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**Appalachian Regional Commission**

**STATE OF ALABAMA**

**STRATEGY STATEMENT  
2015**

**Robert Bentley  
Governor**

**Alabama Department  
of  
Economic and Community Affairs**

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## **Introduction**

*Vision: Appalachia will achieve socio-economic parity with the nation.*

*Mission statement of ARC: ARC's mission is to be a strategic partner and an advocate for sustainable community and economic development in Appalachia.*

Each year, the thirteen member-states of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) publish strategy statements outlining their plans for the use of ARC funds in the designated ARC service areas of their respective states. Programs and activities benefiting the residents of those areas are eligible to receive consideration for funding from the funds designated by Congress for that purpose. Thirty-seven counties in northern Alabama are included in the service area of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). These counties are listed on the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) web site: [www.adeca.alabama.gov](http://www.adeca.alabama.gov) as well as the ARC web site at [www.arc.gov/counties](http://www.arc.gov/counties). This strategy statement is submitted annually to the Commission and outlines the State's commitment for the use of ARC funds and is in accordance with the State of Alabama Appalachian Development Plan 2011-2015.

The Appalachian Regional Commission is a regional economic development agency, representing a partnership of federal, state, and local governments, designed to address local needs. The Commission was established by Congress as part of the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA) of 1965 and works to enhance economic and community development and improve the quality of life for the residents of Appalachia.

ARC is comprised of 13 governors of Appalachian states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the president. Each year Congress appropriates funds, which ARC allocates among its member states. Each state, in turn, implements its ARC program, implementing the goals, strategies and objectives outlined in its Appalachian Development Plan and Strategy Statement.

## **Overview of Alabama ARC Program**

### Organization

The Governor serves as Alabama's ARC Commission Member and the Governor's Office assigns administrative duties to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). In turn, ADECA Director Jim Byard, Jr. serves as the Governor's Alternate State Member and serves as the state-level contact for those seeking ARC assistance. The goals of Alabama's ARC program are implemented through collaboration and partnerships with federal, state and local economic and community development organizations and multi-county

development organizations called local development districts (LDDs). Alabama's LDDs, or Regional Councils of Local government, play a key role in the implementation of Alabama's ARC program. Governed by boards comprised of elected officials, business people and other local leaders, the LDDs provide invaluable local support and technical assistance.

### Service Area

Thirty-seven of Alabama's sixty-seven counties are located within the Appalachian Region. These counties are: Bibb, Blount, Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Chilton, Clay, Cleburne, Colbert, Coosa, Cullman, DeKalb, Elmore, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Hale, Jackson, Jefferson, Lamar, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Macon, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Pickens, Randolph, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Tuscaloosa, Walker, and Winston.

### Appalachian Development Highway System

Congress established the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) as the centerpiece of ARC's economic and community development program. The ADHS was designed to provide an efficient transportation system to economically and physically connect Appalachia to the rest of the nation. The ADHS is currently authorized at 3,090 miles and Alabama's Appalachian Region has 295.7 miles eligible for ADHS funding. Completion of the ADHS will enhance economic growth and community development in Appalachian Alabama. Alabama has completed 152.4 miles of the ADHS, providing major new connections to Memphis, Tennessee in the west, Atlanta, Georgia in the east, and to the Tennessee state line near Bridgeport in the north. Corridor X, which runs between I-65/I-59 in Birmingham and Itawamba, County Mississippi, provides an important alternative to U.S. Highway 78, a major east-west corridor in the area. Corridor X provides full access to Interstate standard highways to numerous small communities subject to heavy automobile and truck traffic levels. Corridor V in Alabama links the Mississippi State Line to the Tennessee State Line and is now nearly complete with approximately 135 miles open to traffic. Corridor V, which has been constructed in stages, still requires more work - primarily the addition of travel lanes.

While the ADHS provides important highway access, improving connections between the highway network and important rail lines, inland waterways, and airports will assure the global reach necessary for area businesses to compete and succeed in the global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Building on the success of the International Intermodal Center at Huntsville International Airport and capitalizing on the new containerized shipping capabilities now being developed at the Port of Mobile, improved coordination and integration of highway, rail, inland navigation, and aviation services will provide Appalachian Alabama with a powerful new link to the global supply chain, improving the competitiveness of existing businesses and attracting important new enterprise into the region.

## Socio-Economic Status of ARC Alabama

### Ranking System for ARC Counties

ARC funds are allocated to counties within Appalachia using an index-based county economic classification system. This system involves the creation of a national index compiled by comparing each county's averages for three economic indicators: the three-year average unemployment rate, per capita market income, and poverty rate. Resulting values are added and averaged, creating a composite index value for each county. Then, each county in the nation is ranked, based on its composite index value, with high values indicating higher levels of economic distress. Each of the 420 counties in Appalachia is classified into one of five economic status designations, based on its national ranking.

**Distressed** counties are the most economically depressed counties. They rank in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties. **At-Risk** counties are those at risk of becoming economically distressed. They rank between the worst 10 percent and 25 percent of the nation's counties. **Transitional** counties are those transitioning between strong and weak economies. They constitute the largest economic status designation. Transitional counties rank between the worst 25 percent and the best 25 percent of the nation's counties. **Competitive** counties are those that are able to compete in the national economy but are not in the highest 10 percent of the nation's counties. Counties ranking between the best 10 percent and 25 percent of the nation's counties are classified competitive. **Attainment** counties are the economically strongest counties. Counties ranking in the best 10 percent of the nation's counties are classified attainment.

The following table denotes which Appalachian Alabama counties have received a **Distressed** classification since FY2010:

<b>FY 2010</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
Hale Macon	Hale Macon	Chambers Hale Macon	Chambers Hale Macon Pickens Winston	Chambers Hale Macon Pickens Randolph Winston	Coosa Hale Macon Pickens Randolph Winston

### County Economic Designations

As noted above, counties, Coosa, Hale, Macon, Pickens, Randolph and Winston counties are rated in the bottom ten percent (10%) of counties and are designated as **Distressed** counties for Fiscal Year 2015. As **Distressed**, these counties are eligible for eighty percent (80%) funding from ARC for projects in their county, up to the State limit of \$200,000.

