

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BREATHITT COUNTY

09/01/2008

COMMUNITY MISSION STATEMENT

Breathitt County is dedicated to creating sustainable community development by promoting equitable economic opportunity and sound environmental practice. We wish to maintain a positive attitude and an atmosphere where everyone can work together for the betterment of the community in which we live.

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

For Breathitt County, we envision:

leadership that is effective, ethical, collaborative and inclusive;

citizens that are engaged in the process of community transformation;

communication strategies that provide a positive image of Breathitt County and easy access to governmental, civic, community and business information for residents and visitors;

employment that pays reasonable hourly rates and provides health benefits for every willing worker;

coordinated recreational and educational programs that use current facilities and resources to provide opportunities for all age groups, from youth to senior citizens;

grant-funded projects that are developed, written, managed and implemented by local citizens;

an arts program that provides space, programming, training, and exhibition and performance opportunities for both local and non-local artists; and

coordinated community cleanup efforts that include education of all age groups about the importance of a clean environment and recycling.

This strategic plan for Breathitt County sets out the goals, objectives, and strategies for the following major theme areas.

- I. CAPACITY BUILDING**
- II. INFRASTRUCTURE**
- III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**
- IV. RECREATION**
- V. EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**
- VI. HUMAN SERVICES AND FAMILY SUPPORT**
- VII. HEALTHCARE AND WELLNESS**
- VIII. ARTS, HUMANITIES, and CULTURAL HERITAGE**

I. CAPACITY BUILDING

GOAL 1: Citizens and officials will have the ability to work together for the improvement of the community as a whole

Objective 1: Leaders will follow the decisions and desires of the community as a whole

Activities:

- The fiscal court will adopt and facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan.
- City Council will adopt and facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan.
- The strategic plan will be distributed to various agencies and civic groups requesting their support.
- Citizens will have a shared sense of belonging to the community and will be active in identifying and monitoring community needs and progress.
- The strategic plan will be updated as needs become apparent and revised at least every four years. Annual progress reports will be publicized and major contributors will be recognized.

Objective 2: Leaders will take a facilitating and enabling role in community development

Activities:

- Invite and encourage county and city officials to attend community meetings.
- The Fiscal Court, City Council, and other governing groups will hold one or more joint meetings per year.
- County and city officials will represent the community at state and regional meetings.
- Community leaders, agencies and individuals will network to identify resources within and outside of the community and will participate in inter-agency meetings.
- Individuals and agencies will be designated as primary contacts for state and regional agencies and events.
- Leaders will recognize that the availability of a skilled and educated workforce is imperative to attract business and industry; and leaders will support programs to improve the workforce and to break the generational cycle of entitlement in the community.

Objective 3: Leaders and citizens will have leadership skills needed to work as a team

Activities:

- Develop and implement a Breathitt County Leadership training program.
- Public officials and other community leaders will participate in job-specific training as well as training in leadership, communicating, conflict resolution, teambuilding, etc....

Objective 4: Maintain an active community dialogue program

Activities:

- The BCAT will conduct one general session meeting per month.
- Sub-committees will meet monthly to plan and implement projects.
- BCAT will facilitate special focus community dialogue meetings as a need becomes apparent.
- Progress on the implementation of the strategic plan will be publicized in the local newspapers, through radio and the local access TV station, and on a county website.

Objective 5: Train grant writers and establish a grant writers group

Activities:

- Local governments will have staff trained and capable of writing grants.
- Conduct one grant writing workshop per year to train local grant writers.
- Conduct training sessions on CDBG grants/loans.
- Maintain an updated listing of active, trained grant writing volunteers.

Objective 6: Maintain a website for county and city governments, local agencies and local businesses

Activities:

- Develop and maintain website.
- Provide easy access to governmental, civic, community and business information for residents and visitors.

GOAL 2: Provide staff sufficient to support the services necessary to the implementation of the strategic plan

Objective 1: Designate staff needed to implement the strategic plan

Activities:

- Develop jobs descriptions and designate staff that will work toward implementation of plan.
- Keep staff informed and trained in necessary areas of expertise.

- Provide sufficient funding for staff education and training and attendance of and participation in conferences, etc.

II. INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL 1: The citizens of Breathitt County will have access to treated water and sewer/septic services

Objective 1: Support a plan that will enable 80% of Breathitt County households to have waterlines in place and functional by December 31, 2009

Activities:

- Support BCWD in plans to provide treated water to as many residents of the county as feasible.
- Request funds from AML, CBDG, LGEDF, and any other sources available for waterline expansion to meet the needs of our residents.
- Prioritize projects for the greatest common good...to provide service in areas with the greatest number of households that need service and also by the availability of funding for the project.

