



# SEDA-COG

**Economic Development District**

**Comprehensive Economic  
Development Strategy**

**2024 Annual Report**

*Presented by SEDA-Council of Governments, December 2024*

**SEDA-Council of Governments  
Economic Development District**

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
Annual Report – 2024

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**SEDA-Council of Governments  
Economic Development District**

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**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
Performance Progress Report – 2024**

**Performance Progress Report**

<b>Grantee:</b>	<b>SEDA-Council of Governments (SEDA-COG)</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Support for Planning Organizations</b>
<b>Project Number:</b>	<b>ED22PHI3020027</b>
<b>CEDS Performance Year:</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Reporting period end date:</b>	<b>December</b>
<b>Report Prepared by:</b>	<b>Elizabeth Lockwood, Director Project Development/Grants Denise Rhodes-Wolf, Program Analyst, Economic Development</b>
<b>Five-year CEDS Time Period:</b>	<b>2020-2025</b>

**Regional CEDS Update:**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**

**The 11-County Region**



The SEDA-COG Economic Development District is comprised of 11 counties: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, and Union. All counties actively participate in the District’s economic development program. The SEDA-COG Board of Directors, CEDS Committee, and various advisory committees include representation from all eleven counties.

**SEDA-COG Board of Directors**

Economic development activities of the SEDA-COG Economic Development District (EDD) are directed by a 22-member Board of Directors. SEDA-COG’s governing body is broadly representative of the principal economic interests of the region. A list of present board members is included as **Attachment A** to this report.

## **SEDA-COG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, 2024**

The CEDS Committee collectively provides input into the CEDS process and has the responsibility for working with staff to develop and update the region's CEDS for review and approval by the SEDA-COG Board of Directors. (**See Attachment B** for a listing of the individuals on the CEDS Committee).

The Board and CEDS Committee continue to maintain an active involvement in EDA programs and in the identification and implementation of other economic development opportunities. Opportunities are actively pursued to provide financial and technical assistance to business and industry within the District.

Staff completed the 5-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for 2020, which was approved by the board in December 2020. A copy of the CEDS is found on the SEDA-COG website: [https://seda-cog.org/wp-content/uploads/2020\\_5-Year\\_CEDS\\_FINAL\\_WITH\\_ATTACHMENTS.pdf](https://seda-cog.org/wp-content/uploads/2020_5-Year_CEDS_FINAL_WITH_ATTACHMENTS.pdf).

## **Local Loan Review Committee**

SEDA-COG administers numerous loan programs, including the SEDA-COG Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), which was funded through EDA with local match from the SEDA Foundation. Additional loan programs include the ARC Revolving Loan Fund, the Telecommunications Equity and Marcellus (TEAM) loan fund, the USDA Intermediary Relending Program, and the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI).

SEDA-COG also continues to function as a Certified Development Company under the Small Business Administration's 504 Program and offers the program statewide. SEDA-COG continues to provide regional administration of the Pennsylvania PIDA Loan Program, a program proven valuable in connection with the region's economic development activities.

The Local Loan Review Committee (LLRC) functions as an advisory body for SEDA-COG's various financing programs. This Committee includes representatives from the SEDA-COG Board; the banking and accounting professions; and other entities able to contribute advice in the evaluation of loan proposals.



**Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance.** The Commonwealth's Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) Program was designed by the

Commonwealth to encourage coordination of economic development efforts to promote enhanced customer service to the business community and a comprehensive and efficient economic development delivery strategy. The Central PREP Program's core partners, the area's eight (8) industrial development organizations; SEDA-COG; and the two Small Business Development Centers (SBDC's) located at Penn State University and Bucknell University. The 11 core partners have been meeting on a regular basis and continually improving the program, seamlessly integrating our service delivery system.

### **Five-Year CEDS**

The five-year CEDS revision was completed and approved on December 2, 2020 at the SEDA-COG's CEDS Committee and Board of Directors meeting. A draft version of the CEDS document was shared with the SEDA-COG CEDS Committee, Board, and regional organizations including the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) Partners, Heartland Partnership, county planning directors and the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC) prior to approval. SEDA-COG's CEDS was also made available for public review and comment.

As an outgrowth of the review process, the document was reworked with minor revisions to statistics and figures including a greater emphasis on workforce and available affordable housing as well as the addition of organizations that can assist in meeting the varied objectives. Staff is preparing for the next 5-year CEDS due in 2025 and is looking to take the CEDS online.

### ***EDD Online CEDS PILOT PROJECT***

This 3-year project will create regional economic indicators and data dashboards to increase the utilization, effectiveness, and reach of our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) and to provide real-time data updates for partners and project sponsors in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Cooperative purchasing will allow our organizations to leverage the benefit of procuring this service/technology by aggregating our purchases to secure the best costs and reduce overall administrative time and expenses. This project could serve as a model for other EDDs and states around the nation.

SEDA-COG and the NEPA Alliance are designated as Economic Development Districts with the Economic Development Administration and Local Development Districts with the Appalachian Regional Commission. Additionally, our EDDs also serve as PA Data Center Affiliates with the Pennsylvania State Data Center and the U.S. Census Bureau. Several of our EDDs also serve as Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Rural Planning Organizations, and house the region's workforce development boards. All planning organizations require the use of demographic and employment data to develop plans with goals, objectives, and strategies designed to build unity and advance services, programs, and projects that deliver economic prosperity throughout Pennsylvania.

The need for real-time data to monitor, benchmark, and utilize in decision-making and funding applications continues to increase. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the ineffectiveness of static CEDS that are not easy to update and are built with single-use tables and charts that are not flexible and are highly labor intensive. It is now necessary for EDDs to develop innovative technology-based solutions to provide real-time data for staff efficiency while also being economical enough to be adopted by other organizations.

## Strategy Review 2020 5-Year CEDS Goals

### The Strategy goals are:

1. Encourage the protection, modernization, and expansion of existing businesses and job opportunities, and where appropriate, encourage entrepreneurship and the recruitment of new business and industry consistent with the character of the Region.
2. Aggressively encourage the deployment of technology and widespread accessibility to broadband services and capabilities.
3. Encourage the upgrading of skills and talents for the Region's workforce and the creation of family-sustaining wages.
4. Encourage the prudent utilization of the Region's natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner (including land, water, natural gas, and lumber).
5. Improve and expand infrastructure, flood resiliency, and conservation/greening efforts to enhance the older and rural centers throughout the area for business and economic development.
6. Encourage the promotion of the Region as a destination for travel, recreation, and tourism.
7. Cultivate efforts for the Region to become resilient in the face of natural disasters, pandemics, and economic downturns.