As noted above, counties ranked between the lowest ten percent (10%) and twenty-five percent (25%) of the nation's counties are designated **At-Risk** under ARC's classification scheme. Using this ARC indexing system, there are eleven (11) **At-Risk** counties in Appalachian Alabama for Fiscal Year 2015. These counties include Bibb, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, DeKalb, Fayette, Franklin, Lamar, Marion, Talladega and Tallapoosa. As such, they are eligible for seventy percent (70%) funding from ARC, up to the State limit of \$200,000.

**Transitional** counties rank between the lowest twenty-five percent (25%) and the best twenty-five percent (25%) of the nation's counties. For Fiscal Year 2015, Appalachian Alabama has eighteen (18) **Transitional** counties, including Blount, Calhoun, Chilton, Cleburne, Colbert, Cullman, Elmore, Etowah, Jackson, Jefferson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Marshall, Morgan, St. Clair, Tallapoosa and Tuscaloosa. As **Transitional** counties, these counties are eligible for fifty percent (50%) funding from ARC, up to the State limit of \$200,000.

**Competitive** counties rank between the best ten percent (10%) and twenty-five percent (25%) of the nation's counties and Appalachian Alabama has one **Competitive** county, which is Madison County. Madison County is eligible for thirty percent (30%) funding from ARC, up to the State limit of \$200,000.

**Attainment** counties are the economically strongest counties and rank in the best ten percent (10%) of the nation's counties and are not eligible for ARC project funding. Alabama has the distinction of having the **only Attainment** county among the thirteen (13) Appalachian states, which is Shelby County.

### Economic Summary

Alabama's Appalachian Region includes 37 counties in the northern part of the State, with a mix of urban and rural areas. The region covers the Anniston, Birmingham-Hoover, Decatur, Florence-Muscle Shoals, Gadsden and Huntsville Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), as well as part of the Montgomery and Tuscaloosa metros.

According to American Community Survey statistics from 2008-2012, Appalachian Alabama covers 25,673 square miles and has a population of 3,061,793, which is 64% of Alabama's total population of 4,777,326. Alabama's Appalachian population of 3,061,793 represents 12% of the entire Appalachian Region population of 25,233,601.

The total number of persons Ages 25-64 in the Civilian Labor Force in Appalachian Alabama was 1,182,049 as compared to the State of Alabama's total of 1,811,178. Seventy-three point one percent (73.1%) of Civilian Persons Ages 25-64 were in Appalachian Alabama's Civilian Labor Force in comparison with 73.6% for the Appalachian Region and 78.1% of the nation. The unemployment rate in Appalachian Alabama was 8.1%, comparing with Alabama's rate of 8.3% and the Appalachian and National rates of 7.7%.

Educational attainment comparisons of the total population Ages 25 and over showed that 17.4% of the population in Appalachian Alabama had less than a High School diploma, as compared to 14.3% of the nation. Those with a Bachelor Degree or higher in Appalachian Alabama was 22.8% as compared to the State of Alabama's 22.3% and the national figure of 28.5%.

Throughout the 13 state Appalachian Region, 18-24 year olds made up less than 7.5% of the population in 97 Appalachian counties. Of these counties, 67 were outside metropolitan areas, suggesting a possible lack of opportunities in these communities for youth making the transition to adulthood. In Appalachian Alabama, the percentage of residents ages 65 was 13.9%, which was slightly higher than the national average of 13.2% and 1.3% lower than the 13.2% for the Appalachian Region.

The median household income in Appalachian Alabama was \$44,308, compared to \$43,160 for the state and \$53,046 for the nation. The percent of persons in the Alabama Appalachian region in poverty for all ages was 16.9% as compared to the Appalachian percentage of 16.6% and the national percentage of 14.9%. The figures for those persons Under Age 18 living in poverty were 24.3% in Appalachian Alabama as compared to 23.2% for the Appalachian region and 20.8% for the nation.

Alabama's economy continues to recover from the recession, and although slower than anticipated, business executives and industry analysts remain solidly optimistic about the prospects for Alabama's economy for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2014 and for 2015. New and expanding industries in Appalachian Alabama provided more than 11,240 jobs and total investments in excess of \$1.9 billion in 2014. Alabama is growing into a major automobile producer, and has three major international auto manufacturers: Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai and Honda. Mercedes-Benz is located in Vance, which is in two ARC counties, Tuscaloosa and

Bibb, while Honda Manufacturing of Alabama is in Lincoln, which is in the ARC county of Talladega. Several ARC counties benefit from these automotive manufacturers and the Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers serving them. Alabama continues to see growth in other industries, including food processing, rubber and plastics, chemicals, and aerospace, as evidenced by the \$600 million final assembly line for Airbus, which will come on-line in 2015. Madison, Morgan, Limestone and other ARC counties in the area are poised for growth in the aerospace industry as well as with the United Launch Alliance factory in Decatur. Atlas and Delta launch vehicles produced in Appalachian Alabama have carried weather, GPS, communications, surveillance and research satellites on missions designed to strengthen national security and improve life on earth. Site selection consultants continue to rank Alabama as a top state for doing business and give high marks to the state for its labor climate and business environment.

### **Alabama Initiatives**

ARC States' Co-Chair, Governor Robert Bentley, continues to lead Alabama forward in fostering sustained economic growth, improving educational outcomes for Alabama's children, youth and adults, and improving the health and quality of life for all Alabama residents. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and the Alabama ARC program will partner with other state agencies in furthering Governor Bentley's vision for Alabama's future.

The Alabama ARC Program will collaborate with the Alabama Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Alliance, the Economic Development Association of Alabama and others to further the efforts of the *Accelerate Alabama* plan, which identified 11 targeted business sectors for economic development focus and were centered on three economic development drivers: Recruitment, Retention and Renewal. ARC Partner, the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama Foundation, collaborates with seven research university in Alabama to promote and reward high-growth and innovative start-up companies from across the state. Collectively they have established *Alabama Launchpad*, which provides unique opportunities to obtain startup capital and receive expert guidance. Alabama ARC supports such efforts through its participation in ARC's Appalachian Community Capital Initiative and participation in Revolving Loan funds and Angel funds in Appalachian Alabama. Alabama ARC will work closely with the Alabama Department of Commerce to increase trade in Appalachian Alabama, and will participate in trade events as well as events sponsored by the ARC Export Trade Advisory Council. The State of Alabama will support programs that increase export sales of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) from Appalachian Alabama as well as programs that increase the number of SMEs engaged in international trade.