Objective 2: Support a plan to increase the sewage/septic handling capacity of all Breathitt County households by December 31, 2009

Activities:

- Provide information and referrals to citizens on availability of funding for septic systems.
- Enforce policies against straight piping and other environmental issues.
- Support the building of a new waste water treatment facility (sewage plant) away from HWY 15.

GOAL 2: To provide better road access

Objective 1: Develop a bridge/road improvement plan which will improve access to all areas of the county in all seasons

Activities:

- Improve (pave) Southfork Road to Elk View—must be a priority to develop tourism initiatives.
- Improve Barwick Road—bottom of road gets covered with mud and gets slippery.
- Follow through with Army Corps to get bridge at Copeland.
- Develop another access to the Panbowl Industrial Park.

Objective 2: Develop a plan to upgrade existing intra-county roadways

Activities:

- Continue to upgrade roads that have the heaviest traffic counts and the greatest need.
- Support plan to expand Hwy. 15 to a four lane road from the Mountain Parkway (Campton) to Hazard. (BCAT supports a project that would 5 lane the existing HWY15 from Shell Mart to Wal-mart and try to keep this corridor).

GOAL 3: Develop coordinated communications and computing technology

Objective 1: 90% of residents will have access to broadband internet by December 2009

Activities:

- Lobby service providers and Public Service Commission to extend broadband coverage to areas currently not served.
- Collaborate with HCTC, UCM, MSU and other entities to provide access to distance learning, video conferencing, and distance earning opportunities.

Objective 2: Develop a coordinated communication/information system for the county

Activities:

- Maintain a county/city website and a system of communicating with community members and potential visitors.
- Increase the number of people who are involved in community activities and who are aware of community services.

Objective 3: Expand Public Computer Access Points

Activities:

- BC Public Library will provide public access to computers.
- BC Life Skills Center will provide public access to computers.
- Collaborate with other community entities to provide access to technology.

Objective 4: Schools will be networked and have access to current technologies

Activities:

- Seek funding necessary for technology upgrades in all schools.

GOAL 4: Citizens will have access to public TRANSPORTATION system

Objective 1: Implement a county wide system of public transportation including a local transit system within the city limits

Activities:

- Create a Public Transportation Committee to identify needs.
- Develop a plan that will meet community needs.
- Seek funding to implement the service.

GOAL 5: To have adequate HOUSING for all county residents

Objective 1: Study and address the variety of housing needs in Breathitt County

Activities:

- Expand low-income housing facilities throughout the county where infrastructure is available.
- Develop condominiums and apartments for lease or rent to young adults leaving their parents homes, professionals, early retirees and widowed individuals.
- Develop transitional housing for people in process of leaving welfare and entering the workforce, or homeless due to disaster, etc.
- Support the development of assisted living housing for seniors who need options other than the NH Geriatric Center.
- Develop additional properties into subdivisions with streets, water, sewer, etc. . . to provide options for home ownership; and develop down payment assistance programs and work with HUD/VA home ownership programs.

GOAL 6: Citizens will have an appreciation of our natural environment

Objective 1: Children and adults will be educated on the importance of recycling and environmental protection

Activities:

- Incorporate environmental education into P16 and AE curriculum
- Ordinances on littering and garbage pick-up will be enforced.
- Coordinate and support county clean-up efforts.
- Develop a recycling center.

III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

GOAL 1: To create a diverse economic base through the recruitment, expansion, and retention of businesses and industries

Objective 1: Expand the Industrial Authority to an Economic Development Board

Activities:

- Appoint an engaged board that will take a holistic approach to community development.
- Encourage viable economic development projects that promote investment of private capital, expansion of local tax bases, and creation of permanent jobs for low and moderate income individuals.
- Encourage projects that will involve basic economic activities, including manufacturing, import substitution, or the distribution of Breathitt County goods.
- Provide economic development information to prospective/expanding businesses and industries.
- Provide small business incubator space.

Objective 2: Support an Economic Development Manager

Activities:

- The county and city will commit resources to fund a professional economic developer that can be a key person in facilitating the implementation of this plan.
- Provide assistance and information to existing businesses to help them achieve or maintain profitability.
- Provide support and direct assistance to local and regional development efforts by working with key business and local, regional, state, and federal organizations to identify economic and community needs and priorities.
- Partner with SBA/SBDC, HCTC, MSU and others to provide businesses with training, technical assistance, information, and entrepreneurial training.

- Collaborate with Small Business Association and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Identify potential financial resources and assistance programs at local, state and federal level and make potential resources and assistance information available to small businesses/ prospective new businesses.

GOAL 2: Promote business expansion through participation in the Renewal Community tax incentive programs

Objective 1: The Industrial Authority, Economic Development Manager, Local Government Officials, Business Owners and interested individuals will know how the RC and other tax incentive programs work

Activities:

- Prospective investors/prospects are informed of the incentives.
- Existing businesses are informed of the incentive program.
- Employers outside the zone are informed of the tax incentives available due to hiring individuals from the zone.

