Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Mid-East Commission
2020

Serving Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin and Pitt Counties

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Member Governments

Beaufort County

Aurora
Bath
Belhaven
Chocowinity
Pantego
Washington
Washington Park

Bertie County

Askewville
Aulander
Colerain
Kelford
Lewiston/Woodville
Powellsville
Roxobel
Windsor

Hertford County

Ahoskie
Como
Cofield
Harrellsville
Murfreesboro
Winton

Martin County

Bear Grass
Everetts
Hamilton
Hassell
Jamesville
Oak City
Parmele
Robersonville
Williamston

Pitt County

Ayden
Bethel
Falkland
Farmville
Fountain
Greenville
Grifton
Grimesland
Simpson
Winterville
CEDS Vision Statement

The 2020 Mid-East Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy will help build a regional competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace by establishing and maintaining a robust regional infrastructure, thereby creating revitalized and vibrant communities, which will develop healthy and innovative people.
Introduction

The Mid-East Commission was created by the State of North Carolina in May of 1967 as a Regional Council of Governments serving the local governments and residents of Region “Q”, which is comprised of Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin, and Pitt Counties, as well as their municipalities. The Commission’s mission is to assist people in the Region and its environs by providing professional technical assistance services from its Planning, Economic Development and Community Services Department, Workforce Development, and Area Agency on Aging. The multifaceted and vast experience of its highly trained, educated, and professional staff enables it to meet the needs of its clients, enhancing and sustaining their quality of life.

CEDS and NC Tomorrow Overview

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed and required to bring together the public and private sectors in creating a comprehensive and performance-based plan to strengthen the regional economy. A CEDS is required for a region to be eligible for assistance through Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs. The CEDS 2017-2022 document provides an analysis of the regional economy and all of its elements and serves as a guide to establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, identifying investment priorities and funding sources, and assigning lead organizations the responsibility for executing the action plan. CEDS 2017-2022 is the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with broad base and diverse public and private sector participation.

North Carolina Tomorrow is a collaborative partnership, led by the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils (NCARC), with the US Economic Development Administration, North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Community Investment and Assistance and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, to create a uniform statewide North Carolina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (NCCEDS).

The first initiative in 2012 was to create “Uniform” Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) across North Carolina. These regionally-significant CEDS serve as the foundation to create the statewide NC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – a statewide blueprint for creating an economically sustainable economy for North Carolina. The statewide CEDS promotes growth and community development based on common sense, data collection and analysis, and sustainable best practices.

Funding for the 2012 NC Tomorrow initiative was provided by the US Economic Development Administration and the NC Department of Commerce, Division of Community Investment and Assistance through the NC Catalyst Program. The NC Department of Commerce provided planning grants to 16 non-entitlement local governments, one in each of the 16 Council of Governments (COG) regions.
**Guiding Principles and Standards**

The statewide NCCEDS centers on the Six Livability Principles established by the EPA, HUD & HUD Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities, the Six Investment Principles set forth by the US Department of Economic Development and the NADO CEDS Standards of Excellence. The planning process included all sectors of the economic development community including local, regional and state economic developers, planners, private industry, educational institutions, elected officials and multiple ground-level community organizations to help North Carolina regions develop strong economies and become more sustainable and resilient in the coming years.

Statewide NC CEDS Guiding Principles and Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUD-EPA-DOT LIVABILITY PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>EDA INVESTMENT PRIORITIES</th>
<th>NADO STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide more transportation choices</td>
<td>Collaborative regional innovation</td>
<td>Build more resilient economies and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote equitable, affordable housing</td>
<td>Public-private partnerships</td>
<td>Foster a regional collaborative framework to align resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance economic competitiveness</td>
<td>National strategic priorities</td>
<td>Use modern scenario, data and analysis tools and planning techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support existing communities</td>
<td>Global competitiveness</td>
<td>Create a more strategy-driven planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investments</td>
<td>Environmentally sustainable development</td>
<td>Increase collaboration across boundaries and position regional CEDS into building blocks for statewide strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value communities and neighborhoods</td>
<td>Economically distressed and underserved communities</td>
<td>Communicate in compelling and modern communication techniques: online and social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engage the public, private, non-profit and education sectors, along with the general public in the development of the CEDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2020 Update

The 2020 CEDS minor update includes a new section on Opportunity Zones. It can be found on pages 90-98. The 2017 CEDS was a five-year major update. For the 2017 major update, staff worked with a CEDS Advisory Committee consisting of 28 people from diverse backgrounds representing both the private and public sectors.

