

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

Action Steps:

- ❑ Strengthen outreach efforts to Congress and the Massachusetts legislature to ensure that the region's policy priorities are at the forefront.
- ❑ Promote statewide fiscal equity in local aid, transportation investments, public schools funding, and other programs.
- ❑ Prioritize economic opportunity initiatives in the region's areas of concentrated poverty.

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

- ❑ Collaborate with existing civic leadership development programs and community organizations that advance civic engagement.
- ❑ Support and expand Leadership Pioneer Valley and other leadership programs to reach a greater number of individuals.
- ❑ Encourage the creation of public art and broad access to cultural activities and resources.
- ❑ Encourage community engagement strategies that include underrepresented populations (immigrant, migrant, ethnic minority, low-income and geographically isolated).
- ❑ Support the City2City Pioneer Valley program, and promote adoption of best practices from other regions.
- ❑ Encourage and publicly celebrate civic engagement of local companies and institutions.
- ❑ Increase awareness and utilization of the Plan for Progress, including its use as a guide for other strategic plans, through outreach and advocacy by Plan for Progress members and implementers.
- ❑ Regularly review the accountability measures and dashboard metrics for the Plan for Progress to be sure that strategies are relevant, widely shared and accessible.

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

