



Annual Review 2014

Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth



New Initiatives, New Staff Mark 2014

John Molinaro's mission is to build prosperity in a 14,000 square mile region that stretches from Columbiana County in the northeast to Brown County in the southwest – the Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth.

From his office in Nelsonville Molinaro, president and CEO of APEG, reflected on the organization's accomplishments and challenges. He's proud and optimistic.

Companies are growing, wells are being drilled, and workers are learning new skills. And while more is getting done, there's more to do.

Q: What was 2014 like for the Appalachian Partnership?

A: 2014 was a very good year for APEG!

On the JobsOhio side of the operation we came into the year with a goal of closing 10 percent more projects, which we accomplished. And we met our business retention and expansion goal calling on 135 of the region's companies to offer them assistance. We did quite a bit of work inventorying development sites; particularly along the Ohio River where we identified 21 sites. We engaged an engineering firm to work with us and the property owners so that we could get the level of detailed information that will help us effectively market those sites. That's led to pretty significant interest in those particular sites.

2014 JobsOhio/APEG
27 Projects
1652 New Jobs
\$2.2 Billion Capital Investment

Q: What did 2014 look like for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership?

A: Our activities continued to grow. We did MEP projects with more than 75 manufacturing companies and helped them with issues of productivity and profitability. We built out our staff so that we have a more robust team to work with smaller Appalachian companies. As part of our staff expansion we brought on board a continuous improvement engineer who can help us work in depth with companies who want to increase their productivity. There's growing demand for his expertise.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership
In 2014 APEG-MEP tripled its number of projects to 144.

Q: Tell me about the region's wood products industry.

A: We probably have the largest remaining cluster of hardwood furniture manufacturers in America in the region and we're focused on supporting and promoting them. We've identified over 500 supply-chain firms and are working on inventorying their capacities. We're also working on providing technical assistance to those companies.

Through a Make It In America Challenge grant, we hired an individual with extensive international experience in wood products, we couldn't ask for a better level of competence or market understanding.

Q: The Make It In America grant includes funds for worker training. What's being done there?

A: We named the program Upskill, which really is a good description of what we're doing. We are helping manufacturing companies in three key industries – metal fabrication, wood products, and chemicals and polymers – increase the skills of the workers that they already have on board. We have resources to increase the skill level of about 900 workers between now and the end of the grant in October 2016.



John Molinaro, president and CEO, Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth.

Q: What's the latest on the region's shale development?

A: 2014 was a very good year for the industry. We had a lot of drilling activity. More wells are being completed and the new wells are doing substantially better than older ones in terms of output. The heart of the play is farther south than people had originally envisioned. The I-77 corridor south of I-70 has turned out to be more productive than the area north, where the play began. We've seen drilling activity happening as far south as Washington County. Wells in Monroe County are some of the most productive seen anywhere, ever, and I mean that in a global sense. The 2014 production numbers are pretty outstanding.

2014 APEG Shale Play
1,719 Total Wells
318 Drilled Wells
714 Producing Wells

Q: You've called midstream capacity critical to shale development in eastern Ohio. Why is it so important?

A: The midstream is the part of the energy processing industry between the well and the end user. In the APEG region, firms like MarkWest and Blue Racer completed major facilities that help separate out the natural gas components, ethane and propane, for example. We also saw a lot of pipeline infrastructure go in this year. The reason infrastructure is so important is because nobody wants to put \$10 million or more into drilling a hole in the ground and then cap it and wait to get their product to market. Also, we had announcements about additional capacity that will be developed in the next few years. That should keep us on pace with or ahead of existing drilling activity.

Q: Can you do anything to help the region's shale development?

A: Yes. We're adding another staff position that's focused on midstream and downstream opportunities created by the shale drilling. We're trying to capture more of the industries that use the products coming out of the ground, that's what the new, full-time person will do. We're very, very excited about having more resources to work on attracting investment to the region because it means jobs in the midstream and downstream shale activity.

Q: What about industrial sites not along the Ohio River?

A: 2015 is the year that we will begin to gain more information about high value sites in some of our more inland locations, particularly on some of our major transportation corridors. We're continuing to get the word out to development consultants and major companies and industries that are especially well suited for our region and our logistics advantages.

