

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE



▪ *In-Person Meeting* ▪

AGENDA
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Homewood Suites by Hilton, Capital Ballroom
700 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219
Thursday, January 5, 2023
9:45 A.M.

In accordance with §2.2-3708.3 of the Code of Virginia, public access for this meeting is being provided both in person and through electronic communications means. Video will not be used for this meeting, only audio. The public may remotely participate in this meeting by utilizing the following meeting link:

<https://virginiatobaccocommission.my.webex.com/virginiatobaccocommission.my/j.php?MTID=m4c19bbea837293b683eb494fdfe9cab1>

If participating by phone, please dial:

1-408-418-9388 (toll) and enter meeting number: **2631 326 6747** and password: **78495872**

If during the meeting electronic transmission fails, the public may alert the Commission by calling 804-894-9652 or emailing jbutler@revitalizeva.org. If alerted to a transmission failure, the Committee shall recess until public access is restored.

Welcome and Call to Order	<i>Mr. Ed Blevins, Chair</i>
Call of the Roll	<i>Mr. Andy Sorrell, Acting Director</i>
Approval of the <u>10/4/22</u> Minutes	<i>(published on website)</i>
Public Comment	
Review Feedback Received on Draft 2023-25 Strategic Plan	<i>Mr. Andy Sorrell, Acting Director</i>
Other Business	<i>Mr. Andy Sorrell, Acting Director</i>
Public Comment	
Adjournment	

MEMO

TO: TRRC Strategic Planning Committee
FROM: Andy Sorrell, Acting Director
DATE: December 21, 2022
RE: 2023-25 Update to Commission's Strategic Plan

Update

§ 3.2-3103, *Code of Virginia* requires the Commission to prepare a strategic plan every two years. The Commission last updated its Strategic plan in May 2020. The Strategic Planning Committee (the "Committee") reviewed and provided feedback to staff on draft 1 of the 2023 -2025 Strategic Plan (the "Plan") at their meeting on October 4, 2022. Based on the Committee's feedback, staff revised the Plan to reflect the Committee's direction. That revised Plan (draft 2) and a comparison document noting changes since the draft 1 were provided to the Committee for review and comment at the beginning of November and then to the full Commission for review and comment in mid-November. No additional feedback was received from the Committee or Commission members on draft 2 of the Plan at that time.

In accordance with § 3.2-3103, *Code of Virginia* Commission staff shall solicited input from over 100 local and regional economic developers, the Va. Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services (VDACS), the Va. Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), the Va. Dept. of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), the Va. Tourism Authority, the Va. Resources Authority (VRA) and the Center for Rural Virginia. Staff reached out to these organizations and many more requesting a review and any feedback on the draft. In order to have feedback to share with this Committee in time for the winter meeting, a comment period solicited feedback from Commission partners for three weeks (November 18 – December 9).

The current draft of the Plan (draft 2) and a comparison document summarizing changes between drafts can be found as **Attachments 1 and 2** to this memo – this is the version of the draft partners reviewed.

At the conclusion of the comment period, staff had received a total of 22 responses from partners and 14 that provided specific feedback. A summary of that feedback can be found as **Attachment 3**. The condensed timeframe between our fall meeting in October and the winter meeting in January did not allow for this partner feedback to be reviewed by the Committee prior to the January meeting as has been initially hoped by staff. Staff requests the Committee review the partner feedback attached to this memo and be prepared to discuss with staff and provide direction on how the draft should be revised and a preferred timeline for those revisions. After this review and direction, staff will revise the draft Plan (draft 3) and share with the Committee. Once the Committee is comfortable with the draft, Staff recommends an all-virtual public Committee meeting be held to receive any final input on the revised draft. After this meeting, in consultation with the Committee Blevins and Commission Chairman Ruff, staff will prepare a final draft for the Committee to recommend for adoption at the Commission's spring 2023 meeting.

If a clean copy of the existing 2020 Strategic Plan is desired, a copy can be found on the Commission's website here: <https://www.revitalizeva.org/publications/>

Additionally if earlier copies of the Strategic Plan is desired for review (2016 & 2018) they can also be found on the above website.



A Strategic Plan for the
Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission
2023-2025

January 2023

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About the Commission

In 1998, the Attorneys General of 46 states signed the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) with the four largest tobacco companies in the United States to settle state suits and recover billions of dollars in costs associated with treating smoking-related illnesses. Four states - Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Texas - settled their tobacco cases separately from the MSA states. A portion of the MSA proceeds funded the creation of the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

Chapters [31](#) and [31.1](#) of [Title 3.2](#) of the [Code of Virginia](#) contain statutes governing various aspects of the Commission.¹ Broadly, those serving the Commission may be split into two groups - members (or commissioners) and staff.

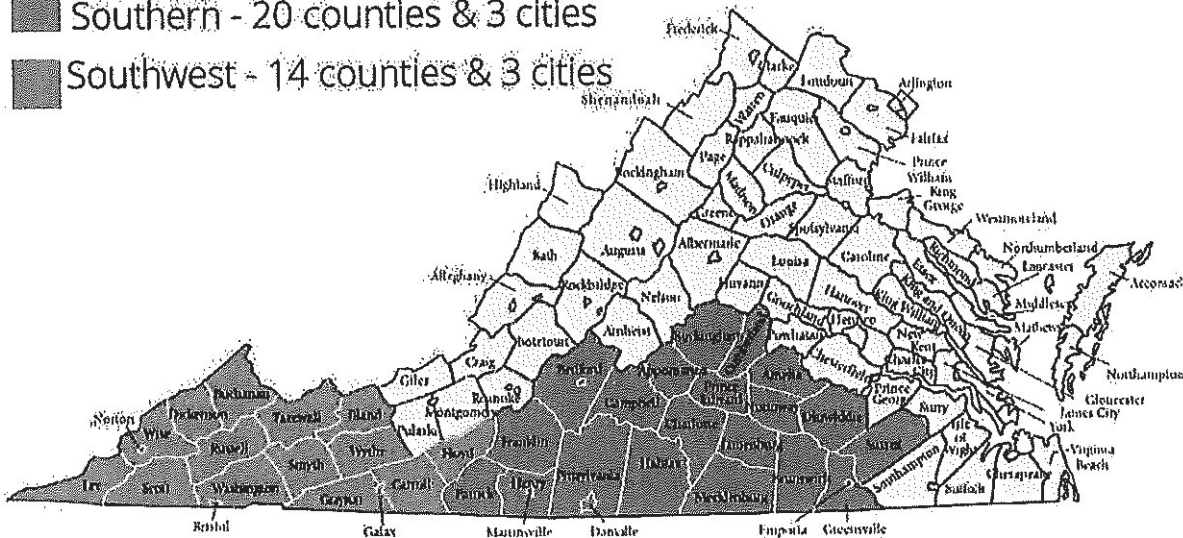
The Commission is composed of 28 members and appoints from its membership a chairperson and vice-chairperson. These and other details on membership are described in [§3.2-3102](#). Members are appointed to one or more committees. Each committee is assigned a chairperson by the Commission chair. Some committees have a vice-chairperson or are structured to have co-chairs.

A current organizational chart of staff may be found on page 18.



Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission *footprint localities*

- Southern - 20 counties & 3 cities
- Southwest - 14 counties & 3 cities



¹ During the 2015 legislative session, section [§62.1-203](#) of the Code of Virginia was amended to include reference to the Virginia Tobacco Region Revolving Loan Fund ([§3.2-3117](#)). This section describes the powers of the Virginia Resources Authority.

Mission

The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission is created as a body corporate and a political subdivision of the Commonwealth and as such shall have, and is vested with, all of the political and corporate powers as are set forth in this chapter. The Commission is established for the purposes of determining the appropriate recipients of moneys in the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Fund and causing distribution of such moneys for the purposes provided in this chapter, including using moneys in the Fund to ... revitalize tobacco-dependent communities.²

Section 3.2-3101, Code of Virginia³

Vision

In today's environment – where markets are largely global and employment is increasingly knowledge-based – the Commission seeks to accelerate regional transformation, giving citizens expansive opportunities for education and employment, and providing communities the benefits of economic stability, diversification, and enhanced prosperity. In particular, the Commission seeks to meet the region's specific challenges related to a historic dependence on tobacco production, textile and furniture manufacturing, and coal production.⁴

As a result, the Commission also recognizes that investments should reflect and directly advance local, regional and state priorities as established by elected and appointed officials, representatives from institutions of higher education, and other community leaders. The Commission views economic development as a partnership and will - as often as practicable - seek input from regional stakeholders to ensure its priorities align with those of the region.

The Commission's work is grounded in an objective and quantifiable economic base analysis. In general, directly productive industries, and the workforce training and development which supports them, do more to further this goal and should be favored over an increase in service industries primarily serving local markets.

