BIG SANDY
COMPREHENSIVE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY 2023 - 2027
RESOLUTION OF THE BIG SANDY AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
2023 - 2027 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

WHEREAS, the Kentucky Area Development Districts, in coordination with the Department for Local Government (DLG), Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), are engaged in a Commonwealth-wide, community-based, strategic planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Big Sandy Area Development District Board of Directors, CEDS Steering Committee completed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to assure compliance with eligibility for funding through EDA; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors recognizes the 2023 – 2027 CEDS as the Big Sandy Area Development District’s consensus strategy and template for future economic growth and revitalization in the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Big Sandy Area Development District Board of Directors approves and adopts the 2023 – 2027 Big Sandy Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for submission to the Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, and Department for Local Government.

Adopted this 22nd day of November 2022.

Chair

Executive Director

SERVING FLOYD, JOHNSON, MAGOFFIN, MARTIN AND PIKE COUNTIES
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

## 2023 - 2027

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The economic development, sustainable growth, and resiliency of the Big Sandy region relies on a solid comprehensive planning effort that makes an honest evaluation of existing conditions and charts a strategic course for the future. The Big Sandy Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the result of that planning process, creating a tool to guide our development strategies and activities for the next five years. Guided by a diverse group of stakeholders including local governments, economic development professionals, business leaders, educators, and workforce developers, the present plan is a data-driven approach to growth and development. The CEDS plan analyses the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the region, establishes a set of five-year goals and objectives, and creates a framework to evaluate progress and adapt as the region moves forward.

The 2023 – 2027 Big Sandy CEDS identifies three overarching goals for the region; regional economic development focused on both industrial recruitment and nurturing local entrepreneurs, building and maintaining a regional infrastructure for the 21st century and beyond, and, building a regional ecosystem to strengthen, support, and expand regional tourism.
The 2023 – 2027 CEDS has been created for regional stakeholders and local governments as well as the U.S. Economic Development Administration by the Big Sandy Area Development District in Prestonsburg, Kentucky. The Big Sandy Area Development District is a multi-county and city planning and economic development organization serving the five counties of Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin, and Pike in eastern Kentucky. Big Sandy ADD is recognized by the EDA as the region’s Local Development District. In this role the Big Sandy ADD facilitates the development of the plan and assists in implementation and evaluation of the strategies identified. The ADD also assists local jurisdictions and organizations in pursuing funding for projects from the EDA and other federal, state, and private resources. Big Sandy ADD staff have been guided in the CEDS development by a regional CEDS Steering Committee made up of a group of stakeholders drawn from various disciplines and locations across the Big Sandy region.
II. Summary Background

Environment and Demographics

Geography

The Big Sandy district is comprised of the five eastern-most counties in Commonwealth of Kentucky. Bordering both Virginia and West Virginia the district spans 1,988 square miles of steep, lush mountainsides and narrow, windy river valleys in the heart of America’s central Appalachian Mountain region. Eastern Kentucky’s picturesque mountain setting makes the region an ideal location for outdoor recreation and activities featuring ample opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, cycling, hunting, fishing, camping, kayaking, rock climbing, and ATV trail riding to name just a few. At the same time, the landscape provides some natural constraints and challenges as well. Flat, developable land across the region is somewhat scarce, limiting opportunities for most larger-scale industrial and agricultural development. The same rivers that provide kayaking and fishing amenities also bring not infrequent flooding events while the mountainous terrain poses unique design challenges for water systems and other utility distribution. Still, the geography of the district, and the benefits of that mountain landscape, create a unique quality of place for the enjoyment of residents and tourists alike.

Topographic Rendering of Elkhorn City, Pike County
History and Culture

Originally a sparsely populated section of the larger Cherokee tribal territory, the Big Sandy region experienced significant influx of immigration by Scottish, Irish, English, German, and French settlers throughout the nineteenth century. Early commercial ventures in the region included timber production, fur trapping and hunting, and apple and tobacco farming. With the beginning of commercial coal mining in the region in 1900, agriculture and timber pursuits were eclipsed by larger scale coal mining operations. Commercial coal production was later supplemented with oil and natural gas extraction, leading to a fairly specialized regional economy focused on fossil fuels for energy production.

