

ANNUAL REPORT
2014

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



ALEX SMITH



The Executive Committee continues to oversee this excellent organization and strives to make it the most effective and efficient economic development organization possible. Because of each system's support we continue to bring industrial and retail development opportunities to our region.

Site Search professionals, consultants, industrial realtors and corporate officers continue to utilize our research and services. Your Association will continue to provide the most accurate and professional information to anyone seeking to relocate or expand their operations in Tennessee. Local communities have directly benefited from our expertise, services, and the consistent professional efforts from WTIA. This prepares and positions West Tennessee communities for success and growth.

I can assure you that your association will continue to search for and foster every opportunity for growth for our region. The Executive Committee and staff have worked diligently to position the organization for many more years of service. We determined long ago that by cooperating with each other and focusing on the common goal of economic development, we all feel and see benefits.

The WTIA staff will continue to serve each distributor system and the communities they represent in the manner that they've come to expect. Thank you to all the systems that continue to invest in themselves through WTIA by partnering and making West Tennessee stronger. Success is never complete, and while we acknowledge our association's accomplishments we are striving to enhance its value and service to West Tennessee.

I hope you will view this 2014 Annual Report as an attempt to capture the efforts and successes of our association and the communities we serve. Continued support and collaboration make WTIA successful in promoting growth, investment and jobs throughout our region. Thank you for your commitment to our Association

MESSAGE FROM WTIA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MIKE PHILPOT, CEcD



As we enter our 59th year of service to communities in West Tennessee, your Association will continue to assess all the opportunities and challenges it is faced with, and continue to assist our communities with the necessary tools to help them compete globally. West Tennessee communities and businesses will never again be any less global than they are today, and must continue to position themselves for the challenges and growth of the future.

WTIA has always been an entity that promotes positive change. The industrial landscape in our region continues to grow and change. In 2014 we can certainly say that our state, country, and world continued to change. We witness daily just how interconnected our world has become. West Tennessee impacts and is impacted by the global marketplace. Our past efforts to think globally and act regionally are what have sustained us over the years and will for years to come. New companies and the expansion of existing industry continue to be the life-blood for our economy. Many projects were completed in 2014 and several were launched that we will see the benefits from in the coming year.

Second only to identifying potential prospects, we continue to help develop community's "products" for investment opportunities. Many of the communities have utilized our Deal Ready® certification and the State's Tennessee Select Sites certified site program, thus increasing their chances of attracting prospects. In conjunction with that preparation, WTIA has been

implementing the Virtual or Dynamic Building concept to those who have certified sites. ECD is accepting submissions for their prospects from communities that have completed the Dynamic Building process. Like anything else, you can't be too prepared for economic development prospects. It has been proven over and over that the communities that take the time to organize and prepare, do succeed. We look forward to assisting more site certified communities to take advantage of this trending concept.

Efforts to promote and implement retail projects also continue to prove be successful. We have been able to help identify and assist local groups and retail developers find much needed locations. New jobs and investments are generated and the overall "quality of place" is enhanced. We will definitely continue to develop relationships with developers and encourage them to investigate service and retail opportunities throughout our region.

In looking back over past Annual Reports for the Association I've noticed how West Tennessee has never taken for granted the successes and growth that have occurred. Continued focus and working together with our allies allows us to leverage and promote the assets of West Tennessee.

Much was planned, much was accomplished, and much is left to do. Thank you for your support and trust. Remember...together we all prosper.

ACTION REPORT

PROSPECTS:

10 companies visited **23** communities

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO:

46 companies

MEETINGS:

Logged attendance at **261** area meetings

SERVICES:

- Conducted marketing outreach to domestic and foreign companies
- Established and maintained professional relationships with site search consultants and corporate real estate executives
- Assisted with marketing of all regional assets, i.e., Port of Cates Landing, Memphis Mega Site, FTZ 283, and local industrial buildings and sites
- Extensive community development assistance for all of our communities
- Assisted in the identification, development, and implementation of retail projects through the West Tennessee Retail Alliance
- Participated in local and regional Leadership programs
- Maintained websites: wtia.org; TVASites.com; ECD site; Deal Ready®; West Tennessee Retail Alliance
- Demographic updates
- Presentations and/or speeches to: Oakland Chamber of Commerce, Brownsville Retail Committee, Gibson County Adult Leadership Class, Lauderdale County Adult Leadership Class, Milan Lions Club, Gibson County officials, Gibson County Youth Leadership, Humboldt Rotary, Bolivar city officials, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, Decatur County Chamber of Commerce
- Toured multiple buildings/sites in West Tennessee
- Assisted with prospect presentations/RFI preparation for various communities
- Assisted multiple communities with dynamic/virtual building concept planning
- Hosted West Tennessee Allies meeting
- Hosted WTIA annual and mid-year meetings
- Hosted multiple FTZ meetings with applicants and interested groups
- Conducted retail strategy meetings in multiple communities