The Alabama State Department of Education's Plan 2020 is the strategic plan to prepare all students to be successful in college and/or career upon graduation from Alabama's high schools and utilizes four priorities which establish the foundation of the plan: Alabama's 2020 Learners, Alabama's 2020 Support Systems, Alabama's 2020 Schools/Systems, and Alabama's 2020 Professionals. The plan focuses all available resources to completely address critical aspects of each component and make significant measurable progress. With established education partners, including the Appalachian Higher Education Network, the Alabama ARC program can contribute to the successful execution of Plan 2020 and improve student growth and achievement, increase the graduation rate, close the achievement gap and increase the number of high school graduates that are college and/or career-ready and compete in the global economy.

The Alabama ARC Program will continue to partner with the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and others to further implement ARC goals, strategies and objectives to provide access to health-care professionals, promote health through wellness and prevention and promote improved health through community-based activities. The program will continue to contract with ADPH's office of Rural Health to implement the Alabama J-1 Visa Program and further collaborate with the Office of Rural Health to address Alabama's continuing trend in the closure of rural hospitals and clinics. Additionally, the program will seek opportunities and pathways to implement programs and form alliances to stem Appalachian Alabama's continued growth of diabetes patients in its population.

### **Strategies for Appalachian Alabama**

One of the key differences between ARC and other federal institutions is in the discretion given to the 13 states in determining how their allocated funds will be spent. Funds must be spent in accordance with ARC guidelines, on projects benefiting those counties designated as a part of the Appalachian Regional Commission's service area, and must meet at least one of ARC's four strategic goals and Alabama's state objectives. Specific strategies the State of Alabama may pursue to achieve our development goals are set forth below:

### **ARC Goal One: Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation.**

#### **Strategic Objective 1.1: Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

State Strategy 1.1.1: Support training programs to increase the proficiency of business development practitioners, economic development officials, and international trade professionals.

State Strategy 1.1.2: Encourage local and regional initiatives that assist communities in developing plans for more efficient and sustainable use of energy.

State Strategy 1.1.3: Support local efforts to form partnerships, both short-term and long-term, between local governments, nonprofit community-based groups, and private businesses for economic and community improvement.

**Strategic Objective 1.2: Diversify the Economic Base**

State Strategy 1.2.1: Provide capital funding for the development and expansion of small business incubators.

State Strategy 1.2.2: Encourage and support revolving loan fund capitalization efforts for Local Development Districts.

State Strategy 1.2.3: Support efforts to improve access to capital for small and medium-sized businesses.

State Strategy 1.2.4: Promote job creation through investment in the development of renewable energy resources throughout Appalachian Alabama.

**Strategic Objective 1.3: Enhance Entrepreneurial Activity in the Region**

State Strategy 1.3.1: Provide support from programs that seek to establish an entrepreneurial climate throughout Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 1.3.2: Support programs and initiatives that provide training, assistance, and other resources to entrepreneurs for the creation and expansion of local businesses.

State Strategy 1.3.3: Support programs that encourage and teach youth entrepreneurship.

**Strategic Objective 1.4: Develop and Strengthen Strategic Assets for Local Economies**

State Strategy 1.4.1: Support local efforts to develop and enhance the assets of Appalachian Alabama to increase the level of domestic and international visitation.

State Strategy 1.4.2: Support infrastructure development to increase tourism, based on the economic impact of the development.

State Strategy 1.4.3: Support training programs and workshops on tourism development for local areas.

State Strategy 1.4.4: Support the development, production, and use of local assets for the energy needs of Appalachian Alabama.

**Strategic Objective 1.5: Increase the Domestic and Global Competitiveness of the Existing Economic Base**

State Strategy 1.5.1: Support programs that will increase goods and services exported from Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 1.5.2: Encourage the use of e-commerce applications by small and medium-sized enterprises to improve their supply, manufacturing, and distribution chains.

State Strategy 1.5.3: Support initiatives that promote increased foreign direct investment in Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 1.5.4: Support technical assistance to businesses and organizations for achievement of operational efficiencies through energy conservation.

## **ARC Goal Two: Strengthen the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy.**

### **Strategic Objective 2.1: Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

State Strategy 2.1.1: Support youth leadership development efforts through leadership training, experience-based education programs, apprenticeships, youth-operated enterprises, and cooperative education activities.

State Strategy 2.1.2: Support efforts to establish ongoing local leadership training programs.

### **Strategic Objective 2.2: Enhance Workforce Skills through Training**

State Strategy 2.2.1: Strengthen programs that provide basic skills and workforce training to increase employee capabilities, improve job skills, and upgrade marketable skills.

State Strategy 2.2.2: Support workforce readiness programs that provide skills necessary to acquire jobs.

State Strategy 2.2.3: Strengthen basic skills programs in the public school system and establish specific competency requirements.

State Strategy 2.2.4: Support programs and mobilize resources to increase adult literacy.

State Strategy 2.2.5: Support programs and initiatives that provide for career planning and placement.

State Strategy 2.2.6: Strengthen programs that provide or enhance science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce training to increase employee capabilities, improve job skills, and upgrade marketable skills.

State Strategy 2.2.7: Support the planning and development of Regional Skills Alliances (RSAs) that provide workforce training for established industry clusters.

### **Strategic Objective 2.3: Increase Access to Early Childhood Education and Educational Opportunities**

State Strategy 2.3.1: Support initiatives that provide opportunities for a quality preschool experience through parent support programs, quality childcare and preschool programs.

State Strategy 2.3.2: Assist communities in developing programs and services for families and caregivers of young children that will ensure that all children are healthy and prepared to succeed in school.

State Strategy 2.3.3: Support educational programs in K-12 that will expand and improve current programs.

State Strategy 2.3.4: Support programs that improve teacher quality by increasing professional development programs.

State Strategy 2.3.5: Support programs that will expand the use of telecommunications in education, especially K-12.

State Strategy 2.3.6: Support initiatives that will provide technical assistance to communities on long-term financing, and resource identification for the continuation of exceptional programs.

State Strategy 2.3.7: Support initiatives that will help parents and caregivers learn positive skills to help them meet the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all children.

State Strategy 2.3.8: Support programs that promote the use of ground source heating and cooling with the installation of geothermal heat pumps in K-12 schools.

State Strategy 2.3.9: Support programs that will increase energy efficiency in schools, especially K-12.

State Strategy 2.3.10: Support program to train and educate teaching professionals and younger Alabamians  
State Strategy 2.3.11: Support programs that advocate the environmental and energy consumption reduction benefits of recycling.