### Objectives:

Derived from the goals listed above are the following objectives:

- Continue to foster economic development activities through the various components of the Central Region PREP and Engage! programs, including business finance assistance, export marketing, and government procurement technical assistance. In accordance with Goal 1, primary emphasis will be on fostering the maintenance and expansion of the Region's existing industrial base.
- Cooperate with industrial development groups throughout the Region to expand industrial/business parks or establish new parks wherever such need is determined to exist, with particular attention to promoting the tax-abated Keystone Opportunity Zones that have been established in this Region by the local taxing bodies and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- Support entrepreneurship and innovation, provide support and assistance to the Keystone Innovation Zones, Ben Franklin Technology Centers, and Small Business Development Centers throughout the Region.
- Cooperate with the IMC, NEPIRC, SBDCs, and other programs of the Central PREP Region's economic development service delivery network.
- Promote sharing of resources between partner counties, economic development agencies, and SEDA-COG.

- Cooperate with the Advanced Central PA and other workforce providers in targeting resources at identified training needs for the Region.
- Develop relationships with universities, colleges, and technical schools in coordination with career development professionals to identify course work/curriculum gaps for the future workforce.
- Build a strong foundation for economic success and shared prosperity by investing in education.
- Promote niche economies and business clustering.
- Foster better coordination among the Region's PREP partners, institutions of higher learning, and vocational-technical schools with existing employers and Advance Central PA to focus resources where they are most urgently needed.
- Build the infrastructure necessary to allow widespread adoption of natural gas utilization thereby providing for long-term job opportunities that will endure after the exploration boom tapers off and diminishes.
- Encourage affordable housing as necessary to support the resident workforce and influence a healthy, balanced economy by addressing barriers to affordability.
- Cooperate with local visitors' bureaus, the Commonwealth, and other interests to promote the Region as a tourist and recreation destination.
- Encourage park and trail development to foster increased recreational and heritage tourism.
- Ensure ongoing and emerging economic development activities do not diminish the attractiveness of the Region to tourists.
- Encourage highspeed broadband buildout in areas unserved or underserved by working with and incentivizing internet service providers.
- Participate and support the Advance Central PA's Next Generation Sector Partnerships for Manufacturing and Healthcare.

### **Regional Economic Conditions**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the SEDA-COG EDD continues to provide the basis for SEDA-COG's economic development efforts. The CEDS tracks data including monthly and annual unemployment rates, county business patterns, layoffs and closings in the region.

In July 2024, the region's monthly unemployment rate was 3.7% (see **Table 1**). This rate was lower than both Pennsylvania's unemployment rate during the same month (4.0%), and the national unemployment rate of 4.5%. Clinton, Columbia and Mifflin Counties are the three counties in the SEDA-COG area to have a higher unemployment rate than the SEDA-COG region and the state. Centre, Juniata, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder and Union counties have unemployment rates below or equal to the state rate in month of July.

<b>Table 1 - Comparative labor Force Data for the SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania and the United States (Not Seasonally Adjusted)</b>				
July 2024				
County	Number in Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Centre	78,000	75,500	2,500	3.2%
Clinton	17,500	16,800	700	4.3%
Columbia	34,800	33,400	1,400	4.1%
Juniata	12,800	12,300	400	3.5%
Lycoming	56,000	53,900	2,200	3.9%
Mifflin	21,700	20,800	900	4.1%
Montour	9,500	9,200	300	3.4%
Northumberland	44,100	42,200	1,900	4.2%
Perry	25,700	24,900	900	3.4%
Snyder	20,000	19,200	700	3.7%
Union	20,000	19,300	600	3.2%
<b>SEDA-COG Region</b>	<b>340,100</b>	<b>327,500</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>	<b>6,658,000</b>	<b>6,394,000</b>	<b>264,000</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>169,723,000</b>	<b>161,038,000</b>	<b>7,685,000</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<i>Source: PA Dept of Labor and Industry</i>				

The 2023 Annual Unemployment Rate for the region was 3.3%, which is lower than the state (3.4%) and the nation (3.8%). Please refer to **Table 2** on the next page. The three counties with the highest annual unemployment rate for 2023 include Clinton (4.0%), Northumberland (4.0%), and Columbia (3.6%). Counties with the lowest unemployment rate for the same period include Montour (2.7%), Centre (2.7%), Perry (2.9%) and Union (2.9%). **Table 2** also shows the annual unemployment rate for 2022 for comparison. All counties in the SEDA-COG region experienced a decline in the unemployment rate from 2022 to 2023, with the region overall having an unemployment rate decline of 0.7%, which is the same decline rate as the state, but the nation had an increase of 0.2% in the unemployment rate.

**Table 2 -2023 Annual Labor Force Data for the SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania and the United States  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)**

County	Number in Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	
				2023	2022
Centre	79,900	77,700	2,200	2.7%	3.3%
Clinton	17,400	16,700	700	4.0%	5.0%
Columbia	34,400	33,200	1,200	3.6%	4.2%
Juniata	12,600	12,200	400	3.4%	4.0%
Lycoming	55,500	53,500	2,000	3.5%	4.4%
Mifflin	21,300	20,600	700	3.5%	4.4%
Montour	9,400	9,100	300	2.7%	3.2%
Northumberland	42,700	41,000	1,700	4.0%	4.6%
Perry	25,000	24,300	700	2.9%	3.4%
Snyder	19,800	19,200	700	3.4%	4.0%
Union	19,900	19,300	600	2.9%	3.6%
<b>SEDA-COG Region</b>	<b>337,900</b>	<b>326,800</b>	<b>11,200</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>	<b>6,158,000</b>	<b>6,296,000</b>	<b>223,000</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>167,767,000</b>	<b>161,443,000</b>	<b>6,324,000</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>

*Source: PA Dept of Labor and Industry and US Bureau of Labor Statistic*

**Table 3** and **Figure 1** on the next page show the “not seasonally adjusted” annual average unemployment rate by county, the SEDA-COG region, Pennsylvania, and the nation over the ten-year period from 2014 through 2023. **Figure 1** illustrates that from 2015 to 2019, the national unemployment rate was lower than both the SEDA-COG Region and Pennsylvania. However, in the period between 2020 and 2023, the national unemployment rate was higher than the SEDA-COG rate (except for 2022). It is also important to note the SEDA-COG Region remained equal to or lower than the Pennsylvania unemployment rate, except during 2019 when the Region was slightly higher than the state. The year 2020 reflects the abrupt change in unemployment associated with COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the SEDA-COG region’s unemployment rate remained lower than both the state and national rate. In 2023, the latest data shows the SEDA-COG region had a lower unemployment rate (3.3%) than the state (3.4%) and the nation (3.8%).

