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NINE COUNTIES. ONE VISION.

Imagine The Possibilities.

A Region Growing Into Greatness

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Nine Counties. One Vision.

A Region Growing Into Greatness

OVERVIEW



What do the results tell us?

Nine Counties. One Vision. has given the region (Anderson, Blount, Grainger, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, Roane, Sevier and Union counties) a clear agenda for its future. This agenda – reached through a meticulously designed participatory process where residents suggested ideas, developed goals and set priorities – spells out what is important for the future of this region. It provides a snapshot of needs and desires that must be addressed expeditiously. Two characteristics stand out.

First, the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* agenda is holistic. It addresses issues that go beyond the four categories that have received the most support: education, environment, transportation and downtowns. It includes goals and strategies for growth management and rural preservation, culture and the arts, community places, human relations, and quality of life, to list a few.

Second, the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* agenda is clearly regional in scope. Its goals and strategies cross professional, institutional and jurisdictional lines. Its regional emphasis ranges from creating a regional education foundation, to developing a regional trail and greenway system; from developing a regional light rail system, to firmly establishing downtown Knoxville as the region's hub; from protecting the region's natural areas, to establishing a regionwide annual arts event that focuses on the region's rich heritage; from protecting the welfare of animals, to recruiting businesses through a regionally coordinated effort.

The comprehensive scope of the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* agenda and its regional thrust result from participants embracing the idea that all parts of the region are important to the well-being of the whole. Vision participants were able to set aside local issues and focus on regional solutions. This exemplary spirit of collaboration and open-mindedness displayed by *Nine Counties. One Vision.* participants is the model to follow as the vision moves toward implementation.

Metropolitan regions are becoming the dominant economic, environmental and social components of the new century. More than ever, the economies, societies and environments of the nine county area are intertwined, transcending political divisions. The results of *Nine Counties. One Vision.* show unequivocally that all the cities within the region, their suburbs and the natural and rural areas that surround them maintain their strong identities yet share a common destiny.

This report describes what that common destiny is.

Background

Nine Counties. One Vision. started when several groups began talking separately but simultaneously about the need for a process to create a common agenda in the Knoxville area. These efforts ranged from a regional leadership initiative, to various efforts in surrounding counties, to grassroots efforts in the inner city and South Knoxville, to a growing belief in the business community that a consensus-building approach to developing a common agenda was needed. Twenty-nine individuals representing different perspectives in the region came together to discuss what that approach should be. These 29 invited more than 150 people from throughout the region to a meeting at Ijams Nature Center. After a presentation of the idea of developing a common agenda for the region, the participants completed a questionnaire. Of the respondents, 97 percent enthusiastically endorsed the effort. A large majority thought the effort should

be regional and should include Knox County and all eight contiguous counties. The original group of 29 became the vision's Initiating Committee and moved to set up a legal structure and secure funding. Most importantly, the Initiating Committee established a process to recruit a Steering Committee of the region's unofficial leaders – people respected because of their love for the community and region.

The process

Nine Counties. One Vision. started on February 1, 2000, with a meeting of 200 high school students coming from all parts of the region. The 435 ideas they contributed were the beginning of an unprecedented and extraordinary outpouring of participation. During the remaining 19 meetings held in all parts of the region more than 3,600 residents participated, contributing a total of 8,827 ideas.

Volunteers placed each idea into one of 48 categories, including, among others, environment, education, transportation, animal welfare and government. These categories, and the ideas they contained, were discussed at six Goal Writing Workshops held April 3, 4, 6, 10, 11 and 13. More than 450 citizens translated those ideas into 48 goals and 240 strategies. The *Nine Counties. One Vision.* Steering Committee grouped the 48 goals into 12 Vision Themes and developed a vision statement for each Theme. The 12 Vision Themes and 48 goals were presented at the Vision Fair, held May 19 and 20 at Volunteer Landing. The nearly 1,300 who participated in the celebration provided a first prioritization of the 48 goals.

Last summer more than 400 volunteers, divided into 12 work groups, sifted through all the information produced by *Nine Counties. One Vision.* They interviewed organizations in the region, gathered information on national trends and programs relevant to the vision's strategies and recommended the strategies and action steps included in this report.

The vision at-a-glance

Participants in the 20 Idea Gathering Meetings: 3,614
 Participants in the 5 Goal Writing Meetings: 455
 Participants in the Vision Fair: 1,296
 Participants in the Implementation Working Groups: 450

Facilitators: 250
 Volunteers: 750
 Ideas Collected: 8,827
 Vision Themes: 12

Where did all the ideas come from?

The 3,614 residents who participated in last winter's idea-gathering meetings represent a record attendance for face-to-face participation. Not only did *Nine Counties. One Vision.* attendance set a record high it also represented a balanced cross-section of the entire area. An analysis of attendance at the 20 idea-gathering meetings of *Nine Counties. One Vision.* shows that 34 percent of the participants came from Knox County and 56 percent came from the surrounding counties. The remaining 10 percent were high school students from all parts of the region.

A breakdown of participants by counties follows:

Anderson: 10%	Loudon: 9%
Blount: 13%	Roane: 7%
Grainger: 4%	Sevier: 9%
Jefferson: 8%	Union: 5%
Knox: 34%	

Half of the meeting participants were age 45-65, 21 percent were 30-44, 20 percent were over 65 and 9 percent were under 30. Of the participants, 63 percent had lived in the region for more than 20 years, 15 percent for 10-20 years and 22 percent for less than 10 years.

These percentages clearly indicate that the goals and strategies of *Nine Counties. One Vision.* express the aspirations of the region's residents. They are also a testimonial to a thorough volunteer outreach effort that left no stone unturned in an effort to excite and involve residents.

The Mission

The strongest message that emerges from *Nine Counties. One Vision.* is an exhortation to citizens and leaders to recognize and protect the values and assets of the region. "A region growing into greatness" is the call to action, the mission statement prepared by the Steering Committee to capture the essence of this vision.

The major themes of nature, technology and heritage not only capture distinct and essential elements of the vision they also help bring the vision into sharper focus.

Nine Counties. One Vision. affirms its strong environmental identity as defined by the beauty and character of its ridges, valleys, farms, cities, towns and neighborhoods.

Nine Counties. One Vision. calls for the highest quality education that capitalizes on the region's strong tradition in pioneering technology, establishing the notion that the region is willing and ready to compete in a global economy.

Nine Counties. One Vision. champions the protection and celebration of its multifaceted heritage and culture manifested in the places, events, individuals

and organizations that have molded the region's character.

These major themes evoke a vision of a beautiful, prosperous and livable region.

The Vision: an Overview

A vision as broad and comprehensive as this one is hard to comprehend at a single glance. This is because people do not live in regions. They live in neighborhoods where they raise their children, make friends and create safe, happy and comfortable lives. For residents to support the comprehensive vision of *Nine Counties. One Vision.*, they must have a personal understanding of how it affects the neighborhoods, the streets, the blocks and the homes in which they live. This summary overview will help bring into vivid focus what the vision wants to accomplish and how we can all benefit from it.

The Environment

The nine counties are striving to become a leader in environmental preservation, a region that protects and enhances its unique natural environment for current and future generations. The vision ranges from conserving and restoring an ecologically sustainable natural environment to developing a system of "greenspace, hiking trails, walkways, bike lanes, parks and blueways" that are safe and accessible for recreation as well as transportation. It also anticipates that "citizens, industries and government will work together to restore air and water quality and make the region litter-free."

The vision recommends activities on several fronts. One is the creation of a "regional coordinating board; to identify principles and strategies for environmental preservation and sustainable development."

Additionally, two initiatives can have a major impact on the character and physical appearance of the region. The first links communities within the region with a "well-planned, constructed and maintained system of

interconnecting greenways and trails.” The second makes the region litter-free providing “incentives for households, businesses and institutions to reduce waste, increase recycling and increase materials reuse.”

Growth Management and Rural Preservation

The desire to preserve and enhance the region’s environmental quality goes hand in hand with the desire to manage future growth with “well-planned development,” that will “limit sprawl while respecting property owners’ rights” and “restore the scenic character of the region, its rural ways of life and its natural and agricultural life-support systems.”

The vision recommends the creation of a citizen network, the Citizen’s Growth Management Councils. These Councils will work to require regionwide “environmentally responsible and well-planned development.” Another strategy is the creation of a Rural Heritage Preservation organization to preserve and conserve “natural resources, agricultural economy, cultural heritage and the scenic beauty of the nine counties region.”

The Growth Management and Rural Preservation goals have a lot in common. Both are concerned with the current lack of management and preservation policies in the region. Both suggest the creation of assertive organizations to monitor development policies and activities, to educate and build support for management and preservation issues and to actively address specific growth-management and preservation issues at the local level.