#### **Strategic Objective 2.4: Increase Educational Attainment and Achievement**

State Strategy 2.4.1: Support initiatives that promote lifelong learning.

State Strategy 2.4.2: Support programs that reduce the school dropout rate in our Appalachian counties to equal or better than the national average.

State Strategy 2.4.3: Utilize telecommunications, computers, and other technological capabilities to deliver education and training programs.

State Strategy 2.4.4: Strengthen programs that provide or enhance science, technology, engineering and mathematics training to increase employee capabilities, improve job skills, and upgrade marketable skills.

State Strategy 2.4.5: Continue to improve public education through the implementation of statewide reforms.

#### **Strategic Objective 2.5: Provide Access to Health-Care Professionals**

State Strategy 2.5.1: Support educational programs that train health-care professionals who will locate in Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 2.5.2: Support programs to provide primary health care to Appalachian citizens.

State Strategy 2.5.3: Support the development of health career education pathways linking students at all grade levels – primary, secondary, post-secondary, and post-graduate – and encouraging them to pursue health career training in Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 2.5.4: Pursue healthcare workforce development initiatives that tailor training programs to the needs of workers, patients, and healthcare institutions in rural communities and other underserved areas.

State Strategy 2.5.5: Invest in the physical infrastructure needed to expand and sustain primary health care services, including buildings, equipment, telemedicine facilities, and electronic medical records systems.

State Strategy 2.5.6: Finance the direct provision of primary care and specialty clinical services, but only in cases where start-up operations or emergencies require the short term support needed to gain sustainability.

#### **Strategic Objective 2.6: Promote Health through Wellness and Prevention**

State Strategy 2.6.1: Bring the infant mortality rate into parity with the nation.

State Strategy 2.6.2: Support programs to strengthen prenatal and neonatal health care and to provide education programs to reduce the infant mortality rates.

State Strategy 2.6.3: Support programs to prevent teen pregnancy.

State Strategy 2.6.4: Support projects that expand access to health services through telemedicine applications.

#### **State Objective 2.7: Promote Improved Health Through Community-Based Activities**

State Strategy 2.7.1: Develop the public health infrastructure needed to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the risk factors that lead to poor health.

State Strategy 2.7.2: Build community-based partnerships (among citizens, local officials, schools, business, health departments, and medical professionals) as needed to encourage local health initiatives addressing diabetes, obesity, cancer, infant mortality, substance abuse, or other conditions that disproportionately affect the Appalachian region.

State Strategy 2.7.3: Educate the public on lifestyle changes that can support improved health, by providing proven health and wellness programs and testing new approaches crafted to the Appalachian region.

State Strategy 2.7.4: Work with community officials to pursue capital investments and local policy changes linking health conditions and economic strength, such as the development of farmers markets and walking tracks.

### **ARC Goal Three: Develop and improve Appalachia’s infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive.**

#### **Strategic Objective 3.1: Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

State Strategy 3.1.1: Encourage local leaders to explore innovative, cost-effective arrangements for delivery of services, including service consolidations.

State Strategy 3.1.2: Provide training, consultation, and financial support for local leaders and organizations to build capacity to address infrastructure challenges.

State Strategy 3.1.3: Leverage partnerships and regional efforts to enhance the energy efficiency of the Region’s infrastructure investments.

State Strategy 3.1.4: Support the utilization of high-quality geospatial data for use in planning infrastructure improvements in Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 3.1.5: Promote the coordination of geospatial data gathering and sharing activities among public agencies across Appalachian Alabama.

State Strategy 3.1.6: Encourage adherence to National Spatial Data Infrastructure standards when developing geographic information systems.

State Strategy 3.1.7: Support strategic planning initiatives for local organizations and agencies to capitalize on economic development opportunities created by the Appalachian Development Highway System.

#### **Strategic Objective 3.2: Build and Enhance Basic Infrastructure**

State Strategy 3.2.1: Support job creation and retention by investing in water, sewer, site development, industrial access roads, and other physical infrastructure to serve new and expanding industrial and commercial development.

State Strategy 3.2.2: Pursuant to ARC’s residential service policy, ensure public health, regulatory compliance, and economic opportunity by providing new and existing customers with safe drinking water. The State will give priority to water projects that serve areas with documented health hazards.

State Strategy 3.2.3: Pursuant to ARC’s residential service policy, ensure public health, regulatory compliance, and economic development by providing new and existing customers with wastewater disposal and treatment services. The State will give priority to wastewater projects that serve areas with documented health hazards.

State Strategy 3.2.4: Support the development and construction of strategic community facilities that will enhance opportunities for job creation and retention.

State Strategy 3.2.5: Encourage and support the design and construction of energy-efficient public facilities.

### **Strategic Objective 3.3: Increase the Accessibility and Use of Telecommunications Technology**

State Strategy 3.3.1: Support initiatives that implement Alabama’s Strategic Plan for Telecommunications in Appalachia.

State Strategy 3.3.2: Support efforts to link new and existing telecommunication networks.

State Strategy 3.3.3: Support training in the public, private, and non-profit sectors in Appalachian Alabama in the use of new technologies and applications.

State Strategy 3.3.4: Support projects that will evaluate existing architecture, infrastructure and equipment or facilitate the development of new applications and networks.

State Strategy 3.3.5: Support projects that will assist in the development of architecture infrastructure and equipment for new networks.

State Strategy 3.3.6: Support promising and innovative telecommunications applications and programs.

State Strategy 3.3.7: Encourage strategic investment in telecommunications infrastructure, including the use of conduit for fiber optic cable in basic infrastructure projects that increases local, regional, and global connectivity.

State Strategy 3.3.8: Develop “smart parks” with telecommunications infrastructure, which will meet the needs of information industries.

### **Strategic Objective 3.4: Build and Enhance Environmental Assets**

State Strategy 3.4.1: Support programs to raise awareness and leverage support for the reclamation and reuse of Brownfields properties in industrial areas and mine-impacted communities.

State Strategy 3.4.2: Encourage eco-industrial development that can responsibly take advantage of the Region’s natural-resource assets.

State Strategy 3.4.3: Support regional planning and economic development policies and programs that promote good stewardship of the Region’s natural resources.

State Strategy 3.4.4: Support programs that encourage planning for, and development of, healthy and livable communities.

