

Rural Retention & Attraction Committee

2026 Action Summary

Executive Summary

The Rural Retention & Attraction Committee was established to strengthen talent retention and attraction across the Tri-State region by developing practical resources communities can use locally.

Throughout 2026, the committee focused on moving beyond discussion to action. Using regional data, direct feedback from graduating college students, and collaboration among community leaders, the committee identified shared strengths and developed tools to help communities tell a more consistent story about the region.

Key accomplishments included:

- Establishing baseline demographic, workforce, housing, and quality-of-life data for the region.
- Surveying graduating students to better understand the factors influencing where they choose to live and work.
- Developing the Regional Job Search page to better connect employers and job seekers.
- Creating a Regional Messaging Framework centered on **Time, Affordability, Opportunity, and Place.**
- Developing a Regional Messaging Toolkit with adaptable resources communities can use for talent attraction and community promotion.

As the committee looks ahead, its focus will shift from developing tools to supporting communities in putting those tools into practice while continuing to strengthen connections with students, young professionals, alumni, and former residents.