

Pulaski Area
Economic Adjustment Strategy
Vision Session



June 19, 2008
New River Valley PDC

A. Tyler St.Clair
205 Madison Street
Lynchburg, Virginia 24504
434-846-2428
ats6t@virginia.edu

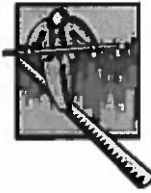
**PULASKI AREA ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT STRATEGY
VISION SESSION
June 19, 2008**

SESSION PURPOSE

To create a vision for economic vitality for the Pulaski area

SESSION GOALS

1. Create joint awareness of the change situation that is facing the Pulaski area
2. Develop a list of changes desired in the Pulaski area
3. Develop a vision of the future, including several choice "identities"
4. Develop 2-3 meaningful goals to achieve each identity
5. Identify leadership/sponsorship for the goals



Getting the most out of today would require . . .

- Honesty – being frank
- Being bold - thinking outside the box and beyond where we've been in the past
- Thick skin – remember this is about improvement of our situation and avoid taking things personally
- Being good listeners
- Being realistic regarding our goals and limits
- Taking ownership - laying the foundation so that others can build upon it
- Perseverance
- Being advocates of the Vision

Others who need to provide input, be involved, and support the Vision include . . .

- Board of Supervisors
 - Town Councils
 - County Administrator
 - CEOs of major industries/businesses
 - President of the Community College
 - Other School Board Members
 - School Superintendent and Principals
 - Major Investors
 - Utility Providers
 - Civic Leaders
-
- Other Stakeholders (that influence the area)

Roles in this process include . . .

Vision Group: Create the Vision for economic prosperity

Elected Officials/Top Managers: Buy in and support the Vision, provide funding and investment

Grass Roots Citizens: Counter apathy and fear of unknown; be able to see the future; support the Vision

**CHANGE AWARENESS:
WHERE HAVE WE BEEN AND WHAT'S THE PICTURE FOR THE FUTURE?**

Past

Now

Future



Discussion 1

What are the most significant events in the community's history that have influenced what it is today?

Discussion 2

If the community continues to do exactly what it is doing right now, what economic future do you predict for the area?

Most significant events in the community's history that have influenced what it is today . . .

Yellow Group

- Foreign competition (furniture, textiles)
- Transportation changes (I-81, rail – the loss of passenger service)
- Major industry (Volvo, AT&T, Pulaski furniture, RFAAP)
- Educational facilities (universities, NRCC, and public schools)

Green Group

- NRCC development; also VT and RU
- White Motor/Volvo/Mack
- Coming and going of rail
- I-81 (good and bad)
- War – RFAAP
- Demise of textiles/furniture
- Claytor Lake
- NRV Airport (near miss)

Blue Group

- Constant change with our economic base (rail to coal to textiles to ?)
- Decline in population; shift in demographics
- Development of Claytor Lake
- Scenic beauty of the area
- Industries (AT&T, Pulaski Furniture, RFAAP, Renfro, Klopman Mills, Volvo)

Red Group

- Railroad
- Manufacturing (wood, cloth) gone
- White Motors (connected with growth of VT, RU, NRCC)
- Regionalism (connected to growth of Airport, I-81, public services, and I-77)
- Claytor Lake

If we continue to do exactly what we are doing now . . .

Yellow Group

- Loss of identity
- Economic demise
 - Lose resources (state, federal, youth/youth talent, apathy)
 - Increased dependencies

