



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

REGIONAL
commission

RVARC.ORG

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Core Program Summary Sheet for *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*

Program Description and Purpose

The CEDS outlines the regional economic development strategy and is a required document under the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain this funding source and RVARC's designation as an Economic Development District (EDD).

It is used by several Federal agencies, including the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and EDA, in considering applications for funding. In addition to the CEDS plan itself, our CEDS work is supported by a committee consisting of elected officials, local economic development staff, economic stakeholders, and private-sector businesses and proxies.

The CEDS undergoes major revisions every five years and minor updates every year. The last major update of the CEDS was adopted in FY26. The CEDS update in FY26 is expected to include the development of a project prioritization process to narrow down the existing list of 140+ projects to a focused list of needs that RVARC staff work to implement.

CEDS development and ongoing updates are supported by the CEDS Committee, a formal Committee of RVARC made up of elected officials, local economic development staff, private sector representatives, and others in the economic development space. In FY26 this committee is undergoing a review and restructuring.

Project Types

CEDS projects consist of two types:

- Local or regional needs in infrastructure, site development, workforce support, tourism, and other supportive services. Projects are submitted by member localities, and are then reviewed and prioritized by the CEDS committee. Funding opportunities from a variety of sources are then pursued for these priority needs. Inclusion in the CEDS is often a prerequisite for certain funding sources, especially EDA, and projects can be amended into the program by the CEDS committee as necessary.
 - Examples of projects that have been listed in the CEDS include the Jackson River Trail; Masonic Theater renovations in Clifton Forge; Vinton Branch Library redevelopment; Amtrak passenger rail platform in the City of Roanoke; and business park access throughout the region.
- General economic development planning, technical assistance, convening support, and analysis. Planning and technical assistance projects must ultimately support economic development goals, but can address a range of prerequisite needs such as housing, childcare, resilience, and quality-of-life projects.
 - Examples of general economic development planning and technical support projects include Roanoke Valley Greenway planning, the Childcare Access Resource Guide, Healthy Roanoke Valley, the Air Service Task Force, and Regional Food System plan.

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke
Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



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EDA-funded projects are limited to those impacting our designated Economic Development District (EDD) localities, which include the Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke; the Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; and the Towns of Clifton Forge and Vinton.

Goals and Objectives

The CEDS establishes a Vision, Goals, and Strategies of economic development for the region, developed, approved, and regularly reviewed by the CEDS committee. The nine (9) goals established by the CEDS are:

- Diversifying the economy
- Maintaining a skilled workforce
- Improvements to infrastructure
- Projecting a positive identity
- Marketing the region's assets
- Redevelopment of unused properties
- Affordable housing opportunities
- Resilience
- Multimodal transportation

CEDS project types and RVARC work program activities ideally should support these goals, though general technical support on a number of economic development-related items is also considered.

Core Program Alignment

Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan

- The Transportation and Economic Development (TED) Study identifies transportation projects in the TPO planning area with the potential for high economic development impact.

Rural Long Range Transportation Plan

- Project recommendations from rural transportation planning studies and DRPT planning efforts are included in the CEDS project list.

Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan

- Some projects are alternative transportation projects. Potential overlap between recreational infrastructure and active transportation infrastructure (e.g., greenways) might apply.

Hazard Mitigation Plan

- Stormwater projects are included in the CEDS. Some opportunity around environmental and economic resilience exists but needs further review.

Blueprint for Action

- Opportunities exist around Recovery Ready Workplaces, and support services such as specialized training focused on getting people in recovery back into the workforce.

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