

Planning For Our Future

Turbulent economic times currently challenge our nation and our state. The West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (WKWIB) and Pennyrile Area Development District (PADD) are taking this time to ensure that our region is prepared for the future. Thanks to support from the U.S. Department of Labor and Economic Development Administration, the WKWIB and PADD have begun a five-month process of identifying future economic development targets and aligning workforce programs around those businesses' needs. National consultants from Avalanche Consulting, Inc. and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) will conduct a multi-faceted, in-depth

evaluation of the region and craft a strategic plan that will result in long-term growth and prosperity.

This process will answer critical questions such as: What characteristics of our region are true competitive advantages? How do individual counties' strengths combine to create a unique environment for business? Where are the gaps in our talent pipeline? What specifically should the region do to expand and recruit companies in tomorrow's high growth sectors?

As a result of this process, the nine-county region will be positioned for the next wave of economic growth and have the expertise, vision and tools to succeed.

The Process

The five-month project will be comprised of two distinct phases:

Phase One:

Workforce Analysis

During the first phase, the consulting team will conduct an in-depth assessment of the Pennyrile region. The process will begin by updating **statistical information about the region's economy and workforce conditions**. The consulting team will conduct focus groups, interviews and surveys to understand local perceptions and vision. Next, an **evaluation of the region's educational infrastructure** and assets will reveal strengths and gaps in the talent pipeline. Phase One will conclude with a series of **strategic recommendations for enhancing skill sets and preparing the region for current and future employer needs**.

Phase Two:

Emerging Sector Analysis & Plan

Phase Two will occur concurrently with Phase One. During this phase, the consulting team will evaluate the region's industry base and recommend **targets for future business recruitment, expansion, and entrepreneurship** initiatives. The process will **conclude with strategic recommendations** for aligning workforce, community, and economic development efforts to prepare the region for target industry growth.

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