2014 RETAIL DEVELOPMENT:



14 West Tennessee Retail Alliance Member Counties Reported 260 New Businesses Opened... and created 1089 new job opportunities. These new businesses, while they varied in type and scope from individual and family owned new businesses, such as Sonshine Flowers & Gifts, Troy (Obion County) to nationally recognized chain businesses, such as Family Dollar, Adamsville (McNairy County), certainly had a positive impact on the economic development of their communities.

To illustrate the impact of retail on our West Tennessee economy, the Tennessee Department of Revenue reports that these 14 WTRA member counties reported a total of \$3,624,285,361 in retail sales for 2013. (Retail sales figures exclude Shelby & Madison Counties & the 2014 Tennessee Retail sales figures were not available at the time of this report)



TRAVEL

- Retailer One-on-One in Nashville
- TEDC Day on the Hill
- Site Selectors Guild in Denver
- TVA Economic Developers Forum in Nashville
- SEDC Meet the Consultants in Dallas
- USDA Rural Development Conference in Murfreesboro
- TEDC Spring Conference in Destin
- ICSC Recon Event in Las Vegas
- ICSC in Nashville and Atlanta
- Consultant visits in Atlanta
- SEDC Annual Meeting in Memphis
- TEDC Fall Conference in Jackson
- CDC Meeting in Atlanta
- NACIC Meeting in Toronto
- Meet the Consultants Event in Atlanta
- Governor's Conference in Nashville
- IEDC in Ft. Worth
- SEDC in Savannah
- Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Conference in Montreal

PROGRAM OF WORK



New Business Recruitment and Development

1. WTIA will continue its focus on small and medium sized companies for recruitment purposes. We will pursue the niche of companies which meets the capabilities of most of the rural communities that we serve. WTIA staff will continue to document and report monthly all New Business Recruitment and Development activities.
2. Target smaller companies that match with our region's attributes. Targets include, but are not limited to: Food Processing/Packaging, Metal Fabrication, Plastics, Automotive, Medical Devices, and Defense-related companies.
3. Continue to develop contacts and relationships with site search consultants. Participation, when budget permits, in hosting events with site search consultants and company officials.
4. Participate with Local Communities, State and TVA on recruiting efforts to ensure coordination of efforts.
5. Continue to review foreign recruitment strategies and where deemed viable or necessary, participate in strategic marketing trips. i.e., State of Tennessee, TEP, Canada/Europe, etc.
6. Continue promoting retail development through West Tennessee Retail Alliance.

Community Preparedness and Development

1. Maximize and amplify assets of the region; infrastructure, FTZ 283, Megasite, Port of Cates Landing, etc. Assist with marketing materials for the communities.
2. Work with communities to prepare and present proposals as requested.
3. Provide research and documentation of regional demographics, mapping, etc. that can be utilized by our communities when they are dealing with prospects.
4. Present programs, information and tools that will enhance local competitiveness on projects. (Allies meetings, webinars, hosting consultants, etc.) Offer programs not being offered by other economic development groups.
5. Training of local leaders in marketing and utilizing the Foreign Trade Zone program.
6. Continue to promote and market the Deal Ready® and Tennessee Select Sites programs and ensure their validity.
7. Implement more virtual building initiatives.

23
new plants/expansions

1,270
new job opportunities

\$150,760,000
in capital investment

Dynamic Building Plan

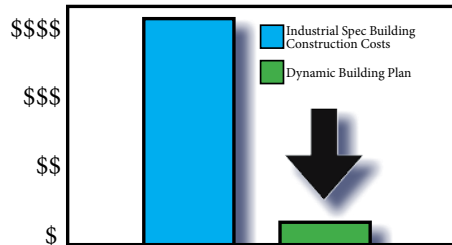
The Dynamic Building Plan concept is a design driven, visually presented planning process. The concept revolves around three main incentives: Lower capital investment, expedited launch for construction, and higher visibility in marketing efforts. As a result, this level of preparedness means prospects have a higher confidence level in the community.