Education

The education vision foresees the creation of the “best public education systems in America; where every person . . . has the means to reach his or her fullest potential and become a valued member of society.” Two strategies are used to accomplish that overall goal.

The first is the establishment of a public education foundation created to “provide seed money for innovation” and support those initiatives that “create a passion for excellence,” “build strong school leadership,” improve “student achievement and support excellent professional development of teachers.”

The second deals with the use of school facilities as community resources, “transforming schools into community centers and expanding school programs.” Technology is expected to play a key role in this process of creating “full-service” community schools.

Downtowns

Regional and community interest in making Downtown Knoxville “the vibrant urban heart of the region” is high. The goal received the highest ranking at the Vision Fair last May. It also attracted the highest participation during the working group phase of the vision.

The strategy to accomplish the Downtown Knoxville goal comes out of the creation of a set of design and development values based on the 2,005 ideas – out of the 8,827 ideas submitted by participants to the vision process – that deal with design and development aspects of the region. These values, representing the consensus through the region, can be used in the development of a master plan for downtown and contiguous neighborhoods that will include design guidelines, development incentives and enforcement mechanisms. They can also be used as an objective tool to enhance current proposed developments and act as a catalyst for future development.

A carefully appointed Task Force will steer the master plan effort by securing private and public funding and by educating and involving the general public in the process.

Community Places

Three themes stand out in the effort to make the nine-county region one that emphasizes “high-quality development, beautiful neighborhoods and a strong sense of community and preserving historic structures.” They are creating strong neighborhoods, beautifying the region and preserving the region’s historic buildings.

The vision for the region’s neighborhoods calls for beautiful “clean residential and commercial places of harmonious design” where “residents can come together” and build community. To accomplish that goal, the vision recommends the creation of a Regional Council of Neighborhoods that would help create new strong neighborhood organizations and bring together existing ones.

The effort to beautify the region focuses on the development and enforcement of “stronger codes throughout the region,” with laws and ordinances designed to protect trees, control signage, prevent and eliminate litter and promote landscaping.

Residents are concerned with the preservation and reuse of historic structures. The plan calls for a nine county historic preservation organization that will look at preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings throughout the region.

Transportation

The *Nine Counties. One Vision.* ideas also help make it easier for people to get around through the development of a transportation system that connects “every corner” of the region and that is “efficient, reliable, affordable and environmentally friendly.” People traveling through this region will be able to comfortably switch between modes of transportation: cars, rail, buses and bicycles. They will also be able to walk to more destinations than is possible now.

To ensure the coordinated implementation of such a complex system, the vision recommends creating a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The RTA's first orders of business would be to develop a regional transportation plan, mount a political campaign to ensure the passage of the necessary enabling legislation and build awareness and support for the plan." The RTA would focus on rail and bus transportation with an emphasis on "pilot demonstration projects that utilize existing rail and road right-of-ways." An extended Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), to include all nine counties, would focus on road improvements to complement the system. Working with the MPO, a newly formed Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee would focus on implementing a "network of safe routes and facilities for biking and walking that is integrated with other modes of transportation and the region's greenways"

Economic Development

Nine Counties. One Vision. establishes that the region is a fundamental economic entity competitive in a global economy, which "aggressively promotes responsible economic development across a broad spectrum of productive activities." The vision looks to create a "renewed spirit of entrepreneurship" from which the entire region would benefit, leading to "more new company starts, more wealth created and, in turn, more investment available for second- and third-generation company start-ups."

The vision recommends achieving this goal through the development of business incubators and by "marrying local sources of venture capital" with local entrepreneurs. A regional economic development round table would serve as "a clearinghouse/one-stop assistance center that directs companies to existing service providers and creates new services as needed."

Tourism would play an important role in the region's prosperity. The vision recognizes that "tourism is the number one industry in the area" and recommends the development of a unified tourism strategy for the region.

Human Relations and Quality of Life

Nine Counties. One Vision. champions social equity by making residents of all races, ages and social groups the “foundation” for a successful region and by encouraging a strong sense of racial and social harmony.

One key to accomplishing that goal is an appreciation for “differences” among the region’s residents. As a first step in that direction, the vision recommends the creation of a Race Relations Institute that provides “education, research, training and advocacy to government, businesses, schools, justice systems, media organizations, associations and individuals throughout the region” on issues of race.

Nine Counties. One Vision. also imagines a region where senior citizens are respected, their knowledge and talent utilized and where they have easy access to appropriate affordable housing, quality health care and centers of activity and learning. In particular, the vision sets a goal for development of modestly priced housing in each of the nine counties where “seniors” independence could be maintained” and where the region’s elderly members can “age in place” within a community if they wish to do so.

The vision recognizes a “growing crisis” in the number of young people “not on the road to becoming successful” and seeks to mobilize the region’s resources to empower them. It recommends extending to all nine counties the model of America’s Promise – The Alliance for Youth in existence in Knox and Anderson counties.

Health Care and Social Services

The vision aims to provide outstanding health care through an “affordable, fully accessible, high quality, community-based system that addresses both the short- and long-term needs of all citizens.”

The vision also strives to provide a comprehensive and coordinated social services network. *Nine Counties. One Vision.* recommends the creation of interagency councils in each county that would “create linkages between existing organizations and individuals to enhance service delivery and reduce duplicate services.”

Arts and Culture

The nine-county region aspires to be a place that celebrates the arts and its diverse cultural heritage and “preserves, fosters, celebrates, promotes and financially supports its local artists, diverse art forms and cultural heritage.”

One way that *Nine Counties. One Vision.* will set out to reach this goal is by forming a Nine-County Arts Coalition “made up of individual arts councils or representatives from each county.” The coalition can lead the way in supporting arts and culture by “developing funding for and acting as a clearinghouse for shared resources.” Additionally, the proposed Cultural Preservation Task Force can “foster knowledge and appreciation for the culture and history of the region through museums, cultural centers and cultural celebrations.” Residents are concerned with the preservation and cataloging of the region’s historical and cultural treasures, including individuals, places, celebrations and organizations that have contributed to the region’s character. Finally, an annual festival hosted by each county in a rotating fashion can become the catalyst for showcasing the heritage and talent of each county while building pride for the whole.

Government

Nine Counties. One Vision. advocates vigorous regional cooperation through structured and constructive dialogue among jurisdictions to sustain citizen involvement in planning and implementing the vision.

The Regional Council of Governments is expected to play a key role in coordinating the diverse aspects of the vision and in promoting the “sharing of

resources and common focus” throughout the nine counties. It will act as a thread that weaves the visions together by keeping citizens involved and maintaining a regional focus throughout the coming decades.

Animal Welfare

Nine Counties. One Vision. foresees a region where wild and domestic animals are adequately valued and cared for by an educated populace with proper funding, laws, facilities and natural habitats.

The strategy to accomplish this goal focuses on the allocation of public funding to finance the operations of “permanent, full-service animal centers that provide shelter services, veterinary services, public education, licensing, enforcement and development of animal habitats.”

Conclusion

The next phase of *Nine Counties. One Vision.* is to see that the region’s goals and strategies are implemented. This is, of course, a complex task. Many of the issues the vision addresses are difficult to tackle and much time and effort are required. To be successful, implementation must capitalize on the strong climate for regional cooperation that the goals suggest. In turning residents’ aspirations into action, *Nine Counties. One Vision.* must maximize economic and organizational resources and summon the support of public and private sectors.

Implementation starts on January 23, 2001, a year from *Nine Counties. One Vision. Kick Off.* In one year the region has produced a credible and legitimate vision. Its goals and strategies are goals and strategies shared by the entire region. The political climate is favorable. Now citizens, elected officials, private sector leaders, special interest groups, philanthropic institutions and not-for-profit organizations must work together to turn ideas into reality. They must cooperate, reach out, recognize and preserve the region’s assets and have fun along the way.

Environment

A region that protects and enhances its unique natural environment for current and future generations.

The Goals:

Greenways, Trails, and Parks

A nine county interconnective system of greenspace, hiking trails, walkways, bike lanes, parks and blueways that preserve natural resources and scenic beauty and enhances and expand, non-motorized, safe and accessible recreation as well as transportation.

Environmental Preservation

A region that values, protects, conserves and restores an ecologically sustainable natural environment.

Air and Water Quality

A region that protects and restores its air and water resources through open interaction of its citizens, industries and governments.

Waste Management

A litter-free region that preserves and protects its natural beauty through environmentally sustainable waste management.



GREENWAYS, TRAILS, AND PARKS

Implementation strategy

Establish a regional commission to develop a master plan for a regional network of parks connected by greenways, trails, and blueways.