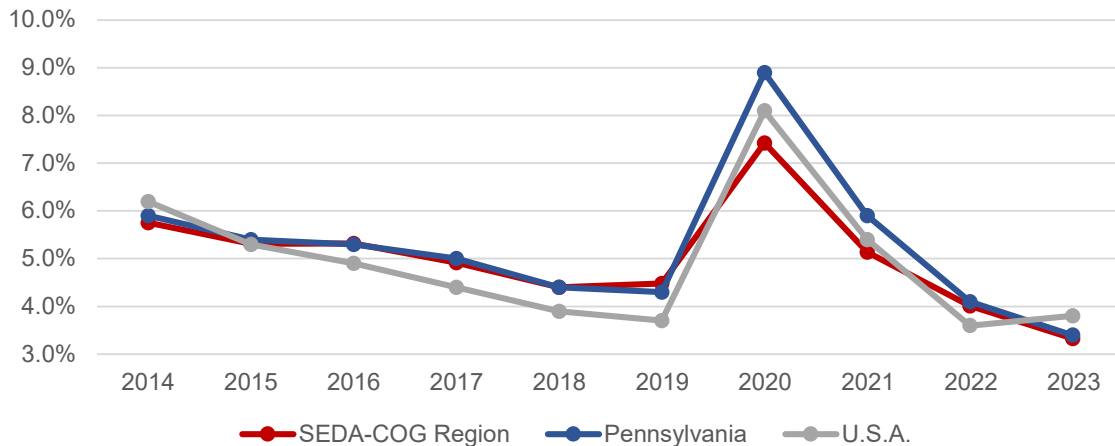
**Table 3 - Ten Year Annual Average Unemployment Rate for the SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania and the United States (Not Seasonally Adjusted)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Centre	4.3%	4.0%	4.1%	3.8%	3.3%	3.3%	5.7%	4.3%	3.3%	2.7%
Clinton	7.4%	7.0%	7.0%	6.2%	5.5%	5.4%	8.5%	6.2%	5.0%	4.0%
Columbia	6.3%	5.8%	5.5%	5.3%	4.9%	4.7%	7.9%	5.4%	4.2%	3.6%
Juniata	5.7%	5.0%	5.3%	4.7%	4.1%	4.4%	7.0%	4.7%	4.0%	3.4%
Lycoming	6.2%	6.2%	6.6%	5.7%	4.9%	4.8%	8.6%	6.2%	4.4%	3.5%
Mifflin	6.5%	5.9%	5.7%	5.4%	4.8%	4.6%	8.2%	5.7%	4.4%	3.5%
Montour	4.7%	4.4%	4.2%	3.9%	3.6%	3.5%	6.1%	4.1%	3.2%	2.7%
Northumberland	6.8%	6.2%	6.2%	5.8%	5.4%	5.5%	9.1%	6.3%	4.6%	4.0%
Perry	5.2%	4.5%	4.6%	4.4%	3.9%	3.7%	6.6%	4.4%	3.4%	2.9%
Snyder	5.2%	4.8%	4.6%	4.5%	4.1%	5.4%	7.4%	4.8%	4.0%	3.4%
Union	5.0%	4.6%	4.7%	4.4%	3.9%	4.0%	6.6%	4.4%	3.6%	2.9%
<b>SEDA-COG Region</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>

Source: PA Dept of Labor and Industry

**Figure 1 - Annual Unemployment Rate from 2014 to 2023**

SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania, and U.S.A.  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



### Income, Earnings, and Poverty

**Table 4** shows the most current U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey Data (ACS 5-Year estimates) on household income in 2022 inflation adjusted dollars. The statewide median income stood at \$73,170, with national median income at \$75,149. Ten of the eleven SEDA-COG counties had median incomes less than state levels, with Northumberland (\$55,952), Mifflin (\$58,012), Clinton (\$59,011), and Columbia (\$59,457) having the lowest. The only county in the SEDA-COG region with a higher median income than both the state and nation was Perry (\$76,103). Perry County’s close proximity to Pennsylvania’s state capital likely influences the high median income. A similar comparison is made with mean household income, as there is only one county in the SEDA-COG region (Montour \$103,130) that exceeds state and national estimates. In this case the presence of Geisinger Medical Center and the concentration of high paid physicians is the results in a higher mean household income.

<b>Table 4 - Household Median and Mean Income in the Past 12 Month (2022 inflation-adjusted dollars) SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania, and United States</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Centre	\$ 70,087	\$ 95,839
Clinton	\$ 59,011	\$ 75,224
Columbia	\$ 59,457	\$ 76,713
Juniata	\$ 61,915	\$ 78,975
Lycoming	\$ 63,437	\$ 80,309
Mifflin	\$ 58,012	\$ 70,553
Montour	\$ 72,626	\$ 103,130
Northumberland	\$ 55,952	\$ 74,086
Perry	\$ 76,103	\$ 91,535
Snyder	\$ 65,914	\$ 84,417
Union	\$ 64,914	\$ 96,921
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>	<b>\$ 73,170</b>	<b>\$ 100,837</b>
<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>\$ 75,149</b>	<b>\$ 105,833</b>
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2022) 5-Year Estimate</i>		

Creation of family-sustaining wages is one of the 2020 CEDs strategic goals. As a benchmark for family sustaining wages, it is vital to look at poverty levels in the region. However, it is important to note that in counties with large universities and students living off-campus, poverty rates are statistically impacted.  
(<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/12/off-campus.html>).

This is especially true for Centre (Penn State University) and Columbia (Bloomsburg University) and could be impacting rates in Lycoming (Penn College of Technology and Lycoming College) and Clinton (Lock Haven University).

Pennsylvania’s poverty rate in 2020 stood at 12%, with the national rate at 12.8% (see **Table 5**). Six counties in the SEDA-COG region exceed the state rate: Centre (17.8%), Clinton (15.4%), Columbia (14.1%), Mifflin (13.9%), Lycoming (13.6%), and Northumberland (13.1%). Northumberland and Mifflin are the only counties from this list that do not have a large university presence.