Early commercial coal mining companies created full-scale towns around their operations to house and support their workforces. These “coal camps” featured rows of often identical single family houses, company stores for groceries and supplies, schools, churches, and often recreational facilities. Some coal towns featured municipal swimming pools, movie theaters, and even golf courses. These small, insular communities created strong local identities and pride of place that persist long after the closure of the coal mines and the decline in the population.

The blend of a variety of central and western European cultures, the lingering memory of life in the company coal camps, and relative geographic isolation of the Big Sandy region has helped to forge a distinctly Appalachian culture. This cultural heritage is evident in local food traditions, in the local arts and crafts, and especially in the country music traditions that characterize the region. Such a high concentration of country music superstars have come from the Big Sandy region and neighboring counties that the primary transportation corridor, US Highway 23, has been officially designated as a National Scenic Byway named the “Country Music Highway.”
Current Demographics

Populations in the Big Sandy region have declined steadily over the past two decades as the primary industries, coal and gas production, have dwindled. Current population in the region stands at 140,720, a 12% decrease from the year 2000. Unless this trend is reversed, current population projections predict population loss to accelerate over the next few decades with a further 12% decrease by 2030 and a whopping 30.5% decrease by 2045. For an in-depth analysis of future population projections see the Kentucky State Data Center’s Population and Household Projections Report 2020-2050 at https://louisville.app.box.com/s/ndp7uvqbi6xtsv1sd2ylntvaer02kkq

Population History

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Source: US Census Bureau; Intercensal Population Estimates

In addition to increasing outmigration, the Big Sandy region faces other concerning demographic conditions including an aging population and poverty and disability rates higher than other areas of the state. Currently 18% of the region’s population is aged 65 years or higher. The percentage of low-income persons in the region is 24%, much higher than the state average of 16%. Statewide the rate of persons of working age living with a disability is 15.8% while in the Big Sandy region, the percentage of disabled people aged 18 to 64 is a much higher 24%.
Current Economic Conditions

People and Earnings

In 2021 the labor force in the Big Sandy region comprised 42,153 people. The annual average unemployment rate in the region for the same year was 7.3%, higher than both the state average of 4.7% and the national average of 5.3%.

Per capita personal income in the region varies from a high of $41,330 in Floyd County to a low of $32,383 in Martin County. All counties remain below the state per capita income of $47,339 for the same period (2020). Over the five year period from 2015 to 2020 counties in the region saw an average increase of 23.3%.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment continues to rise in the region with an average high school graduation rate of almost 96% and more than 42% of the working age population having at least some college education.

Existing Industry and Employment

The top employment sectors in the Big Sandy region are health care, education, retail, and mineral (coal, oil, and gas) extraction. The region’s largest employer is Pikeville Medical Center in Pike County with 3,028 employees. In all but Pike County, the county boards of education remain the largest single employer. However, overall those large employers represent only 2% of the regions workforce, the majority (62.8%) work in firms with only one to four employees.

Existing Infrastructure

Transportation

Early settlers were able to rely on the Big Sandy River as a primary transportation route, moving goods and people in and out of the region via barge and small steamboats. Today, the river that gives the region its name is navigable exclusively by sport and fishing craft, making it ideal for kayaking and paddling sports, but shifting transportation to roads and railroads.
With the advent of commercial logging and later coal mining, rail became a major transportation asset for the region and remains significant today. Both rail and highway corridors in the region developed with the primary goal of transporting coal from the area north to riverports along the Ohio River. The region’s primary highway, the US 23 Country Music Highway, bisects the region parallel to the Big Sandy River to provide a four-lane arterial connection to the nearest interstate highway, I-64 north of the region in Catlettsburg.

The region is linked to the Lexington and central Kentucky area, including access to I-75 and I-64 by the Mountain Parkway. In 2014 the expansion of the Parkway began with the goal of eliminating the remaining two-lane section of the road between Magoffin County and its intersection with I-64 near Winchester. Work on the final sections are expected to be completed in 2024. The final section of the Parkway expansion between Salyersville and Prestonsburg was announced in August 2022 and is expected to begin design in 2023.

Two small regional airports serve the Big Sandy region, Pike County Airport – Hatcher Field in Pike County and the Big Sandy Regional Airport in Martin County. Both airports are small, general aviation facilities with runway lengths of 5,300 feet and 5,000 feet respectively. Big Sandy Regional Airport is in the process of completing federally-funded improvements to the safety area.