Why should we commit to that strategy?

Because it is consistent with the needs and values expressed by the citizenry during the visioning process.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- First order of business is the appointment (by various counties) of Nine Counties Greenways, Trails and Parks “Commission.”
- Once appointed, this group can move forward with development of a “master plan.”
- Once completed, the Master Plan will serve as the blueprint for future “development” of regional network of parks connected by greenways, trails and blueways.
- A full-time paid executive director will most likely be necessary to “make it happen.”

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Nine County Greenways, Trails, and Parks Commission should be the leadership entity for this initiative.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and strategy.

Employment of Executive Director and part/full time staff will cost in the \$75,000 - \$100,000 range per year. Endorsement of “Commission” (by County level elected officials), appointment of Commission members, and development of the Nine Counties Master Plan, will cost very little (the major expense will be development/printing of Master Plan – (est. \$50,000, including public meetings, etc.). Actually implementing the Plan (land acquisition, trail and greenway construction, maintenance of developed parks, trails, and greenways, etc.) will be expensive. Actual cost would be hard to estimate at this time.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Since the first step is the institutional development of the “Commission,” this initiative will need a champion, or champions, within the political leadership of various counties. *Nine Counties. One Vision.* can help by providing the lobbying necessary to gain this “buy in” from local politicians.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION

Implementation strategy

Create and fund a regional coordinating board that works with existing organizations, institutions and the general public to identify values and strategies for environmental preservation and sustainable development and to develop mechanisms for their implementation and monitoring.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- To preserve and enhance the environmental quality and livability: quality of life.
- Because many of our current planning, development and land-management practices are having serious and costly impacts upon our health, quality of life and the natural ecosystems on which our survival depends.
- Because problems with compliance are common, even in counties where environmental regulations exist, either because of ineffective incentives or inadequate enforcement.
- Although there are several agencies and organizations in the area working to identify and protect environmentally sensitive lands, progress is slow without a permanently staffed regional office to facilitate and coordinate these efforts.
- Because currently there are no organized, coordinated efforts to identify and protect environmentally sensitive lands.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Form a steering/visioning committee to:

- Develop charter/mission statement.
- Identify appropriate candidates for board.

- Identify funding mechanisms.
- Develop goals.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Nine Counties. One Vision.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

We need at a minimum three full time people plus expenses (extensive travel within the nine counties and a few trips to regional or national workshops will be necessary) and an office, equipment, supplies and communications costs (including printing and some advertising).

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Assist in bringing in more public support, forming the board and finding the funding.

AIR & WATER QUALITY

Implementation strategy

Develop a regional educational consortium that is represented by the citizens, industries and government officials in the nine county area and will create a new generation of informed and empowered citizens who are effective in sensitively managing our regional natural environment. The consortium is mandated to oversee the implementation of the following strategies:

- 1) Develop an inventory to identify unique regional environmental sensitivities using Geographic Information System techniques.
- 2) Develop environmental education curriculum for K-12 schools and environmental education opportunities for the general public and decision-makers. Maintain consortium representation in local decision-making processes.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Education is very often considered to be the means by which social change is enacted. By enlightening the children and adults of our society to the benefits for and means by which they can protect our natural environment, we create a more responsive and integrated society that lives in closer connection to the world. By creating a quality comprehensive environmental curriculum that serves the entire region, we will bring educational opportunities to a broad spectrum of adults, children and elected officials who would not be reached otherwise.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

K-12 Education: Air and water quality will become part of the curriculum developed for K-12 grade school programs. This program should be modeled after the Adopt-a-Watershed program, which is active in many Knox County schools.

Community/General/Adult Education: The community education component will focus on action-oriented projects by striving to create education opportunities through hands-on community projects and targeted programs for professionals that may be used for certification, licensing and permitting of activities with potential to affect air and water quality. Part of the community education efforts could be focused on exposing people to the myriad of lifestyle and planning options that affect the air and water quality in the area. Other efforts could include parks and recreation, greenways, growth management and education.

Elected Officials: The Non-point source Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) model should be implemented to help educate community decision-makers on the key issues regarding air and water quality.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

K-12 educators and administrations will need to be supportive of the new curriculum. There will need to be regional agreement and support for full integration of the curriculum in the schools. For adult and elected official education, there will need to be a program developed that requires employees of certain government branches and corporations to receive environmental education. We will need key people to make implementation of environmental education curriculum mandatory in all nine-county school areas.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

- Cost of curriculum developers.
- Cost of teacher trainings.
- Cost of materials.
- Cost of setting up adult education and elected official programs (hiring teachers).

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Implementation strategy

- Create an incentive for households, businesses and institutions to reduce waste, increase recycling and increase materials re-use.
- Generate public support for shifting from the current general tax-supported waste collection/transportation/disposal system to a system that charges only for solid waste discarded.
- Create a Task Force with representation from each of the nine counties that will determine the true cost of solid waste collection/transportation/disposal. demonstrate how citizens are taxed for solid waste services whether or not they use those services.
- Educate the public about the magnitude of potential savings that results when wastes are reduced.
- Teach all citizens (adults and youths) about ways to reduce waste and promote implementation of variable rate or user fee waste-collection programs in each county.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

The strategy provides short- and long-term advantages. In the short term, it improves communication and awareness about solid waste management throughout the region. In the long-term, implementing the strategy will give citizens more control over expenditures on solid waste services and will put free-market forces to work on waste reduction. Ultimately, the strategy will help conserve finite landfill space and will improve stewardship of natural resources. In addition, this strategy does not attempt to reinvent the wheel. It can easily be integrated with existing educational programs, community organizations and state/local agency initiatives.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Calculate the present cost of solid waste collection, transportation and disposal, per 30-gallon residential bag in each of the nine counties. Develop an

educational strategy for the public (adults and youths) that points out the inequity that people who generate little trash subsidize those who generate a lot. Show how changes to the present system would financially benefit those who generate the least waste. Promote the actions of reducing, reusing and recycling as ways to reduce residential and commercial garbage collection, transportation and disposal costs. Educate citizens about how and why to purchase products locally that contain recycled materials.

Work with the Beautification Work Group to promote its work with litter codes enforcement. Create pilot studies in local communities (e.g., Tellico Village, Norris, Farragut) to demonstrate the potential savings of money and resources that are possible when a community works together to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Form a citizens' issue awareness/lobbying group (potentially the same as the Task Force) that will track the progress of bills/proposals related to solid waste issues in the state and local governments.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force working with local business leaders, agency personnel and citizens.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The group does not have enough information at this time to develop a budget. However, costs of implementation will be associated with the labor required to gather and develop information and costs of developing and distributing educational information. Implementation costs may be minimized if labor is provided on a volunteer basis.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Identify decision-makers from each of the nine counties who are familiar with the issues described in this action plan. Form the Task Force of decision-makers and interested citizens. Get the Task Force started on action plan implementation.

Growth Management and Rural Preservation

A region that balances well-planned growth while preserving its rural and agricultural heritage.

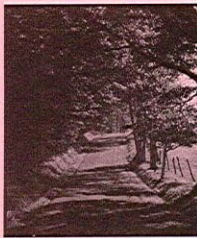
The Goals:

Growth Management

A region that protects its scenic beauty and natural resources; preserves farms and open spaces; rehabilitates old, residential, commercial and industrial areas; requires environmentally responsible and well-planned development and limits sprawl while respecting property owners' rights.

Rural Preservation

Protect and restore the scenic character of the region, its rural ways of life and its natural and agricultural life support systems.



GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Implementation strategy

Establish a Citizens' Growth Management Council in each county to monitor development policies and activities, to educate and build support for growth management and sustainability and to actively address specific growth management issues at the local level.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

At the present time, there is no significant coordinated growth management planning at the county level supported by a countywide community group. It is our conclusion that growth management can only be accomplished by a group with a vision of the whole and with the political clout to get a fair hearing. This strategy builds on the effort that has been mandated, though not yet accomplished, by Tennessee's growth management legislation, Public Law 1101.

What action steps are necessary to implement the strategy?

- Establish a Citizens' Growth Management Council.
- Follow on to the interest generated by the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* movement by calling on individuals and organizations that have shown direct or indirect interest in growth management.
- Coordinate carefully with the Economic Development and Transportation committees because these could be a source of conflict with Growth Management.
- Determine and support whatever organization or individuals should lead.
- Publish and keep current a regionwide series of quality of life indicators.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Citizens' Growth Management Council.

What will it cost to implement the action steps?

Much could be accomplished by volunteers, but real resources in terms of a permanent staff will be necessary for the long term. Some planning graduate students' assistance can be accomplished merely by redirecting existing efforts related to the student's work.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Establish the Citizens' Growth Management Council.