Q: What is APEG's main selling point?

A: We've got a great manufacturing workforce that's really underpriced. That gives us a real competitive advantage. The workers in our region earn, on average, about 84 cents for every dollar that workers in Ohio earn. So we have some opportunities to market ourselves strongly. We've got a very large manufacturing workforce with a very high skill level at a very reasonable price. We'll be out this year trying to make the case on those issues.

Q: What other priorities do you have for 2015?

A: This is a year when we anticipate substantially increasing our efforts to work with smaller and mid-size firms, manufacturing firms with up to about 50 workers. Many, many of those firms are likely to be in the wood furniture industry. We're trying to take advantage of the federal Make It In America project and our ongoing work through the Manufacturing Extension Partnership to really help those small firms do better.

This is also the year the UpSkill Your Workforce training program will hit its stride. We anticipate during 2015 we'll see 400 or 500 workers receive training assistance. That will be good for the workers and good for their companies to help both do better here in Appalachian Ohio.

UpSkill Your Workforce
\$800,000 committed to APEG incumbent worker training.

Q: APEG's staff doubled to 15 in 2014. What are some of those new hires doing?

A: We added a JobsOhio Project Manager who also spends half her time coordinating our work inventorying development sites. With some restructuring we've also been able to double our outreach efforts to larger companies (more than 50 workers.) At the same time we added an additional staff position focused on our outreach to smaller manufacturers (50 or fewer workers.)

We've got a deeper level of assistance available, especially financial assistance, for smaller companies. At the beginning of the year we added a full-time communications position and then towards the end of the year we added an office staff position.

It feels great to be running with a full staff! We're all ready for 2015.

Q: What does the late-2014 major decrease in oil pricing mean?

A: We anticipate that 2015 will produce as much or more gas as 2014. Some will come from wells that have already been drilled but haven't been completed. There will also be a lot of new drilling activity. So far the rig count in Ohio is down just slightly from what it was a year ago, less than 10 percent. Fortunately, the Utica shale play in eastern Ohio, and the Marcellus that's being drilled here as well, are among the most profitable plays in the entire country. Because of that – despite very low oil and gas prices – the companies drilling here are able to make a profit in this market. Those that have announced the largest cutbacks tend to be companies that are very heavily exposed to shale plays in America that mostly produce oil.

Q: What can you share about APEG's Ohio River Strategy?

A: We have started and will continue to work very hard to identify and develop industrial sites along the Ohio River. We're seeing a lot of rethinking globally about where heavy manufacturing should occur and the Ohio River is really an ideal place for it. We've had a number of major projects that we've been working on that are potentially interested in river sites.

Q: Do you expect any of those projects to come to fruition this year?

A: That would be great, but these projects can take several years for a final go or no-go decision to be made, there's a lot of lead time. It's important for us to make sure that we've got the region at the table and that our sites are well represented, that keeps our staff busy. We're making the best case for why Ohio River sites are a good place for these companies to consider locating.

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Appalachian Partnership
for Economic Growth

2014 New Jobs and Capital Investments



Ohio has a competitive and profitable business environment that makes it an attractive place for companies to grow or locate their businesses. Our strategic location and pro-business climate bring together a full range of benefits from low-cost access to customers, a comprehensive supply chain, streamlined regulatory processes and assistance programs that make Ohio work for a growing company with expansion needs.

The Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth, a network partner of JobsOhio, works with expanding companies to secure their investment in Ohio. These successful projects are considered “metric wins” that JobsOhio and APEG measure as a component of their success in creating jobs and attracting new investments.

JobsOhio offers a variety of incentives and support to help companies expand and locate in Ohio. Assistance includes loan and grant programs, state income tax credits, financing and roadwork grants. Projects range from capital for expansion to incumbent worker training, low-interest loans, loans to support next-generation products and services and tax credits for research and development activities. JobsOhio also offers programs in conjunction with the Ohio Development Services Agency.

Not all “metric wins” receive offers for incentives; offered incentives are not always accepted.