Finally, the Commission must focus on ensuring the maximum impact of its expenditures, both as they relate to creating economic growth and as they relate to maintaining the Commission's fiscal sustainability as a critical source of capital to the region the Commission serves.

Priorities

The Commission must continue to adapt to meet the challenges of reduced budgets and a changing economic landscape over the next decade and beyond, if it is to continue being a catalyst for growth and increased prosperity across Southern and Southwest Virginia.

² The statute also contains a section referring to the Commission's mission to indemnify tobacco farmers through direct payments. That portion of the mission was deemed completed and is omitted here for clarity.

³ The full section of the code can be accessed at: <http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title3.2/chapter31/section3.2-3101/>

⁴ The most updated survey economic data (and links to regional and MSA data) are available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessible at: <http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.va.htm>

Specifically, this means that the Commission will continue to prioritize lending activities over grantmaking, be more efficient in the way it conducts business, seek to create new funding avenues through the creation of an outside nonprofit, and make the best use of staff expertise and regional marketing initiatives.

Ultimately, the Commission will transition into an organization engaged in significant business and community lending, increasing access to capital and continuing its workforce and infrastructure missions through targeted grants made from interest on the corpus, earnings on lending, and other development activities such as receipt of grants and donations.

Funding & Strategic Priorities

The Commission receives hundreds of grant and loan applications each year and must determine how to allocate its limited annual budgets to best serve the needs of the Tobacco Region. This will become even more important as the Commission enters its third decade with a diminished corpus and reduced earnings on that corpus. While the Commission will retain the ability to fund large scale, regionally transformative projects at a high level, individual grant awards will be lower than in prior years and the bar that must be cleared to acquire funding will be higher. Further, the Commission will continue to transition away from grants as the primary mechanism for funding projects and towards low or no interest loans.

The three mechanisms that inform staff recommendations and Commission decisions regarding which projects to fund, whether by loan or grant, are: 1) our Key Funding Priorities, which describe the sorts of project categories that will receive preference over all others, even those that follow our General Funding Policies; 2) our Committee Structure and Program Outcomes and Goals metrics; and 3) our General Funding Policies, which describe specific policies related to uses of funds and preferred overall project finance rules.

Funding Priorities

The Commission has narrowed its focus to areas in which it can make the highest impact while remaining a strong steward of its resources. This includes a continuation of business and community lending, while preserving some traditional areas of effort for the Commission like traditional economic development, agribusiness support, and education/workforce development. In no particular order of preference, the Commission's funding priorities shall include:

- 1. Business and community lending:** The Commission's largest budget line is directed toward community and business lending. This approach increases access to capital in the region while also contributing to the Commission's financial sustainability. This program is funded via a full annual corpus invasion of 15%, less any budgeted funds for grant making and administration. This invasion improves the Commission's fiscal position rather than harm it, as loans are usually made at interest rates greater than the yield on the Commission's assets within the State Treasury. This increased lending activity will, in many cases, result in awards consisting solely of loans whereas past guidelines may have resulted in a grant award. The Commission does not intend for its lending program to compete against local community banks, but to provide an alternative means of capital to projects that may not otherwise be a good fit for a local private lender.

2. **Education and workforce development:** As the national and global economies increase focus on human capital, the Commission must continue to support the region's efforts to address economic competitiveness factors and ensure employers can hire top-flight talent. This will remain a focus for the Commission as we believe it presents opportunity for high return on investment and supports long-term economic growth.

The program will continue to be broken out into three categories:

- a. Competitive education grant-making, in which the Commission provides capital to post-secondary institutions for the creation of new programs or to expand existing, in-demand programs.
 - b. The Talent Attraction Program (TAP), in which the Commission offers to pay student loans for people who have specific, desired credentials, contribute meaningfully to their communities, and work in occupations for which there is currently a workforce shortage with the goal of incentivizing people to change their career plan and locate in the Tobacco Region.
 - c. Workforce financial aid, in which the Commission reduces the cost of credential or degree attainment at the region's community colleges and higher education centers.
3. **Agribusiness:** The purpose of the Commission's Agribusiness funding strategy is to promote agricultural and agribusiness growth, development and diversification, as well as reducing dependence on tobacco and tobacco-related business. Even with the transition away from tobacco, agriculture remains the largest economic sector in the Commonwealth and the largest economic sector – by far – in the footprint. The Commission will continue to make support for the agribusiness sector a priority. However, in keeping with the renewed focus on high-impact investments, emphasis will be given to value-added, aggregation, and systemic improvements, rather than research or programs for individual producers.
 4. **TROF:** The purpose of the Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund (TROF) is to provide performance-based monetary grants and loans to localities in the footprint to assist in the creation of new jobs and investments, whether through new business attraction or existing business expansion. Grants and loans, awarded at the Commission's discretion, are evaluated in a manner consistent with the goals of the Commission and amounts are awarded commensurate with the project's impact on the community and/or region in which the project is locating. Evaluation of award amounts are consistent throughout the region and based on the following criteria: prevailing wage rates, number of new jobs, taxable capital investment, industry type, and the possibility of related economic multiplier effect. While the TROF program has been successful in drawing new businesses to the region and creating tens of thousands of jobs, the region remains at a disadvantage relative to more-populous regions with deeper reservoirs of medium and high skill workers. As a result, the added competitive advantage the TROF offers remains important to landing transformative projects.

Incremental improvements to the TROF program have been made over time and these should continue. The program should remain discretionary, reserved for projects the staff are persuaded are truly competitive, and which might not develop absent TROF

funds. Projects eligible for TROF funding must enjoy the support of economic development staff in the locality and region, and the Commission's regional marketing team (when they've been involved). TROF will be reserved for projects in traded sectors that promise to increase the locality's prevailing wage and significant preference should be given to projects that enjoy the support of sister state agency programs like the Commonwealth Opportunity Fund, Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) grants, or similar programs.

5. **Industrial and business infrastructure:** Footprint localities (and the Commonwealth as a whole) continue to have a shortage of available and desirable locations in which to place industrial and business facilities. This shortage of both building stock and infrastructure assets puts the region at a competitive disadvantage when competing with other states to attract top employers along with the jobs and investment they bring. The Commission will continue to make grants and loans to support the creation and improvement of industrial sites, business locations, shell buildings, and telecommunications infrastructure to close this gap and ensure that localities within the Commission footprint can compete successfully for projects. Priority will be given to projects that improve the readiness of sites already under development within the region as opposed to the acquisition and development of new sites.
6. **Small Towns Initiative:** The rural small towns in the Tobacco Region serve as important community focal points and economic centers. Due to changing transportation and economic patterns, these rural communities have faced acute challenges that are often reflected in extremely low-to-medium household incomes, lack of well-paying job opportunities, high rates of out-commuting by the workforce and high building vacancy rates. The Commission desires to support projects that focus attention on revitalizing the footprints rural small towns in a manner that supports local and regional economic revitalization efforts that will attract outside capital investment in rural small towns.
7. **Community Assets and Opportunities:** Many rural areas in the Tobacco Region are fortunate to have local natural resources and cultural assets with the potential to develop into tourist destinations. The Commission supports natural and cultural asset projects that are regionally-impactful and have the demonstrated potential to attract outside investments and visitors to the region.

Strategic Priorities

Along with changes in funding priorities it is necessary to make changes to the way in which the Commission conducts business and seek out ways to utilize existing resources more effectively.

Committee Structure

The Commission has five standing committees, with the option to create new committees on an ad-hoc basis for special purposes. All committees meet at the call of their respective committee chairpersons.

Most committees evaluate grant and loan proposals from eligible applicants, as specified by each Request for Proposal. These committees make recommendations to the overall Commission as to what projects should be funded, in what amounts, and whether said funding should be in the form of a grant or loan. Some committees are operational in nature and recommend policy or process changes to the Commission. The overall purpose and objectives of each committee is described below.

1. Executive - The Executive Committee is the Commission's rulemaking and administrative committee. The chair and vice-chair of the Commission serve as the chair and vice-chair of this committee.
2. Southern Virginia Committee - The Southern Virginia Committee hears proposals from applicants for grants or loans to support economic development in Southern Virginia. Previously allocated funds will continue to be assigned to specific counties, but future program funds will be available to all southern counties, cities, towns and nonprofits within the region.
3. Southwest Virginia Committee - The Southwest Virginia Committee hears proposals from applicants for grants or loans to support economic development in Southwest Virginia. Program funds are available to all southwest counties, cities, towns and nonprofits within the region, without regard to any specific tobacco-related local data, historic or current.
4. Education - The Education Committee oversees the Commission's Talent Attraction Program (TAP) and hears proposals for grants or loans for competitive education funding as well as financial aid support at community colleges and higher education centers throughout the footprint.
5. Incentives and Loans - This committee will oversee both TROF and Community and Business lending policy and awards.
6. Such ad-hoc committees as may be necessary to accomplish specific tasks. A good example is the strategic planning committee tasked with the production of this report.