Begin discussion with other goal groups that have complementary or seemingly competing strategies.

Begin discussions with the university or other individuals and groups that could lead the overall effort in the long haul.

Work with whatever individual or organization selected to lead to develop specific tactics and a budget.

RURAL PRESERVATION

Implementation strategy

Form a Rural Heritage Preservation Organization, which may take the form of a corporation, foundation or other appropriate form that will most effectively achieve our goals.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- To create a legal entity that has the single purpose of planning and promoting our rural heritage.
- Because no other organization has been chartered for this specific purpose.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Develop a directory of people, organizations and available public and private resources whose support for the strategy will be key to the formation of the Rural Heritage Preservation Organization.
- Form the Rural Heritage Preservation Organization.
- Select a core group of organizers, or incorporators, to write the organization's charter.
- Enlist an influential, charismatic or otherwise well-respected person to act as spokesperson/leader of the organization.
- Identify funding sources or other sources of support, such as professional expertise already available from related organizations, such as TVA and the University of Tennessee.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Form a Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The initial cost will be volunteer hours and administrative financial support.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Convene a meeting of people and organizations that support the strategy.
- Organize a meeting of the goal teams that have overlapping strategies for the purpose of exchanging information and planning for mutual support of the others' strategies.
- Organize a meeting of the nine counties' representatives who bought into the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* process to inform them of the action plans that will involve cooperation of local planning authorities.

Education

Every person in this region reaches their fullest potential as a life-long learner through access to an excellent education.

The Goals:

Education/Facilities and Technology

An internationally competitive public education system that provides equal access for students of all ages and stations; that provides full access to computers and information age technology; that provides job skills and technology training; that is community based with lower student-teacher ratios; and that provides a safe, healthy, clean, stimulating, and pleasant environment in which to learn.

Education/Curriculum

A region that has the best public education system in America; where every person is provided the resources to receive a first class education of his or her choice and has the means to reach their fullest potential and become a valued member of society.

Education/Finance

A region which supports the highest quality education through sufficient and equitable funding demonstrated by well-paid and qualified teachers, with exemplary curriculum and materials and accessible and affordable education.

Schools as Community Resources

A region that supports lifelong learning for all its citizens through an educational community that is accessible, supportive, open and collaborative with all the region's educational resources.

Education/Standards

Create schools of excellence characterized by high standards, with accountability and equity throughout the region which results in improved education for all.



EDUCATION/CURRICULUM

Implementation strategy

- Establish a public-education foundation that serves as seed money for innovation rather than supplemental funding for schools, organized with the purpose of supporting those initiatives that:
 - Create a passion for excellence, community support and positive change within the school systems.
 - Build strong school leadership.
 - Are supported by measurable data and attainment of critical results based on improved student achievement.
 - Support excellent professional development of teachers.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- Because it is an ongoing and flexible regional strategy. The foundation would be governed by a neutral and independent board of directors that serves as an advocate for regional excellence in education, as well as a catalyst and source of seed money for innovation toward excellence.
- Because communities are no better and no less than their school system.
- Because public-education foundations around the United States have had a tremendous impact on education and, therefore, on their respective communities (e.g., economically, etc.).
- Because it provides the opportunity to address the five other strategies that were also investigated by the Education/ Curriculum Goal Team: curriculum mapping, leadership and professional development, parental involvement, model schools and benchmarking school systems. Implementation of these strategies through the foundation can also have a tremendous impact on the nine-county region.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- 1.) Form a Task Force to do the following:



- Solicit guidance from other public-education foundations and the Public Education Network (a national network of local public-education foundations).
- Develop a funding strategy and recruit the initial seed money.
- Develop an organizational plan and legal structure for the foundation
- Recruit the board of directors.

2.) Assemble a board of directors; its first actions will include:

- Implementing the funding strategy.
- Recruiting the professional staff for the organization.
- Guiding the beginning of the foundation's operations.
- Consider establishing an advisory committee, which would provide the board of directors a more diverse and inclusive community perspective on education issues.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force will lead the implementation effort. It should have a high-profile chairperson whose name is synonymous with education and who has the clout to bring in funds. It should also have a vice chair(s) to focus on both long-range purpose and the best organizational structure to achieve that purpose.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The goal is to reach a fund size of \$10 million with annual grant-making and program costs of at least \$1 million.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form the Task Force.

SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND FACILITIES TECHNOLOGY

Implementation strategy

Transforming schools into community centers that will include technology training sites. Expanding school programs toward concept of “full-service” community schools.

Why should we commit to that strategy?

- Better use of resources.
- Response to broader range of community needs.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a leadership team.
- Raise awareness.
- Develop partnerships.
- Work with principals of individual schools.
- Audit of existing sites and technology available for use.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Tennessee Consortium for the Development of Full-Service Schools.
The schools themselves.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Most things could be funded through reallocation of funds rather than requiring new funds.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Endorse the concept of creating community learning centers in our schools.
Assign a team to plan strategy and implementation.

Downtowns

A region with vibrant downtowns.

The Goals:

Downtown Knoxville

A downtown which is the vibrant urban heart of the region. A vibrant place where people enjoy living, working, playing and shopping in a well-planned, culturally-diverse, physically beautiful and attractive, pedestrian-friendly and economically-thriving environment which welcomes visitors and is effectively linked to adjacent neighborhoods.

Regional Downtowns

A regional network of vibrant urban areas each of which has been master planned to celebrate its individual uniqueness and historic character; that serves as a pedestrian friendly hub; that provides local retail and youth entertainment venues; that enhances and celebrates surrounding natural resources; that is accessible, safe, and clean; that is interconnected with other communities in the region; and that works with those in planning and promoting the entire region.



DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE

Implementation Strategy

Create a Downtown Task Force which will:

- 1.) Finish development of *Nine Counties. One Vision*. “Design and Development Values” that are based on the extensive citizen input (8,827 ideas) that have already been obtained during the *Nine Counties. One Vision*. idea gathering process.
- 2.) Use the *Nine Counties. One Vision*. “Design and Development Values” to develop and implement a Master Plan for Downtown and the Contiguous Neighborhoods which includes:
 - Design Guidelines
 - Development Incentives
 - Enforcement Mechanisms
- 3.) Develop an organizational structure that ensures Master Plan implementation and community education and ongoing Master Plan updates through community involvement.
- 4.) Use the “Design and Development Values” to enhance current proposed developments such as the Worsham-Watkins International Plan, the Justice Center/Jail, and the Convention Center and World’s Fair Park redevelopment, and to be a catalyst for future developments consistent with the Values, such as, but not limited to, the renovation of the S & W Building, the Sterchi Building, and the Tennessee Theater renovation and expansion.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Regional and community interest in a healthy downtown is currently high, as recognized by the overwhelming results from the citizens that participated in

Nine Counties. One Vision.

In order to best take advantage of this interest in the highest quality way for the long-term future, the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* “Design and Development Values” can be the guide toward the best possible development, consistent with the citizens’ vision.

The Values will also guide the development of a new Master Plan, which will identify how to create maximum positive spin-off development for the whole of Downtown and the contiguous neighborhoods, and will assure appropriate development.

Action Steps

- Finalize the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* “Design and Development Values.”
- Interview the key public officials concerning their ideas of the best ways to implement this strategy and communicate the citizen-driven source of the “Design and Development Values.”
- Communicate the complete *Nine Counties. One Vision.* analysis of the Worsham Watkins International Plan to the Public Building Authority, and determine if there is any appropriate ongoing role for *Nine Counties. One Vision.*
- Determine Task Force composition and conceptual funding strategy for the Master Plan based on input received.
- Recruit and convene Task Force and obtain consent to utilize the staff of the Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) to propose a Master Plan Scope of Work, Budget and Method to Proceed.
- Form a staff team from the partners represented on the Task Force coordinated by MPC.
- Finalize the “Design and Development Values” with the Task Force.
- Determine the final scope of the Master Plan, obtain funding and recruit the consultant team.
- Go forward with the Master Plan process and recruit development consistent

- with the Values, such as the historic reuse of the S & W Building.
- Follow through with Master Plan development and implementation, including the development of guidelines, incentives, enforcement mechanisms and ongoing organizational strategies.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

A Downtown Task Force carefully selected by *Nine Counties. One Vision.* to represent the stakeholders.

What will it costs?

Master Plan \$100,000 (low end) to \$350,000 (full scale).

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Create the Task Force.



Community Places

A region that emphasizes a high-quality development, beautiful neighborhoods and a strong sense of community.

The Goals:

Preserving Our Structures

We want communities that support, value and promote the preservation and restoration of our downtowns, neighborhoods and historic rural areas.

Beautification

Preserve the natural environment and beautify the manmade environment creating greener, cleaner and safer communities.