First Quarter 2014

Company	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Capital Investments
Ohio Valley Trackwork, Inc.			
<i>Gallia County/Springfield Township</i>	5	27	\$ 0
Road construction assistance to improve large truck and load access allowing better customer service; JobsOhio Roadwork Development Grant and ODOT's Jobs and Commerce grant.			
The New Carlisle, LLC			
<i>Ross County/Chillicothe</i>	13	9	\$ 6,729,013
Renovation of an arson-damaged historic building in the center of downtown Chillicothe for use by Adena Health Care; JobsOhio Revitalization assistance.			
Miba Energy Holding, LLC			
<i>Morgan County/McConnellsville</i>	10	0	\$ 800,000
Company is investing in a shared service center at their McConnellsville campus to house back office operations for North America businesses.			
Ridge Corporation			
<i>Muskingum County/Frazeysburg</i>	40	0	\$ 5,000,000
Acquired 15-acre site for manufacture of lining systems for trailer and truck industry; Job Creation Tax Credit assistance.			
Amanda Bent Bolt Company			
<i>Hocking County/Logan</i>	20	200	\$ 4,300,000
Company is adding 45,000 square feet of production space to its automotive parts plant to accommodate expansion.			
Three Rivers Energy			
<i>Coshocton County/Coshocton</i>	34	0	\$ 27,000,000
Doubled corn storage capacity to meet demand for ethanol; 145,000 gallons daily production uses up to 50,000 bushels of corn.			
The Mason Company, LLC			
<i>Highland County/Leesburg</i>	3	65	\$ 140,055
Makers of animal housing and enclosures added jobs and new software to increase capacity and competitiveness; Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation grant.			
Famous Industries, Inc.			
<i>Guernsey County/Byesville</i>	0	195	\$ 0
HVAC manufacturer received Manager/Supervisor Performance Evaluation training.			
ITW Food Equipment Group, LLC			
<i>Highland County/Hillsboro</i>	33	89	\$ 125,000
Consolidation of operations created new assembly jobs for commercial food processing equipment.			
TOTAL	158	585	\$ 44,094,068

Second Quarter 2014

Company	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Capital Investments
Bellisio Foods, Inc.			
<i>Jackson County/Jackson</i>	91	1270	\$ 17,000,000
Facility expansion added twentieth production line to launch Chili's brand products; JobsOhio grant for new employee training.			
Waterford Tank & Fabrication, Ltd.			
<i>Washington County/Beverly</i>	72	68	\$ 4,119,000
Facility expansion to accommodate growing demand for high pressure gas separators and storage tanks; JobsOhio grant assisted in improving sewer facilities.			
Maca Plastics, Inc			
<i>Adams County/Winchester</i>	22	26	\$ 439,351
Automotive parts maker's expansion project included new equipment purchase; JobsOhio Workforce Grant and Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation grant.			
Consolidated Metco, Inc.			
<i>Ross County/Chillicothe</i>	55	0	\$ 1,314,705
Manufacturer of plastic components for heavy duty truck cabs; JobsOhio Workforce Grant and Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit.			
Oak Chips, Inc.			
<i>Pike County/Waverly</i>	25	21	\$ 0
Purchased equipment to expand into stave production to serve the international cooperage market; Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation grant and Fluor B&W Opportunity Fund support.			
Ohio Valley International, Inc.			
<i>Pike County/Pike</i>	19	0	\$ 1,552,000
Purchased equipment to expand into stave production to serve the international cooperage market; Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation Grant and Fluor B&W Opportunity Fund support.			
TOTAL	284	1385	\$ 24,425,056

Third Quarter 2014

Company	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Capital Investments
Tri-State Beef Co., Inc.			
<i>Gallia County/Bidwell</i>	224	8	\$ 24,575,000
Beef slaughter, packaging and processing facility will process 50 million pounds annually; construction begins 2015; Jobs Ohio Growth Loan, Job Creation Tax Credit.			
iHealth Solutions, LLC			
<i>Lawrence County/South Point</i>	75	0	\$ 646,000
Company provides information technology support for electronic health records relocating their operations to Ohio; JobsOhio Workforce Grant and Job Creation Tax Credit.			
Southland Truck Center, Inc.			
<i>Ross County/Chillicothe</i>	50	14	\$ 11,811,200
Customized installations on Kenworth trucks consolidated into company's first Road Ready Center, a new 100,000 square-foot facility; JobsOhio Workforce Grant and Job Creation Tax Credit support.			
MarkWest Energy Partners, LP			
<i>Harrison County/Cadiz</i>	45	0	\$ 100,000,000
Constructing a \$100 million condensate stabilizing facility to process Utica shale natural gas liquids.			
Sawmiller			
<i>Hocking County/Haydenville</i>	0	10	\$ 170,000
APEG arranged an AEP Ohio grant for new 3-phase electric service to power a new milling machine that helped retain jobs.			
Apex Sports			
<i>Muskingum County/Zanesville</i>	16	0	\$ 60,000
Purchase equipment to manufacture softballs (only softball manufacturer in the U.S.); JobsOhio loan assistance.			
TOTAL	410	32	\$ 137,262,200