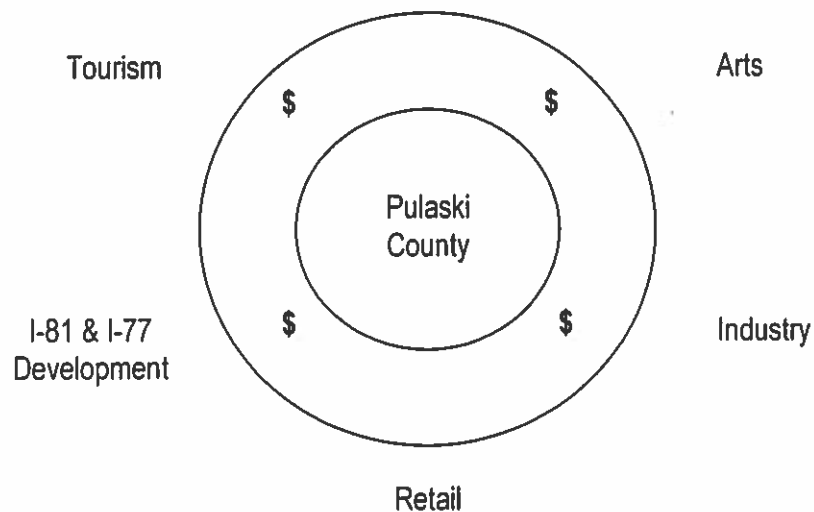
Green Group

- Growth in tension from "haves" to "have nots"
- Cost of social services will rise
- We will be passed by (broad band, etc. etc.)
- Demise of the towns/county
- Will we have Volvo and their suppliers forever?
- Bedroom community for Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Radford MSA

Blue Group

- Flat/declining revenue
- Budget constraints
- No hope for the future

Red Group



Conclusions

- If we don't find a new identity, we will get one that we don't want
- We have to find our niche – we have to find what we are good at and then we have to feed the niche and push it; we can't go at this halfheartedly
- We have to be willing to sacrifice and to take risks
- We have to deal with the perception that we are tentative
- There is no defense for some of the delays in action or decision-making that led us to be where we are now
- We can't wait for others
- We need to invest in ourselves
- This cannot be done with 3 localities working against each other; we MUST "purge this virus" to be successful
- We have to have an active strategy to deal with the naysayers
- There is a constituency that is against investments that will raise taxes [need to plan for this]

VISIONING: IDENTIFY A NEW ECONOMIC IDENTITY AND THE CHANGES THAT GO WITH IT



Discussion 1

What can the Pulaski area be that will make us economically healthy and prosperous?

Discussion 2

To achieve this, what changes would need to be made in the Pulaski area to support this vision of economic health and prosperity?

In small group work to identify possible identities that would lead the Pulaski Area to economic health and prosperity, the following identities and changes were brainstormed/discussed . . .

Group 1

Our identity as a RECREATION CENTER and identity as an INDUSTRIAL BASE need to build off each other

As a RECREATION CENTER, we can build upon: lakes, golf, hunting, New River Trail (biking, walking), Randolph Park, Raceway, baseball, Claytor Lake State Park, Gatewood

To be an INDUSTRIAL BASE, we need to build upon our existing industry and perhaps add Green Industry

Assets	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resources • Industrial land/sites • Buildings • Quality of life • Educational facilities • Regional population • Billionaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce ("Everyone who wants a job has one") • Reputation • Perception(s) – change it • Housing • Empty buildings • Education – perception • Development \$ • Regional cooperation

Changes that need to be made include:

- Change our self-image and sell it!
- Infrastructure investment
- Implement change culture and action – make small changes to lead to large changes in our economic base
- Sell ourselves to ourselves by increasing public relations – need to show commitment to thing by increasing staff dedicated to economic development (100% of the time)
- Partner with developers rather than expecting them to do it all
- Make those tough decisions
- "Incentivize" retail development
- Willingness to do it! (citizens and government)
- Partner with industry to expand/create apprenticeship program (train your future employees early)
- Remarket skill resources
- Engage the younger generation

Group 2

The identities that we could have include:

- EDUCATION CENTER
- RECREATION CENTER
- NANO CENTER
- GREEN

To be an EDUCATION CENTER, our current resources include: PCHS Vocational, Governor's School, NRCC, Workforce Development, GED Middle College, ODU, proximity to others, career coach

To be an EDUCATION CENTER, we would have to diversify and enhance:

- Skills
- Small business development
- Training (i.e. health care)
- Vocational/technical
- College Prep (dual enrollment, A.P.)
- Physical facilities
 - Wired/Fiber/Technology
 - Healthy environments
- Market education
- Job shadowing

