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## Vision 2025 highlights for Aug. 5, 2018

The Tribune-Democrat Aug 4, 2018



Wally Burlack, Vision 2025 project consultant, speaks to federal officials during a recent Regional Economic Diversification Summit.



Here's a look at recent highlights and developments connected with the Vision 2025 initiative in Johnstown.

The economic strength of our region was the focus of a recent Economic Diversification Summit sponsored by the city of Johnstown, JARI and the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission.

The event brought together community leaders from a six-county region with state and federal officials, including those from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Discussions at the summit revolved around three main topics: how to make our natural water resources work for the region, broadband and cellular service and land banking as a way to transform blighted properties.

Vision 2025 leader Wally Burlack was among those who presented to the group.

“This was a wonderful opportunity to share with regional, state and national leaders, the many great things we have underway in our region,” Burlack said.

“My presentation focused on the vibrancy underway in downtown Johnstown with the addition of new businesses, including a new restaurant, brewery and Coal Tubin’.

“One goal of this summit was to make sure our priorities are aligned across the region,” he added. “We can definitely make great progress when we are pulling in the same direction.

“The collaboration underway in our region is exciting.”

Job opportunities in our region are another thing to be excited about.

Here in the Greater Johnstown region, there are plenty of opportunities, including open positions in manufacturing, transportation and construction.

In addition to opportunities, there is also plenty of collaboration underway to make sure those who are looking for jobs get the training they need.

A free welding training program is now available for Cambria and Somerset residents looking for a new career opportunity. The 225-hour training program is being offered by JARI at no cost to eligible participants thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the Pa. to Careers Program.

The first series of classes begin this fall.

Outdoor recreation is another topic which is creating a buzz in our region.

The Friends of the Inclined Plane Trails Vision 2025 capture team will show off its hard work at the Inclined Plane Trails opening ceremony tentatively scheduled for Aug. 12.

This event will include a community hike, downhill mountain bike racing and a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

To learn more about the Inclined Plane Trails visit Vision 2025 at [johnstown25.com](http://johnstown25.com).

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