<b>Table 5 - Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months SEDA-COG Region, Pennsylvania, United States</b>		
	Percent Below Poverty Level	Number of Persons Below Poverty Level
Centre	17.8%	25,580
Clinton	15.4%	5,704
Columbia	14.1%	8,560
Juniata	9.4%	2,278
Lycoming	13.6%	14,574
Mifflin	13.9%	6,307
Montour	10.2%	1,769
Northumberland	13.1%	11,428
Perry	8.7%	3,973
Snyder	9.9%	3,782
Union	11.4%	4,097
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>1,480,430</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>40,910,326</b>
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2020) 5-Year Estimate</i>		

### Manufacturing Jobs

**Table 6** contains data derived from the U.S. Census Bureau’s County Business Patterns. This table shows total jobs and total manufacturing jobs in 2013 and again ten years later in 2022 (the most recent data available) for the counties in the Economic Development District (EDD), for the region, and for the state. The total number of jobs for the region decreased 0.6% between 2013 and 2022. During the same time frame, total jobs increased by 7.8% for the Commonwealth.

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, total manufacturing jobs in the SEDA-COG region declined by 4.0%. The state’s manufacturing jobs increased by 4% for the same timeframe. It should be noted that a confirmed 7 of the 11 counties in the SEDA-COG region had a decrease in manufacturing jobs between 2013 and 2022. Three counties to experience an increase in manufacturing jobs were Juniata County (24.2%), Northumberland County (16.1%), Centre County (6.3%) and Mifflin County (4.3%). Three counties: Clinton, Mifflin and Montour’s manufacturing employees were calculated using a mid-point range to avoid disclosing the operations of an individual employer. The percentage of total jobs in the region represented by manufacturing jobs declined from 16.8% in 2013 to 16.3% in 2022. Statewide, the percentage of total jobs in the manufacturing sector from 2013 to 2022 was 10.4% and 10.0% respectively. Although declining, the SEDA-COG EDD continues to be more dependent on the manufacturing sector for jobs than the state.

Area	Total Jobs			Manufacturing Jobs			Manufacturing Jobs % of Total Jobs	
	2022	2013	% Change	2022	2013	% Change	2022	2013
Centre	44,379	44,783	-0.9%	4,241	3,990	6.3%	9.6%	8.9%
Clinton	10,759	10,950	-1.7%	3,079	3,750	-17.9%	28.6%	34.2%
Columbia	22,070	22,851	-3.4%	4,206	5,179	-18.8%	19.1%	22.7%
Juniata	6,224	5,385	15.6%	2,438	1,963	24.2%	39.2%	36.5%
Lycoming	45,401	46,696	-2.8%	7,118	7,834	-9.1%	15.7%	16.8%
Mifflin	14,639	13,983	4.7%	3,912	3,750	4.3%	26.7%	26.8%
Montour	13,605	14,458	-5.9%	616	750	-17.9%	4.5%	5.2%
Northumberland	22,794	23,134	-1.5%	4,432	3,817	16.1%	19.4%	16.5%
Perry	6,127	6,249	-2.0%	430	632	-32.0%	7.0%	10.1%
Snyder	14,487	14,441	0.3%	3,429	3,627	-5.5%	23.7%	25.1%
Union	16,091	14,919	7.9%	1,321	1,381	-4.3%	8.2%	9.3%
<b>SEDA-COG</b>	<b>216,576</b>	<b>217,849</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>	<b>35,222</b>	<b>36,673</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>5,584,830</b>	<b>5,180,805</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>560,912</b>	<b>539,575</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>135,748,407</b>	<b>118,266,253</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>12,188,330</b>	<b>112,764,38</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, “County Business Patterns”, 2013 and 2022

\* Data suppressed to avoid disclosing the operations of an individual employer. Number of employees is the mid-point of a range.

The region’s reliance on the manufacturing sector and its decline has mandated SEDA-COG to pursue a strategy of encouraging growth in other industry sectors including technology and advanced manufacturing to diversify our employment base. This strategy is being routinely incorporated into SEDA-COG's various economic development activities and is used in ongoing project evaluations. Some historic examples of pursuing growth in technology and advanced manufacturing include the EDA funded Bloomsburg Regional Technology Center, the Penn State University’s expansion of the Technology Center at Innovation Park, and the expansion of the Juniata Business and Industry Industrial Park. All three projects met the growing demand for manufacturing, technology business incubation space and to accommodate incubator graduate companies making the

transition to more permanent space. Additionally, as new projects are developed, the buildout of broadband infrastructure in the form of laying of conduit and fiber is encouraged.

## **Economic Development Activities**

### Loan Packaging

The loan packaging component of SEDA-COG's economic development activities continues to be a key service provided to the region's businesses. At present, SEDA-COG can provide clients with access to the SBA-504 Program, the EDA Revolving Loan Fund, the ARC Revolving Loan Fund, the Telecommunications Equity and Marcellus (TEAM) loan fund, the various Commonwealth loan programs, the USDA Intermediary Relending Program, and the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) loan programs.

Using these available loans as a base, SEDA-COG has developed a comprehensive finance packaging service for its business clients. This service combines SEDA-COG's lending capability with the financing potential myriad of state and federal programs. These public-sector sources can and are linked with traditional private financing sources. Private lending institutions tend to be conservative in their lending policies. The participation of one or more of SEDA-COG's loan programs can often persuade the private institution to participate in a project.

As of August 31, 2024, the SEDA-COG loan portfolio showed a total of 185 open loans from various sources totaling over \$43.2 million. These loans are anticipated to assist in the creation of 542 new jobs. In addition, there were 21 committed loans totaling over \$15.4 million, with a projected job increase of 95. During the 12 months ending August 31, 2024, a total of 25 loans were settled totaling over \$9.1 million. These loans represent various combinations of sources and are projected to help create 63 new jobs.

SEDA-COG continues to provide staff assistance in connection with the review and packaging of loans through the Clinton County EDA revolving loan fund, which was set up as a result of the Clinton County EDA Title IX project.

### **SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority (JRA)**

The SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority (JRA), along with its short-line operator, provides customer-oriented service to 100 industries on the North Shore, Nittany & Bald Eagle, Shamokin Valley, Juniata Valley, White Deer & Reading, and Lycoming Valley Railroads. For over 40 years, the nine-county SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority has been a self-sustaining engine of economic development for central Pennsylvania. The JRA currently supports over 12,600 jobs.