To be a RECREATION CENTER,

Have	Next
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Claytor Lake• Trails• Randolph Park• Golf course• Gatewood• Calfee• Fine Arts Center• Museums• Civil War battle site• New River• Fairgrounds• Speedway• Loving Field• Cool Spring• Parks/playgrounds• Skate Park• Farmer's Market• YMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote a person to market and work with prospects who want to use the facilities• Recreation Center• Adult/passive activities• Support system<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Motels- Services, etc.• Educate<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Prepare local businesses- Promote local business• Invest• Buy In – Locals have to help promote this• Be ready to support the "big" event

To develop a reputation as GREEN, some options include:

- Becoming known as a "green community"
- Recycling community
- Infrastructure – i.e. alternative transportation, LEED buildings and Earth Craft community
- Government leadership

Group 3

There are many identities that we could pursue – which one is right for us? (Brainstorm)

Retirement Community	Tourist Center	Technology Community
Golf Community	Green/Renewable Community	Education Community
Small Town USA (balance)	High Tech Community	Preparedness Community
Scenic/Outdoor Community	Nanotech Community	Consumer/Customer Friendly Community
Bedroom Community	Rail Community	Wine Community

Our highest priority identities might include:

"PULASKI PREPARED"

- EDUCATION
 - Resources – labs
 - Middle schools
 - Teacher salaries
 - OUTDOOR RECREATION
 - Golf
 - Claytor Lake/Gatewood
 - Trails
 - BUSINESS/INDUSTRY/TECHNOLOGY
 - "Open for Business" including Infrastructure (graded sites, roads, rails, water/sewer), Staff, Technology, and Incentives
 - Good/Better Customer Service
2. GREEN/RENEWABLE COMMUNITY (needs to take on greater importance)

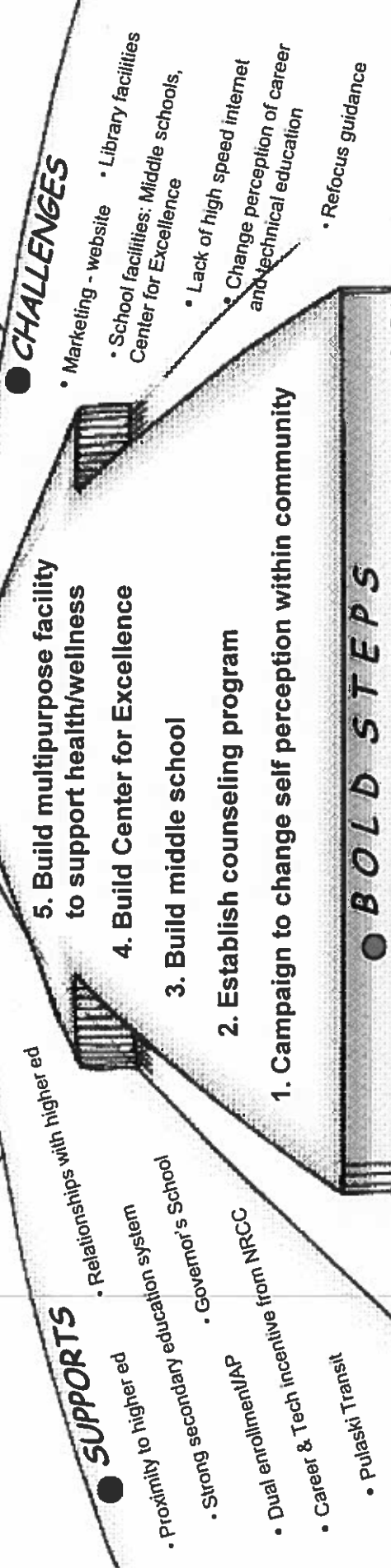
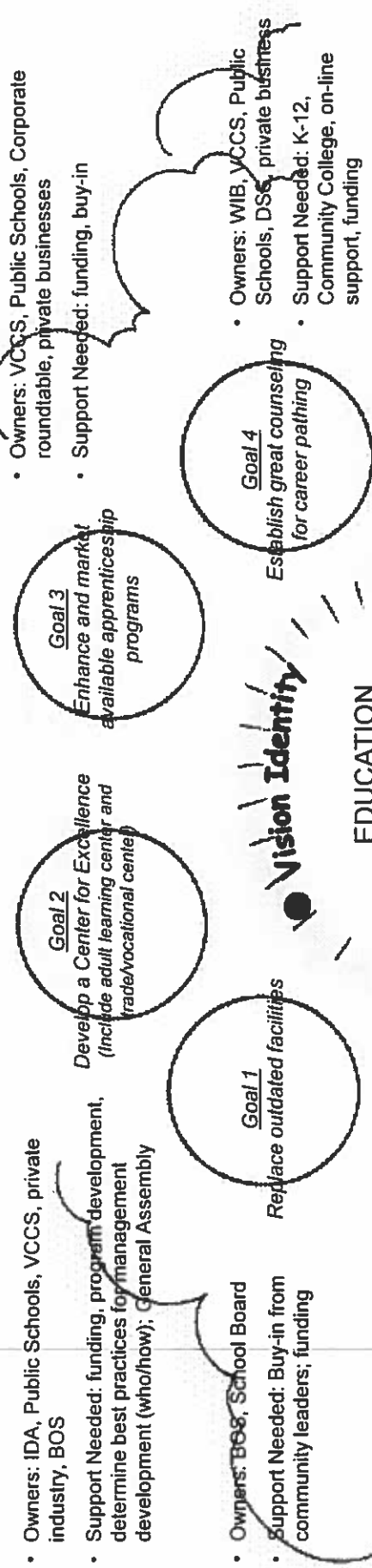
Action items and changes and to bring the Vision and greater economic prosperity to the Pulaski area include:

