

MVP Executive Summary

What is MVP?

The Mahoning Valley Partnership (MVP) is a coordinated economic development plan focused on the Mahoning Valley. It was developed through many discussions designed to address the common issues and opportunities associated with growth and sustainability in our region. The plan aligns resources and initiatives of a diverse array of community organizations and stakeholder institutions.

How was it developed?

Over the course of several weeks, multiple members of key organizations related to economic and community development within our Valley met to discuss adopting a common vision and how best to move forward in implementing it. MVP is a working document put in place to examine competitive strengths and needs in our region. It will constantly be assessed, revised, and updated.

What are the Goals?

MVP creates the framework to achieve the following high-level goals:

- Maximize use of funds and efficiency of programs
- Identify clear ownership and tasks for initiatives to encourage sustainability
- Identify and prioritize regionally significant projects for funding
- Provide a single, unified voice both inside and outside the region
- Implement regional-thinking in all levels of leadership

Specific Targets:

Workforce/Training & Education

1. Boost initiatives between educators, students, and professionals on career pathways.
2. Embrace the integration of new technology in the classroom and workplace.
3. Increase opportunities for hands-on experiential learning whether through on-the-job training, internships, or other methods.

Innovation & Entrepreneurship

1. Enhance reputation as an entrepreneurial community.
2. Position Youngstown State University as a hub for applied research and commercialization that supports and promotes innovation.

3. Raise opportunities in communities for creativity and engagement to foster an inclusive shift towards greater appreciation for new ideas.

Access to Capital

1. Develop more diverse and innovative sources of capital.
2. Improve customer-service orientation by making the process more accessible.
3. Create clearer definition and better communication around financing programs available.

Infrastructure & Site Development

1. Meet the needs of new and existing businesses and the community as a whole by maintaining sound, safe, and efficient infrastructure.
2. Eliminate access barriers to employment through transportation options and targeting infrastructure dollars towards high-density and high-employment areas.
3. Optimize utilization of land banks to drive higher parcel consolidation and the redevelopment of blighted properties.

Industry & Business Climate

1. Create mechanism to assist companies' transition from traditional to high-end, high-tech manufacturing.
2. Diversify our economic base by building on competitive advantages in advanced industries.
3. Promote retention and growth of businesses through our shared resource network that provides technical assistance for exporting, access to capital, technology adoption, and other needs.

Quality of Life & Community Vitality

1. Build opportunities for engaging and developing youth and early-career leadership.
2. Engage all voices to create communities of choice and an empowered citizenry.
3. Encourage place-based strategies to strengthen existing assets and improved standards of living.

Why is this Necessary?

This regional approach to economic development is important because regionalism gives multiple smaller communities the ability to remain competitive with larger communities. The Mahoning Valley is in a key position to grow itself as a regional economy better than ever before, with new

technologies such as advanced manufacturing creating greater opportunities for advancement.

Currently, our region lacks a structure that is conducive to systemized coordination. This results in many resources not being utilized effectively, as multiple partners are not leveraged to achieve goals, creating duplications and overlaps, or a general lack of awareness of the activities pursued by different partners in our area. MVP provides a platform for stakeholder organizations to regularly update each other and coordinate to pursue shared goals.

What model was used?

As a model, the Economic Development Administration's Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership was employed, as this provided a useful backbone to build our community an economic development goals. It is also currently one of the most important frameworks employed by the federal government to verify demonstrable regional collaboration deserving of grant dollar allocation.

Using this model, the following "public good" areas have been identified as priorities: workforce training and education, innovation and entrepreneurship, access to capital, infrastructure and site development, industry and business climate, and quality of life and community vitality.

What is the Mahoning Valley's Vision?

The Mahoning Valley Partnership strives to build a globally recognized hub of innovation that drives economic opportunity for all people. The Partnership creates a strategic economic development program that is accountable, inclusive, engaging, and coordinated among stakeholders in order to increase prosperity and vitality.

How will this be implemented?

Key stakeholders in the community have identified action items that they have the best ability to complete. Each item has been assigned an owner, an anticipated time-range of implementation, and a level of urgency.

Youngstown State University's Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) will act as the chief "navigator" for the implementation and continuity of the Mahoning Valley Partnership to ensure a tactical and strategic-driven approach.

It will do this through the following measures:

1. Perform an ongoing assessment of each of the action items and their progress, distributing the results to community partners.

2. Convene community partners to track progress and re-assess action items as well as introduce new members and action items to the Partnership.
3. Collect and compile regionally-focused, up-to-date demographic and labor information for ready use.
4. Serve as a support system for all other partners as they carry out the action items outlined in the Partnership.
5. Publish updates through a yearly Initiatives Report as well as through other appropriate mediums.

Further Notes:

- To ensure success, REDI has compiled a large database of funding sources, and has also assembled the staff and data needed to assist partners as they pursue grants or other methods to implement their action items.
- Eastgate Regional Council of Governments will also oversee the continual evaluation of MVP to ensure its sustainability through monitoring its progress in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is a federally-endorsed long-range planning document that benefits from MVP's action-oriented steps that has parallel goals and objectives.