of all people engaged in the labor force between the ages of 16-64 years old. In the Pioneer Valley, the median age of the workforce declined by 0.8% between 2012 and 2013, from 40.9 to 40.6 years old. Each county's median worker age decreased. Hampshire County decreased by 1.1%, while Hampden and Franklin Counties saw decreases of 0.7% and 0.4%, respectively.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

Strategy Grouping IV: Foster the Region's Business Climate and Prospects for Sustainable Growth**Total Number of Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Sites on the Lower Connecticut River and Tributaries**

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-4.3%	3

Description:

As quoted from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, "Combined sewer overflows, or CSOs, were built as part of sewer collection systems that were designed to carry both sewage and storm water in the same pipe. When there is not a lot of storm water, this mix is transported to a wastewater treatment plant where it is processed. However, after heavy rainfall or snowmelt, storm water and sewage overload the system. Without CSOs, this mix would back up into homes, businesses, and public streets. Combined sewer systems have regulator structures that allow overloaded systems to discharge into rivers, lakes and coastal areas subjecting them to higher pollutant loads. This can compromise a water body's uses and lead to water quality violations in the receiving waters." Throughout the Pioneer Valley, the total number of CSO sites on the Connecticut River has decreased* from 70 to 69 between 2011 and 2012, representing 4.3% reduction. As of 2012, Hampshire County has eliminated its remaining CSOs. Franklin County still contains three CSOs, all in Montague, while since 2011; Hampden County has decreased from 66 to 64 as of 2012.

*Due to adjustments in how CSOs are measured, the precise figures from prior reports may not be fully consistent with updated data. However, the overall trend is quite clear – there has been a consistent reduction in Pioneer Valley CSOs each time they have been officially measured.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Amount of Non-School Local Aid Per Capita Received by the Region's Cities and Towns

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
7.4%	3

Description:

The amount of non-school local aid includes all aid that a town receives for purposes other than education. This includes the following sources: Unrestricted General Government Aid, Local Share of Racing Taxes, Regional Public Libraries, Police Career Incentive, Urban Revitalization, Veteran's Benefits, Exemptions for Veterans, Blind and Surviving Spouses, Exemptions for the Elderly, State Owned Land, and Public Libraries. In the Pioneer Valley, the per-capita non-local school aid increased 7.4% between 2012 and 2013. All three Counties saw increases with Hampden and Hampshire Counties increasing 7.4 and 7.3 percent, respectively, and Franklin County seeing the largest increase of 8.3 percent.

Data Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Cherry Sheets

Rate of Property and Violent Crimes Reported

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
5.9%	1

Description:

Property and violent crimes consist of the following crimes: Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny-Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft and Arson. The rate of property and violent crimes reported in the Pioneer Valley increased between 2012 and 2013 from 3.0 to 3.2 crimes per 100 people. Trends varied across the three Counties with Franklin County experiencing the largest increase (54.3%)* and Hampden County experiencing a slight increase of 2.7% while Hampshire County had a 3.2% decrease in the rate reported. However, this aggregate data may be distorted by reporting variations by community from year to year.*

*Note: FBI data is only available for communities that report their statistics for all 12 months of a calendar year and those communities can vary from year to year. Thus, some of the changes in trend may be due to which community data is missing each year. In 2013, the FBI had no recorded data for the following:

Franklin County- Ashfield, Greenfield, Northfield, Shelburne
 Hampden County - Blandford
 Hampshire County - Hadley, Chesterfield
 Holyoke Community College

Data Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

Percentage of Housing Units that are Owner-Occupied

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
0.7%	2

Description:

Percentage of Housing Units that are Owner-Occupied includes all types of housing units and is calculated by dividing the number of owner-occupied housing units by the total number of housing units in the region. Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of housing units in the Pioneer Valley that were owner-occupied was fairly stable, increasing slightly by 0.7% (from 64.1% to 64.8%). Hampshire and Franklin Counties saw increases of 1.8% and 4.3%, respectively while Hampden County saw a 1.8% decrease.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey 1 year estimates

Percentage of Owners with Mortgages Paying more than 30% of Their Income on Selected Monthly Owner Costs

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
0.4%	2

Description:

According to many government agencies, people who pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs are considered to be housing cost burdened. The U.S. Census Bureau provides estimates on this statistic based on a survey of a sample of the population with the American Community Survey. Data for this indicator includes all home owners who have mortgages. Monthly owner costs include payment for mortgages, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees. Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of home owners in the Pioneer Valley who were housing cost burdened remained stable, increasing slightly from 31.4 to 31.8 percent. This increase in the percentage of home owners who were housing cost burdened reflected Hampden and Franklin Counties, with Hampden County showing the largest increase of 3.3%, followed by Franklin County showing an increase of 3.1 percent. Meanwhile, housing cost burden decreased by 1.7% in Hampshire County.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