Improved Fiscal Management

The Commission's efforts toward sustainability have slowed the decline in Commission finances, but they have not stopped it. It is imperative that the Commission take further steps to reduce and reverse the decline in Commission assets and ensure that the Commission will remain a viable and impactful entity for change until the communities the Commission serves are at least as economically successful as the Commonwealth as a whole.

Sustainability: During, and upon completion of the transition to sustainability, the Commission will only reduce its overall financial position in instances of truly game-changing economic development opportunities, meaning facilities with many hundreds or thousands of jobs at or above the prevailing wage and investment in excess of \$250 million. Otherwise, the Commission's focus on sustainability will require that, moving forward, the Commission only grant from earnings on the Commission's corpus, interest on loans, and assets created by the new development team. With this approach, by 2025 the lending portfolio should be generating significant returns, as should the development team, meaning that there is the potential for maintenance and eventual slow expansion of grant-making efforts in the second half of the 2020s. In the next iteration of the Commission's strategic planning process, this fiscal transition will be evaluated, and the Strategic Planning Committee will recommend continuing, pausing, or reversing this transition based on documented financial changes.

Asset management. The Commission's grant agreements require that any grantee deliver, to the Commission, a security interest in any real, tangible, or intellectual property that is purchased with non-TROF grant funds. For many years these assets existed and would occasionally be transferred to the private sector and trigger a clawback, but there has only recently been a systematic approach to cataloguing our property and recording our interest in that property. This means that the Commission is the partial owner of millions of dollars of land, buildings, and high-value equipment across the footprint. Moving forward, the Commission will complete the cataloguing of this portfolio of equipment and real property that has already begun in the field offices and record right to reimbursement notices against all assets over a specific value. Once properly catalogued and right to reimbursement notices have been recorded, the Commission will also explore potential uses of this portfolio and determine if it represents something that could be leveraged to support future activities.

Fund development. (See: Commission Foundation) A transition to better fiscal management, coupled with increased lending and decreased grant activity, means that the Commission has the potential to grow in the years ahead and improve its financial position. However, the Commission also does work – especially in education and workforce development – that could be supported by charitable contributions and grants from other entities, which would take further pressure off of the current corpus. This entity would not be a recipient of Commission funds, rather it would be a new vehicle for bringing funding to support Commission projects.

To facilitate this move to outside funding, the Commission plans to create a non-governmental nonprofit to oversee the acquisition and allocation of funds for the purpose of grant making. This will require the hiring of development staff who will seek grants

from the government and charitable foundations as well as individual contributions from donors that care about the success of Commission-supported communities.

Commission Foundation

Much of the work the Commission undertakes in its largest budget area, education, which includes workforce development and talent attraction, is eminently eligible for funding via other grant-makers and donors. It makes good fiscal sense for the Commission to pursue the creation of an outside nonprofit, which should, once it has built up a portfolio of donors and grants, be able to fund the Commission's education and talent attraction work without requiring significant inputs from the Commission's corpus.

Bring in outside funds. By creating a foundation or nonprofit that resembles those operated by the Foundation for Healthy Youth or any Virginia public university, the Commission will have a vehicle to receive funds from other organizations and individuals. This Commission foundation will seek both private and public sector grants as a means of continuing to fund Commission programs, particularly in education and workforce development.

Management. This outside entity will be managed by a board composed of current and former members and staff of the Commission in an effort to prevent any divide between the two organizations, and the Commission's Executive Director will also be director of the nonprofit. The Executive Committee will appoint the membership of the board of the nonprofit, and those members will serve short terms with the opportunity for multiple reappointments.

Initial funding and staff. The Commission will make the initial investment in this nonprofit for the purposes of hiring a development staffer who will work out of the Richmond office and report to the Executive Director. It will be the job of this staffer to seek grant and donation opportunities that align with the goals of the Commission's education and workforce development programs and, in consultation with the Executive Director, pursue those opportunities. This staffer will also be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the fund.

Legislation. Creation of this nonprofit will require legislation. A bill has been drafted and requires a sponsor in the General Assembly. Members of the Commission should engage in outreach to the General Assembly in favor of this plan's strategic direction, generally, and a change in the Commission's enabling statute to permit the creation of the foundation, specifically.

Investing in the Regions

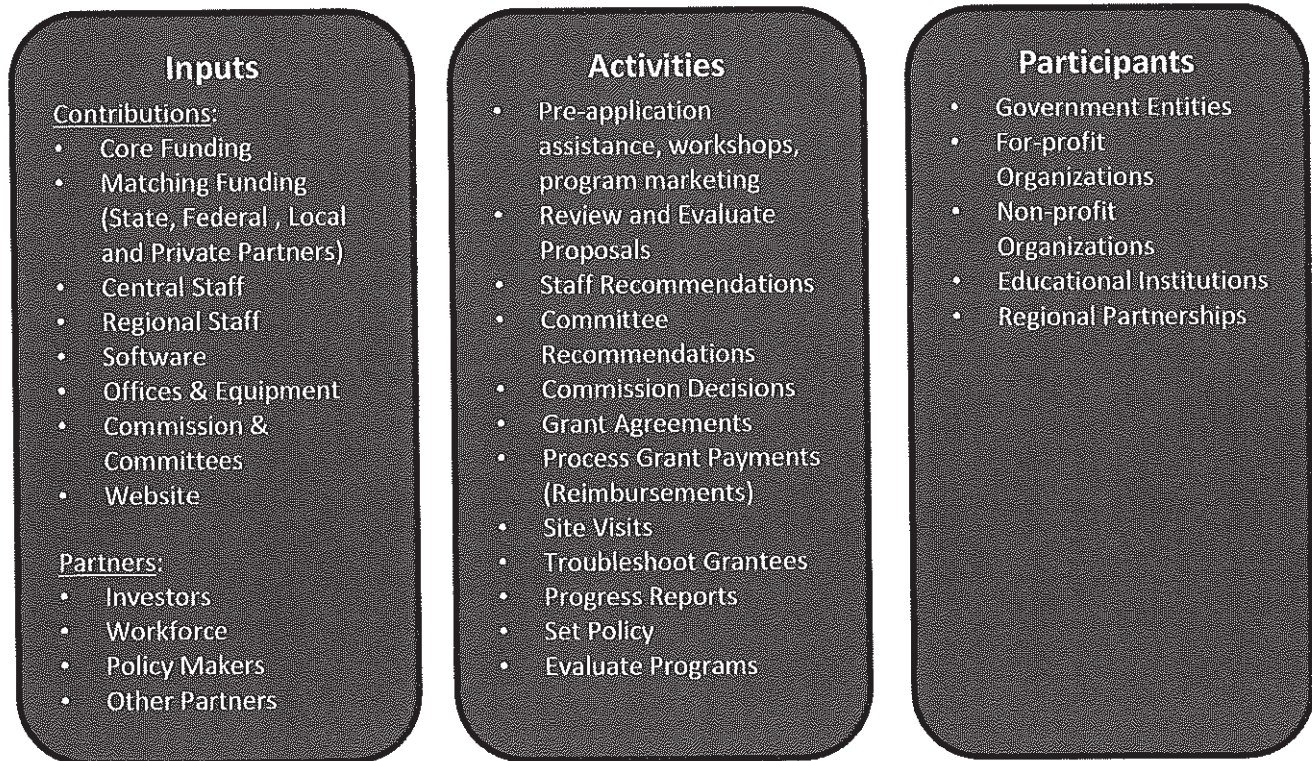
Regional Marketing and Development Efforts. The Commission will implement measures to assess the value and productivity of its regional marketing efforts, Invest Southern Virginia and Invest Southwest Virginia. The Commission will also continue to seek partners to support funding of these efforts to expand promotion of economic development opportunities in its geographical footprint.

Program Outcomes and Goals

Each programmatic committee of the Commission does its work in pursuit of specific “project outputs,” each of which supports one or more of the “targeted outcomes,” the long-term goals of the program. Below, each committee’s work is broken out into one or more logic models that display the specific outputs supporting each programmatic goal. It is the goal of Commission staff to evaluate projects, both before awards are given and in follow-up, on how well they meet the clear metrics laid out in project outputs when grants or loans are awarded. For more detail on specific metrics, please contact Commission staff.

Inputs, Activities and Participants

Broadly, TRRC has five different programs, each with one or more investment strategies. Each program and strategy has specific outputs, or deliverables from the project, which target specific outcomes in the region. Below is a comprehensive representation of the Inputs, Activities and Participants, though some may vary by program.



Investment Strategies, Project Outputs, and Targeted Outcomes

Investment Strategies

- Investment Strategies are the "tracks" selected by the grant applicant.
- Each investment strategy has a specific set of associated outputs and outcome(s).