Recreation

Increase the quality and diversity of well-managed recreational opportunities for all ages and interests within the region, including parks, community recreational facilities, multi-purpose athletic fields, water-related recreational resources, golf courses and sports complexes and extend Boys and Girls Clubs to outlying areas.

Creating Quality Places

Clean residential and commercial communities reflecting harmonies design, planned development, a respect for preservation, ample trees, green space, lighting and parks, where all people can come together within a pedestrian friendly environment.

Neighborhoods

Identifiable, safe, interconnected neighborhoods that provide a strong sense of community and a high quality of life for their residents.



PRESERVING OUR STRUCTURES

Implementation strategy

Create an adequately staffed and funded regional historic preservation organization (the Preservation Alliance) to facilitate the preservation and reuse of historic structures and encourage heritage-sensitive development.

Why should we commit to that strategy?

The nine county area currently possesses historic assets that are not being utilized to their fullest potential. The demolition and neglect of these assets represents a missed opportunity for the entire area and since they are irreplaceable, immediate action is needed in order to preserve them. The economic benefits of historic preservation have been documented throughout the country and those principals should be used to guide efforts here.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Develop a Task Force to establish the Nine County Preservation Alliance. Initially the initiative would be a program managed by Knox Heritage, Inc.

Develop an agreement to manage the program for a specified period of time (i.e. maximum of 5 years) will need to be reached with the Knox Heritage Board of Directors.

Set up an Advisory Council made up of representatives from all nine counties.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Nine County Preservation Alliance Advisory Council
Knox Heritage

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

\$450,000 for three years of operation

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Form the Task Force that will identify members for the Nine County Preservation Alliance Advisory Council.
- Assist with outreach to local government officials.
- Highlight the Nine County Preservation Alliance initiative when the *Nine Counties. One Vision* plan is unveiled to the public.
- Assist the Task Force and Advisory Council in identifying sources of funding.

BEAUTIFICATION

Implementation strategy

Establish and enforce stronger codes, laws and regulations within the region designed to protect trees, control signage, prevent and eliminate litter and promote landscaping consistent with *Nine Counties. One Vision.* “Design and Development Values.”

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- To acknowledge that strong laws and regulations and enforcement are necessary for implementation of the strategy.
- To create public awareness and teach people to value the visual environment, maintain environmental diversity, protect natural resources and respect places of beauty.
- To provide model tree, landscaping, sign and litter laws and regulations that promote regional environmental integrity, abate noise and visual pollution and help cool our cities in the summer.
- To foster development values that respect the special character of the region, as defined by geography, culture and climate and to conserve agricultural land and open space.
- A more beautiful community provides a better environment to live, work and raise a family, is more attractive to new employers wanting to locate in the area and to existing businesses that thrive on tourism and other image-related economies.
- A more beautiful community actually has less crime and people perceive that communities that are more beautiful are safer.
- Removing visual clutter (such as overhead power lines and billboards) reduces distractions for drivers and leads to fewer accidents. This will become more significant as the population of drivers ages.
- To teach that profitable business, development and preservation of the natural and scenic environment are not in conflict with one another.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Create an implementation committee.
- Hold a regional environmental conference (addressing trees, urban forestry, landscape architecture, litter and sign control) to raise public awareness of the importance of strong and enforced ordinances; include a session for local government law departments.
- Develop a model sign ordinance to reduce the number and size of on-premise business signs (encourages monument-style signs and discourages pole signs, streamers, pennants, blimps, etc.).
- Develop uniform litter laws with meaningful fines to be adopted by local and county governments throughout the nine-county region.
- Enact ordinances in all communities protecting the existing urban forest to a minimum 40 percent canopy, replacing a number of trees per acre requirement.
- Develop stronger laws and regulations that preserve, in large part, established landscapes, trees and turf areas on property perimeters and elsewhere on-site, during development of property. Constructed landscapes throughout the region should connect to the native landscapes using native plants and materials that are better adapted to the region and its climate. Standards for proper design and building techniques should maximize water conservation and limit runoff from hardscapes.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The implementation committee.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

To be determined by the implementation committee.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Create the Implementation Committee.
- Take the beautification strategies and all the other strategies to existing organizations, governmental bodies, state agencies and others and insist that those groups adopt these strategies, incorporate them into their existing programs and implement them in the next few years. These groups would develop and enforce the new codes and would undertake public awareness to encourage acceptance and compliance.
- Consolidate and organize the opinions and action steps of the nine-county region and set goal achievement schedules.
- Seek support from city and county attorneys and planners to write model ordinances that protect the scenic environment.
- Fund existing organizations and use the media to further public awareness not only to protect the natural environment but to reverse manmade threats to scenic beauty.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Implementation Strategy

Create a Regional Council of Neighborhoods to help establish Neighborhood Organizations where they do not currently exist, to develop individual models of good community design based on the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* “Design and Development Values.”

Why should we commit to this strategy?

To create neighborhood or community level public involvement in growth and development. This will greatly affect the shape and form of development throughout the region as long-term stakeholder’s interests are balanced with developer’s short-term bottom line calculations. This will shift the balance of power from a few wealthy, politically connected groups or individuals, to empowered citizen groups focussed on improving the quality of life on their street, their block and their neighborhood. Creating strong neighborhood organizations is like making strong bricks, which can then be used to build strong communities. The Regional Council of Neighborhoods will be the mortar that binds these bricks together.

What action steps do we need to take to implement this strategy?

The Task Force drafts Regional Council of Neighborhoods charter and bylaws, based on Maryville 2020 vision process and the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* “Design and Development Values.”

Nine Counties. One Vision. aids Task Force in lobbying all regional governmental units to help fund a staff of facilitators/coordinators at the Regional Council of Neighborhoods to work with Local Governmental Units to develop citizen driven plans for community development and community based neighborhood organizations.

Regional Council of Neighborhoods facilitator/coordinators train staff in Local Governmental Units where staff exists, or recruit volunteers in other communities, on how to conduct the citizen planner charettes and how to use the information and resources created.

Regional Council of Neighborhoods provides web-based resources for Neighborhood Organizations to use in the chartering process and as they move into their own implementation phase.

Nine Counties. One Vision. encourages and facilitates the creation of a chair of excellence at UT to focus on zoning for traditional neighborhood design and heritage sensitive development, and become a resource for regional communities to help implement best practices.

Who can lead the implementation efforts?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The Regional Council of Neighborhoods would require a professional staff to give it stability. It would need the following:

- An executive director at \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year.
- At least two facilitator/facilitator trainers at \$40,000 per year.
- Office space of approximately 2,500 square feet at \$10 a square foot for \$25,000 per year.
- Overhead expenses of \$5,000 a month for \$60,000 per year.
- Total annual expense of \$210,000 to \$250,000 per year for the first two years.
- Office equipment and start-up expenses would represent an additional \$30,000 in the first year.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Nine Counties. One Vision. needs to form a Task Force to lead the effort to establish the Regional Council of Neighborhoods as described in the action steps. Task Force should be led by a dedicated core of members from the Quality Places/Neighborhoods Goal Team who are ready to see this process through to fruition.

Human Relations and Quality of Life

A region where citizens recognize that diversity, strong families and quality homes are the foundation for successful communities.

The Goals:

Youth

To mobilize the region's resources to empower our youth.

Human Relations/Diversity

Create and promote a just and caring region with respect and appreciation for differences in order to provide equal opportunities for all citizens.

Quality of Family Life

A region that values, supports and advocates for strong families as the cornerstone of our communities.

Religion

Reaffirm the region's commitment to high ethical and moral standards in individual and collective behavior; acknowledge the significant role of our diverse religious heritage; encourage understanding of all religions; and support a cooperative network of religious institutions.

Quality of Senior Life

A region where senior citizens are respected, their knowledge and talent utilized; where they have easy access to appropriate affordable housing, quality healthcare and centers of activity and learning.

Housing

Provide well-planned, affordable housing and shelter that is desirable, safe and decent for all people.



YOUTH

Implementation Strategy

- Create support effort in all nine counties that provide:
 - Caring Adults
 - Safe Places
 - Healthy Start
 - Marketable Skills
 - Opportunities for Community Service

These resources, called the Five Promises, are identified by America's Promise, The Alliance for Youth as the five fundamental resources needed to build and strengthen the character and competence of our youth.

Why should we commit to that strategy?

