

**BREAKOUT GROUPS CONCEPT PAPER**  
(ARISE Regional Forum; 14 March 2003)

The challenge: We must think and act like a region in competition with other regions, not parts of a region competing with each other.

The key ingredient: A broad alliance of different interest groups-environmentalists, inner city residents and leaders, business, government, farmers, labor, suburbanites, and faith communities-working together across regional, racial, and economic boundaries.  
Starting points and Breakout Group topics:

**1. Coordinating Regional Economic Development** (John Poorman, Moderator)

- Coordinate work and roles of government, business, development corporations.
- Include ALL parts of the region in strategies for growth, including areas that have so far been left behind.

**2. Planning for Growth** (Don Odell, Moderator)

- 50,000 new residents for the Capital Region where will they live, work, commute?
- We must preserve our environment, we cannot afford new highways, and unmanaged growth will diminish quality of life.
- We need to promote positive collaboration between developers, citizens, and planners as we map out proposals for the future: antagonistic and time-consuming processes will discourage investment in the Capital Region.
- Local projects should be considered in the context of regional development.
- Energy and mass transit: can the Capital Region become not only Tech Valley but Alternative Energy Valley?

**3. Revitalizing Inner Cities** (Rev. Van Stuart, Moderator)

- Homeownership is crucial.
- Attract some homeowners (incoming or local) back into the cities: empty nesters, young high tech workers can benefit from urban living.
- Empower inner-city residents to move from renting to owning.
- Develop a strategic regional plan for affordable and moderate-income housing, scattered site rehabilitation and reinvestment does not turn neighborhoods around.

#### 4. **Enhancing education and workforce development** (Dr. Carson Carr, Moderator)

- Link up schools, vocational training, and higher education with business and markets.
- Retain more of our area's high school and higher education graduates.
- Math and science training needed for high tech jobs.
- Many spin-off industries, however, are not themselves technological-broad curricula needed for more than just high tech.
- Outreach to disadvantaged populations is **ESSENTIAL**: without empowering this group, we will not have a strong or plentiful enough local workforce.
- Apprenticeship programs and strategic partnerships of business and labor can help create good workers and living wages that benefit the economy.
- Areas of critical need: construction trades, healthcare, research, internships, entrepreneurial supplier companies for major new industries.