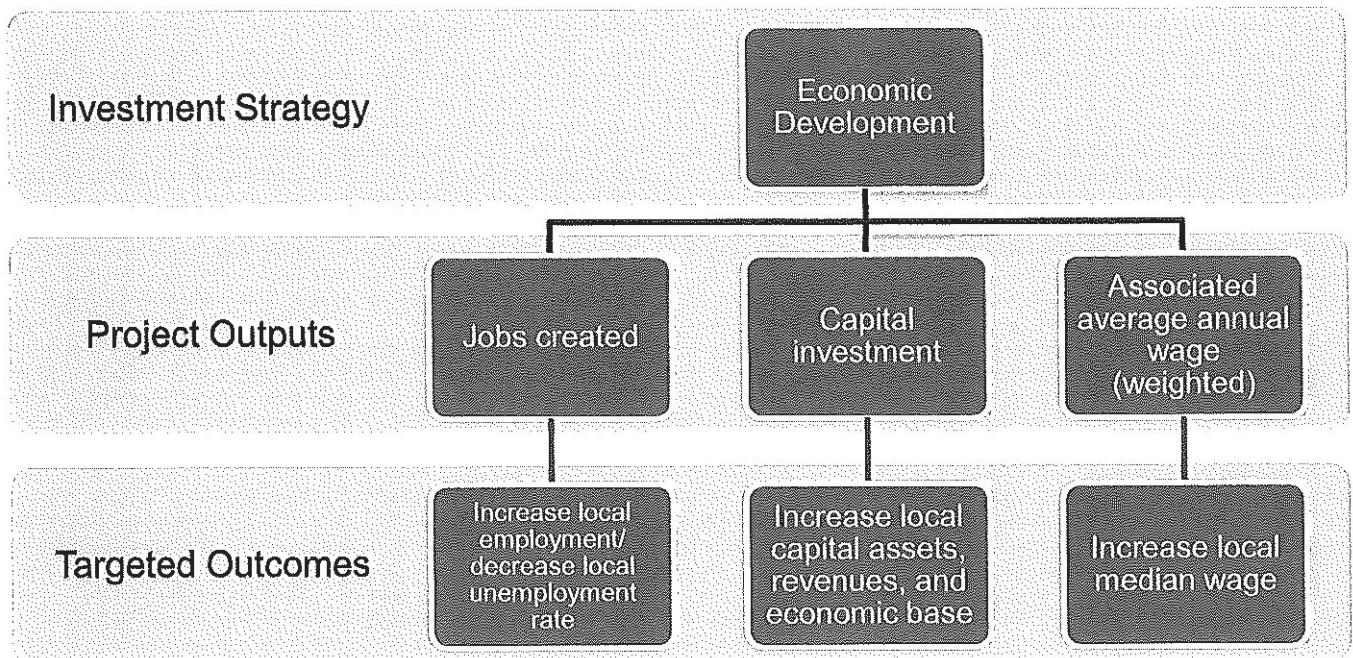
Project Outputs

- Outputs are the legally-binding, contractual obligations specified in the grant agreement.
- Outputs may vary by program, by investment strategy, or they may be the same.
- Outputs are synonymous with "deliverables."
- *Outputs are projected, anticipated, or estimated in the application, and updated with actuals during and at the close of the project*
- For a more intuitive reference, TRRC refers to outputs as "project outputs."

Targeted Outcomes

- Outcomes are the measures being targeted by the program.
- Outcomes are difficult to directly target on a project basis
 - For example, it is unreasonable to put as an output in the grant agreement that a project must decrease the unemployment rate in the locality which it is based.
 - Instead, the output is to create new jobs, which should have a positive effect on decreasing the unemployment rate.
- For a more intuitive reference, TRRC refers to outcomes as "targeted outcomes."

TOBACCO REGION OPPORTUNITY FUND (TROF) LOGIC MODEL

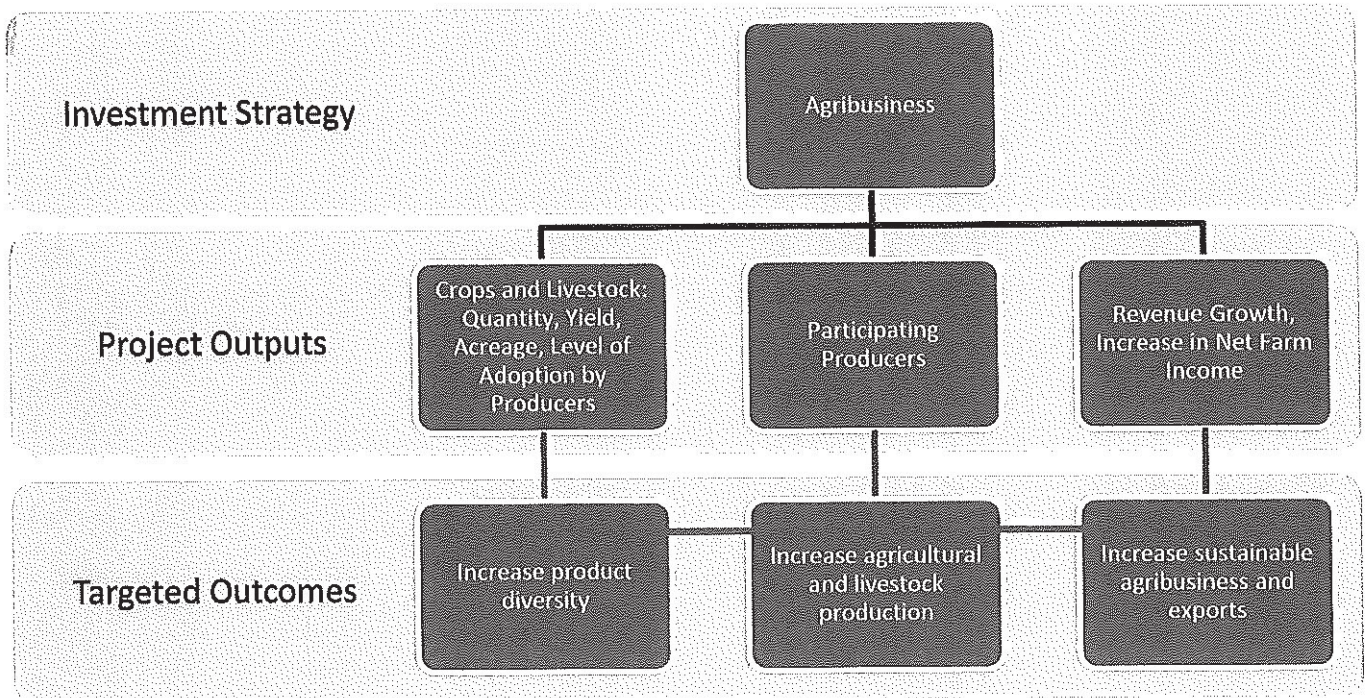


SOUTHERN & SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Agribusiness

Agriculture is the dominant industry in the Commission footprint. The Commission strives to grow and diversify agribusiness in the region through investment in the following types of projects:

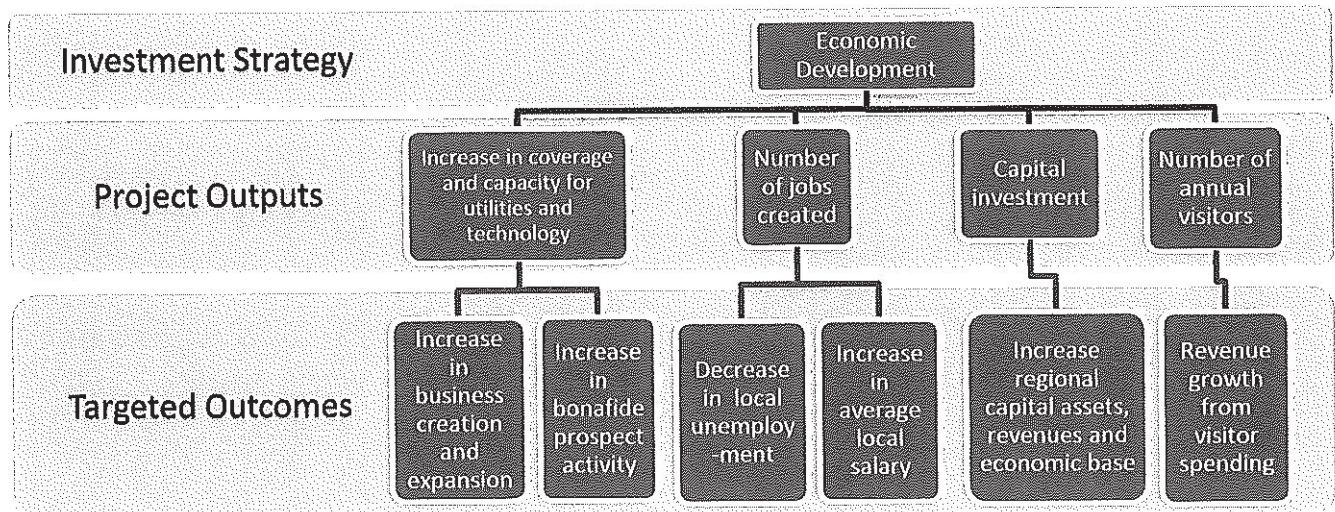
- Commercial Agriculture Product and Food Processing Facilities
- Cost Share Programs
- Crop and Livestock Demonstration
- Local Farmers Markets
- Multipurpose Agriculture Centers
- Wholesale & Retail Cooperative Marketing