- Because children are clearly our most precious resource.
- Because the number of young people not on the road to becoming successful, contributing adults is a growing crisis. We must point them in the right direction if they are to grow up strong and ready to take their places as successful adults and community leaders.
- Because our strategy is strengthened by being a part of a national movement that is led by such a respected leader as General Powell, and that has as its symbol the "little red wagon."
- Because the Five Promises and the little red wagon are a powerful framework around which to build a community-wide and regional vision capable of uniting individuals and organizations to take collective action to make children our number one priority.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Convene a Regional Promise Task Force to:

- Create Community of Promise initiatives in each of the nine counties that mobilize adults to fulfill the Five Promises for the youth in their county.
- Empower youth to participate fully in their county’s Promise effort through county-wide Youth Action Councils and a *Nine Counties. One Vision.* Regional Youth Council staffed by a Regional Youth Council Coordinator.
- Build regional collaboration and resource coordination through a *Nine Counties. One Vision.* Regional Promise Task Force and Regional Promise Resource Coordinator.
- Expand the Alliance for Youth Fund at the East Tennessee Foundation to provide grants to local Communities of Promise and to support regional collaboration and resource coordination.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

- Anderson County’s Promise, Campbell County’s Promise, and Knoxville’s Promise
- The East Tennessee Foundation
- *Nine Counties. One Vision.*

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Costs to implement the strategy and action steps over a five-year period are estimated to include:

- 1.)Regional Alliance for Youth Summit(\$20,000 per year for 5 years) \$100,000.
- 2.)Staff for initial five year term \$500,000.
- 3.)Website development & maintenance (\$15,000 initial setup; \$3,000 maintenance and updates per year for five years) \$30,000.
- 4.)Special Consultants, Regional Workshops & Trainings \$30,000.
- 5.)Travel Expenses \$25,000.
- 6.)Materials, supplies, etc. (\$5,000 per year for 5 years) \$25,000.

7.)Miscellaneous \$15,000

Total \$725,000

The securing of loaned staff and in-kind services may reduce these costs.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Create the Regional Promise Task Force
- Work with the East Tennessee Foundation to secure funding or in-kind resources to support the local and regional efforts.
- Utilize key leadership from Anderson County's Promise and Knoxville's Promise to recruit their peers in the other seven counties (e.g., mayors, county executive, business leaders, chambers of commerce, United Way, youth-serving groups, educators, etc.).
- Identify multi-sector leadership in each county to invite to the annual Alliance for Youth Summit

HUMAN RELATIONS/DIVERSITY

Implementation strategy

Create a Race Relations Institute that would provide undoing racism education, research, training and advocacy to government, businesses, schools, justice systems, media organizations, associations and individuals throughout the region.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Because undoing racism in the region is the right thing to do and because we will find it increasingly difficult to attract industry and talent to the region unless we do.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Bring together all persons in the region currently working on undoing racism.
- Compile and publish a list of current projects and ideas for the future.
- Write the equivalent of a business plan.
- Help principals obtain working space, determine funding, hire staff and begin.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Knoxville Project Change has a successful six-year history of work in undoing racism and has expressed strong interest in leading a collaborative effort toward the implementation of this strategy.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The estimated cost is \$500,000 per year for five years and the development of a funding plan thereafter.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Endorse this strategy.

SENIOR QUALITY OF LIFE

Implementation strategy

Development of moderately priced housing integrated into every community based on demographic analysis and geographic accessibility.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Please refer to the results of the individual counties under housing options in the full report in the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* office.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- In each county, identify key individuals to serve on a Task Force regarding senior housing.
- The East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging (ETAAA) should drive the political process of selection of Task Force members.
- The committee will be responsible for completing an in-depth environmental analysis of low- to moderate-income models of housing in the counties and make recommendations on how to implement our strategy.

Who should lead the implementation effort?

The East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Funding for development and construction will come from a combination of local investors, partner finance, inner-city renovation funds and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Committee and partners will employ experts, if necessary, to identify funding distribution. Costs of experts and development plan will be folded into financing of project.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

Healthcare and Social Services

A region that provides outstanding social services and healthcare

The Goals:

Healthcare

An affordable, fully accessible, high-quality, community-based healthcare system that addresses both the short- and long-term needs of all citizens.

Social Services

An effective, comprehensive and coordinated social network offering support and service to all our residents.



HEALTH CARE

Implementation strategy

Develop a strong regional united Task Force to support the regional health agenda and the work plan of the Regional Health Council and the Knox County Health Council, through the East Tennessee Regional Health Office and the Knox County Health Department.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

The East Tennessee Regional Health Office and the Regional Health Council are comprised of 15 counties in total, and this excludes Knox County. The Knox County Health Department along with the Knox County Health Council acts independently because of its metropolitan status; however, the two work parallel and are capable of sharing resources. To be perfectly clear in the distinction of their roles, the East Tennessee Regional Health Office does not have authority or administrative responsibility related to Knox County, which includes the Knox County Health Department and the Knox County Health Council. Thus, the priorities and health concerns of the two offices, the East Tennessee Regional Health Office and the Knox County Health Department, are somewhat different because of the target population(s).

While we realize that our focus has been on the nine counties, we feel it is in the best interest of this goal and strategy to work in this manner and within this region. These two agencies are already working in a coordinated effort with the Healthy People 2010 plan. (Healthy People 2010 is the prevention agenda for the nation. It is a statement of national health objectives designed to identify the most significant preventable threats to health and to establish national goals to reduce these threats. This is produced and published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.)

By adopting the strategy, we can effectively cover a wide perspective of health-care issues and act as a catalyst to the regional health department to help advance the strategies it has for the region in correlation to the national

Healthy People 2010 plan. Ultimately, our health-care goal action and implementation plan can generate energy, initiate regional resources and encourage political advocacy to help advance the health-care goals of the region. Lastly, this collaboration would help drive other efforts within the region for specific counties' needs as they arise.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

We need to turn the strategy over to the Regional Health Office and to the Regional Health Council for implementation as well as the Knox County Health Department and the Knox County Health Council.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The East Tennessee Regional Health Department needs to lead and oversee this effort and should include representation from the Knox County Health Department.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Not applicable.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Form a Task Force.
- Establish a working relationship with the Regional Health Council and with the Knox County Health Department and the Knox County Health Council.
- Develop an action plan to support the role it will play in carrying out the health-care goal and strategy.
- Develop other partnerships to ensure the success of the process.
- Develop a strong, regional, united voice and coordinated strategies.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Implementation strategy

Create linkages between existing organizations and individuals to enhance service delivery and reduce duplicate services.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

This strategy will serve as an effective, comprehensive and coordinated social network while offering support and services to all residents in the nine-county region.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force and identify which of the nine counties currently has an interagency council.
- If a county does not have a council in place, we first need to work with the local elected officials to address this need.
- Once an interagency council exists in all nine counties, the Task Force needs to make contact with the agency leaders and ask for a designated representative from each council to serve on a regional interagency council.
- The Task Force will need to do preliminary work in designing the structure of the Regional Interagency Council.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The individual nine county health councils along with the local United Way in each county.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Other than administrative costs, we foresee no major expenses. We suggest a budget for \$50,000 during four years to cover these expenses for the nine counties. Broken down that would average \$12,500 per year for nine counties at \$1,388 per county each year.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

Arts and Culture

A region that celebrates the arts and our diverse cultural heritage.

The Goals:

Arts and Culture

To create an environment that preserves, fosters, celebrates, promotes and financially supports our local artists, diverse art forms and our cultural heritage; and offers all citizens of the region access to and education of the arts and cultural offerings.

Events and Activities

A region that celebrates its quality of life, heritage and future with hundreds of mini-cultural activities and events in our communities that are affordable, accessible and fun.

Cultural Facilities

Develop single or multi-purpose facilities for all ages throughout the nine counties with indoor and outdoor spaces that serve as gathering places, museums, performing arts venues, libraries, parks and showcases for the regional flora, fauna, heritage and waterways.

Preserving Our Culture

Develop and foster knowledge and appreciation for the culture and history of the region through museums, cultural centers and cultural celebrations. Preservation of the natural areas and redevelopment of historic buildings and landmarks is necessary for the preservation of the nine counties' culture. Encourage heritage-sensitive development.



ARTS & CULTURE

Implementation strategy

Create a Regional (nine-county) Arts Coalition made up of individual arts councils or representatives from each county to develop funding for and act as a clearinghouse for shared resources, supporting fine arts curriculum in public schools, creating arts districts in the region, utilizing existing facilities in innovative ways for the arts and promoting the arts through events, lobbying and advertising.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

The nine-county Regional Arts Coalition's funding mechanism will capitalize on the cultural assets of our region. It will advance a broader civic agenda of supporting arts and culture with positive impact on socioeconomic growth and quality of life in East Tennessee. Investment toward the creation of a strong regional cultural identity will catalyze creative collaborative efforts between arts, education, government, technology, business and environment that can leverage regionally competitive commercial growth.

What action steps do we need to take to implement this strategy?