In the past year, traffic along the rail lines has been over 14,000 carloads, and generally following the flat results in rail traffic seen in national carload count trends for merchandise carloads. Marcellus gas-related business is slower from earlier quarters; there were two frac sand unit trains and additional smaller car blocs that arrived in the 4th quarter of FY 2023-2024 totaling just 486 carloads of frac sand. This slowdown is typical during the summer months. Future frac sand unit trains are scheduled for FY 2024-2025 2nd and 3rd quarters, indicative of the upcoming winter drilling season. Generally, rail car counts have been slightly falling along all operating railroads. The rail car storage business has

remained lower-than-normal historic averages, though increasing since FY 2022-2023. Due to delays in coal car availability, only one outbound coal unit train occurred in the 1st quarter FY 2024-2025. Due to delays, the rail system will likely see its last outbound coal unit trains from the Newberry Yard next calendar year (Summer 2025). The end of outbound coal on our rail network is due to the inability of the coal company to obtain necessary permits to expand their strip mine. On the NBER, carloadings is lower due to lack of aggregate car moves and no more salt stockpile storage. Small upticks in other industries expanding their business and/or reach have not fully backfilled the loss of the other business. Additionally, cement carloads are much lower year over year do to a significant slowdown in construction.

All of 2024 will continue to focus on a surge in the capital improvement program worth over \$6 million. An additional \$6 million in capital investment is currently scheduled for the calendar year 2025. The JRA in partnership with the Borough of Milesburg will replace a combination railroad and public street bridge with construction commencing in the first half of 2025 utilizing previously awarded PennDOT multi-modal funding. Project completion has been delayed due to long lead times on bridge components. This project has an estimated construction cost of \$1 million and a Contractor has been selected and agreements in place. Otherwise, all previously awarded contracts are progressing on schedule and on budget. As we work toward the completion of a large grade crossing and signal upgrades along the Shamokin Valley Railroad (SVRR), the JRA is in the engineering phase of a \$3.4 million grade crossing safety project on the Selinsgrove Industrial Track for construction in summer/fall 2025.

Interest in rail service from private industry has continued with existing customers expanding throughout the rail network. A focus on marketing the rail system to existing and potential customers should result in added customers and carloads across the rail system throughout to help blunt the soft market seen and predicted to extend into early 2025. Existing customer expansions proposed on the Shamokin Valley Railroad should also bring a healthy increase in carloads in early 2026. Interest and inquiries for rail services continues throughout the system.

### **Connect Humanity’s Appalachian Digital Equity Accelerator (ADEA)**

SEDA-COG is proud to serve as a Lead Community Agency in the Connect Humanity’s **Appalachian Digital Equity Accelerator (ADEA)** project funded by a \$6.2M Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) ARISE grant. ADEA aims to empower 50 underserved communities by developing tailored digital equity master plans. These strategic plans will enable communities to effectively compete for a share of the \$45 billion available through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity Act (DEA) funding. By leveraging Connect Humanity's coordination efforts and the substantial \$1,630,405 in in-kind matching funds from project partners, SEDA-COG will play a crucial role in ensuring that these communities have the resources and support needed to foster digital inclusion and bridge the digital divide.



### **Keystone Opportunity Zone**

Since 1999 SEDA-COG has been designated as the administrator of the Central Region Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), which includes sub-zones representing nine of the 11-counties in the SEDA-COG region. The KOZ program continues to be a valuable economic development tool for Central Pennsylvania.

SEDA-COG, as the Zone Coordinator, shares potential project leads with all subzones that match the lead's requirements. We also provide presentations at various taxing body meetings and work with companies, so they fully understand the KOZ program, thereby maximizing program benefits and reducing program misconceptions.

Staff continues to provide administrative services for the Commonwealth's Keystone Opportunity Zone Program (KOZ). In 2023, (the most recent KOZ data currently available) it was reported that over 319 people were employed and there has been over \$34 million invested in the Central Region KOZ in 2023.



### **Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP)**

As stated previously, the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) Program was designed by the Commonwealth to encourage coordination of economic development efforts, to promote enhanced customer service to the business community and to provide a comprehensive and efficient economic development delivery strategy. The Central PREP Program's core partners include the region's industrial development organizations; SEDA-COG; and the two Small Business Development Centers (SBDC's) located at Penn State and Bucknell University.

The thirteenth year of the PREP Program began July 1, 2023. Highlights from the 2023/2024 state fiscal year include:

- Central Region PREP Partner meetings were held on November 7, 2023, February 6, 2024, and May 7, 2024.
- Numerous PREP Coordinator Conference calls throughout the reporting period for the coordinators to discuss PREP-related issues and opportunities.
- Provision of education and information to the partnership through the Central Region PREP distribution list.
- Staff continues to provide technical assistance on Executive Pulse.

The key to an integrated service delivery network is an in-depth awareness and understanding of the services being provided by other members of the network and ongoing and responsive communication between network members to ensure companies are receiving quality assistance in a timely manner. To that end, the following service providers presented at the quarterly PREP Partner meetings for this reporting period:

- Ngozi Bell, the SBA's Office of Advocacy, Region 3, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, DC, West Virginia presented on the SBA's

Office of Advocacy which is an independent voice for small business within the federal government, the watchdog of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, and a source of small business statistics and research. Advocacy advances the views and concerns of small businesses before Congress, the White House, federal agencies, federal courts, and state policymakers.

- Karen Grimm-Thomas, Early Childhood Education Strategy Advisor, Creative Child Care Solutions with the Pennsylvania Key gave a presentation titled, “Insufficient Child Care: Business Impacts and Supports.”
- Noelle Long, Director of SEDA-COG’s Export Department and Nicolas Cerbantes, Director, U.S. Commercial Service Harrisburg; U.S. department of Commerce/International Trade Commission shared their exporting knowledge with the PREP partners

### **Engage!**



Engage! is a Pennsylvania statewide business retention and expansion program designed to interact with targeted companies regularly and proactively. The overall goal of Engage! is to retain existing businesses in a community and

to help them grow by building solid relationships with business owners or key decision makers and economic development partners and their representatives.

In support of the PA DCED Engage! Project, the Central Region Engage! Team have partnered to interview businesses across a range of categories, deliver intense and customized business support through visiting with businesses and hold roundtables on a range of business-related topics.

For the State FY 2023-2024, the Central Engage! region completed 149 Engage! visits and 1 roundtable. One hundred sixteen business referrals were made to Engage! partners and other service providers in the region. Central Region Engage! Team meetings were held monthly throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year, except for August.

### **Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation Project**

SEDA-COG has continued to take part in the regional Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) Project Task Force organized by the Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce. The task force is focused on facilitating the construction of the CSVT Project, an over \$900 million project, and our 11-county region’s largest transportation/economic development project. When complete, the CSVT will stretch 13 miles and alleviate congestion on several highways, providing a safer environment for motorists while opening bottlenecks that slow north-south traffic traveling through the region.