The CEDS Advisory Committee met four times for the 2017 major update in person and also disseminated information for comment via email to develop the plan. Major tasks included updating the demographic data, SWOT analysis, and Goals & Objectives; and adding a new section on Resiliency. The 2017 update included two public input meetings held on August 30, 2017 and September 6, 2017.

CEDS Advisory Committee

The CEDS Advisory Committee represents the economic interest of our region. The committee acts as an advisory committee to review and update the CEDS and to recommend its approval to the five counties in the region and the Mid-East Commission Board of Directors. Mid-East Commission staff worked closely with the committee and other key public and private sector members during the development of CEDS 2017-2022.

To conduct the preparation of the major update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and to address other key economic development strategic issues in the Region, the Mid-East Commission, the planning organization for the Economic Development District, in conjunction with each county’s Economic Developer, appointed the persons to the CEDS Advisory Committee.

These Advisory Committee members are made up of private sector representatives, public officials, community leaders, and representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals. The CEDS Advisory Committee membership roster is included as Appendix B.

In addition to the Advisory Committee, we have obtained input from the five county Economic Developers who work solely in economic development. This list consists of the following persons:

- Martyn Johnson – Economic Developer of the Beaufort County Economic Development Commission
- Steve Biggs – Economic Developer for Bertie County
- Bill Early – Executive Director of the Hertford County Economic Development Commission
- Jason Semple – Executive Director of the Martin County Economic Development Commission
- Wanda Yuhas – Executive Director of the Pitt County Development Commission
These individuals were included because of their in-depth knowledge of the needs, social characteristics, and goals of their respective counties. Their input is an essential element of public/private participation.

The following employees of the Mid-East Commission assisted in the development of the CEDS:

- Jamie Heath, Planner
  (Lead person to Advisory Committee)
- Kevin Richards, Director of Community and Economic Development
- Bryant Buck, Executive Director

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Mid-East Region is consistent with and dependent upon the citizen participation process. The 2017 update included two public input meetings held on August 30, 2017 and September 6, 2017.
Background

Region “Q” is located in Northeastern North Carolina but not in the extreme Northeastern corner of the state. The region is comprised of Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin and Pitt Counties. It is a wide, essentially flat, coastal plain lying within the inner coast along the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds. The region is dominated by rural undeveloped, agricultural and woodland that is sparsely populated. Small municipalities make up most of the population centers in Region “Q”. Pitt County is the only semi-developed county in the region and varies demonstratively from the other four counties.

The region is punctuated by flat, meandering rivers – the Tar-Pamlico, Pungo, Chowan, and Cashie, and the more turbulent waters of the Roanoke. The vast acreage on both sides of these rivers and their many tributary creeks are devoted to undevelopable floodplains. The entire system of sounds, rivers, tributaries and wetlands constitutes the second largest estuary ecosystem on the entire East Coast and of the United States.

The land is dominated by wetland peat, and predominantly sandy and loam based prime agricultural soils. Beaufort County serves as a prime example, "A large percentage of the land in the County has severe constraints for development, due primarily to a seasonal high water table and year-round wetness tendencies. These soils are also located in areas susceptible to flooding as specified by FEMA." The vegetation consists of that found in wet and floodplain areas with Carolina pines tending to dominate the landscape. Farm crops which dominate the soil and a natural resource based economy are peanuts, tobacco, cotton, grain corn, and soybeans. The region has a mild four-season climate with frequent humid conditions typical of the Southeastern United States.
Love Living Here Exercise

Members of the CEDS Advisory Committee and people attending public input meetings were asked, “Why do you love living here?” Their answers were used to form the following word cloud. Larger text represents a greater number of responses.
Area Economic Performance Factors

Land Use and Environment

The region suffers from restricted or constrained land use plans because of the floodplain or near-floodplain nature of the terrain - a terrain that in many locations cannot be economically developed or is environmentally sensitive. For example, in Bertie County nearly 80% of the soils in the County have limitations for septic tanks due to its poor drainage, seasonally high water tables, or permeability problems" (CAMA Land Use Plan). Further in Beaufort County, "Over 70% of the County is underdeveloped land, including sensitive environmental areas..." (CAMA Land Use Plan).

The region's portion of the fragile Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary must be protected from degradation. Land use and environmental controls protect the life support system for the fishing industry and enhance several tourist activities. However, many developers of potential job creating projects find it uneconomical and time consuming to deal with these controls. Industrial and other business uses can find sites, but site selection is often compromised by the location of environmentally sensitive areas. The pull is strong in both directions.