Water and Wastewater Capacity

Providing municipal water and sewer service to the entire Big Sandy region has long been a primary goal for local leaders. The sometimes drastic changes in elevations between homes and neighborhoods in the district along with distance between homes provide unique challenges to water systems that providers in other regions of the state rarely encounter.

Currently 90% of the Big Sandy region’s population is served by municipal water systems while the remaining 10% rely on private wells, cisterns, or – in especially remote areas – hauled water. Municipal wastewater systems are not as well developed as the region’s water systems. Only 29% of the population is currently served by municipal wastewater systems, primarily within cities or along major highways and population centers. The vast majority of remaining households rely on septic systems and packaged treatment plants. In some remote regions illegal straight line
pipes to streams still exist. The region’s water and wastewater providers continue to seek state and federal funding to expand service to unserved households in the region with the goals of reducing reliance on wells for water service and eliminating septic systems and packaged treatments plants for wastewater treatment wherever possible.

Energy

Energy costs for the Big Sandy region tend to be higher than other regions of the state, especially metropolitan regions. Electrical rates for the region tend to be around 20% higher than in other regions. On the other hand, rates for natural gas are significantly lower than other regions with an average monthly household cost of $20.28 per month, as much as 46% lower than some other areas in the state.

Broadband and Communications

Reliable, high-speed internet service throughout the entire Big Sandy region is critical to education and economic development, especially for the expansion of work from home opportunities and telemedicine. Currently all of the region has some access to internet service with a minimum speed of 100 Mbps through either fiber, cable, DSL, or satellite distribution. The completion of the final mile of a high-speed fiber network offering speeds of 1 gigabyte per second within the district is a goal. Through the development of the Kentucky Wired Initiative, the Big Sandy region currently has three Common Network Box fiber nodes in Prestonsburg, Pikeville, and Paintsville. The three existing internet service providers in the region will be responsible for building out the remaining service lines to reach the commercial and residential customers in the region.

Education and Workforce Development

The University of Pikeville (UPIKE) is the largest post-secondary institution in the region and the only four year college and graduate school located in the region. UPIKE is also home to the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Kentucky College of Optometry. In addition to a full array of bachelors degree programs and professional programs in medicine and optometry, UPIKE offers graduate degrees in nursing, business administration, social work, and teaching.

Two-year associate degree programs and other technical certifications are available through the Big Sandy Community and Technical College with campuses in Prestonsburg, Pikeville, and Hager Hill. The Prestonsburg campus of BSCTC is also home to a distance education center for Morehead State University.
Additional opportunities for technical education and certification include the Eastern Kentucky Advanced Manufacturing Institute (eKAMI) in Paintsville offering certification in Computer Numeric Controlled (CNC) manufacturing and industrial robotics. New opportunities opening soon include the Galen College of Nursing campus in Pikeville and the new TEK Center, Inc. offering certified skilled trades training in heavy equipment operation, electricity, industrial maintenance mechanic, masonry, plumbing, and carpentry.

**Industrial Parks**

The Big Sandy region has three regional industrial parks, a number of smaller industrial sites and properties, and two industrial parks in development. The East Kentucky Business Park in Martin County is a 186 acre industrial park with a mix of occupied buildings, available buildings, and several shovel ready properties. The larger Enterprise Industrial Park in Pikeville is a 300 acre site with a similar mix of availability. In 2022 the region’s newest and only rail adjacent industrial park, Hager Hill Industrial Park opened in Johnson County. Efforts to expand the region’s supply of certified build ready and shovel ready industrial sites and properties are continuing.

*East Kentucky Business Park Spec Building, Martin County*
II. SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis

Strategic evaluation and analysis of existing regional economic conditions requires a robust examination of the conditions, trends, and developments that constitute a region’s relative strengths and weaknesses along with an examination of existing and emerging economic opportunities, and an honest evaluation of internal or external threats to the region. This examination is often referred to as a S.W.O.T. analysis.