Fourth Quarter 2014

Company	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	Capital Investments
Ohio-West Virginia Excavating Co.			
<i>Belmont County/Mead Township</i>	0	0	\$ 0
JobsOhio funds supported a Phase II environmental review of this river-front site to determine site readiness.			
Kraft Foods Group, Inc.			
<i>Coshocton County/Coshocton</i>	300	372	\$ 43,000,000
Kraft will move all bacon production to this facility investing \$40 million and creating 300 new jobs.			
R. K. Administrative Services, LLC			
<i>Pike County/Waverly</i>	120	0	\$ 12,853,000
Retail chain Rural King, opening a 930,000 square-foot warehouse, distribution center and retail store; JobsOhio Revitalization, Job Creation Tax Credit, Fluor B&W Opportunity Fund, and Southern Ohio Diversification Initiative grant.			
Utica East Ohio Midstream, LLC			
<i>Carroll County/Orange Township</i>	185	0	\$1,200,000,000
Support provided to unravel regulatory issues allowing the company to move forward with its major investment in Ohio Utica shale play.			
MarkWest Energy Partners, LP			
<i>Harrison County/Cadiz</i>	145	0	\$ 650,000,000
Connections facilitated with proper regulatory agencies helping move the company's investment forward.			
Plains All American Pipeline			
<i>Jefferson County/Toronto</i>	50	0	\$ 80,000,000
With partners at Ohio EPA were able to fast track a permit for the construction of this condensate storage facility.			
TOTAL	800	372	\$1,985,853,000

JobsOhio (Statewide)

2014

Total Number of Projects	286
New Jobs	21,377
Retained Jobs	52,140
Total Jobs	73,517
Capital Investments by Companies	\$ 6.1 billion

Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth

2014

Total Number of Projects	27
New Jobs	1652
Retained Jobs	2179
Capital Investments by Companies	\$2.2 billion

Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Appalachian Partnership companies are growing and benefiting from training and business support offered by the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP).

Last year, APEG-MEP provided \$501,000 in training and technology/productivity improvements to strengthen the region's ability to succeed in the highly competitive manufacturing environment.

Continuous improvement accounted for 50 percent of last year's 144 MEP training, coaching and facilitating projects. Topics ranged from: standard operating procedures and lean leadership to process mapping and waste reduction.

Another 28 percent of the training focused on workforce opportunities like: supervisor leadership and management coaching.

"2014 was our second full year of operation; we doubled our MEP outreach staff and hired an experienced Lean process expert to work with our manufacturers," said John Molinaro, CEO of APEG. "In 2015 we will expand our reach to support more mid-size and small companies (those with 50 or fewer employees) and will be able to offer even more cost effective assistance using our in-house Lean expert."

Make It In America



Receiving one of only 11 Make It In American Challenge grants awarded nationally in 2013, APEG has used those resources to staff and launch two new initiatives. Forest to Furniture, an effort to develop an Ohio wood products supply-chain database, and UpSkill Your Workforce, a program providing incumbent worker training to three key industries, have each achieved their first-year goals.

Forest to Furniture

Making Ohio's wood product companies accessible online is the plan for the database currently under development by Craig Rosenlund, APEG's forest products supply chain developer. The Forest to Furniture effort recognizes that Ohio hardwoods are highly prized in the international and domestic wood-products trade and that Appalachian Ohio's furniture manufacturers may represent the largest remaining furniture sector the U.S.

