

EDA Funding for Southern West Virginia

The “Appalachian Climate Technology” (ACT) Now coalition led by Coalfield Development will receive nearly \$63 million from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) matched by \$29 million in private funding totaling \$92 million to strengthen local economies, support energy industries and expand job opportunities through 8 projects in 21 counties across Southern West Virginia. The ACT Now coalition will create an estimated 5,000 new direct and 15,000 indirect jobs, create 125 new businesses, and leverage \$250+ million in private sector investment over time. The ACT Now Coalition includes several of the state’s most innovative community-based organizations, the support of the state’s two largest cities (Charleston and Huntington) and its two largest universities (West Virginia University and Marshall).

1) HUNTINGTON’S BROWNFIELDS INNOVATION ZONE (“H-BIZ”) [\$8.2 MILLION]

H-BIZ is 100 acres of vacant manufacturing brownfields in the heart of downtown Huntington that is ready for redevelopment as a green manufacturing and technology innovation center. H-BIZ will be anchored by a new RCBI Welding & Robotics Technology Training Center located in a re-purposed, century-old factory building, and a new Marshall University baseball stadium, along with other technology and manufacturing tenants.

2) CHARLESTON’S LEARNING, INNOVATION, FOOD & TECHNOLOGY CENTER (“LIFT CENTER”) [\$13 MILLION]

The Charleston Area Alliance and the City of Charleston, Marshall University, Coalfield Development Corporation, the regional economic development organization Advantage Valley, and private sector companies will transform the 9-acre, 110,000 sq. ft. Kanawha Manufacturing plant in a low-income neighborhood in the heart of the city into the LIFT Center. LIFT will include the new “Marshall Green Battery Institute” to provide research & development on electric batteries for clean vehicles, zero-emissions airplanes, and renewable energy storage; a Coalfield Development job training center; a food hub run by Refresh Appalachia; and private investment by innovative companies including Parthian Battery Solutions (electric battery repurposing), BETA Air (zero-emissions, electric vertical takeoff and landing airplanes, which will start using Yeager International Airport), Dickinson Renewables (launched by WV’s oldest company), and Edelen Renewables (an Appalachian innovator in solar projects).

3) WAYNE COUNTY’S “BLACK DIAMOND” HUB FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT [\$6.375 MILLION]

Coalfield Development will revitalize the long-closed and badly polluted Black Diamond Factory in West Huntington into a hub for solar logistics and job training run by Solar Holler, and a headquarters for expanding solar companies, recycling and reuse businesses, and bio-based manufacturing.

4) LOGAN’S JUST TRANSITION CENTER (CLIMATE AND EQUITY NEXUS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION) [\$3.2 MILLION]

Coalfield Development is partnered with Southern Community & Technology College to transform the former, now-idled “Coal Miner Training Academy” in the City of Logan into a new “Just Transition CENTER” which will provide job training in biobased manufacturing and other skills from Coalfield Development, and digital technology training from Generation West Virginia.

5) FORMER MINES TO SUSTAINABLE MINE LANDS [\$9.658 MILLION]

WVU and the Nature Conservancy will lead a program to boost the pace of abandoned mine reclamation in Appalachia with new approaches to sustainable reuse of these lands. A new workforce will transform closed mines into productive reuses in solar/wind/geothermal generation, energy storage, agro-forestry for carbon capture and for biomass/bioenergy production, healthy food production, rare earth element development, manufacturing, and eco-tourism & outdoor recreation.

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6) GROW NOW – GROWING RESILIENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WV WORKFORCE [\$10.764 MILLION]

The region must expand its proven workforce development approaches, especially for young jobseekers, dislocated coal workers, minority and persistent poverty communities, and unemployed/underemployed West Virginians. Generation West Virginia will lead the effort to create digital and green collar technology jobs, and the Alliance for Economic Development of Southern WV will train a green building workforce.

7) COMMUNITY + BUSINESS RESILIENCE INITIATIVE [\$7.076 MILLION]

West Virginia coalfield communities will not be able to take advantage of sector diversification and growth without significant capacity building, strategic planning, downtown revitalization, and site and brownfields preparation in a strategically aligned way. The West Virginia Community Development Hub will provide technical assistance and planning support to communities to prepare for new economic opportunities, the WV Brownfield Assistance Centers will help transform brownfields and **BAD (Blighted, Abandoned & Dilapidated) Buildings** for repurposing as new economic and job centers, and Advantage Valley and the West Virginia HIVE Network will deploy “**GREENER WV**” entrepreneurial development programs for foster business start-ups and expansions in these sectors.

8) RE-POWER APPALACHIA INITIATIVE [\$5.533 MILLION]

“Re-power Appalachia” will increase solar (and other renewable energy) deployments by 10x in WV to \$100+ million annually by training a workforce to install 750 solar roofs annually, backed by a new investment fund to help small businesses and non-profits access low-cost capital and incentives for projects.

Investment Area