For the present Big Sandy CEDS planning process, Big Sandy Area Development District engaged not only the CEDS steering committee but also local industry leaders, economic development professionals, chambers of commerce, regional industrial development authorities, and the public to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the Big Sandy region.
Strengths

Tourism, recreation, and scenic assets

The Big Sandy region boasts a plethora of tourism venues, recreation opportunities, and natural beauty that draws visitors to the region. The US 23 Country Music Highway is so called because of the unusual number of country music superstars who were born or lived in communities along the highway including performers such as Loretta Lynn, Dwight Yoakum, Patty Loveless, Chris Stapleton, and Tyler Childers. Music and performing arts centers such as the Mountain Arts Center, the Appalachian Wireless Arena, Appalachian Center for the Arts, the Country Music Highway Museum and smaller music venues do stuff. Other tourism draws include the Dawkins Line Rail Trail, the Breaks Interstate Park, elk viewing tours, and numerous lakes and recreational trails.

Existing infrastructure

Over the past two decades, regional water and wastewater services have expanded dramatically bringing municipal utilities to historically unserved and underserved areas and providing opportunities for commercial property development in each county in the region.

Existing and expanding transportation assets

Existing highways in the region provide a reliable and efficient transportation network that continues to improve. Within the next five years, the Mountain Parkway is expected to be a complete, high-speed interstate grade roadway from Salyersville in Magoffin County to its intersection with I-65 outside of Winchester. Within the same timeframe major expansions are expected to reach completion including the KY 979 Harold to Minnie Connector. Within the next decade additional improvements will include significant development of the Mountain Parkway expansion from Salyersville to Prestonsburg and US 460 from Pikeville to the Virginia line.

Higher education and professional education opportunities

The University of Pikeville continues to lead the region in professional education, especially in medicine with the School of Osteopathic Medicine, the College of Optometry, and the Elliot School of Nursing. These opportunities are expected to expand in coming years with the
announcement of planning and development of a new dental school to complement the existing health education cluster.

**A strong healthcare anchor industry**

Pikeville Medical Center, the largest employer in Pike County and the largest hospital in the region, continues to expand in both footprint and service array. PMC opened a new Heart and Vascular institute in 2021, the new Mettu Children’s Hospital in 2021, and the Appalachian Valley Autism Center in 2022.
Weaknesses

Limited Career Pathways

The Big Sandy region boasts a plethora of tourism venues, recreation opportunities, and natural beauty that draws visitors to the region. The US 23 Country Music Highway is so called because of the unusual number of country music superstars who were born or lived in communities along the highway including performers such as Loretta Lynn, Dwight Yoakam, Patty Loveless, Chris Stapleton, and Tyler Childers. Music and performing arts centers such as the Mountain Arts Center, the Appalachian Wireless Arena, Appalachian Center for the Arts, the Country Music Highway Museum and smaller music venues do stuff. Other tourism draws include the Dawkins Line Rail Trail, the Breaks Interstate Park, elk viewing tours, and numerous lakes and recreational trails.

Limited housing stock at all levels

Over the past two decades, regional water and wastewater services have expanded dramatically bringing municipal utilities to historically unserved and underserved areas and providing opportunities for commercial property development in each county in the region.

Aging and incomplete infrastructure

Existing highways in the region provide a reliable and efficient transportation network that continues to improve. Within the next five years, the Mountain Parkway is expected to be a complete, high-speed interstate grade roadway from Salyersville in Magoffin County to its intersection with I-65 outside of Winchester. Within the same timeframe major expansions are expected to reach completion including the KY 979 Harold to Minnie Connector. Within the next decade additional improvements will include significant development of the Mountain Parkway expansion from Salyersville to Prestonsburg and US 460 from Pikeville to the Virginia line.

Rising costs of living and costs of doing business

The University of Pikeville continues to lead the region in professional education, especially in medicine with the School of Osteopathic Medicine, the College of Optometry, and the Elliot School of Nursing. These opportunities are expected to expand in coming years with the
announcement of planning and development of a new dental school to complement the existing health education cluster.

**Lack of ready industrial sites and buildings**

Pikeville Medical Center, the largest employer in Pike County and the largest hospital in the region, continues to expand in both footprint and service array. PMC opened a new Heart and Vascular institute in 2021, the new Mettu Children’s Hospital in 2021, and the Appalachian Valley Autism Center in 2022.