Economic Development

The Commission supports investment to increase capacity for economic development opportunities within the region through the following types of projects:

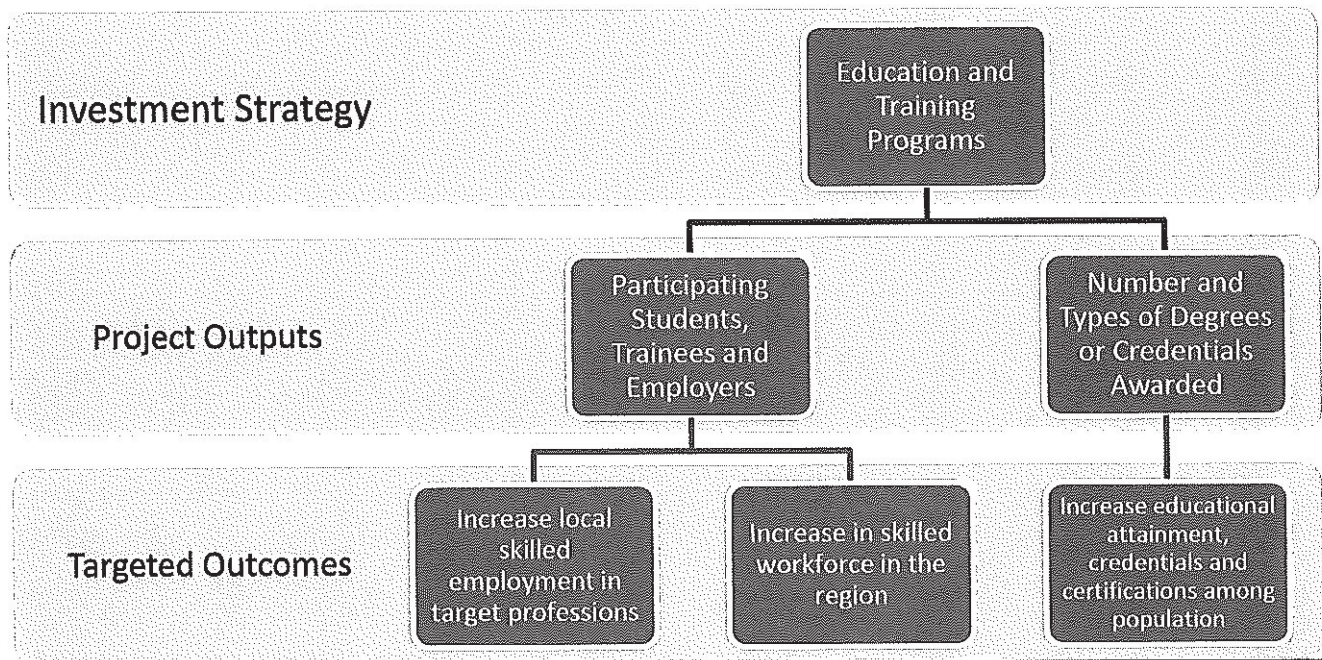
- Physical infrastructure improvements (industrial site development, shell buildings, water/sewer)
- Tourism creation and expansion
- Technology infrastructure and connectivity improvements



EDUCATION PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Through its education programs, the Commission seeks to prepare citizens for new-economy employment opportunities through workforce development, higher education scholarship and loan programs for the two regions and competitive grants to community colleges and other post-secondary educational entities. These types of projects include:

- Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Training Programs
- High School Equivalency (GED) Programs
- Post-Secondary Programs, with a focus on STEM-H
- Workforce Training Programs
- Community College Financial Aid
- Four-year scholarships to attract graduates to the Tobacco Region



Operations

This section describes the internal operations of the Commission. Five areas are covered: Program Design, Meeting Schedule, Loan Fund Operational Description, Data Strategy, and Organization Chart.

Program Design. Each program has specific outputs and outcomes that are directly tied to the goals of each program. The duration of these goals can vary between programs.

- Outputs are specific deliverables required from a project by an awarded applicant (or grantee) to satisfy the obligations of the grant agreement.
- Outcomes are the measures a program targets for effecting change.

A small but important distinction is that unlike outputs, outcomes cannot be targeted directly. Program specific outputs vary because program-specific outcomes vary. Project success is judged on delivered outputs, while program success is judged on effected

outcomes.⁵

Every applicant to a program must clearly articulate and demonstrate how the specific project relates to the goals of the program, what outputs shall be delivered, when such outputs are delivered, and the anticipated effect of these outputs on the outcomes targeted by the program.

Commission staff review and score submitted applications. The criteria used to score an application are pre-established and program-specific, and have remained consistent over the life of the Commission.

Commission staff prepare a report containing background information, an evaluation of the financial viability of the proposed projects, and recommendations on each application in the current pool and distribute the report to the appropriate committee for review in advance of the next committee meeting. Although staff are neither members of the Commission nor members of any committee, they are available before, during, and after committee meetings to answer questions from applicants or members or the public.

If an applicant is awarded a grant, a grant agreement must be signed between the Commission as the grantor, the awarded applicant as the grantee, and the final recipient of the grant funds. Depending on the outputs of a project, the deliverables in the grant agreement may vary within or between programs. Grant agreements are legally enforceable contractual obligations between the signed parties. **Every grant agreement contains clauses that provide legal remedies, including in certain cases a clawback provision, which may be exercised in the event of any unapproved use or misuse of Commission funds, and/or outputs specified in the signed grant agreement not being met by a specified point in time.**

The grantee responds to interim assessments (surveys) on progress made toward achieving the obligated outputs. Interim assessments are program specific. The assessments are intended to provide the Commission with useful quantitative data on the progress of the project toward completion. The Commission or Commission staff may, at any time, request additional information from grantees.

A final assessment is done once a project is completed within the duration specified in the grant agreement. A project is considered complete when the obligated outputs are met or exceeded, or when the obligated outputs either have not or will not be met. In the event of the latter, a clawback may be initiated by the Commission. **Under no circumstances will a final disbursement of funds be made to any grantee before Commission staff have received, reviewed, and validated the final assessment from the grantee.**

A project is closed once all documentation is received by the Commission and all obligations are considered satisfied.

⁵ In practice, it is often difficult to judge a program's success on effected outcomes because of other exogenous effects on that same outcome (e.g. lowering the unemployment rate). Examining the realized outputs of a program over time is another way to judge program success. However, this approach provides no information on the outcomes the program was intentionally and specifically designed to effect.

Meeting Schedule. The Commission meets regularly three times each year, with various committees having met in the weeks leading up to a full Commission meeting:

1. The Commission's winter meeting shall be held in January, prior to the convening of the General Assembly.
2. The Commission's spring meeting shall be held in May or early June.
3. The Commission's fall meeting shall be held in September or early October.

Any additional meetings may be called at the request of the chair, but the Commission has a goal of accomplishing all of its annual business in its three regular meetings. Should an unforeseen event like a global pandemic occur, meetings may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Commission's chair.

With the passage of HB444 (regarding electronic meetings by public bodies) into law during the 2022 General Assembly session, the Commission will evaluate the incorporation of meeting via electronic means for some functions such as called meetings outside of the regular meeting schedule.

Revolving Loan Fund – Operational Description. The Tobacco Commission was authorized during the 2015 session of the General Assembly to set up a revolving loan fund in partnership with the Virginia Resources Authority (VRA).⁶

This loan fund is the preferred funding option for any grant applications in support of projects that are likely to generate sufficient recurring revenue to service loans. This fund is distinct from the Commission's business and community lending portfolio.

When grant or loan requests are made by localities, they are routed to the relevant committee, and evaluated by Commission staff. Commission staff recommend to the committee that the applicant receive no award, receive a grant in some amount, or be reviewed for a loan up to some amount. Should the relevant committee, and then the full Commission, choose to extend a loan, the applicant will be directed to VRA for a creditworthiness evaluation. Upon completion of that evaluation, a loan will be extended from the revolving loan fund in an amount equal to the lesser of the applicants' creditworthiness or their loan offer from the Commission. Upon notice from VRA that a loan will be extended, the amount of the loan will be deducted from the relevant committee budget and transferred to VRA. In future years, when the revolving loan fund has adequate resources from repayments, its funds will be allocated for the use of various committees during the budget process.