According to Rosenlund, who has three-plus decades in management and operations serving the domestic and international wood-products industry, the database will help domestic and international buyers locate Ohio companies who can provide the raw and finished products they need.

"By providing the information about the products our companies provide, we will be able to support their development of new markets along with opportunities to broaden their supply chain and generate new products and services," said Rosenlund.

The 500-plus companies in the database will represent broad industry coverage in the areas of: logging; primary producers (sawmill, plywood); intermediate value-added (planing mills, ripstock/cutstock, components); architectural millwork and moldings; cabinet manufacturing; furniture manufacturing; specialty products (flooring); ancillary services (dry kiln, planing, cut-up, lamination).

Once launched, the Ohio Forestry Association will maintain the database which is being developed by the Voinovich School of Public Affairs, Ohio University, on their proprietary supply-chain software.

In addition to the database, Rosenlund is meeting and working with a variety of companies in the supply-chain to increase their productivity through improvements to manufacturing efficiencies and training.

"From visiting companies representing all manufacturing sectors across the state and providing technical consulting support to them, increasing their supply chain is an important recurring theme," said Rosenlund. "I believe that the benefits of the database will be wide ranging."

Contact: Craig Rosenlund at crosenlund@apeg.com

Ohio MEP estimates over 1350 Appalachian Ohio manufacturing companies with fewer than 50 employees and 315-plus companies with over 50 employees.

Increased support for small companies

Owners and managers in small companies have to wear many different hats and must be singularly focused on getting their product to their customers.

"MEP can serve your company by being the external expert in any area you've identified," explained Dan Rose, MEP outreach specialist. "When I work with you to set your priorities, then it's my job to move those solutions forward. I line up the trainer or find the process improvement expert who can help your company take that next step."

MEP can be the "fresh eyes" a company needs to improve quality/reduce waste, upgrade the HR manual, provide drug-free workforce and safety training or website development.

Continuous improvement in high demand

Continuous improvement/Lean concepts and applications are in high demand across the nation and even higher in the APEG

region. Of the region's businesses, 73 percent rated continuous improvement/cost reduction strategies their biggest strategic challenge versus 68 percent of their peers outside the region. Gearing up to meet this demand was APEG's top MEP goal.

"Lean is all about eliminating waste whether it's wasted motion, raw materials, time or energy – and adding those savings to your bottom line," said Ryan Hagen, APEG's manufacturing/Lean specialist. "What would it mean to your company if you could reduce any area of waste by 20 percent?"

Bringing his expertise in value stream mapping, standardized work instruction, product-flow charts/process mapping and a variety of other Lean tools and processes is Hagen's charge.

Affordable and accessible

APEG-MEP's training, coaching and facilitation are provided at affordable rates on a sliding scale. Our training professionals

have a broad range of industrial expertise and are experienced in Appalachian Ohio's manufacturing culture.

"Prior to the creation of APEG-MEP, it was difficult to find experienced trainers and experts in our rural location. There is a great deal of need to support the deep roots of our manufacturing companies and help them grow and prosper," said Molinaro.

"Knowing how to 'make things' is part of who we are in Appalachia. We need to be sure we're staying up-to-date with quality and efficiency to keep those critical jobs in our communities," he said.

APEG-MEP is part of Ohio MEP and is funded by the Ohio Development Services Agency and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a subsidiary of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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Serving Customers Large & Small

Kraton Polymers

Kraton Polymers is entering its third year as an APEG-MEP client. The global company which produces styrenic block copolymers, has over 400 employees at its facility in Belpre, Ohio.

"Our work with MEP helps us improve our cost position and drives overall global competitiveness through continuous improvement," said Tom Mahlberg, technical manager for the company.

Last year the Manufacturing Extension Partnership provided expertise for two major continuous improvement/Greenbelt efforts at Kraton.

The first focused on generating a process map with the goal of reducing the amount of time required to change from manufacturing one product on the line to making a different product on the same line. The quicker the transition, the shorter the downtime in production. The project was a repeat of a line transition improvement effort conducted in 2013.

"We had great success with our K-1 production-line-transition project in 2013," said Mahlberg. "What that project saved in line transition time represented \$900,000 in revenue and we make two or three transitions every year on that line."