In November 2013 the Commonwealth passed Act 89, a \$2.3 billion transportation funding plan, which substantially filled the funding gap for the CSVT Project, along with subsequent support from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed in 2021. The CSVT Project is divided into northern and southern sections. The northern section connects Route 147 south of Montandon in Northumberland County to Route 15 south of Winfield in Union County. The northern section, including a 4,500’ bridge over the West

Branch of the Susquehanna River, was opened to traffic in July 2022. The southern section will construct roughly 6 miles of new, four-lane, limited access highway, connecting with the northern section south of Winfield and proceeding to the existing Routes 11/15 interchange just north of Selinsgrove in Snyder County. The southern section will also include an interchange/connector to Route 61 (Veterans Memorial Bridge) and Routes 11/15 in Shamokin Dam.

Construction of the southern section commenced in 2022. Construction of the southern section is estimated to cost \$395 million and is planned to be completed through three contracts. The first contract, for earthwork, started in the summer of 2022 and is anticipated to be completed by 2025. The second contract for the southern section was awarded in October 2023. This contract includes nine new bridges. Additionally, four noise walls are included in the second contract. Final design work is ongoing to develop plans for the third construction contract, which will involve paving the new highway and constructing its interchanges. Bids for that contract are anticipated by early 2026. The southern section is anticipated to be opened to traffic in 2027.

During 2021, the Williamsport Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the SEDA-COG MPO collaborated with PennDOT and Michael Baker International to complete a special impact study for the CSVT. The Williamsport MPO received funding from PennDOT in 2022 to retain Michael Baker International to support implementation of the CSVT special impact study recommendations. Part of the focus will be on preparing for and participating in economic development and land use planning processes throughout the region that are affected by the CSVT Project. Other primary focus areas will include assisting with grant applications integral to implementing the study recommendations and providing guidance to study area municipalities engaged in updates to their current land use ordinances or developing new ordinances/plans to respond to CSVT impacts. The management team has been working to implement the study recommendations. One outgrowth has been initiating a US Route 15 Corridor Improvements Study focused on a 10-mile segment between the I-80 interchange and the SR 54 intersection.

### **Flood Resiliency**

To help prepare for natural disasters such as flooding, a regional flood resiliency proposal was developed by SEDA-COG. The project included a self-assessment tool, implementation of the tool, project prioritization, and implementation. It provided a calculated response to flood insurance reform, developing partnerships with universities; insurance underwriters; banking community; local, state, and federal agencies; and combining those revenues with private funds. Considerable support was obtained through these meetings. Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funds (\$75,000) were secured and matched with SEDA-COG funds to develop resiliency plans in six communities within the region. Additionally, with the assistance of SEDA-COG, the LDDAP successfully secured additional funding to pursue resiliency efforts in most of the LDD's statewide. SEDA-COG assisted four LDD's with the public meeting and educational component of this process, and so the evolution began.

The following work has been actively pursued by the Flood Resiliency Department:

SEDA-COG continues to solicit surveyor services for discounted pricing to prepare and issue FEMA Elevation Certificates for individual property owners. The program

currently underway is in the Town of Bloomsburg, and the boroughs of Selinsgrove, Lewisburg, Danville, and Milton. Residents are taking advantage of this program and are paying about half of the state average for their Flood Elevation Certificates.

SEDA-COG has also developed an initiative to increase the number of communities participating in the Community Rating System (CRS) through FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). By participating in the CRS program, communities who adopt and maintain higher regulatory standards for floodplain management receive discounts on NFIP policy premiums. Through SEDA-COG's involvement in capacity building, communities with limited staff and resources may take advantage of the insurance premium discounts. Currently SEDA-COG serves as the CRS Coordinator for the Borough of Lewisburg and the Borough of Renovo and anticipates enrolling additional communities in the CRS. However, FEMA Region 3 has experienced some challenges in enrolling new communities into the CRS program and our staff continue to navigate, making this process more streamlined with FEMA and PEMA contacts.

[Act 22 of 2023](#), signed by Governor Josh Shapiro on November 1, 2023, establishes the Flood Insurance Premium Assistance Task Force to review and analyze existing statutes, procedures, practices, processes, and rules relating to the administration of flood insurance in Pennsylvania. In calendar year 2024, the Pennsylvania Insurance Department asked Ms. Zeigler to speak to the State's Insurance Commission and provide feedback on SEDA-COG's regional work in relation to flood mitigation. Many stakeholders also echoed the hurdles of the CRS program and beyond. Comments have been incorporated into the *Flood Insurance Premium Assistance Task Force Final Report*, dated July 2024, which can be found linked [here](#).

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners submitted an appropriation request to fund Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending in calendar year 2022. The County was awarded a Legislative Earmark under the FY 2023 Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program to complete the technical analysis and engineering of a flood control structure with the intention to pursue funding for implementation to reduce the long-term risks to loss of life and property damage from flooding. The award notification was received at the end of September 2023 with contracting received in May 2024. SEDA-COG is currently assisting the County with the drafting of a Request for Proposals to federally procure an engineering firm to complete this important work. The engineering portion of the project needs to be completed by the end of September 2026, per the grant agreement.



The award notification was received at the end of September 2023 with contracting received in May 2024. SEDA-COG is currently assisting the County with the drafting of a Request for Proposals to federally procure an engineering firm to complete this important work. The engineering portion of the project needs to be completed by the end of September 2026, per the grant agreement.

In early 2023, the Flood Resiliency program became engaged with an (already underway) Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for the County of Lycoming. The Greater Williamsport Levee Rehabilitation Project, EDA Investment No. 01-79-14910, was awarded to the County in the amount of \$5,600,000.00 in calendar

year 2020 for rehabilitation work required to be completed on the North East section of the levee. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) identified that the levee's cross pipes are unacceptable/minimally acceptable, as well as the I-Wall of the structure, as it relates to maintain eligibility for USACE accreditation. Procurement for engineering services occurred for design and permitting and was awarded to WSP (formally known as Wood). The project was required to enter USACE's Semi-Quantitative Risk Assessment (SQRA) process prior to permitting release and has caused significant delays to the project. The first phase of the construction project was put out for bid in November 2023, and one sole bid was received in early December 2023, which was ~\$7 million over the anticipated budget due to an unknown non-compete clause with contractors. Currently, the County, SEDA-COG and WSP are attempting to seek EDA approval to move forward with a new first phase approach in rehabilitating four cross pipes, seeking a change of scope for the second phase, as well as an extension to the period of performance with EDA. A request package was submitted in August 2024, to EDA for review and presentation to the Investment Review Committee (IRC).