- Document what we have or don't have
- One picture
- 4 lane Rt.11 and Rt.100 to unclog arteries
- East/west connector road
- Better PR – hire staff and have one voice
- Rail service/access (industrial site, passenger service)
- Invest more in education (schools, teacher salaries, lab/technical space)
- Water/sewer infrastructure
- Preparedness/readiness [when opportunities are there]
- Zip code change
- Broadband/wireless
- Stronger leadership (drop the hammer, incentives, decisions, make it easier to invest/develop)
- NRV Airport improvements
- Better websites for County and towns
- Sell off non-performing assets

- Close revenue loopholes (taxes, etc.)
- State and national political leadership
- Redistrict Pulaski
- Approach VT and RU
- Have priorities
- Promote Claytor Lake

Pulaski Area Economic Prosperity **VISION**

July 14, 2008



OUR "VALUE PROPOSITION"

- Must prepare workforce for employers; must build entrepreneurs to stimulate business development
- Cannot attract a workforce (executives, employees) without a good school system; perception is poor now
- Can commute from home from pre-school to PhD; must quantify results and benchmark our success

Pulaski Area Economic Prosperity VISION

July 14, 2008

Owners/Support for Marketing/PR

- Owners: Towns, County, Chamber, attraction and business owners
- Support Needed: buy-in, change of mindset, money/staff, coalition of owners, policy direction, willingness to utilize shared technology to bring it together

Owners/Support for Infrastructure Support and Development

- Owners: Planning commissions, parks & recreation depts, coalition of owners (state, Claytor Lake, NRT, Shelor Motor Mile) Chamber, Visitor Center, school system
- Support Needed: Support and companion business, explored diversity of activity, unified calendar of events, match up with tourism plan, a pride mentality, money/staff

Goal 3

Develop/implement a strategy to insure that planned development preserves our natural resources

Goal 2

Develop/implement consistent recreation marketing strategy and themes for all 3 jurisdictions

Goal 4

Develop/implement more diversified recreation activities so that the Pulaski area has appeal for all types of consumers

Goal 1

Develop one entity to develop/coordinate the promotion/marketing of recreation assets/events