GOAL 3: To create a diverse economic base through tourism

Objective 1: Assess and develop tourism resources

Activities:

- Prepare a tourism master plan that will identify tourism assets and potential attractions.
- Prepare sites for tourism and assist private individuals in developing tourism infrastructure.
- Purchase/Lease easements and develop 4-wheel trails, bike trails, wagon trails, horse trails, and walking trails throughout the county.
- Develop RV hook-ups, camping sites, and picnic/recreation areas throughout the county and connected by trails.
- Create a joint City/County tourism workgroup that will plan and coordinate annual tourism events, such as festivals, shows, etc.
- Develop a downtown walking trail that has historic markers identifying significant sites.
- Support and encourage the development of businesses to capture the tourism dollar.

Objective 2: Establish tourist information centers

Activities:

- Develop a welcome center on HWY 15.
- Renovate the WPA Jail Building to preserve a piece of our heritage and to also serve as an information center and a more accessible location for the Breathitt County Museum.
- Provide relevant tourism information to the KY 511 tourist channel.
- Facilitate customer service training for employees of local businesses (include training on community tourism efforts and community “pride”).

IV. RECREATION

GOAL 1: To identify and meet the recreational needs of the citizens

Objective 1: Create a joint City/County Parks and Recreation Board to develop and implement a comprehensive parks and recreation plan covering the entire county

Activities:

- Provide recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages.
- Provide a variety of recreational sport leagues..., baseball, basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball...etc.

Objective 2: Develop a wellness facility to serve our community

Activities:

- Collaborate with local organizations to offer wellness education programs.
- Develop a wellness facility and/or work with partners that have facilities that could be used for work-out, fitness, and wellness programs.

Objective 3: Facilitate recreational/entertainment opportunities such as a theatre, bowling alley, arcade, etc.

Activities:

- Provide encouragement and incentives to investors that will operate recreational/entertainment businesses requested by the community.

Objective 4: Coordinate recreational and tourism projects to have the biggest economic impact

Activities:

- Create a joint City/County tourism workgroup that will plan and coordinate annual tourism events, such as festivals, shows, etc., (coordination and communication is essential).
- Participate in the state tourism Matching Funds program.

V. EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

GOAL 1: To improve relations between schools and community

Objectives 1: Increase positive communications and collaboration among all schools

Activities:

- Schools and community will utilize the local cable-access TV station.
- Implement a public relations plan involving all facets of the schools (P-16) and the programs/activities each school offers (emphasizing scholastics).
- Implement a rewards/incentives program for educators and support staff (teacher and parent appreciation programs).
- Support academics boosters in their efforts to recognize academic achievement.

GOAL 2: To improve scholastic achievement and lower the school dropout rate

Objective 1: Increase scholastic achievement by accommodating student diversity and learning styles

Activities:

- Increase parental involvement.
- Increase communication between parents and educators.
- Review/revise all facets of curriculum as needed.
- Local educators will participate in regional P-16 efforts.
- Encourage cooperative efforts to provide more chance for application of knowledge/productivity through hands-on experience.
- Accommodate student diversity.

Objective 2: Offer more diverse opportunities for education and career counseling

Activities:

- Retool and promote Vocational/Technical Programs.
- Provide Job Shadowing/Mentoring Programs.
- Strengthen relationship with HCTC, EKU, MSU, UCM and other higher education institutions.

Objective 3: Offer more arts and humanities opportunities

Activities:

- Encourage school systems to develop an arts and humanities program in collaboration with HCTC and the community. (See activities noted in VIII.).

Objective 4: Increase after school programs offered

Activities:

- Apply for grants/funding sources for afterschool programs.
- Offer a variety of after school activities (academic, sports, arts & humanities...).

Objective 5: Increase Alcohol and Drug Prevention/Intervention Programs

Activities:

- Collaborate with KRCC, BC Health Dept. and others on drug intervention programs.
- Implement research-based alcohol and drug prevention programs in the schools.

Objective 6: Increase attendance in schools by identifying and overcoming barriers

Activities:

- Communicate agreements with judicial system, social services, and law enforcement on parental neglect and subsequent actions and enforce policies.
- Provide transitional programs and classes.
- Apply for grants to support and implement research-based drop-out prevention programs.
- Arrange daycare for school age parents that need to finish their education.

GOAL 3: All citizens, regardless of age, will have opportunities for learning

Objective 1: Preschool and Head Start children and their caregivers will have access to programs, services, and materials to stimulate learning and a love of reading

Activities:

- The public library will offer programs to Head Start, preschools and daycare centers.
- Provide public access to computers and high-speed internet for educational opportunities.

Objective 2: Senior Citizens will have the opportunity for personal growth and development

Activities:

- Conduct programs dealing with senior issues and enrichment through collaborations with Senior Circle, Senior Citizens Center, HCTC, and other community groups.