Additionally, SEDA-COG has responded to the need in Montour County through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). These funds were made available from the July/August (2018) Presidential Declaration. This application was submitted by the county on behalf of three of their municipalities for acquisition/demolition of 10 homes. Anthony and Derry Townships applications were awarded by FEMA Region 3. To-date, three homes (Derry Township) have been acquired and demolished and closeout with PEMA/FEMA occurred in August 2022. Anthony Township's HMGP award was sub granted to the County, SEDA-COG has solicited legal services and Professional Engineering Firms for the acquisition and demolition of four flood prone properties. To-date, three homes (Anthony Township) have been acquired and demolished and closeout with PEMA/FEMA will be complete by the end of November 2024, due to the need of additional work to be complete at one of the project sites, per PEMA closeout requirements

A separate HMGP was awarded to the Borough of Renovo for the acquisition/demolition of sixteen structures on 14<sup>th</sup> Street in the Borough. SEDA-COG assisted with the application in 2021 and the many hurdles the Borough faced to have this project awarded. The total funding is in the amount of \$1,127,840.70, which was received in September 2024. The next step is for all contracting to be put in place and then federally procure an engineer and legal services for settlement purposes. Meetings with all sixteen owners will need to take place to ensure total participation of all sixteen owners, as the structure set to be demolished is one large structure with sixteen individual, non-load/fire proof structural units.

The Borough of Selinsgrove was awarded a FFY 2022 Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program to undertake a Capability & Capacity Building (C&CB) activity – Flood Resiliency Study. The Federal Share (75%) of the grant award is in the amount of \$98,437.50 and is funded with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) monies, along with a Non-Federal Share (25%) in the amount of \$32,812.50 as local match. SEDA-COG assisted the Borough with the application in the amount of \$131,250.00 and will carry out the project management/administration of this grant.

The Flood Resiliency Study's Scope of Work will cover the following topics: Examination of Best Flood Event Procedures, Creation of Standardized/Comprehensive Messaging, Feasibility to Design a Website or Location for Education Materials, Master Binder/Electronic Database/Physical File System, Historic District Consideration, and three Public Meetings will occur along with a draft and final report. The Study will conclude in Spring of 2025.

SEDA-COG was afforded the opportunity to work with the City of Shamokin with an Act 47 Grant to seek a Professional Services Provider to undertake an H&H study for Shamokin Creek. The City's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) has drastically changed and were set to go in effect in early 2023, the new/proposed FIRM has more than doubled the regulatory floodplain and has dire effects for a city trying to revitalize. The H&H study was completed in April of 2022, and virtual meetings with FEMA and its subcontractor occurred thereafter. Originally, it was determined that a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) could be issued with engineering findings; however, after much discussion, FEMA notified the City that the formal Appeal process would open at the beginning of calendar year 2023. The formal Appeal process, if FEMA accepts the engineer's H&H modeling that has been successfully submitted during the Appeal, will allow for a more cohesive mapping approach that should be a more streamlined and easy to digest way of viewing the new mapping. Additional modeling information was submitted to FEMA for their review and consideration in May 2023. SEDA-COG plans to offer flood education to the elected officials, residents and business owners after the new mapping goes into effect in 2025.

The Town of Bloomsburg was awarded their first Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant for a total of two structures to be elevated. The Town accepted the award and sought Professional Services for design work in the Fall of 2021. The project was let to contractors in the summer of 2022 and bids came in high for one of the two structures (due to inflation). Completion is anticipated prior to calendar year 2023 for the one structure remaining in this grant. The higher of the two bids for one structure was rejected and a request to PEMA was made to remove the structure from the FMA award. In turn, two new applications were submitted for that structure. After the request for withdrawal, SEDA-COG on behalf of the Town submitted a Swift Current (FMA program through IIJA) application, as well as a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) under the DR-4506 (COVID) disaster declaration. In April 2023, PEMA notified the Town that the FMA Swift Current application was awarded, and construction (elevation) is underway as of September 2024.

### **Summary of Accomplishments:**

See attached Summary of Accomplishments for SEDA-COG in 2024.



**ATTACHMENT A**  
SEDA-COG Board  
Member List

**SEDA-Council of Governments  
Board of Directors, 2024  
22 Members**

Each County in the SEDA-COG region appoints one Commissioner and a second Representative to serve on the SEDA-COG Board. The Board consists of 22 Members.

**Quorum needed (12)** - A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the Board of Directors.

County	Representatives
Centre	Commissioner Mark Higgins Lisa Strickland, Ferguson Township Supervisor
Clinton	Commissioner Jeffrey A. Snyder Steve Stevenson, Lock Haven City Councilman
Columbia	*Commissioner Randy Karschner Paul Eyerly, IV, President, Press Enterprise, Inc.
Juniata	Commissioner Mark Partner Scott Fritz, Pennian Bank, President & CEO
Lycoming	Commissioner Scott L. Metzger Howard W. Fry III, Fry's Fire Systems, owner
Mifflin	Commissioner Kevin P. Kodish Allana Hartung, Commercial Relationship Manager, V.P., Kish Bank
Montour	*Commissioner Rebecca Dressler Chris Benjamin, Plant Operator, Boyd Station
Northumberland	Commissioner Joseph Klebon *Joseph Moralez, Community Relations Officer, Encina Development Group
Perry	*Commissioner Frank Cambell Colin Reynolds, Centre Township Supervisor
Snyder	Commissioner Joseph E. Kantz Dennis Van Benthuyzen, Colonial Furniture, President
Union	Commissioner Preston R. Boop *Fred Hoffman Jr., West Buffalo Township Supervisor

*\*New Board Members, 2024*

**OFFICERS - 2024**

- President – Commissioner Scott Metzger
- First Vice President – Commissioner Joe Kantz
- Second Vice President – Commissioner Jeff Snyder
- Secretary – Howard Fry, III
- Treasurer – Dennis Van Benthuyzen



**ATTACHMENT B**

CEDS Committee  
Member List

**SEDA-Council of Governments**  
**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee**  
**2024**  
**22 Members**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee is made up of the sixteen Local Loan Review Committee (LLRC) Members, plus six technical, At-Large Representatives. Terms for the CEDS Members are the same as those for the LLRC.