Goal 5

Develop infrastructure and support activities

Vision Identity

RECREATON

We will be a destination place for recreation

SUPPORTS

- Vista (overlooks, scenery)
- Still a very rural/natural setting
- Claytor Lake, Trails, Randolph Park, Golf course, Museums, Civil Center, Fairgrounds, Speedway, Skate Parks, Playgrounds
- "stay-cations" due to high gas prices; overall economic condition
- Lodging tax revenue
- Attractive alternative

CHALLENGES

- Lack of funding for advertising and willingness to invest
- No established follow up system
- Lack of event center & big event space
- Community awareness
- Coordination
- Up to date Infrastructure/information alternatives, unique home grown dining, and winter activities
- Need to improve internet

5. Keep it all first class

4. Implement strategy with education/awareness

3. Obtain funding and resources

2. Establish marketing strategy that also addresses a long term plan

1. Get commitment from localities to organize with cohesive recreation vision

BOLD STEPS

OUR "VALUE PROPOSITION"

- Assets exist; developing recreation assets give greatest cost/benefit; also enhances quality of life for residents
- Not everyone can create the type of natural resources that we have already
- It is a positive for people to speak about recreation; can counter the negatives



DEVELOP ECONOMIC PROSPERITY VISION AND GOALS

1. Describe the identify in future, inspiring terms – "We will be . . ."
2. Identify the top 3 to 5 goals that need to be achieved to attain that identity

EDUCATION

We will be a first class location for learning.

Potential Goals to Achieve the EDUCATION Vision Component	Responsibility
1. Replace outdated facilities. Including: Pulaski and Dublin Middle Schools, libraries (use as learning centers?); also ensure that there is plan for continual facilities upgrading and replacement	
2. Create a "trade" school/training center.	
3. Establish an adult learning center.	
4. Determine and locate a Center for Excellence. (manufacturing? Nano?)	
5. Develop apprenticeship program.	
6. Ensure great counseling (assistance with college applications, etc.)	

RECREATION

We will be a destination place for recreation.

Potential Goals to Achieve the RECREATION Vision Component	Responsibility
1. Develop one entity/person to develop and coordination the promotion/marketing of our recreation assets and events.	
2. Develop and implement a consistent recreation marketing strategy and themes for all 3 jurisdictions.	
3. Develop and implement a strategy to insure that planned development preserves our natural resources.	
4. Develop and implement more diversified recreation activities so that the Pulaski area has appeal for all types of consumers.	
5. Develop infrastructure and support facilities.	

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

We will be ready to meet the needs of 21st Century business and industry.

Potential Goals to Achieve the BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY Vision Component	Responsibility
1. Put fully developed infrastructure in place. Including: Water/sewer, rail, graded sites, broadband, transportation	
2. Streamline the development process. Including: Education on the process/permitting; advocate to follow through (staff)	
3. Streamline the incentive process. Including: Establishing guidelines, delegated authority, supportive of green industry	
4. Create an integrated, streamlined workforce development process.	
5. Develop a strategy to create technology infrastructure to capture future opportunities in business and industry.	
6. Develop and implement customized small business assistance programs. Including: Enhanced Revolving Loan Fund; business retention/expansion program	



NEXT STEPS

1. Develop a Report of the Visioning Session and distribute to participants. (Facilitator, by 6/23/08)
2. Vision Group will meet again to refine the Vision and Goals and to develop a strategy for moving it forward. (ASAP, July/early August)
3. Go to elected officials in a joint meeting and ask for feedback and support, to include funding, staff resources, and policy direction
4. Develop and implement a well thought out communication plan to inform/engage others in the Vision

HOW TO ENSURE SUCCESS OF THE PULASKI AREA ECONOMIC PROSPERITY VISION

- Make sure that we "roll" the Economic Prosperity Vision out in a different way from the past
- Individuals that have participated today need to convey as much support and advocacy as possible
 - Signal that we feel good about what we have done
 - Avoid "murmuring"
 - Broaden the conversation regarding support to more than just funding