When loan requests are made directly by businesses, Commission staff, in partnership with VRA, shall determine the eligibility of the applicant business for a loan. If the applicant is eligible and Commission staff support the making of a loan, VRA staff shall extend a loan directly to the relevant business, and Commission staff shall take any measures necessary to secure pledged collateral or other security necessary to protect the taxpayers.

⁶ The full statute and details can be found in the Virginia Code at § 3.2-3112 et seq.

Data strategy. Data are an integral part of the Commission's work. The Commission shall view and treat data as an asset, and data are leveraged to create value for all stakeholders. Through the collection of detailed grant and loan applications and ongoing grant and loan assessments, the Commission acquires tremendous amounts of data about projects, the region, and grantees within the region.

By making use of modern data analytics, the Commission can ensure strong ROI on its activities while gaining and disseminating new insights into best practices and solutions to region-specific challenges. As the Commission gains better insight into those investments that yield the most return for the region, it will revise grant and loan funding policies to reflect a preference for higher return projects.

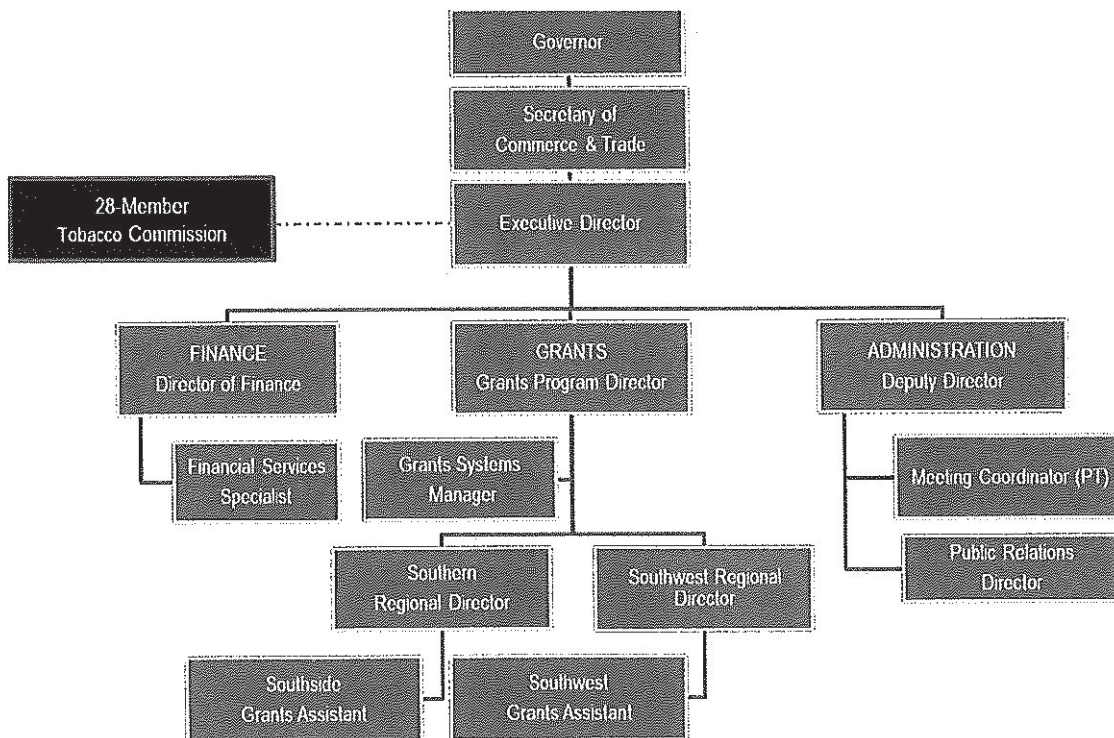
The Commission shall create a clear, consistent, and objective set of criteria for what constitutes successful projects in any funding area and apply these concepts throughout the life of each grant or loan: application, management, and closeout.

The Commission is committed to objective metrics that are consistently recorded throughout the life of any grant or loan.

The Commission shall document comprehensive data management processes and policies. The Commission shall establish a recurring review of these policies for accuracy and workflow improvements.

Appendix A:

Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission Organizational Chart



Comparison Document
2020-2022 and 2023-2025 Strategic Plans

Section	Changes
Overview	First Draft: Updated Service Area Map
Mission	No changes in either draft
Vision	No changes in either draft
Priorities	First Draft: Section was previously called "A New Approach." Minor editing to verbiage.
Funding & Strategic Priorities	No changes to either draft
Funding Priorities	No changes to either draft
1. Business & Community Lending	<p>First Draft: Minor editing to verbiage</p> <p>Second Draft Version: Added underlined verbiage to make clear the Commission intends the lending program to be a gap filler – not a competitor to local community banks.</p> <p>"Business and community lending: The Commission's largest budget line is directed toward community and business lending. This approach increases access to capital in the region while also contributing to the Commission's financial sustainability. This program is funded via a full annual corpus invasion of 15%, less any budgeted funds for grant making and administration. This invasion improves the Commission's fiscal position rather than harm it, as loans are usually made at interest rates greater than the yield on the Commission's assets within the State Treasury. This increased lending activity will, in many cases, result in awards consisting solely of loans whereas past guidelines may have resulted in a grant award. <u>The Commission does not intend for its lending program to compete against local community banks, but to provide an alternative means of capital to projects that may not otherwise be a good fit for a local private lender.</u>"</p>
2. Education & Workforce Development	<p>First Draft: No changes to section</p> <p>Second Draft Version: Added underlined verbiage as alternative to prioritizing previous #8 priority, "Economic Factors Affecting Regional Competitiveness"</p> <p>"Education and workforce development: As the national and global economies increase focus on human capital, the Commission must continue to support the region's efforts to <u>address economic competitiveness factors and ensure employers can hire top-flight talent.</u> This will remain a focus for the Commission as we believe it presents opportunity for high return on investment and supports long-term economic growth."</p>
3. Agribusiness	No changes to either draft

4. TROF	First Draft: Eliminated reference to “Community Business Launch” program
5. Industrial & Business Infrastructure	<p>First Draft Version: Replaced “The Commission will continue to make grants and loans to support the creation and improvement of industrial sites, business locations, shell buildings, telecommunications, natural gas, and electrical infrastructure to close this gap and ensure that localities within the Commission footprint can compete successfully for projects.” with “The Commission will continue to make grants and loans to support the creation and improvement of industrial sites, business locations, and shell buildings to close this gap and ensure that localities within the Commission footprint can compete successfully for projects. Priority will be given to projects that improve the readiness of sites already under development within the region as opposed to the acquisition and development of new sites.”</p> <p>Second Draft Version: Restores reference to telecommunications infrastructure (underlined language) “The Commission will continue to make grants and loans to support the creation and improvement of industrial sites, business locations, <u>shell buildings, and telecommunications infrastructure</u> to close this gap and ensure that localities within the Commission footprint can compete successfully for projects. Priority will be given to projects that improve the readiness of sites already under development within the region as opposed to the acquisition and development of new sites.”</p>
6. Small Towns Initiatives	<p>First Draft Version: New addition to plan “The rural towns in the Tobacco Region serve as important community focal points and economic centers. Due to changing transportation and economic patterns, these rural communities have faced acute challenges that are often reflected in extremely low-to-medium household incomes, lack of well-paying job opportunities, high rates of out-commuting by the workforce and high building vacancy rates. The Commission will make grants and loans to support capital investments in downtown properties and entrepreneurial and business support strategies, with the goal of encouraging the occupancy of vacant, underutilized private buildings and creation/expansion of technology and business service sector jobs.”</p> <p>Second Draft Version: eliminates references to specific strategies, which could be more fully addressed in program RFPs and added info on projects the Commission desires to support (underlined).</p>

	<p>“The rural towns in the Tobacco Region serve as important community focal points and economic centers. Due to changing transportation and economic patterns, these rural communities have faced acute challenges that are often reflected in extremely low-to-medium household incomes, lack of well-paying job opportunities, high rates of out-commuting by the workforce and high building vacancy rates. <u>The Commission desires to support projects that focus attention on revitalizing the footprints rural small towns in a manner that supports local and regional economic revitalization efforts that will attract outside capital investment in rural small towns.</u>”</p>
7. Community Assets and Opportunities	<p>First Draft Version: Restoration of Previous Priority “Many rural areas in the Tobacco Region are fortunate to have local natural resources and cultural assets with the potential to develop into tourist destinations. The Commission will make grants and loans to cultural projects and tourism opportunities that will create jobs, stimulate local business development, and bring significant numbers of residents from outside the footprint into the region.” Second Draft Version: eliminates references to tourism project qualifications, which could be more specifically addressed in program RFPs and added info on projects the Commission desires to support (underlined).</p> <p>“Many rural areas in the Tobacco Region are fortunate to have local natural resources and cultural assets with the potential to develop into tourist destinations. <u>The Commission supports natural and cultural asset projects that are regionally-impactful and have the demonstrated potential to attract outside investments and visitors to the region.</u>”</p>
8. Economic factors affecting regional competitiveness	<p>First Draft Version: Added “The Commission acknowledges that the rising cost of childcare and housing has created barriers to attracting an adequate workforce for rural communities seeking to attract economic development opportunities. These quality-of-life challenges require a creative approach to generate a favorable climate for business growth and human capital expansion in the region. The Commission will consider supporting regional efforts that address these issues and have significant funding support from other public and private partners.” Second Draft Version: This section has been struck and replaced with an update to “2. Education and Workforce Development”</p>
Strategic Priorities	No changes in either draft.