<b>County</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
<b>SEDA FOUNDATION</b>			
Centre	Thaddeus Will	M&T Bank, Sr. Relationship Mgr., VP	04/23/25
Clinton	Thomas A. Keiffer	Penn State SBDC, Business Consultant	04/23/25
Columbia	Paul Eyerly, IV	President, Press Enterprise, Inc.	04/22/26
Juniata	Jeremiah Trout	SVP, Lending Division Mgr, Juniata Valley Bank	04/22/26
Lycoming	David McKernan	Woodlands Bank, Financial Analyst	04/24/24
Mifflin	Allana Hartung	Commercial Relationship Mgr. VP, Kish Bank	04/24/24
Montour	John D. Yoder	Northumberland National Bank, VP Comm. Lending	04/24/24
Northumberland	Janice Kotwica	Retired	04/23/25
Perry	Colin Reynolds	Centre Township Supervisor	04/24/24
Snyder	Gerald A. Stauffer	Ideal Group Inc., co-owner	04/22/26
Union	Vacant		04/24/24
<b>SEDA-COG BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>			
Centre	Mark Higgins	County Commissioner	12/31/24
Clinton	Jeffrey A. Snyder	County Commissioner	12/31/24
Clinton	Steve Stevenson	Lock Haven City Councilman	12/31/24
Juniata	Mark Partner	County Commissioner	12/31/24
Union	Preston R. Boop	County Commissioner	12/31/24
<b>AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVES</b>			
	Paul Caimi	Woodlands Bank, Commercial Loan Officer	12/31/24
	Jeffrey Hollenbach	Susquehanna Community Bank, Executive VP, COO	12/31/24
	Harold Hurst	Cooper Township, Board Chairman	12/31/24
	Stephen Phillips	Retired	12/31/24
	Brian Wiktor	Chief Lending Officer, MC Federal Credit Union	12/31/24
	Vacant		12/31/24

Chairman – Commissioner Jeffrey A. Snyder



# **ATTACHMENT C**

## Summary of Accomplishments

#	Activity	Task	Benefits/Outcome/Impacts/Deliverables	Milestone Date
1	Business & Entrepreneurship	Loan Packaging	The loan packaging component of SEDA-COG's economic development activities continues to be a key service provided to the region's businesses. At present, SEDA-COG can provide clients with access to the SBA-504 Program, the EDA Revolving Loan Fund, the ARC Revolving Loan Fund, the Telecommunications Equity and Marcellus (TEAM) loan fund, the various Commonwealth loan programs, the USDA Intermediary Relending Program, and the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) loan program. As of August 31, 2024, the SEDA-COG loan portfolio showed a total of 185 open loans from various sources totaling over \$43.2 million. These loans are anticipated to assist in the creation of 542 new jobs. In addition, there were 21 committed loans totaling over \$15.4 million, with a projected job increase of 95. During the 12 months ending August 31, 2024, a total of 25 loans were settled totaling over \$9.1 million. These loans represent various combinations of sources and are projected to help create 63 new jobs.	Ongoing
2	Business Retention, Expansion, & Attraction	Engage! Program: Business Visits and roundtables focused on small business	In support of the PA DCED Engage! Project, the Central Region Engage! Team have partnered to interview businesses across a range of categories, deliver intense and customized business support through visiting with businesses and hold roundtables on a range of business related topics. For the State FY 2023-2024, the Central Engage! region completed 149 Engage! visits and 1 roundtable. One hundred sixteen business referrals were made to Engage! partners and other service providers in the region.	Ongoing
3	Critical Infrastructure: Transportation, Broadband & Energy	Broadband Engineering and Deployment Readiness Plan	The Lycoming County Broadband Engineering & Deployment Readiness Plan will determine the best solutions to fill existing service gaps, assess the readiness of ISPs to pursue state and federal funding for broadband deployment, and prepare Lycoming County to collaboratively work with ISPs to pursue state and federal funding resources.	December-24
4	Critical Infrastructure: Transportation, Broadband & Energy	Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) Project	SEDA-COG has continued to take part in the regional Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation (CSVT) Project Task Force organized by the Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce. The task force is focused on facilitating construction of the CSVT Project, an over \$800 million project and our 11-county region's largest transportation/economic development project. When complete, the CSVT will stretch 13 miles and alleviate congestion on several highways, providing a safer environment for motorists while opening bottlenecks that slow north-south traffic traveling through the region. The northern section, including a 4,500' bridge over the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, was opened to traffic in July 2022.	Ongoing
5	Project Development/Project Support	Build to Scale	Provided EDA project development and grant application assistance.	Ongoing
6	Flood Resiliency	Expanding Community Rating System (CRS)	SEDA-COG has developed an initiative to increase the number of communities participating in the Community Rating System (CRS) through FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Currently SEDA-COG serves as the CRS Coordinator for the Borough of Lewisburg and the Borough of Renovo and anticipates enrolling additional communities in the CRS. However, FEMA Region 3 has experienced some challenges in enrolling new communities into the CRS program and our staff continue to navigate, making this process more streamlined with FEMA and PEMA contacts.	Ongoing
7	Flood Resiliency	Survey Services	SEDA-COG continues to solicit surveyor services for discounted pricing to prepare and issue FEMA Elevation Certificates for individual property owners. The program currently underway is in the Town of Bloomsburg, and the boroughs of Selinsgrove, Lewisburg, Danville, and Milton. Residents are taking advantage of this program and are paying about half of the state average for their Flood Elevation Certificates.	Ongoing
8	Critical Infrastructure: Transportation, Broadband & Energy	SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority	Over the last 12 months, traffic along the rail lines was over 14,000 carloads. Marcellus gas related business remains an important part of the carloads, however, it is not the "gold rush" scenario of 2013-2014 but there were 486 carloads in frac sand and related commodities between June 2023 and June 2024. Future frac sand unit trains are scheduled for FY 2024-2025 2nd and 3rd quarters, indicative of the upcoming winter drilling season	Ongoing
9	Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education Foundation (PASSHE)	Industry-Advised Workforce Training Program	PASSHE is requesting EDA support to launch Kickstart, an industry-advised workforce training program in collaboration with five specific industry clusters in Pennsylvania. The five clusters, technology, healthcare, insurance, hospitality and business, all have demonstrated an ongoing need for skilled workers and have led the process to create Kickstart. There are two goals/deliverables for the Kickstart program: 1) a scalable infrastructure and Kickstart playbook to create a robust educational experience across all 10 PASSHE universities in Pennsylvania, and 2) university graduates fill good jobs and contribute value to the workplace in their communities.	September-25