Percentage of Renters Paying more than 30% of Their Income on Rent

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
2.5%	1

Description:

According to many government agencies, people who pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs are considered to be housing cost burdened. The U.S. Census Bureau provides estimates on this statistic based on a survey of a sample of the population with the American Community Survey. Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of renters in the Pioneer Valley who were housing cost burdened increased 2.5% from 53.6 to 56.0 percent. This trend of increased housing cost burden varied among the three counties, with Franklin County experiencing an increase of 13.9%, Hampshire County experiencing an increase of 5.6%, while Hampden County experienced a decrease of 3.6 percent.

Data Source: United States Census Bureau 2012 and 2013 American Community Survey, 1 Year Estimates

Median Sale Price of a Single Family Home

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
7.7%	3

Description:

Single family home sales include all transfers over \$1,000 classified by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue with a 101 use code. Between 2012 and 2013, the median sale price of a single family home in the Pioneer Valley increased from \$177,095 to \$190,750. All three counties saw increases with Hampden and Franklin Counties rising 8.2% and 8.8%, respectively, while Hampshire County saw an increase of 4.3 percent. This stabilizing trend in home sale prices across the Pioneer Valley suggests that, at least in some areas, the housing market crash of the past couple of years is continuing to turn around in the region.

Data Source: The Warren Group, Realtor Association of the Pioneer Valley

Building Permits Issued for New Residential Construction

Pioneer Valley Indicator Trend

Percent Change	Rating
-3.0%	1

Description:

Between 2012 and 2013, the number of building permits issued for new residential construction in the Pioneer Valley saw a decrease of 3.0 percent, from 561 permits in 2012 to 544 in 2013. Trends varied significantly throughout the region with significant increases in Hampshire and Franklin Counties (10.1% and 9.6%, respectively) and a sharp decrease of 12.1% in Hampden County from (330 to 290).

Data Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

APPENDIX A:

PLAN FOR PROGRESS COORDINATING COUNCIL MEMBERS

Plan for Progress Coordinating Council Membership May 2015

Kathleen Anderson, *President, Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce*
Teri Anderson, *Consultant*
Suzanne Beck, *Executive Director, Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce*
Ellen Bembien, *President, T2 Foundation*
Timothy Brennan, *Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission*
Patricia Crosby, *Executive Director, Franklin/Hampshire Regional Employment Board*
Dianne Fuller Doherty, *Regional Director, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center*
Kathleen Dowd, *Director, Human Service Forum, Inc.*
Linda Dunlavy, *Executive Director, Franklin Regional Council of Governments*
Martha Field, Ph.D., *Professor, Economics & Business, Greenfield Community College*
Brooks Fitch, *Consultant*
John Gallup
Wanda Givens, *Director, Mason Square Health Task Force*
Nicole Griffin, *Griffin Staffing Network*
Jeffrey Hayden, *Vice President, Business and Community Services, Holyoke Community College*
Daniel Hodge, *Director of Economic and Public Policy Research, UMass Donahue Institute*
Samalid Hogan, *Senior Project Manager and Brownfields Coordinator, Office of Planning & Economic Development, City of Springfield*
David Howland, *Regional Engineer, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection*
Geoff Little, *Senior Account Representative, Training and Workforce Options (TWO)*
Larry Martin, *Business Services and Projects Manager, Regional Employment Board of Hampden County*
Terence Masterson, *Economic Development Director, City of Northampton*
William Messner, Ph.D., *President, Holyoke Community College*
Marla Michel, *Director, Regional Engagement, UMass/Amherst*
Marikate Murren, *Director of Training and Workforce Development, MGM Springfield*
Russell Peotter, *General Manager, WGBY - 57*
Katherine Putnam, *President, Package Machinery Company, Inc.*
Robert Reckman, *Northampton Chamber of Commerce and Fairgrounds Redevelopment Corporation*
James Shriver, *Chairman, Chamber Energy Coalition, Inc.*
Christopher Sikes, *Chief Executive Officer, Common Capital*
Richard Sullivan, *President/CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts*
Michael Suzor, *Assistant to the President, Springfield Technical Community College*
Oreste Varela, *Springfield Branch Manager, U.S. Small Business Administration*
Debra Boronski, *Senior Regional Director, Massachusetts Office of Business Development*
Mary Walachy, *Executive Director, Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation*
Lora Wondolowski, *Executive Director, Leadership Pioneer Valley*
David Woods, *Principal, Woods Financial Group*
Katie Zobel, *President, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts*

