

Section 6: Economic Resiliency

Economic resiliency can be defined in many ways, but in its simplest form it refers to the ability of a defined area to recover from or adjust to the negative impacts of extreme internal stresses or external economic shocks. These shocks and stresses can be natural disasters, human scale disruptions or long term economic shifts.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania CEDS, developed and integrated as part of *Mapping the Future*, incorporates resiliency into its overall development. Resilient themes can be found throughout the document and are integrated with the work elements and concepts within the plan. In short, the region seeks to consider and imbed resiliency thinking into its planning and delivery systems. As a combined official transportation plan (LRTP under U.S. DOT) and official Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS under EDA), the plan integrates resilient themes and actions throughout as part of its program delivery in both roles.



SPC as the MPO manages modal and system operations programs in a number of areas: transit planning; human services and workforce development transportation planning; ridesharing; safety, traffic operations and congestion management planning, including traffic signal improvements and ITS; freight and intermodal planning; sustainability/resiliency analysis; and, smart transportation planning. These programs produce

useful planning documents that guide plan development and support plan implementation, including transportation resiliency planning. This continuing planning program provides SPC the opportunity to identify and work with regional partners to address potential disruption to the region's transportation system that could impact regional mobility and commerce.

With respect to economic resiliency, the CEDS incorporates policy goals, strategies and organizational actions. *Mapping the Future* contains 16 policy goals. During the CEDS development process, participants were asked to prioritize the policy goals and development actions for SPC as the Economic Development District. These actions were developed in association with the prioritized goals and concepts identified in the SWOT process. Actions that

directly impact the economic resiliency efforts of the region are identified as such in the CEDS Action Plan (see Section 4.3).

Two major shocks and stresses were identified as potential weaknesses and threats through the SWOT analysis and have been determined to be keys to the future economic resiliency of the region. These are *changing demographics and workforce* and the *volatility of the energy sector*.

In building economic resiliency, the CEDS considers steady-state and responsive initiatives that will be undertaken by SPC. It is important to note that after approval, the CEDS Committee will regularly meet to review and amend action steps as necessary to continue to address these issues. In addition, SPC, through its normal course of business, will continue to monitor, assess and evaluate regional trends to identify any changes to the regional that should be included in the resiliency discussion and response initiatives.



Steady-state initiatives tend to be long term efforts that seek to bolster the region’s ability to withstand or avoid a shock and/or stress and can be seen as proactive activities. Examples of steady-state initiatives contained in the CEDS Action Plan and that enhance the long term resiliency planning include:

- Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) - The PREP program is designed to coordinate regional services delivery to promote retention, expansion and diversification, by the following Commonwealth business service providers: Industrial Resource Centers (IRCs), Industrial Development Organizations (IDOs), Local Development Districts (LDDs), and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). As the region’s LDD, SPC is a core partner in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Regional Economic Performance. **(volatility of the energy sector)**
- Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), an initiative designed to encourage communities to develop comprehensive economic

development strategies that will strengthen their competitive edge for attracting global manufacturer and supply chain investments. SPC will continue to participate and support The Greater Pittsburgh Metals Manufacturing Community IMCP. **(volatility of the energy sector)**

- Support regional talent attractions and retention initiatives. **(changing demographics and workforce)**
- Support regional and member efforts that are designed to address the demographic and workforce challenge. **(changing demographics and workforce)**

Responsive initiatives include establishing capabilities to be responsive to the region’s recovery needs following an incident and can be seen as reactive activities. Examples of responsive initiatives are contained in the CEDS Action Plan include:

- Support efforts to work with targeted industry sectors that are significantly impacted by the collapse of the coal industry. **(volatility of the energy sector)**
- Supply Chain Diversification. Help regional manufacturers identify new domestic and international market opportunities, as well as develop and execute strategies to penetrate new target markets in the shift away from coal-focused industry to new opportunities in metals and advanced materials manufacturing and associated spin-off manufacturing sectors. **(volatility of the energy sector)**



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- The EDD will actively support efforts to work with targeted industry sectors that are significantly impacted by the collapse of the coal industry. (**volatility of the energy sector**)
- The EDD will also seek to actively support partners and regional efforts targeted to assist in retention and expansion of existing businesses. Examples include, but are not limited to, market diversification and growth (both foreign and domestic), operational improvements, and access to capital. (**volatility of the energy sector**)
- Participate with newly formed WIB partnerships to enhance coordination between local boards. (**changing demographics and workforce**)