*Gifford Road Industrial Park – Currently in Development, Magoffin County*
Opportunities

Tourism, local foods, and arts & crafts movements

The existing tourism amenities in the region already draw a small but steady stream of visitors each year. Expanding the existing tourism assets and developing new ones presents an opportunity to develop regional tourism as a viable industry cluster. Development of these assets can be enhanced by regional food and farming traditions and Appalachian crafts including quilting, wood carving, and metalwork.

Regional college and university network

The expanding array of professional medical programs at UPIKE presents an opportunity for further specialized training and education for medical and support careers. Along with UPIKE other regional higher education institutions including Morehead State University and Big Sandy Community and Technical College present a network of educational and workforce development opportunities to train, retrain, and upskill the region’s workforce.

Regional industrial parks

The Big Sandy Region currently boasts four established industrial parks with two additional future industrial parks in development. Both the regional East Kentucky Business Park in Martin County and the Kentucky Enterprise Industrial Park in Pike County are Shovel-Ready designated parks. Both parks feature a mix of occupied sites, available land, and available buildings. The recently opened Hager Hill Industrial Park in Johnson County is a designated Build-Ready site and is the first park in the region to be rail served. Gifford Road Industrial Park is Magoffin County’s newest park adjacent to the expanding Mountain Parkway. Two additional industrial park development projects are underway in Floyd and Pike counties.

The region’s growing inventory of available sites and buildings provide an opportunity to meet the needs of expanding industry. Continued product development including infrastructure upgrades, building upgrades, new park development, and new buildings position the region to build a product pipeline that will enhance our competitive advantages.

Regional Opportunities:

- Tourism, local foods, and arts & crafts movements
- Regional college and university network
- Regional industrial parks
- High-tech agriculture projects and education
- Music, entertainment, and audio/video production industry and education
High-tech agriculture projects and education

With the launch of the AppalAtcha Agritech KY orchard and Community at the Core in Martin and Johnson Counties in 2021 the region has an opportunity to both repurpose former mine lands as well as create new large-scale farming and food processing operations in the region. Sustainable high-tech agriculture ventures in the region will be given an even greater push though the creation of UPIKE’s Ag-Tech Innovation Center of Excellence specializing in research, innovation, development, conservation, and agricultural workforce development.

Music, entertainment, and audio/video production industry and education

The region’s rich country music heritage provides an opportunity not only for tourism and entertainment but for technical education and workforce development as well. The expansion of CMH 23 in Prestonsburg will provide technical education in audio and video production, set design, broadcasting, and other skills for the region’s workforce. CMH 23 partners including the Big Sandy Community and Technical College and the Mountain Arts Center will help develop additional opportunities for broadcast and production industries in the region.
Threats

Rising cost of living and cost of doing business

The rising costs of energy in particular limits the opportunity for development in the region. This serves as a deterrent to attracting certain industries to the region such as manufacturers, data centers, or other large consumers who depend on affordable and reliable electricity for their operations.

Economic outmigration and brain drain

The declining population in the region can be directly linked to the decline in the coal, oil and natural gas industries. Without replacement of sustaining wage employers residents will continue to leave the area to seek employment and opportunities elsewhere. In spite of the many advanced educational opportunities in the region, without new industry many graduates will depart the region to find employment outside the region as well.

Addiction and substance abuse

Drug and alcohol addiction and misuse continue to be a concern for the region as these threaten the region’s overall physical and mental health, workforce participation, and overall quality of life.

Incomplete water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure

Expanding the region’s access to municipal water and wastewater service is critical for developing both housing and industrial properties for future growth. Building out the final mile of broadband infrastructure, especially fiber networks, is also critical for business development and for capitalizing on the growing work-from-home employment opportunities.

Distance to airports and interstates

One comparative disadvantage to the region is the distance to the nearest commercial airport and interstates. The average distance from the region’s industrial parks to Huntington Tri State Airport is 73 miles. The average distance from the parks to the nearest interstate, I 65, is 83 miles.
Five Year Strategic Direction

Based on the regional economic analysis and the results of the community wide SWOT analysis, the Big Sandy CEDS steering committee established three broad goal areas to focus efforts on over the next five to ten years. For each goal area, strategic objectives have been identified and prioritized to establish the strategic direction for the region.

Goal One – Achieve regional economic development focused on both industrial recruitment and nurturing local entrepreneurs.