State Strategy 3.4.5: Support programs that promote the use of landfill gas and biofuels to generate renewable energy.

State Strategy 3.4.6: Support programs to decrease energy usage in public buildings

State Strategy 3.4.7: Support programs that advocate building energy code adoption.

State Strategy 3.4.8: Support programs to educate consumers in energy efficiency and renewable energy practices and methods.

State Strategy 3.4.9: Support programs to stimulate consumer demand and supplier innovation through training and education for residential industry professionals, building professionals, and consumers.

### **Strategic Objective 3.5: Promote the Development of an Intermodal Transportation Network**

State Strategy 3.5.1: Work with state and local partners to identify and develop intermodal transportation facilities.

State Strategy 3.5.2: Support programs to encourage the expanded use of existing intermodal facilities.

State Strategy 3.5.3: Extend rail spurs into industrial areas, with a priority on those that serve multiple sites.

## **ARC Goal Four: Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation.**

### **Strategic Objective 4.1: Foster Civic Entrepreneurship**

State Strategy 4.1.1: Encourage long-term strategic planning by local and regional leadership to take full advantage of the economic and community-building opportunities of the Appalachian Corridor Development.

State Strategy 4.1.2: Support local and multi-jurisdictional forums to promote communication and mutual understanding, and resolution of barriers to completion of the remaining ADHS miles.

### **Strategic Objective 4.2: Promote On-Schedule Completion of ADHS Corridors X and V**

State Strategy 4.2.1: Support efforts to complete Corridor X.

State Strategy 4.2.2: Support efforts to complete Corridor V

State Strategy 4.2.3: Encourage the use of conduit for deployment of telecommunications technology.

### **Strategic Objective 4.3: Coordinate Work on ADHS State-Line Crossings**

State Strategy 4.3.1: Encourage the coordination of technical information, funding disbursements, and construction scheduling between adjoining states to facilitate completion of state-line crossings of ADHS corridors.

The State's maximum threshold for counties designated by the ARC as "distressed" will be eighty percent (80%) with a maximum of \$200,000 in ARC funds per project. The maximum threshold for counties designated by the ARC as "transitional" will be Fifty percent (50%) with a maximum of \$200,000 in ARC funds per project. The maximum threshold for counties designated as "at-risk" may be up to seventy percent (70%) with a maximum of \$200,000 in ARC funds per project. The maximum threshold for counties designated as "competitive" will be thirty percent (30%) with a maximum of \$200,000 in ARC funds per project. ARC funds are ineligible for activities occurring in counties designated as "attainment," except in the case of multi-county projects, which provide clearly defined benefits in one or more "distressed" counties. A waiver of the restriction for "attainment" counties may be requested in accordance with Section 7-6.6 of the ARC Code. Funding for Revolving Loan (RLF) programs will be considered with respect to established Commission-approved RLF Guidelines.

State thresholds for Administrative Grants for Local Development Districts (LDDs) will be fifty percent (50%), except for those LDDs with "distressed" counties: the threshold will be seventy-five percent (75%) with a twenty-five percent (25%) match. The State's Consolidated Technical Assistance program will be funded at a maximum of fifty percent (50%). Projects are considered on a year-to-year basis with a maximum of three years' funding unless there are extenuating circumstances. The State will not fund projects to construct or renovate school buildings, except in emergencies. Project overruns will not generally be considered for additional ARC funding.

When there are project under runs, ARC funds will generally be de-obligated, returned, and made available for other eligible projects. A request for proportional reduction will be given consideration in projects with under runs. Under certain circumstances, the state may waive the state policy maximum of \$200,000 per project. The State will target areas of greatest need, and will respond with ARC funding in emergency situations and whenever special development opportunities arise. The maximum threshold for emergency relief projects and projects considered as special development opportunities will be 80/20.

### **Local Development Districts**

In order to strengthen local participation and use funds effectively and efficiently, the Appalachian Regional Commission works with Alabama and other Appalachian states to support a network of multi-county planning and development organizations, or Local Development Districts (LDDs) throughout the Appalachian region. In Alabama, eight (8) Local Development Districts cover the 37 ARC counties in Alabama. The Executive Directors and staff of Alabama's ARC LDDs are instrumental in the implementation of Alabama's ARC Program. They work with their board members, elected officials, economic development professionals and citizens to identify priority needs of their local communities. In turn, the LDDs develop and implement plans for economic development in their communities which empower local leadership and foster and sustain economic development. (Appendix I contains contact information for Appalachian Alabama's Local Development Districts)

The LDDs which cover Alabama's ARC region are:

**Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments**

**West Alabama Regional Commission**

**Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham**

**East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission**

**South Central Alabama Development Commission**

**Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission**

**North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments**

**Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments**

The counties of Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion and Winston comprise the **Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (NACOLG)**. As Chair of the Region 1 Workforce Development Council, NACOLG holds meetings with members of the community to discuss business, educational and economic issues to improve the quality of life for our citizens.

The LDD's participation in workshops provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission each year enhances the ability to provide information to assist member governments and nonprofits located within the region with applications submitted to ARC. The usage of ARC funds allows these communities and non-profit organizations to leverage their resources (which are usually very limited) but gain results that greatly benefit the northwest region.

The LDD's revolving loan fund program is an economic tool that continues to be used in assisting small to midsize businesses in the region in need of additional financing when their total needs cannot be met by one financial institution. The ability to assist companies is one effort of the LDD that allows companies to create jobs or retain jobs in our region. Annually the LDD participates in a financial seminar with representatives of the UNA Small Business Department, Rural Development and the Southern Development Council to increase awareness of the revolving loan fund program to members of the financial community.

As well as utilizing ARC funds the LDD works with the member governments when funding opportunities become available through agencies such as the Alabama Department of Community and Economic Affairs (Community Development Block Grants, Economic Development Grants, Float Loan Funds); USDA Rural Development, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Transportation, Special Appropriations Program and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Many of our member governments utilize Land and Water Conservation funds to improve indoor and outdoor activities throughout the region.

The staff works diligently in seeking resources and opportunities to enhance economic growth and is proactive in addressing needs within the area. **NACOLG** was awarded \$100,000 EDA grant to support economic recovery in its delivery area. The funds will be used to develop new strategies to recover from major job losses in the past year.

Member governments use services of the LDD staff to develop community long range plans, comprehensive plans, tourism development plans, downtown revitalization plans, redistricting plans, hazard mitigation plans and homeland security plans.