Create a *Nine Counties. One Vision.* Arts & Culture Task Force for summit planning; anticipate cultural funding issues and create a summit program that includes building the structure of a regional cultural authority and exploring and innovating mechanisms for funding its operation. Suggested action steps as follows:

- Identify the existing arts councils and arts organizations in the nine county region.
- Where arts councils do not exist, identify government and/or cultural representatives to represent the county or the community.
- Assess the interest and commonalities between these organizations and cultural representatives.

- Solicit and promote the participation of the potential participants in creating the regional coalition.
- Convene a meeting of those identified as potential participants for the purpose of creating a regional coalition. Determine mission/purpose of the coalition and define its relationship to the smaller regional entities: arts councils and counties without an art organization.
- Canvass the nine-county region as to the existence of and potential for funding (government, corporate and individuals) as to their interest in supporting an arts coalition with a fund-raising mission for all the arts.
- Assess the interest of the potential funders in participating in the coalition, stressing the benefits and positive aspects of one central fund-raising body for the arts.
- Call a summit of these potential funders to gain their official commitment and support for the creation of the Regional Arts Coalition.

Who can lead the implementation efforts?

Nine Counties. One Vision. Task Force representing nine-county membership from all sectors (cultural, government, business, civic and neighborhoods) focused on forming a regional arts coalition. It is important to have representatives from all counties on the Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

- 1.) With volunteer assistance from Task Force members, \$5,000 should cover the expenses of telephone, mailings, printed materials for the meetings and the costs of the meetings; costs of the meetings include room rental, refreshments and travel costs of a guest speaker.
- 2.) Costs to cover the implementation of the entire strategy have not been determined.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Form the Task Force.
- Make a commitment to arts and culture.
- Provide clerical assistance for implementing the action steps.
- Fund the action steps.
- Identify any overlapping interests among the goals of other work groups or regional entities that might facilitate the implementation of this strategy.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Implementation strategy

Develop an annual festival that moves each year from county to county to celebrate and promote our heritage and culture through exhibits, demonstrations, musical arts, theatre and dance; involve county representatives, chambers of commerce, tourism departments and local companies.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

We need a celebratory and commemorative component that is an on-going testament to the impact of the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* effort. If the World's Fair is our model (despite its current condition) and each county has a show-case pavilion, we will be perpetually educating the region on the role each county plays in the success of the region.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force that includes special-events people from each county.
- Define the mission and purpose of the festival.
- Define the concept: What time of year, how many days, what is the fundamental programming, what is the anticipated budget, define the marketing and positioning of the festival, where does it start and what is the rotation?
- Once government approves and supports the concept, define the monetary support it can provide and get its help in the first stage of pursuing sponsorship.
- Consider hiring a freelance grants person to explore any potential funding.
- Pull together government representatives from all nine counties' convention and visitors bureaus, chambers and special-events offices and present the complete mission, concept and monetary need.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Once the Task Force determines the concept and further determines if it will work, a special events or festival professional/organization should be contracted to put it together with the support of the Task Force and government officials from each county.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

The concept and duration of each festival will have the greatest bearing on cost. And this is a nine-year process at the least. Total cost will require a great deal of analysis. For getting it off the ground, \$150,000 to \$300,000 could serve as a range.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Assemble a very diverse and capable Task Force that knows the industry as well as the region. Special-events people are a must on this committee.

PRESERVING OUR CULTURE

Implementation strategy

Identify the region's integral historical and cultural treasures and produce a catalog featuring the individuals, places, celebrations, organizations, etc. that are important to our culture and history.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- To determine which aspects of our region's culture are most endangered and in need of preservation efforts.
- To recognize the efforts of individuals and organizations actively preserving, interpreting and promoting various facets of our region's culture.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Organize a Task Force to

- Interview other organizations, such as those identified earlier in our report (available in the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* office) to determine more in-depth information about the cataloging process.
- Evaluate the Arts, Culture, & Entertainment (ACE) in Knoxville report to determine its usefulness in the cataloging strategy.
- Use information gathered in the interviews to establish a basic framework for the project.
- Secure professional assistance in the design and publication (traditional and/or online) of the catalog.
- Compile nominations for inclusion in the first publication.
- Publish first cultural catalog and distribute accordingly.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The East Tennessee Historical Society (ETHS) has been identified as an ideal candidate for leadership in the implementation effort.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Cost estimates can be derived after conducting additional interviews with other model organizations and settling upon a publication format. Some costs can be reduced through volunteer participation and pro bono assistance from professionals. Printing costs and possible web site development represent the majority of costs to be incurred.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Create the Task Force.

Transportation

Every corner of our region is connected by a system of transportation that is efficient, reliable, affordable and environmentally friendly.

The Goals:

Mass Transit/Rail

A region linked through a rapid transit rail system that is efficient, accessible, environmentally friendly and connected with national high speed rail systems.

Public Transit/Buses

A region-wide bus transportation system that is rapid, affordable, reliable, environmentally friendly, safe, economic and efficient. The system is linked to other forms of transportation and is responsive to the needs of a diverse population. It enables citizens to fully enjoy the region's social and cultural amenities and it minimizes the use of personal vehicles.

Roads

A region served by an improved network of federal, state and local highways.

Congestion

A transportation system that moves people and goods and that is safe, efficient and accessible.

Bikes, Walking and other Alternatives

Develop and maintain safe, local, and regional networks for alternative non-motorized and motorized transportation and recreation.



MASS TRANSIT / RAIL & BUSES

Implementation Strategy:

Plan, develop and implement a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)

Why should we commit to that strategy?

Without an agency that has authority over all of the components of the transportation system we have no assurance that they will function together to produce the integrated system that is desired.

It is necessary to assure that the components of the system will be developed in the order and to the extent required to allow the system to function in a manner that will assure an effective transportation system.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force.
- Develop the necessary legislative steps to create the RTA.
- Develop a simply stated, straightforward, brief position paper
- Mount a political campaign to assure the passage of the necessary legislation.
- Mount an educational campaign in those areas that will be the likely first members of the RTA.
- Develop a diverse public outreach program.
- Coordinate with other national, state, regional and local transportation planning efforts.
- Identify opportunities for rail transit with a focus on pilot projects that utilize existing rail and road right-of-ways.
- Identify additional funding sources for the planning, advertising and implementing of above strategy.
- Assess journey-to-work movements among the nine counties.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Total start-up effort may take up to \$500,000 to \$600,000 including outreach expenses.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

First, *Nine Counties. One Vision.* should put together an effective Task Force team for implementation. Second, it should provide support to keep the vision alive. The support needed by the Task Force includes:

- Media exposure
- Facilitating cooperation among interested parties
- Fostering political and private support

ROADS/TRAFFIC FLOW

Implementation Strategy:

Expand the Knoxville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in both jurisdictional area and decision-making authority, so that it encompasses the entire nine county region and has greater discretionary authority in the allocation of state and federal transportation dollars.

Why should we commit to that strategy?

Nine counties together can be more influential than each county acting alone.

Action Steps:

1.) Create a Task Force, consisting of representatives from the nine counties, dedicated to the development of a regional plan, which establishes a priority system for the improvement of state and federal highways.

2.) Collaborate with the expanded MPO to develop a master plan for a regional, state, and federal highway system will improve traffic flow. It will also implement the best possible practices for construction, traffic control and accessibility, while giving full consideration to preserving the quality of our communities and natural environment.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

To be determined.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form the Task Force.

BIKES, WALKING, AND OTHER ALTERNATIVES

Implementation strategy

To implement a network of safe routes and facilities for biking and walking that connects destinations and activity centers and is integrated with other modes of transportation and regional greenways through stable funding, legislation, education and safety.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Expansive suburban-style growth has led to the creation of developments inaccessible to any mode of transportation other than an automobile. To achieve better quality of life, better individual and public health and fitness, less road congestion and a safer, better environment for current and future generations in our region, as has resulted in other parts of the country and world where these strategies have been implemented.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Create a Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee through the Metropolitan Planning Organization to act as a review agency/advocate.
- Provide stable funding sources through impact fees and financial and government incentives.
- Adopt ordinances that require sidewalks, greenways and bicycle facilities as part of a new development.
- Retrofit and rebuild roads to provide a network of safe on-street corridors for biking and walking that connect destinations and activity centers.
- Make roads and sidewalks friendlier to nonmotorized transportation and recreation through increased safety devices, safety education and etiquette training.
- Integrate county bicycle and pedestrian plans to create a coordinated and connected regional system of alternative transportation modes using side

walks, greenways and bikeways to connect neighborhoods, commercial and employment centers and mass transit modules.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee can lead. Generally, it is important that grassroots organizations such as community groups, bicycle clubs, greenway and neighborhood associations continue to be actively involved in this process. It is also important that these plans be implemented regionally, across the entire nine-county area, to help prevent the appearance of imposing a hardship in any one county or community.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

It would cost a portion of the current highway and roadway budget.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

- Organize a regional committee of professional and volunteer members to act as an advocate throughout the nine counties.
- Get commitments from government to incorporate bicycle and walking facilities in new road construction and consider inclusion of these for improvement projects of existing roads.
- Make sure we have cyclist and pedestrian representation at the design phase for new roads and local government requirements for developers to construct sidewalks in all new subdivisions.