- Objective: Prepare a skilled and ready workforce by strengthening the collaboration of university, college, vocational education, workforce boards, and existing and emerging businesses and industries.
- Objective: Develop the region’s inventory of certified build-ready industrial sites and buildings and establish a plan for continuing site and building development.
- Objective: Maintain and promote resources for small business development and expansion.
- Objective: Promote the development of safe, affordable, and desirable housing at all levels, especially for low-income and middle-income households.

Strategic Partners

Strategic partners identified to achieve Goal One include; East Kentucky Concentrated Employment (EKCEP), Chambers of Commerce, One East Kentucky, Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, Kentucky Small Business Development Center, and the Kentucky Housing Corporation.

Goal Two – Build and maintain a regional infrastructure for the 21st century and beyond.

- Objective: Promote the completion of safe and efficient highway corridors to link regional products to new markets and draw visitors to the region.
- Objective: Expand regional water and wastewater infrastructure to reach unserved and underserved communities and prepare for future industrial and housing development.
- Objective: Promote the expansion of regional airports to accommodate both freight and passenger service to the region.
Objective: Promote the completion of the “final mile” of high-speed broadband infrastructure in the region.

Strategic Partners

Strategic partners identified to achieve Goal Two include; Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, the Big Sandy Regional Transportation Committee, Big Sandy Water Management Council, the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority, Big Sandy Regional Airport Board, the Pike County Airport Board, and the Kentucky Office of Broadband Development.

Goal Three – Build a regional ecosystem to strengthen, support, and expand regional tourism.

- Objective: Support efforts to brand and market the Big Sandy region as a tourism destination.
- Objective: Support efforts to develop workforce training initiatives focused on regional arts, tourism, and hospitality.
- Objective: Develop networks and resources to support local entrepreneurs serving the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Objective: Support the development of tourism venues, attractions, and amenities within the region.

Strategic Partners

Strategic partners identified to achieve Goal Three include; the Kentucky Tourism Commission, CMH 23, Inc., the Kentucky Wildlands Initiative, the Kentucky Mountain Regional Recreation Authority,
Annual Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of the Big Sandy Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will be led primarily by the Community and Economic Development Department of the Big Sandy Area Development District under the direction of the BSADD Board of Directors. Performance metrics and progress will be reported annually in a comprehensive CEDS update maintained on the BSADD website. The CEDS Department will be assisted in the evaluation by the CEDS Steering Committee who will meet at least annually.

Performance metrics, strategic projects, and progress towards the identified goal areas will be identified for each goal:
## GOAL ONE
**INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT**

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<td>Facilitate collaboration of the Big Sandy Business and Employer Services Team</td>
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<td>Support development of certified build-ready and shovel-ready industrial sites in the region</td>
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<td>Promote and market the region’s available industrial sites and buildings</td>
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<td>Promote technical vocational programming and postsecondary education attainment</td>
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<td>Achieve Work Ready Community certification in all counties in the region</td>
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<td>Identify gaps in services for new businesses and entrepreneurs and encourage development of one-stop centers for regional business</td>
<td>BEST Team Chambers of Commerce Big Sandy ADD One East Kentucky</td>
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<td>Establish a housing development subcommittee to evaluate housing development needs and coordinate planning</td>
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### GOAL TWO
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

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<td>Advocate for the completion of planned highway infrastructure development</td>
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<td>Coordinate development and expansion of water and wastewater systems, pursue grant funding, and administer development projects</td>
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<td>Coordinate planning for addressing water system loss and replacement of service lines 20 years old or older</td>
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<td>Advocate for the expansion of regional airports, pursue grant funding and administer development projects</td>
<td>BSADD Regional Transportation Committee Airport Boards One East Kentucky Big Sandy ADD</td>
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<td>Promote broadband infrastructure development and assist providers with information, funding development, and project administration/assistance</td>
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<td>Promote existing branding initiatives including CMH 23, Kentucky Wildlands, Kentucky Proud, and Appalachia Proud</td>
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<td>Support tourism workforce development initiatives especially the CMH 23 Workforce and Tourism Development Project and tourism/hospitality vocational training</td>
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<td>Promote the creation of resources for local crafters and artists including marketing efforts, maker spaces, skills workshops and educational efforts in the region</td>
<td>Big Sandy ADD Tourism Boards CMH 23</td>
<td>Two to Three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote the development of a regional tourism plan with a focus on identifying existing assets and developing new amenities and venues</td>
<td>Big Sandy ADD Tourism Boards</td>
<td>Four to Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote the efforts to develop hotels, bed &amp; breakfasts, campgrounds, and other lodging options in the region</td>
<td>Big Sandy ADD Tourism Boards Local EDA’s</td>
<td>Four to Five years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunity Zones