GOAL 4: Support the construction of a new expanded Public Library

Objective 1: Build a new library facility

Activities:

- Provide access to library services and expanded programming.
- Expand the Heritage Center.
- Provide additional access to technology.
- Provide rooms for community meetings.
- Provide gallery area for displays.

VI. HUMAN SERVICES AND FAMILY SUPPORT**GOAL 1: The human and social service needs of the community will be met**

Objective 1: Promote the health/well-being and permanency of all families/children in Breathitt County.

Activities:

- The community will support agencies in their efforts to provide services to families and children.
- Coordinate communication between local groups and agencies involved in human and social service.
- Identify common areas of concern among agencies and determine needs that are not being met and areas that might have duplication of efforts.
- Identify a coordinated method for achieving optimum service delivery so existing agencies can better serve their clients.
- Strive to mitigate social and economic polarization.

Objective 2: Meet the early childhood development and daycare needs of the community

Activities:

- Provide access to a state-of-the-art day care facility.
- Evaluate/assess every child of preschool age for disabilities and developmental delays and provide access to services for those in need.

Objective 3: Encourage collaboration and communication among all agencies providing services to families and children

Activities:

- Create a resource directory available on-line for all providers and clients to access.
- All agencies will post service information to the directory and keep it updated.
- Publicize success stories, share events and updates to programs.

Objective 4: Meet the needs of our growing senior population

Activities:

- Provide access to programs and services for senior citizens.
- Update, revitalize, expand and/or privatize the NH Geriatric Center to more fully meet the needs of the community.
- Develop assisted living and adult day care services for seniors who need options other than the geriatric center.

VII. HEALTHCARE AND WELLNESS

GOAL 1: To optimize the health and wellness of all citizens

Objective 1: To optimize healthcare for citizens and improve accessibility to healthcare providers

Activities:

- Develop a Resource Directory of all services and providers and disseminate data to the community.
- Overcome transportation barriers via road improvements and public transportation.

Objective 2: Promote growth of healthcare services

Activities:

- Survey community to assess healthcare needs that are not being met.
- Meet with healthcare provider boards to establish/implement a plan to meet needs.
- Engage in good community dialogue with KRMC, KRCC, and other providers.

Objective 3: Promote programs and services that support health and wellness education

Activities:

- Coordinate among schools, healthcare providers, HCTC, and other institutions to develop and implement health education programs in the community.
- Provide access to research-based alcohol and drug prevention programs and smoking cessation programs to all citizens in need.
- Develop recreational opportunities that encourage physical activity and promote wellness.

Objective 4: Provide access to services for the visually impaired and the otherwise disabled

Activities:

- A vision resource center will be available in the Public Library.
- Maintain sidewalks and walkways that are handicap accessible.
- Plan and encourage development that is accessible to everyone.
- Work with agencies to provide access to public transportation for the disabled.

Objective 5: Recruit programs and research units to our area to study the high rate of blindness, diabetes, Alzheimer's, heart disease and cancer

Activities:

- Collaborate with institutions to educate citizens on current treatments for diseases and resources that are available.
- Encourage families to participate in genetic studies that could lead to medical breakthroughs.
- Convert our healthcare liability problem into an opportunity to focus educational efforts on healthcare careers.
- Use our "ugly" healthcare statistics to attract research institutions that may set up programs in the area that will have an impact on our wellness and also provide a positive economic impact to the area.

VIII. ARTS, HUMANITIES, and CULTURAL HERITAGE

GOAL 1: To have a fully functioning Arts, Humanities, and Heritage Council

Objective 1: Designate staff necessary to coordinate the Council and implement a community arts program

Activities:

- The Council will begin regular meetings and coordinate with schools and agencies to promote training, production and marketing of the arts.
- The Council will work to revive community drama for all ages.
- Organize and produce community performances in a variety of venues.
- Create a resource directory of local artists and patrons and devise strategies to engage them.
- Assess funding sources and write grants for implementing "arts" projects.
- Facilitate technical assistance for local artists.
- Support activities such as "Flicks in the Park" and "Shakespeare in the Park" in collaboration with Jackson Parks and Recreation and other agencies.

Objective 2: To have appropriate venues for the “Arts”

Activities:

- Support the “intergenerational center” project to be built on the HCTC Lees Campus that will include an auditorium, exhibition hall, and other community facilities necessary to promote the arts.
- Promote and support an effort to build an amphitheatre at Douthitt Park.
- Support Public Library expansion to include gallery space.

Objective 3: Market and preserve our cultural heritage

Activities:

- Plan and implement downtown revitalization.
- Facilitate the preservation and restoration of historical downtown buildings.
- Coordinate with city/county tourism commission to schedule activities that promote our heritage.
- Support efforts of the local Historical Society.