**West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)** serves the Appalachian counties of Bibb, Fayette, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa. The region also includes Greene County, a non-ARC county. For FY 2015, Hale and Pickens counties are distressed, while, Bibb, Fayette and Lamar are At-Risk. Tuscaloosa maintains its Transitional status. In addition to the ARC program, the LDD administers the Economic Development Administration program, the Delta Regional Authority program, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Tuscaloosa metropolitan area, the Rural Planning Organization for the rural counties, the Revolving Loan Fund Program, the Area Agency on Aging programs, and various ad hoc projects for local governments such as the Community Development Block Grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund projects, FEMA and EPA projects.

The LDD continues to participate in the Black Belt Commission, a 12-county state-sponsored initiative to improve conditions in this economically poor area of the state. Black Belt counties in the West Alabama ARC region are Hale and Pickens. WARC's role is focused on managing the communications, families, education, and small business development committees. The committees extend beyond regional lines with members representing counties across the Black Belt area of the state.

The West Alabama Revolving Loan Fund is an on-going program administered by the LDD. Due to the slow economy and the lack of lending by financial institutions, the LDD has seen more activity by way of requests for loan applications. These loan funds have leveraged close to \$23 million and created or retained 1,010 jobs in the region.

Additional activities include the annual update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) required by the Economic Development Administration. The CEDS is posted on the LDD's website so that interested individuals and communities may have ready access to a wealth of data on the region. The LDD also updates and maintains the Regional Directory of federal, state and local officials including U.S. Senators and Representatives, the governor and cabinet, state legislators, municipal and county officials, and various other personnel. The CEDS and the Regional Directory are posted on WARC's website along with many other documents that are pertinent to the region. In addition, the LDD updates data on each water and sewer system in the region. The data include maps, number of customers, water sources, type and capacity of water storage facilities, water usage, miles of lines, type of treatment, rates, and contact information.

**Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB)** serves Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby and Walker counties. This LDD continues to assist its local governments with planning, technical assistance, and implementation.

The Building Communities Program, primarily funded by transportation dollars, provides affordable planning and technical solutions for the intelligent design and adaptation of community infrastructure in order to best serve residents. Programmatic goals are the promotion and preservation of (1) economic development, (2) land use, transportation and community facilities and services, (3) housing, (4) natural and cultural resources, and (5) intergovernmental coordination.

With the support of these funding programs and community contracts, the planning staff continues to help communities with downtown revitalization planning, strategic planning, master plans, neighborhood plans, and implementation tools like zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations. Additionally, the planning staff has begun to focus on land banks, vacant property utilization, and the widespread use of smart code and sustainability principles.

The economic development staff continues to support communities with its revolving loan fund programs, small business assistance, grant assistance and management, and the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and supporting the regional development goals, which are:

- To foster regional cooperation.
- To develop and maintain a strong, competitive workforce.
- To promote relationships among the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
- To establish a well-connected, accessible, multi-modal highway, freight and public transportation network.
- To provide optimal infrastructure in order to support current industries as well as attract new industries.
- To market and improve regional assets.
- To cultivate a competitive, attractive quality of life.

RPCGB continues to provide business funding through its Revolving Loan Fund. The RLF has closed over 170 loans totaling over \$6.7 million, leveraging over \$77 million in private funding and creating or retaining approximately 1000 jobs. The staff provides small business assistance by linking businesses with banks and partnering with the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other business resources in the region. The staff also maintains an accounts receivable lending program for incubators in the region. These notes are generally low-cost, short-term micro loans that use receivables as collateral.

The staff continues to provide its member governments with assistance in matching funding needs with sources and managing reporting during and after project completion.

**East Alabama Regional Planning & Development Commission (EARPDC):** (Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties) are served by the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC). EARPDC continued to increase leadership and administrative capabilities of local government officials through training seminars held periodically in association with the monthly meetings of the EAC Board of Directors. EARPDC also encouraged local officials, staff, and boards to participate in statewide conferences and training sessions by mailing brochures to its mailing list. EARPDC also maintains a website with similar information.

The leadership and staff of **EARPDC** collaborate and partner with numerous national, regional and state agencies to enhance economic and community development within the region. They are fully engaged and play a major role in the activities of the Region 5 Workforce Development Council and are responsive to changes in the economies of the communities within their service area. The LDD was instrumental in the application and subsequent awarding of a 2013 Appalachian Livable Communities grant. **EARPDC** worked with local community leaders to develop a plan to further develop its tree farm, expand the farmers market program, promote restaurants that buy locally, and incorporate an education component on healthy eating and food production to benefit local schools.

**South Central Alabama Development Commission (SCADC):** serves Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, and Pike Counties. Macon County is the only Appalachian county in Local Development District 5 and the county of 21,452 (2010 U.S. Census) is an ARC designated “distressed” county. Plagued by higher than average unemployment, high family poverty, and low per capita income rates, Macon County has undergone and is experiencing efforts to remedy these troubling figures. During FY 2014, various projects received and continued to receive ARC support and funding through the implementation of the goals and objectives identified in the State’s Annual Strategy Statement, as well as other local plans and strategies. Development efforts continue in the areas of tourism, industrial recruitment, health care access and infrastructure improvements.

**(CARPDC)** serves Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery Counties. Elmore County is in Alabama's ARC Region and is designated as a Transitional county for FY 2015. CARPDC serves Elmore county and its seven municipalities and assists **Central Alabama Regional Planning & Development Commission** member governments with a number of activities on a regular basis, from budgetary to human services and policies to operational including planning services, transportation services, grant assistance, annexation and economic development assistance.