To encourage capital investment in historically underserved, low-income, and rural areas of the country the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act established Opportunity Zones. Opportunity Zones were designated by the governor’s office in qualified census tracts throughout the state that met minimum levels of poverty and economic distress and held promise for development. Several designated Opportunity Zones are situated throughout the Big Sandy region. Significantly, the region’s industrial parks are located in these designated Opportunity Zones giving extra incentive to long-term investment in the region.

For more information regarding Kentucky’s Opportunity Zones, investment opportunities, and program guidelines visit www.kyoz.org. Maps of Opportunity Zones in the Big Sandy region can be found in the appendix.
Resiliency, Recovery, and Mitigation

Economic resiliency, especially in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated economic effects, is a critical part of the Big Sandy region’s development strategy. Additionally, planning for economic recovery and mitigating natural disasters are part of the Big Sandy Area Development District’s mission. In 2020 Big Sandy Area Development District began drafting a plan to assist in economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Big Sandy Economic Resiliency Plan is in the final stages of development and will be available on the Big Sandy Area Development District website and linked to future updates to the CEDS.

Big Sandy Area Development District is also finalizing the five-year Multi-Jurisdiction, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Strategy. Once completed and adopted by local governments the plan will be available on the Big Sandy Area Development District website and linked to future updates to the CEDS.
Johnson County
JOHNSON

KEY FACTS

- Population: 23,385
- Median Age: 43.8
- Average Household Size: 2.4
- Median Household Income: $36,598

EDUCATION

- No High School Diploma: 17%
- High School Graduate: 37%
- Some College: 28%
- Bachelor's/Grad/Professional Degree: 18%

BUSINESS

- Total Businesses: 726
- Total Employees: 7,038

EMPLOYMENT

- White Collar: 62.5%
- Blue Collar: 22.2%
- Services: 6.2%
- Unemployment Rate: 15.3%

INCOME

- Median Household Income: $36,598
- Per Capita Income: $22,537
- Median Net Worth: $63,097

Households By Income

- The largest group: <$15,000 (20.9%)
- The smallest group: $200,000+ (2.4%)

Indicator ▲

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Bars show deviation from Kentucky

Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Data Axle. The vintage of the data is 2021, 2026.

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**Magoffin County**

**MAGOFFIN Demographics Summary**

**KEY FACTS**

- **Population**: 14,777
- **Median Age**: 41.9
- **Average Household Size**: 2.5
- **Median Household Income**: $27,799

**EDUCATION**

- **No High School Diploma**: 28%
- **High School Graduate**: 38%
- **Some College**: 24%
- **Bachelor's/Grad/Professional Degree**: 10%

**BUSINESS**

- **Total Businesses**: 335
- **Total Employees**: 2,446

**EMPLOYMENT**

- **White Collar**: 44.4%
- **Blue Collar**: 41.6%
- **Services**: 5.0%
- **Unemployment Rate**: 14.0%

**INCOME**

- **Median Household Income**: $27,799
- **Per Capita Income**: $17,455
- **Median Net Worth**: $28,968

**Households By Income**

- The largest group: <$15,000 (25.3%)
- The smallest group: $200,000+ (1.0%)

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<tr>
<td>$200,000+</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
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</table>

Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Data Axle. The vintage of the data is 2021, 2026.
Martin County

**KEY FACTS**
- **Population**: 12,829
- **Median Age**: 40.0
- **Average Household Size**: 2.5
- **Median Household Income**: $38,714

**EDUCATION**
- **No High School Diploma**: 23%
- **High School Graduate**: 40%
- **Some College**: 24%
- **Bachelor's/Grad/Professional Degree**: 13%

**BUSINESS**
- **Total Businesses**: 258
- **Total Employees**: 2,925

**EMPLOYMENT**
- **White Collar**: 59.8%
- **Blue Collar**: 29.1%
- **Unemployment Rate**: 11.0%

**INCOME**
- **Median Household Income**: $38,714
- **Per Capita Income**: $18,025
- **Median Net Worth**: $73,232

**Households By Income**
- The largest group: <$15,000 (20.2%)
- The smallest group: $200,000+ (0.5%)

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Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Data Axle. The vintage of the data is 2021, 2026.
Pike County