"In Obion County, our goal is to reduce cost and speed to market for businesses, giving our clients the utmost confidence in locating in our community. Having completed the Select Tennessee certified industrial site program, the next level of preparedness is our dynamic building plan. This allows our team the flexibility to quickly adapt to the client's need by having a comprehensive set of architectural drawings, a detailed budget and a reliable construction schedule."

– Lindsey Frilling
Obion County Joint Economic Development Council

WHY DOES THIS MAKE SENSE?

LOWER INITIAL INVESTMENT



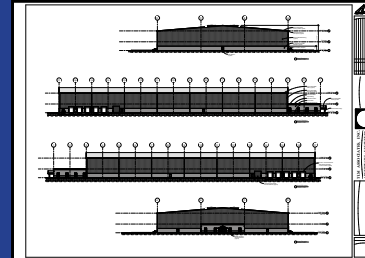
A lower initial investment is the most appreciable benefit as the cost of developing a Dynamic Building Plan is a fraction of the cost to actually build one.

PREPAREDNESS



Completing the Select Tennessee Site Certification means more knowledge of your site, lower risk for prospects, and a portfolio of information that Site Selectors require to evaluate your site for a project.

QUICKER LAUNCH, QUICKER COMPLETION



With a dynamic building plan, the time required to construct a building is greatly reduced. This positions your community for greater success.

"Having the dynamic building package in our toolbox allows our team to respond to most every RFI that we receive. It demonstrates that our community is on the cutting edge of technology and gives us a much higher level of preparedness. Our prospects have been very impressed to see what their proposed building will look like on our site in such a short turn around."

– Bobby Dyer
Henderson County Industrial Board

HIGHER VISIBILITY



A virtual speculative building can be any size and configuration, so your site can be marketed in multiple listing categories and your community gets more opportunities to respond to RFIs from project generators.

VIDEO TOURS OF YOUR DYNAMIC FACILITY



With the information provided, we create a dynamic marketing video. This video will briefly and effectively highlight your site's qualities, and showcase the dynamic building design.

COMMUNITY LEADERS ARE GIVEN A VOICE



Video interviews provide a strong impact, putting real faces to the value your community brings. You can use this to highlight other relevant assets that elevate the quality of life.

"Dynamic buildings are now eligible for submission to prospects through WTIA and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development."

– Mike Philpot
WTIA



MEMBERSHIP



SYSTEM	WTIA DIRECTOR	MANAGER/ SUPERINTENDENT
Bolivar Energy Authority	Terry Brown	John Fortune
City of Brownsville Utility Department	George Chapman	Regie Castellaw
Dyersburg Electric System	Dwight Hedge	Steve Lane
Forked Deer Electric Cooperative	Keith Warren	Jeff Newman
Gibson Electric Membership Corporation	Steve Sanders	Dan Rodamaker
Humboldt Utility Department	Calvin Campbell	Alex Smith
Jackson Energy Authority	Ken Marston	Jim Ferrell
Lexington Electric System	Jeff Griggs	Jeff Graves
Milan Public Utilities	Chris Crider	David Scarbrough
Newbern Light & Water Department		Sandy Hill
Pickwick Electric Cooperative	Ronnie Fullwood	Karl Dudley
Ripley Power & Light Company	Phillip Jackson	Mike Allmand
Southwest TN Electric Membership Corporation	Hugh H. Harvey	Kevin Murphy
Trenton Light & Water Department	Ricky Jackson	Scott Dahlstrom
Union City Electric System	John E. Fowler, Jr.	Jerry Bailey

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

City of McKenzie

McKenzie Industrial Development Board

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Alex Smith, President



Jeff Graves, Vice-President



Scott Dahlstrom, Secretary-Treasurer



Kevin Murphy, Past President



Regie Castellaw



John Fortune



Mike Allmand



Jim Ferrell



Dan Rodamaker



David Scarborough



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Bolivar



George Chapman
Brownsville



Dr. Dwight Hedge
Dyersburg



Keith Warren
Forked Deer



Steve Sanders
Gibson County



Calvin Campbell
Humboldt



Ken Marston
Jackson



Jeff Griggs
Lexington



Mayor Chris Crider
Milan



Sandy Hill
Newbern



Ronnie Fullwood
Pickwick



Phillip Jackson
Ripley



Hugh Harvey
Southwest



Ricky Jackson
Trenton



John Fowler
Union City

Michael M. Philpot, CEcD
Executive Director

Kimberly Kee
Operations Director

Jim Blankenship
Assistant Director

Nita Henry
Administrative Assistant

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