The **North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG)** serves Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan Counties which are all located in Alabama's ARC Region. Each ARC County served by NARCOG is designated as Transitional for FY 2014. The director and staff of NARCOG provide technical assistance to local governments in the preparation and submission of grants from various funding sources, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, Economic Development Administration, Community Development Block Grant, Land and the Water Conservation Fund. NARCOG provides grant and technical assistance to fire and rescue departments in applying for grants through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Grant Program. As part of its planning program, NARCOG assists its local governmental entities in preparing comprehensive, downtown revitalization and hazard mitigation plans; zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and various other studies on a contract basis as requested. NARCOG can also provide technical assistance to local governments in regard to zoning and subdivision issues or questions.

governments in studying the feasibility of project ideas an

**Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG):** DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, and Marshall Counties are served by the Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG). The District had a 2011 estimated population of 644,312. TARCOG helps local governments improve the quality of life for the region's more than 550,000 residents. The Council does this by obtaining funding for local government assistance, coordinating local governments' responses to regional issues, and providing a wide range of services to the region's governments and residents. TARCOG helps member governments work together to address issues best solved cooperatively, rather than independently. TARCOG also provides services and technical assistance to different communities that are unable to provide their own personnel due to funding issues. The services are in three program areas: Aging, Economic Development, and Planning. TARCOG strives to be an advocate for, and partner with, the governments and citizens of the Region to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

Operating under this mandate, TARCOG provides a wide array of results oriented services to local governments in the region, including assistance with governmental functions such as economic development and job creation as well as project funding associated with community development.

## **Program Initiatives for FY2015**

### Available Funds

It is anticipated that ARC Alabama in FY 2015 will receive an amount similar to that of FY 2014. At this time, spending is expected to follow the historical trend from prior years, with spending allocated across all of ARC's goal areas.

### Special Initiatives

In the past, ARC's Federal Co-chair has periodically singled out a special opportunity or strategy to complement the Commission's proven methods of increasing the economic attainment of the Region. These regional initiatives have historically focused on areas such as telecommunications, leadership development, international trade and entrepreneurship, and asset-based economic development. Due to budget constraints and a reduction in funding, these regional initiatives have now become a part of the area development program within each state and projects within these areas are left to the discretion of each state.

### Asset-based Economic Development

Asset-based development leverages what is unique to an area, playing to community strengths. By contrast, support for the strengthening of generic weaknesses in a region's economy does not fit well into an asset-based development framework.

Proposals for funding asset-based economic development projects must demonstrate that they will contribute to the achievement of the goal.

In identifying the advantages of the Region as a whole, four broad opportunities for development become apparent. These opportunities involve the leveraging of cultural, natural, community-based, and structural assets. Examples of development strategies based on these assets are given below.

- **Cultural** – Building *creative* economies by capitalizing on traditional arts, cultural heritage, and new and existing programs for attraction of visitors, both domestic and international, has paid off for a number of regions across Alabama and the Appalachian Region. These strategies have included creation of heritage trails, development of apprenticeship programs, use of traditional retail venues and electronic commerce to market indigenous products, and highlighting the Region's music and narrative traditions.

- **Natural** – Appalachian Alabama has long been known for its natural assets, and the gateway communities leading to them stand to benefit greatly from increased visitation and spending. A sustainable, asset-based development strategy for these natural resources maintains their character while allowing for greater enjoyment of outdoor activities such as fishing, camping, white-water rafting, and rock climbing. Specialized agricultural development, including the processing of specialty food items, fish farming, and organic farming adds value to an activity that has traditionally been a primary economic pursuit. Getting the most from the Region’s productive hardwood forests by maximizing sustainable timber harvesting and value-added processing can create jobs and local wealth.
- **Leadership/Community** – It is often said that a community’s greatest assets are its organizations and its residents, especially those that take leadership roles in helping the community thrive and prosper. A comprehensive asset-based strategy builds community capacity, encourages citizen involvement, and fosters collaboration among business, government, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations to act as catalysts for community and economic development. Successful leadership/civic capacity projects allow a community to rise up to meet the increasing demands of growth and change.
- **Structural** – Appalachian communities can turn local liabilities into opportunities by focusing on strategies such as brownfield redevelopment, adaptive reuse of real estate, and downtown revitalization. Converting overlooked and underused facilities into industrial parks, business incubators, or educational facilities has shown positive results across Appalachia. Throughout the Region, communities and businesses are integrating development and management practices to leverage what they have—historic buildings, abandoned railroads, and old mines—to build and enhance economic vitality.

*Telecommunications, Technology, Workforce Training*

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) will seek to increase the use of technology, distance learning, telemedicine, video arraignment, economic development, and other telecommunications within Appalachian Alabama. The Alabama ARC Program will continue to work with regional and local initiatives and projects in effort to provide telecommunication, broadband and fiber optic access and technology opportunities to underserved areas of Appalachian and continue project development in technology and technology education which empowers the citizens of Appalachian Alabama to compete in the global economy. Workforce development and training efforts will focus on high growth and high demand occupations, including green and renewable energy related occupations and industrial technology and maintenance specialties related to Alabama’s specific industrial sectors, including auto manufacturing.

### Energy Blueprint

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) will continue to promote ARC's Energy Blueprint program in collaborating with ADECA's Energy Division. The Alabama State Energy Program, will direct the State Energy Program (SEP) activities toward changing the behavior of participants in energy markets by increasing awareness of energy efficiency products, services and practices, supporting programs that contribute to a reduction in U. S. imported oil dependency and enhancing the resiliency of our energy system. Alabama's goals and objectives are:

- Increase the use of renewable energy and promote energy efficiency in Alabama
- Promote the production, distribution and use of alternative transportation fuels, alternative fuel vehicles and the use of biofuels in Alabama
- Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy technology
- Promote carpools, vanpools, ridesharing, and public transportation
- Advocate energy code adoption for residential and commercial construction
- Promote the use of ground source heating and cooling in K-12 schools
- Decrease energy usage in public buildings
- Advocate building energy code adoption
- Educate consumers in energy efficiency and renewable energy practices and methods
- Stimulate consumer demand and supplier innovation through training and education for residential industry professionals, building professionals, and consumers
- Train and educate teaching professionals and younger Alabamians
- Advocate the environmental and energy consumption reduction benefits of recycling
- Reduce impacts of energy shortages and/or disruptions

The Alabama strategy for implementing the State Energy Program is to foster programs that address the following areas:

- Renewable energy will be advocated through presentations, partnerships, information distribution, workshops, taskforce development and other means promoting biofuels, bioenergy and solar energy
- Alternate transportation fuels, especially renewable biofuels will be promoted through regional workshops, taskforce participation, presentations, stakeholder coordination and website development
- Promote the use of landfill gas and biofuels to generate renewable energy