<p>Programmatic, capacity-building, and project development</p>	<p>First Draft: Eliminated in 2023 Plan, as priority has been implemented.</p>
<p>Streamlined Committees</p>	<p>First Draft: Heading replaced with "Committee Structure." Replaced "In a period of reduced budgets, dividing resources among too many committees leads to small grant rounds with correspondingly small outcomes. As a result, the Commission will match narrowed funding priorities with a reduction in the number of committees. The Commission will create a single committee for each region that manages all non-education grant-making and lending while eliminating redundant committees including R&D, Special Projects, Agribusiness, and Business Support committees, and rolling their work into the new regional committees. These two regional committees are not continuations of the existing Southside and Southwest Economic Development committees – they will hear projects that would, previously, have come before some of the eliminated committees, at the discretion of the chairs. Additionally, the executive committee will be slimmed down to one that mirrors executive committees of other organizations: it will consist of the chairs of our committees and the officers of the full Commission. Each committee's work is broken out into one or more logic models, which can be seen at the end of this document, that display the specific outputs supporting each programmatic goal. It is the goal of Commission staff to evaluate projects, both before awards are given and in follow-up, on how well they meet the clear metrics laid out in project outputs when grants or loans are awarded. For more detail on specific metrics, please contact Commission staff." With "The Commission has five standing committees, with the option to create new committees on an ad-hoc basis for special purposes. All committees meet at the call of their respective committee chairpersons. Most committees evaluate grant and loan proposals from eligible applicants, as specified by each Request for Proposal. These committees make recommendations to the overall Commission as to what projects should be funded, in what amounts, and whether said funding should be in the form of a grant or loan. Some committees are operational in nature and recommend policy or process changes to the Commission. The overall purpose and objectives of each committee is described below."</p>
<p>Improved Fiscal Management</p>	<p>First Draft: Eliminated the following, as strategy has been implemented: "Focus on lending. In the past the Commission has relied on grants as the primary means of supporting and incentivizing projects across the region. While this has resulted in positive impacts for the localities we serve, it has also resulted in the</p>

	<p>slow drawdown of Commission funds to the point that the Commission risks not being a financially viable entity within a short number of years. That said, the Commission still retains a significant amount of capital. It is critical that the Commission use this capital in the most efficient manner possible, and that will largely mean lending. The Commission has the authority to invade its corpus for more than \$20 million annually for the next several years – rather than use these funds to make further grants, which would dramatically deplete the corpus, the funds will be set aside for making low, fixed-rate loans. At 4% return, each year's corpus invasion would yield at least \$800,000 new dollars per year, meaning millions of new dollars coming into the Commission per-year by year four. At the same time the Commission will expand lending activity beyond its current stakeholders to include business lending, when that business or its principals have sufficient assets to guarantee a loan or the business's locality or IDA/EDA will guarantee the loan. In the past year, multiple businesses have approached the Commission with purchase orders in hand, but without access to capital sufficient to fill those purchase orders. These businesses will be ideal candidates for lending, and will make the business climate in the Commission's footprint even more competitive relative to the rest of the Commonwealth. Focus on lending. In the past the Commission has relied on grants as the primary means of supporting and incentivizing projects across the region. While this has resulted in positive impacts for the localities we serve, it has also resulted in the slow drawdown of Commission funds to the point that the Commission risks not being a financially viable entity within a short number of years. That said, the Commission still retains a significant amount of capital. It is critical that the Commission use this capital in the most efficient manner possible, and that will largely mean lending. The Commission has the authority to invade its corpus for more than \$20 million annually for the next several years – rather than use these funds to make further grants, which would dramatically deplete the corpus, the funds will be set aside for making low, fixed-rate loans. At 4% return, each year's corpus invasion would yield at least \$800,000 new dollars per year, meaning millions of new dollars coming into the Commission per-year by year four. At the same time the Commission will expand lending activity beyond its current stakeholders to include business lending, when that business or its principals have sufficient assets to guarantee a loan or the business's locality or IDA/EDA will guarantee the loan. In the past year, multiple businesses have approached the Commission with purchase orders in hand, but without access to capital sufficient to fill those purchase orders. These businesses will be ideal candidates for lending, and will make the business climate in the Commission's footprint even</p>
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	more competitive relative to the rest of the Commonwealth.”
Commission Foundation	No changes to either draft.
Investing in the Regions	<p>First Draft: Eliminated due to strategy implementation: “Field offices. The Commission’s field office staff has multiple responsibilities including grant management, metric tracking and grant oversight, project development of prospective grant applications, advising regional leaders on economic and community development initiatives, and recently, tracking of Commission assets. Moving forward, the Commission will better utilize the field offices by increasing the focus of field staff on project development and regional leadership. Field office directors have seen more economic and community development efforts in their respective regions than almost anyone in Virginia. Field staff have long been engaged in this activity on an ad-hoc basis, but making these efforts a stated job duty – and allocating a specific percentage of field office directors’ time for it – will bring them more closely into alignment with local and regional economic development staff and yield greater results. Along with this new focus on project development, field staff will continue to evaluate projects as they arrive and during performance periods. This core mission of the grants team will continue with an increased emphasis on thorough tracking of project metrics throughout the life of the grants and ensuring that all relevant data are not just recorded, but entered into the database in a manner that permits more-detailed analysis. Field staff will also directly monitor Commission assets in the field. The Commission possesses millions in physical assets throughout the footprint and with an increased concentration on cataloguing and potentially leveraging these assets good stewardship will be even more important than it has been previously. Field staff will serve as conduits to other state programs (VEDP, Port, DHCD, etc.) or federal programs (EDA, ARC, SBIR, etc.) that may be beneficial to projects, but this has been ad-hoc. By training field staff in other programmatic offerings, and setting aside staff time for advising partner organizations, communities, and business prospects, we can leverage our field staff expertise to bring more resources into the region without expending Commission funds.”</p> <p>Replaced “Regional Marketing and Development Efforts. The Commission’s regional marketing efforts, Invest Southern Virginia and Invest Southwest Virginia, while distinct in character, are both producing significant return for the Commission. Moving forward, the Commission will continue to support these efforts, and will ensure continuity by transitioning from a grantor/grantee relationship to a contract</p>

	<p>relationship. This has already been approved as relates to Anwyl Consulting and Invest Southern Virginia, and will be reflected in the FY21 budget. The three-year grant period for the team managing Invest Southwest Virginia will be regarded as a trial period, after which that effort could also be transitioned to a renewable contract with the Commission. The Commission will continue to seek partners to support funding of these efforts." With "Regional Marketing and Development Efforts. The Commission will implement measures to assess the value and productivity of its regional marketing efforts, Invest Southern Virginia and Invest Southwest Virginia. The Commission will also continue to seek partners to support funding of these efforts to expand promotion of economic development opportunities in its geographical footprint."</p>
<p>Program Outcomes and Goals</p>	<p>First Draft: Eliminated previous "all-inclusive" logic models and replaced with logic models and outcomes specific to investment strategies.</p>

<p>Operations</p>	<p>First Draft: Minor changes to "Program Design" section to bring to current procedures. NEW ADDITION to "Meeting Schedule:" With the passage of HB444 (regarding electronic meetings by public bodies) into law during the 2022 General Assembly session, the Commission will evaluate the incorporation of meeting via electronic means for some functions such as called meetings outside of the regular meeting schedule. Minor changes to "Revolving Loan Program" to bring to current policies and procedures. No changes to "Data Strategy."</p>
<p>Organizational Chart</p>	<p>First Draft: Updated to reflect current structure and positions, and to eliminate staff names. Second Draft: Updated to add dotted line reporting to the Commission for the Executive Director.</p>

Note: Changes are listed by the comment number and name of organization providing feedback.