The K-3 line transition project in 2014 has also produced significant saving for the company.

The second project was also a repeat. For the past two years, a class of between 12 and 15 staff selected from different areas in the company (e.g. engineering, procurement, finance, etc.) has received Greenbelt training to learn and apply continuous improvement strategies. Each individual completing the training then developed and implemented a continuous improvement project in his/her department.

According to Dorinda Byers, MEP coordinator, Kraton's saving goal of \$1 million from each Greenbelt class was realized in both 2013 and 2014. A new class is underway with the same goal.

"We've had great success with our MEP partnership and have future projects lined up," said Mahlberg. "We will continue to use the services of MEP."

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Vino de Milo

Milo's Whole World Gourmet produces the specialty food product lines Vino de Milo (salad dressings, pasta sauces, bruschetta toppings, fruit preserves) and JB's Best Sauces (BBQ, salsas, drink mixes) in Athens, Ohio.

Founded by Jonathan Milo Leal in 2003, his first line of products was wine-based pasta sauces to be joined later by wine-based salad dressings. But he says "his eyes were opened to a whole new market when he received his first order from Japan." Milo's has added private label capacity to diversify the company's customer base.

A corporate brand overhaul in 2012 resulted in "a bright, cheerful, colorful logo and packaging that stands out on the shelf" and almost doubled sales by the end of 2013.

Last year Leal learned about MEP's services and worked with Laurene Huffman, MEP project specialist, on two projects.

"Milo's needed some help in solving day-to-day business issues so we connected him with an expert in safety and provided him guidance in human resources," said Huffman. MEP experts completed a Mock Safety Audit and Phase II Safety Training and an HR Compliance Assessment and developed an HR Policy Handbook for the company.

APEG-MEP is helping Leal explore a Good Manufacturing Practices audit of USDA's food manufacturing quality regulations with the Center for Innovative Food Technology, a sister Ohio MEP affiliate. The audit covers methods, equipment, facilities and controls for producing processed food.

"MEP has helped us in two ways – sourcing experts in areas where we needed help to manage our growth and providing a cost share. They make it doable for a small company; with their help it's easier to think about these things," said Leal. The company has 10 employees.

Because they are a small company, Milo's MEP services were provided at a significantly reduced cost. For companies with fewer than 50 employees the training costs are on a sliding scale which considers the number of hours in the project and other factors, explained Huffman.

Milo's currently uses ACENet's production facilities, but Leal's five-year plan is to be in their own facility in Athens and to be five times larger than they are now.

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Economic Developers Learn About Site Selection

Fostering a better understanding of the site selection process by APEG's local economic development professionals was a 2014 goal.

The region's 25 county-level economic development offices often provide the first response when a site consultant or business begins the search to locate a new site or building. The initial electronic questionnaire requires dozens of data points about the property and must frequently be completed within 48 hours.

"Large cities compete for projects on a regular basis but in the APEG region our counties haven't had a lot of experience with the process," said Marty Walsh, VP business development. "AEP Ohio understood the challenge and partnered with us by funding the Community Economic Development Academy (CEDA)."

CEDA was conducted by InSite Consulting, a South Carolina site selection firm. They offered participants a behind-the-scenes, unvarnished look at the site selection process.

"Our first goal is to eliminate as many sites as possible," said Tonya Crist, InSite co-owner. "If our computer review finds missing data in your site application -- you're out!" The first round of the process will often take the number of potential sites from several hundred to fewer than 75.

The county representatives began their professional development journey with a one-day seminar where InSite owners Crist and Rob Cornwell laid out their fast-paced world of site selection and explained why timelines are short and companies seek very specific details about the site and its environment.

Required site information includes availability and capacities of: gas and electricity on site as well as current rates; excess water and sewer capacity; fiber; and access to road and rail. Proposals may require information about proximity



Rob Cornwell, co-owner of InSite Consulting, (center) conducted a mock site visit in Morgan County as part of the Community Economic Development Academy. He was accompanied by Paul Prater, AEP community affairs manager, and Shannon Wells, director, Morgan County Development Office.

to cemeteries, schools, livestock, prisons, factories, etc.

Phase II of CEDA was the completion of a gap analysis to help each county organization understand how well prepared and staffed they were to be effective in economic development as well as evaluating the county's most competitive site or building.