- Promote the local government loan program to local governments and K-12 schools and provide zero-interest loans for energy conservation improvements, energy audits and building retrofits
- Promote energy efficiency in industrial facilities and participation in the DOE Industrial Technologies program to improve processes and practices that reduce energy use and cost of operation
- The Rural Water System Leak Detection Program will reduce energy usage and water loss
- Energy Codes Outreach and Advocacy Program will promote the adoption or update of energy codes on the local level
- Carpool and vanpool rideshare matching will be promoted to metropolitan and rural areas by promoting the CommuteSmart program through information distribution, presentations and internet communication. Public transportation will also be promoted through marketing materials
- The State Buildings Energy Efficiency Program will increase energy efficiency in state facilities and advocate life-cycle costing to permit the expanded procurement of ENERGY STAR products through state purchasing
- Performance constructing will contribute toward the reduction of energy consumption in state buildings and will be marketed to state agencies, local governments and schools
- The Building Energy Codes Programs will increase residential and public building energy efficiency through advocacy of local government adoption and enforcement of the complete International Residential Code and public building lighting and thermal efficiency standards
- Energy consumer market transformation will occur through public energy education, stimulating demand for ENERGY STAR products, residential building education, and K-12 energy education
- Waste generation impact on the environment and energy consumption to produce end products will be reduced through recycling advocacy
- Promote the use of ground source heating and cooling with the installation of geothermal heat pumps in K-12 schools

### Special Initiatives (Other)

The State of Alabama will continue to participate in the ARC Export Trade Advisory Council (ETAC) and will support efforts to increase international trade and export development in Appalachian Alabama. The State will also assist in recruiting industries for trade expeditions and trade shows related to ETAC. The Alabama ARC Program will advance the Appalachian Regional Commission effort, *Growing the Appalachian Food Economy*, to foster economic diversification and revitalization by promoting local food systems and sustainable agriculture and integrating agriculture and ecological components into educational initiatives and projects. ARC projects in Madison and Jefferson counties are integrating local food systems by partnering with local industries, schools, food banks and other community based organizations. Working with established ARC partners such as Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourism will allow for the continued growth related to the Food economy and all sectors of tourism within Appalachian Alabama.

### **State ARC Program Policies**

The State of Alabama's Appalachian Regional Commission Program will focus primarily on areas of highest need, areas suffering from economic depression, areas with existing health hazards, areas where projects will have the most significant impact, and areas that are not able to help themselves. Each project for which ARC funding is requested will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and must contain performance measures consistent with those set by the Commission in their Performance Plan for FY 2015. ARC funds will not be used for workforce development projects if it is a duplication of funding through the Workforce Development program. The Local Development Districts (LDDs) are encouraged to solicit as many proposals as possible within their service area so that the needs of the Appalachian people can be identified. The ARC program manager works closely with the LDDs and local government officials as well as nonprofit organizations to address the needs of Alabama's Appalachian citizens. The State of Alabama will work closely with national and local partners to foster public and private partnerships to achieve these goals and objectives. All project applications submitted will be required to include performance measures as a part of the application process. All projects submitted to the state for ARC funding must have output and outcome measures included in an evaluation from the grantee. All required forms and information related to Alabama ARC funding can be found at:

<http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/ced/Pages/Appalachian-Regional-Commission.aspx>

## Appendix I

### LDD Directory

#### **NORTHWEST – Region 1**

*Executive Director:* Keith Jones  
*Address:* Northwest Alabama Council  
of Local Governments  
PO Box 2603  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662  
*Telephone:* 256-389-0500  
*E-mail:* [kjones@nwscc.edu](mailto:kjones@nwscc.edu)  
*Counties Included:* Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion, Winston

#### **WEST ALABAMA – Region 2**

*Executive Director:* Robert B. Lake  
West Alabama Regional  
Commission  
4200 Highway 69, North, Suite 1  
P. O. Box 509  
Northport, AL 35476  
*Telephone:* 205-333-2990  
*E-mail:* [robert.lake@westal.org](mailto:robert.lake@westal.org)  
*Counties Included:* Bibb, Fayette, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, (Greene)

#### **Greater BIRMINGHAM-Region 3**

*Executive Director:* Charles Ball  
*Address:* Regional Planning Commission  
Of Greater Birmingham  
Suite 200  
1731 First Avenue, North  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
*Telephone:* 205-251-8139  
*E-mail:* [cball@rpcgb.com](mailto:cball@rpcgb.com)  
*Counties Included:* Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Cherokee, St. Clair, Shelby, Walker

#### **EAST ALABAMA – Region 4**

*Executive Director:* James W. (Bill) Curtis, AICP  
*Address:* East Alabama Regional Planning  
& Development Commission  
(1130 Quintard Ave., Suite 300)  
P.O. Box 2186  
Anniston, AL 36202  
*E-mail:* [Bill.Curtis@earpdc.org](mailto:Bill.Curtis@earpdc.org)  
*Telephone:* 256-237-6741  
*Counties Included:* Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, Tallapoosa

**SOUTH CENTRAL ALABAMA – Region 5**

*Executive Director:* Tyson Howard  
*Address:* South Central Alabama  
Development Commission  
5900 Carmichael Place  
Montgomery, AL 36117-2345  
*Website:* [www.scadc@adss.alabama.gov](http://www.scadc@adss.alabama.gov)  
*Telephone:* 334-244-6903  
*E-mail* [thoward@scadc.net](mailto:thoward@scadc.net)  
*Counties Included:* Macon (Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Montgomery, Pike)

**CENTRAL ALABAMA – Region 9**

*Executive Director:* Greg Clark  
*Address:* Central Alabama Regional  
Planning & Dev. Commission  
430 South Court Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
*Telephone:* 334-262-4300  
*E-mail* [gclark@carpdc.com](mailto:gclark@carpdc.com)  
*Counties Included:* Elmore (Autauga, Montgomery)

**NORTH CENTRAL – Region 11**

*Executive Director:* Jeffrey Pruitt  
*Address:* North Central Alabama Regional  
Council of Governments  
P. O. Box C  
Decatur, AL 35602  
*Telephone:* 256-355-4515  
*E-mail* [jeffrey.pruitt@adss.alabama.gov](mailto:jeffrey.pruitt@adss.alabama.gov)  
*Counties Included:* Cullman, Lawrence, Morgan

**TOP OF ALABAMA –Region 12**

*Executive Director:* Nancy Robertson  
Top of Alabama Regional Council  
of Governments  
5075 Research Drive, N.W.  
Huntsville, AL 35805  
*Telephone:* 256-830-0818  
*E-mail* [Nancy.Robertson@tarcog.us](mailto:Nancy.Robertson@tarcog.us)  
*Counties Included:* DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, Marshall