Section	Page	Changes
Overview, Mission, Vision	3-4	No comments received.
Funding & Strategic Priorities	4-5	<p>12) SOVA REGIONAL ALLIANCE: Is the TRRCs role as laid out in state code to sustain itself or is it to get its funds in the footprint for positive impact? TRRC should reconsider whether loans should serve as the Commission’s primary means of sustainability. Metrics for review of loan program success by addressing whether grants decrease and loans reduced is not supported by localities – localities are responsible for grant and loan losses. Look at alternative revenue streams from grants and other funding sources that could be leveraged to TRRC funded projects vs. using existing commission funds that should be used on the footprint localities and limit grants that are already matched by localities– TRRC staff is has excellent expertise to seek other alternative funding that could be leveraged.</p> <p>(14) SEC OF COMMERCE & TRADE: TRRC should consider all options for financial sustainability – not just a heavy focus on lending over grant making</p>
1. Business & Community Lending	5	<p>(9) SCOTT CO. EDA: Lending program competes with local banks and other lenders public & private lenders)</p> <p>14) SEC OF COMMERCE & TRADE: In note about lending program intent, consider revising to focus on expanding access to capital, not crowding out private market sources.</p>
2. Education & Workforce Development	6	<p>1) VDACS / SEC OF AG. & FORESTRY: often hear from livestock farmers that there is a shortage of food animal ambulatory veterinarians - could TAP funding be utilized to help attract vets to help with shortage of vets in footprint?</p> <p>(2) SVHEC: If childcare and housing are to be supported, it should be made clearer.</p> <p>(3) FRANKLIN CO. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: keep the first draft version of this that specifically referenced childcare and housing</p> <p>(11) VEDP: local and regional partners find very favorable – TRRC ability to inject capital into post-secondary institutions is critical and allows flexibility that it not possible through other state grants or the traditional state budgeting process.</p> <p>14) SEC OF COMMERCE & TRADE: wording edits to TAP goal – revise to read: “...with the goal of incentivizing growth and attraction of a qualified labor force and attraction of talent to the Tobacco Region.”</p>
3. Agribusiness	6	(1) VDACS / SEC OF AG & FORESTRY: see agribusiness logic model comment.
4. TROF	6	(9) SCOTT CO. EDA: added competitive advantage of TROF remains important to rural localities – grant portion is helpful, but the TROF loan portion is not as helpful and is not being utilized as much as

		<p>intended. go back to just offering TROF grants (i.e. not splitting the TROF incentive between ½ grant and ½ loan)</p> <p>(12) SOVA REGIONAL ALLIANCE: Evaluation of private taxable assets by local Commissioners of Revenue is done different by localities – TRRC should have a better process for evaluating capital assets (real estate, M&T TPP) than solely relying upon CORs for final valuation.</p>
5. Industrial & Business Infrastructure	7	<p>(11) VEDP: VEDP is playing a larger role in funding the big sites of 100+ acres (and 50+ acre sites in GO Virginia regions 1 & 2) – TRRCs should consider focus on funding smaller (under 50 acre) sites to complement VEDPs focus on big sites. Additional, VEDP could also collaborate with TRRC on co-investing in larger, high potential sites to maximize impact</p> <p>(12) SOVA REGIONAL ALLIANCE: industrial sites across region are depleted and will limit future industry attraction – ensure funds are available for assessing new sites as an important funding mechanism and that the development of new sites be considered – if not, it will impact regional competitiveness.</p> <p>(13) DANVILLE: Are you moving away from developing new industrial sites? What happens if a locality has needs for additional sites because the stock is depleted? Localities are looking at compiling more land for new industrial sites/parks because we could run out of available sites before we can get new ones prepared to market.</p>
6. Small Towns Initiatives	7	<p>(2) SVHEC: Preference for the earlier description of the small town initiative from the first draft that was more specific. Also concerns about the note about requiring outside capital investment in rural small towns may not always be applicable.</p> <p>10) VA DHCD: good compliment to the Va. Main Street program – good opportunity for VMS to consult and work with TRRC staff on development of program guidelines</p> <p>(11) VEDP: TRRC’s focus on small town revitalization is critical to enhancing quality of life in the Commission’s rural footprint - long-term investments improve the region & are essential for attracting development projects</p>
7. Community Assets and Opportunities	7	<p>(2) SVHEC: Concerns about the note about having demonstrated potential to attract outside investments and visitors to the region may not always be applicable and limit TRRC support</p> <p>(11) VEDP: TRRC’s focus on natural / cultural assets is critical to enhancing quality of life in the Commission rural footprint – long-term investments improve the region & are essential for attracting development projects</p>

Economic factors affecting regional competitiveness	struck	(2) SVHEC: prefers Commission keep the more detailed description of this from Draft 1 that specifically called out childcare and housing. Not clear how childcare & housing will be addressed now. (3) FRANKLIN CO. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: keep the first draft version of this that specifically referenced childcare and housing (4) VA HOUSING: Current draft of Plan does not address workforce housing – economic transformation cannot occur with places to live and adding housing as a necessary component to mission and strategy seems to be where other state economic development entities are going.
Committee Structure	8	(2) SVHEC: make sure committee names are clearly stated.
Improved Fiscal Management	9	(2) SVHEC: if eliminating this portion may want to consider including wording for ongoing data collection, analysis and impact of the implementation over the next 2-5 years
Sustainability	9	(12) SOVA REGIONAL ALLIANCE: Is the TRRCs role as laid out in state code to sustain itself or is it to get its funds in the footprint for positive impact? TRRC should reconsider whether loans should serve as the Commission's primary means of sustainability.
Asset Management	10	No comments received.
Fund Development & Commission Foundation	10	14) SEC OF COMMERCE & TRADE: Options such as this for bringing in outside funding is worth exploring further.
Investing in the Regions: Regional Marketing & Development Efforts	11	(2) SVHEC: wording like this should be added to the improved fiscal management section on page 9. (12) SOVA REGIONAL ALLIANCE: make sure to consider regional economic development offices for this. They would be more effective to do this especially in conjunction with VEDP and site selection groups.
Program Outcomes and Goals; Inputs, Activities & Participants; Investment Strategies, Project Outputs & Targeted Outcomes	11-12	14) SEC OF COMMERCE & TRADE: Overall in inputs, activities and participant boxes, make sure to include data, data analytics and entrepreneurs.
Program Logic Models	13-15	(1) VDACS / SEC OF AG & FORESTRY: P. 13 agribusiness logic model: in first bullet of growing food processing facilities – consider adding encouragement for utilizing Virginia-grown agricultural products. Providing value-added processing to agricultural products is a worthy investment for the area, but even more worthwhile when the processing includes Virginia products in particular and especially those from the tobacco commission regions. Controlled Environment Agriculture is an important administration priority – adding a bullet referring to CEA facilities is encouraged. Aerofarms investment in Danville is a great example of the impact CEA can have in the region
Operations, Meeting Schedule	15-17	No comments received.
Revolving Loan Fund – Operational Description	17	(6) Virginia Resources Authority: to ensure no conflict with 32. 3113 C, TRRC should consider revising the last paragraph of this section to note that When loan requests are intended for private businesses, Commission staff, in partnership with VRA, shall

		determine the eligibility and may extend a loan through a conduit economic or industrial development authority. Commission staff shall take any measures necessary to secure pledged collateral or other security necessary to protect taxpayers.
Data Strategy	18	No comments received.
Appendix A: Org Chart	19	(2) SVHEC: consider including a version of the org chart with staff names and on without. The dotted line showing the executive director reporting to the Commission and a solid line to the governor makes it unclear who the position reports to.
<u>General Comments</u>		(1) VDACS / SEC OF AG. FOESTRY: mostly in keeping with the administration priorities. If not specifically, at least in general in creating investment and jobs in Southside and Southwest Virginia. no-interest or low-interest loans is one way to provide for long-term sustainability of the funds.
		(5) GENEDGE ALLIANCE: TRRC may be better served by concentrating its core mission, rather than continuing to expand services which could result in a diminished set of returns. With the transition in capital assets and business model, the plan should show the historical and projected return on investing activities as outlined. Important to analyze the ROI and market potential and consider a plan that is focused on where the greatest opportunities for return on investment are, and concentrate there.
		(7) LUNENBURG CO.: retain prior southern Va locality allocation amounts
		(8) USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT: TRRC orientation for partners would be helpful
		(9) SCOTT CO. EDA: use core southern & southwest focus group to solicit plan feedback in future
		(9) SCOTT CO. EDA: Dollar for Dollar match requirement for grants is burdensome for rural localities should be less – look at what other funding agencies do for match requirements for rural places
		(10) VA DHCD: Plan seems to align well with DHCD programs
		(11) VEDP: Interested in understanding how TRRC collaborates with other state partners when considering strategic investments in the footprint region. Lots of overlap with other VEDP, DHCD SBSB and other programs that can continue to be tightened up to maximize overall impact of state investments to generate greater economic growth.