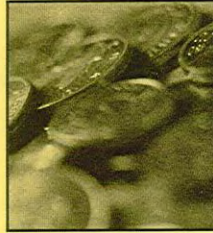
Economic Development

A region that aggressively promotes responsible economic development across a broad spectrum of productive activities.

The Goals:

Business Climate and Jobs

A region that is supportive of balanced economic growth and development, including: targeted business recruitment; sensitivity to the environment and communities; high wage jobs; diverse incentives; good connections to other regions and the world via multi-modal accessibility and well-maintained communication links; entrepreneurial climate; and utilization of natural and other assets.



Tourism Development

A well-planned, linked and promoted destination region highlighting, valuing and protecting its mountains, rivers, lakes and natural beauty; its diverse arts, culture and heritage; and its unique attractions, events and entertainment.

Technology Development

A region of environmentally friendly technology where residents have access to technology training and awareness and use technology as a method of improving life.

Small and Minority Business

A region that promotes and enthusiastically supports entrepreneurialism and innovation to make small businesses, minority businesses and family farms thrive.

Service Enhancement

A region with thriving downtowns, diverse and quality restaurants, shopping and entertainment, easily accessible to every community; and a business environment which attracts technology-based industry.

Industrial Enhancement

A region where appropriate industrial development enhances the quality of life of the people who live, work and play there.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Implementation strategy

Form a regional broad-based economic development round table (Task Force) that will look at organizing three working networks dedicated to serving the nine-county region in industrial marketing/recruiting, access to capital and finance and entrepreneurial/small-business assistance. The organization will serve as a clearinghouse/one-stop assistance center that will direct users to existing service providers where appropriate and create new services as needed.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Because it is needed.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force to outline scope of the round table and make appointments.
- Convene round table to determine gaps and resources in the region to implement the strategy.
- Develop a full implementation plan.
- Organize three networks (committees) to work on industrial marketing/recruiting, access to capital and finance and entrepreneurial/small-business assistance throughout the region.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

To be determined.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

TOURISM

Implementation strategy

Form a Task Force to address regional tourism development with representation from all nine counties. The Task Force's primary focuses will be to hire an outside consultant and develop a unified tourism strategy for the region.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

- Tourism is the No. 1 industry in the area.
- Added awareness will attract consumers, which will lead to increased revenue and create new business opportunities in the region.
- The infrastructure is favorable for supporting thriving tourism development.
- Forming a coalition will allow the counties to take advantage of each other's strengths and foster their weaknesses.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force.
- Raise money.
- Hire a consultant to implement study.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

\$50,000 to \$100,000.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Implementation strategy

Identify technologies that have commercial potential, provide local entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills they need to manage technology companies and provide the infrastructure and access to capital needed to transform new ideas into successful local technology companies.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Because building our own technology companies is the single greatest way to create new wealth in our region, which is the ultimate goal of all economic development efforts. It is critically important that we create a culture of entrepreneurship in East Tennessee, so future generations will seek opportunities to work for themselves rather than for a large employer such as TVA, University of Tennessee or the Oak Ridge Department of Energy complex.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

- Form a Task Force of entrepreneurs from the nine counties.
- Develop more business incubators.
- Train our residents in entrepreneurial and management skills.
- Develop a local source of venture capital to help ensure that our best technology doesn't leave the region in search of the capital required to get to the marketplace.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

Technology 2020, an Oak Ridge-based technology incubation organization.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Technology 2020 has put many of the fundamental building blocks in place. The greatest “cost” to the region will be the donation of time from successful area entrepreneurs to mentor a new generation of skilled managers.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force of experienced entrepreneurs from throughout the nine-county area to lend their support to this important initiative.

Government

A region of citizen-driven and responsible local governments which provide a wide range of coordinated and efficient services.

The Goals:

Government

A consolidated government that cooperates to efficiently utilize services and provide resources with a focus on planned growth including public input; that is led by officials who are capable and accountable with appropriate term limits; and that is funded by an equitable and reliable source of income.

Zoning and Codes

A region where existing zoning laws and building codes are equitably enforced and new ones are created which ensure the development of safe, well-planned, environmentally friendly, aesthetically pleasing communities that are diverse in character, foster community involvement, value historical heritage, preserve agricultural greenspaces and offer residents the opportunity to live, work, shop and play within a caring neighborhood environment.

Citizen Involvement

Citizens, through responsible participation, promote an environment of regional pride and inclusive government that honors the public will in regional and community management and decision making.

Public Safety

Safer communities with reduced crime, effective and equitable law enforcement particularly focusing on drug crimes, more crime prevention programs, improved fire protection, additional and properly funded and trained law enforcement officers, improved police community relations and a 911 system in each county in the region.

Regional Cooperation

A nine county region which shares resources and a common focus in developing and implementing opportunities for cultural and economic growth through cooperating governments and empowered citizens.

Service Delivery

A region that promotes and coordinates infrastructure growth, emergency services, public utilities and ensures those services are delivered equally.



GOVERNMENT-REGIONAL COOPERATION

Implementation strategy

Create an atmosphere that encourages and facilitates agreements between area governments at all levels to share ideas, resources and cultural traditions in ways that cannot be achieved individually. At the appropriate time, establish a nine county Regional Council of Governments.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

It will provide governments a forum for communication and facilitation, eliminating levels of duplication. The strategy will result in greater and more even economic development of the area.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Establish Nine-County Round Table(s) for identifying and coordinating agreements, which may address the following areas:

- Bulk purchasing.
- Technical assistance sharing.
- Computer data networking and standardizing.
- Vehicle maintenance.
- Insurance.
- (Education) integration of learning tools/ methods.
- Institute a Geographic Information System (GIS) for utilities, law enforcement, planning and emergency services.
- Public utility consolidations and uniform standards.
- Emergency services.
- Solid-waste management.
- Industrial development.
- Regional tourism development.
- Transportation planning.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and strategy?

- There will be some short-term costs in instituting and coordinating cooperative services.
- Funding and planning objectives may be achieved by using a tax by use, class and zone.
- Long-term benefits should greatly outweigh short-term costs.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Initiate the round tables.



CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Implementation strategy

Before an election, members compile and mail a voter-information pamphlet to registered voters containing the following:

- Facsimile of the ballot the voter will see on the face of the voting machine.
- Voting instructions.
- Job descriptions of the offices standing for election.
- Candidates' personal statements (and photos).
- Explanation in lay terms of referenda and charter amendments.
- Warning of next scheduled election.
- Answers to frequently asked questions.
- Explanation that the booklet is a demonstration project and appeal for support by subscription.
- Invitation of comments and suggestions.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

The flow of authoritative election information to voters has become haphazard, problematic, unreliable and inconvenient to the point of discouraging voter participation. A successful implementation of this project will supply local voters with the quality of information that has been available to voters in other states for literally decades.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

The activities list and flow graph that show implementational details is on file in the *Nine Counties. One Vision.* office.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

The Task Force.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Cost estimates to generate, print and deliver the described content amounts to 29 cents per voter per election.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Form a Task Force.

Animal Welfare

A region where wild and domestic animals are adequately valued and cared for by an educated populace with proper funding, laws, facilities and natural habitats.



ANIMAL WELFARE

Implementation strategy

Define the standard level of services required to promote animal care and welfare including facilities, training, public education, legal issues and necessary funding.

Why should we commit to this strategy?

Because the people of the nine counties cried out and voted that animal welfare is an essential issue that needs immediate addressing.

What action steps do we need to take to implement the strategy?

Appoint a Task Force to find a common ground by which a minimum standard of education, services, facilities and funding can be allocated to each county depending on its immediate and future needs.

Who can lead the implementation effort?

An appointed Task Force that has sufficient political and economic clout, knowledge of animal welfare and legal issues and a genuine desire to make these badly needed changes a reality.

What will it cost to implement the action steps and the strategy?

Estimated costs for facilities are based on needs from individual counties. Other associated costs will depend on actual services required by each facility and what may currently be available in each community.

What should Nine Counties. One Vision. do next?

Appoint a Task Force and offer continued support during and after the implementation phase and provide media promotion of our goals, strategies and implementation efforts.