PIKE Demographics Summary

**KEY FACTS**

- **Population**: 66,651
- **Median Age**: 43.4
- **Average Household Size**: 2.4
- **Median Household Income**: $35,540

**EDUCATION**

- **No High School Diploma**: 21%
- **High School Graduate**: 41%
- **Some College**: 25%
- **Bachelor's/Grad/Professional Degree**: 14%

**BUSINESS**

- **Total Businesses**: 1,905
- **Total Employees**: 27,247

**EMPLOYMENT**

- **White Collar**: 56.7%
- **Blue Collar**: 28.4%
- **Services**: 7.5%
- **Unemployment Rate**: 14.9%

**INCOME**

- **Median Household Income**: $35,540
- **Per Capita Income**: $22,015
- **Median Net Worth**: $58,375

**Households By Income**

The largest group: <$15,000 (22.5%)
The smallest group: $150,000 - $199,999 (2.3%)

<table>
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<tr>
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Bars show deviation from Kentucky

Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Data Axle. The vintage of the data is 2021, 2026.
## Floyd County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>No. of Employees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floyd County Board of Education</td>
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<td>Mountain Comprehensive Care Centers</td>
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<td>Kentucky Oil</td>
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<td>McDowell ARH Health Care</td>
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<td>Food City</td>
<td>Prestonsburg</td>
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<td>Appalachian Wireless</td>
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<td>Martin ARH</td>
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<td>Frontier Medical</td>
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<td>McDonalds</td>
<td>Harold</td>
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<td>Gearheart Communications</td>
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<td>Wal Mart</td>
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<td>Carl D. Perkins Job Corp</td>
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## Johnson County

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<td>Mountain Manor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowe’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl D. Perkins Voc Rehab</td>
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<td>Citizen’s Bank of KY</td>
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## Big Sandy Area Development District

### 2022 – Major Employers, 50+ Employees

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MAGOFFIN COUNTY</strong></th>
<th><strong>CITY</strong></th>
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<td>McDonald's</td>
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<td>United States Penitentiary</td>
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<td>Interstate Lodging</td>
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*Indicates employers operating in more than one county*
Demographic and Economic Data

Unless otherwise noted, all regional population and demographic data for the Big Sandy Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy are taken from the US Census Bureau 5-Year American Community Survey Data. Links to the US Census website as well as other helpful data sources are given below. For assistance with any local data needs contact the Community and Economic Development Department staff at the Big Sandy Area Development District.

US Census Bureau:
http://data.census.gov

Kentucky State Data Center:
http://ksdc.louisville.edu

US Bureau of Economic Analysis:
http://bea.gov

Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development:
http://ced.ky.gov

Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK):
http://cedik.ca.uky.edu
Big Sandy Economic Development Committee

The Big Sandy Area Development District is grateful for the work of the Big Sandy Economic Development Committee who acted as the steering committee for development of the 2023 – 2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Governor Paul Patton**  
UPIKE, Pike County IDEA,  
Big Sandy Regional IDA

**Jimmy Salyer**  
Magoffin County Economic Development

**Terry B. Fraley**  
City of Inez

**Dennis Hall**  
City of Inez

**Ronnie Warrix**  
Martin County

**Trina Allen**  
Kentucky Office of Employment and Training

**Colby Kirk**  
One East Kentucky

**Michael Huffman**  
Appalachian Wireless

**Dr. Denise King**  
Big Sandy Community and Technical College

**Angelina Reynolds**  
TEK Center, Inc.

**Gary Cox**  
Big Sandy Regional Airport

**Charly Wise**  
Floyd County Chamber of Commerce

**Jordan Gibson**  
Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

**Denise Thomas**  
UPIKE

**James Ayers**  
First State Bank, Martin County Economic Development Authority

**Tyler Burke**  
Columbia Gas of Kentucky

**Bob Shurtleff**  
AEP

**Dalton Hatfield**  
ARH

**Lisa Estep**  
Pikeville Medical Center

**Joe Jacobs**  
Big Sandy Area Development District