InSite consultants then conducted a mock site visit for each of the counties.

"The economic development staff chose the site and prepared all of the information for the visit just like they would for a client visit to judge the viability of the site," said Cornwell. "We also did a critique at each visit to provide feedback on the site and the community presentation. Many included board and community members in the final sessions as those individuals can be an important part of a site presentation."

The assessment of the region identified these key concerns.

- APEG needs more viable industrial parks and buildings.
- Sites in the regional inventory lack needed infrastructure.
- Funding and adequate staffing are lacking in some counties.

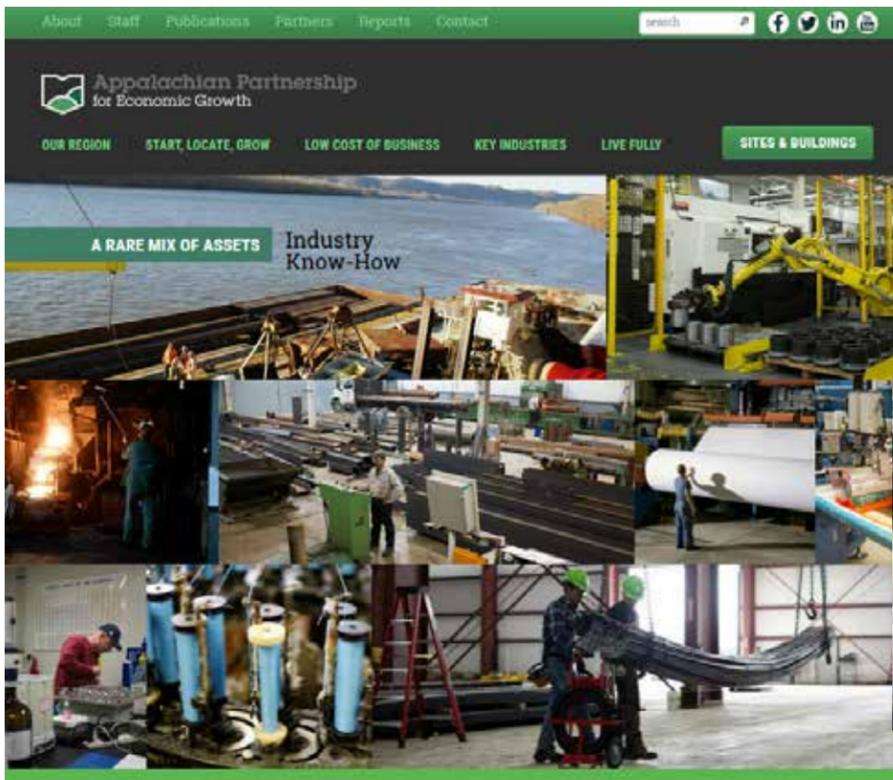
"We have a lot of work to do," said Walsh about APEG's site availability.

"The engagement of the economic development professionals in the region showed their commitment to being well prepared when opportunities present themselves. They're great team members and we appreciate their hard work," said Walsh.

The 12 counties who completed the CEDA process were invited to apply for AEP Ohio grants to help them improve their competitiveness. Grants of \$10,000 were awarded to each of the counties who completed the application.

Receiving AEP Ohio Grants were: Holly Johnson, Adams County; Dorothy Skowrunski, Coshocton County; Melissa Clark, Gallia County; Shane Wilkin, Highland County; Joy Davis, Hocking County; Jennifer Jacobs, Jackson County; Evan Scurti, Jefferson County; Bill Dings, Lawrence County; Shannon Wells, Morgan County; Mike Jacoby, Muskingum County; Jason Kester, Scioto County; and Michele Tipton, Washington County.

Sharing the Message of the Appalachian Partnership



Creating a visual identity and a variety of communication tools for the Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth were high priorities for the past year.

The website was launched in January setting a visual style that was adapted into program logo designs, exhibits, collateral materials and advertising. ASSETS, quarterly print publication, is mailed to over 3,000 readers across the region.

Emails, news blasts and social media are also part of the effort to share information across the Appalachian Ohio region.



To learn more about the Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth go to APEG.com.



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