The Mid-East Commission and the CEDS Advisory Committee are very aware of these divergent opinions and believe development should only occur if the integrity of the land and the quality of the region's air and water are not permanently compromised.

Financial Resources

Commercial capital within the region is largely controlled by lending institutions that are headquartered in other regions of the state or the country. Fortunately, the region generally finds that its servicing lending institutions do make adequate capital available on reasonable terms and conditions.

Due to the low per capita and median household incomes in the region, many residents do not have the discretionary income needed to support flourishing retail and service businesses. Traditional lenders are often unable to take some or any risk to finance these businesses. In such instances, the potential borrowers have acceptable alternative financing sources such as the Mid-East Certified Development Corporation’s EDA Revolving Loan Fund, the USDA Intermediary Relending Program, or the NC Rural Center’s Microenterprise Loan Program.

Business, Personal and Property Taxes

The personal income tax and the corporate tax of the State of North Carolina are applied on a uniform basis throughout the state. Neither is there a differing effect of the state sales tax from one region of the state to another. Property taxes on business and personal real estate and equipment do vary widely from one county to another in proportion to the level of services needed or wanted and in inverse proportion to the per capita size of the list of ratable property. Generally, most of the Mid-East counties are fairly frugal in the level of
services supported. Of the five counties, three have abnormally high tax burdens. This, of course, is discouraging to businesses that are interested in expanding or relocation in these counties.

**Existing Infrastructure**

Existing infrastructure is a considerable, if not major, impediment to the attraction of prospective companies.

Improvements have been made to inter-regional highway infrastructure since the last major CEDS update. At that time, an extensive analysis of inter-regional highway infrastructure showed the most frequently identified needs to be the widening and modernization of routes US 64, US 17, and US 264. Each of these routes have undergone improvements.

US 64 has been brought up to interstate standards in the region and US 264 has been four-laned in the region. However, some portions of US 264 are still below interstate standards. US 17 has been four-laned in the majority of the region. However, some portions of US 17 are still two-laned in the region.

Natural gas, a prerequisite for the location of certain industrial/commercial uses, is now found to be more frequently scattered in areas of Region "Q".

There are common problems with condition, maintenance, capacity, and/or location of public water and wastewater service throughout the five counties. Where these problems potentially affect the location or retention of an employer, a possible EDA public works project exists. Many town systems are 30-40 years old and have never been properly maintained. The result is failing systems - especially the lines.

In the four more rural counties, often even within the reach of urban areas within these counties, public water and sewer are strained by capacity limitations or are improperly located to serve the next potential round of industrial development. Tax bases in these same counties are fully stretched to pay for basic education and other essential services. Extensions and upgrading of water and sewer often seem impossible without outside financial assistance. Where major upgrades to water systems have occurred, the rates for service have risen to the point of sparking public protest.

Former Governor, Jim Hunt, was a key figure in establishing the Information Highway in North Carolina. Private telecommunication utilities joined and completed the systems of fiber optic cable, asynchronous transfer modes (switches), and synchronous optical networks into a single network.

Data now moves much faster than previous capabilities. The implications for the Region "Q" business community is clear - hook-up or be left behind.

It is incumbent upon Region "Q" political and economic development leaders to make sure that service and access is available on a timely basis to its business community.
**Transportation**

**Highways**

Generally, the only less accessible regions of North Carolina than Region “Q” are portions of Northwestern and Western North Carolina in the Great Smoky Mountains and some beaches of the Outer Banks along the extreme East Coast. The Smoky Mountains and the Outer Banks compensate for their inaccessibility by being the top two tourist attractions in the state by which tourists will overcome the areas inaccessibility to gain the enjoyment they want.

Such is not the case for Region “Q”. There currently are not sufficient tourist destinations for most potential visitors to hurdle the difficult roads into the Region. The closest interstate highway to the Region is Interstate 95, which is about 40 miles West of Murfreesboro in Hertford County, 20 miles West of Farmville and 40 miles West of Greenville, both in Pitt County. Other Interstate highways are even less accessible, with I-40 much further away than any portion of I-95.

US 264 (East-West) Wilson By-Pass opened in 2004, improving the accessibility to I-95 (North-South). Additionally, construction of the US 17 Washington By-Pass (North-South) has been completed.

Most east-west and north-south arteries which do exist are far below Interstate standards. Improvements have been made to north-south highways NC 11, US 13 and US 17. However, portions of these highways are still two-laned in the region. East-west highway US 158 is only two-laned in the region, US 264 is four-laned and US 64 has been four-laned. While US 64 has been brought up to Interstate standards, portions of US 264 are still below Interstate standards. The highway system in the region possesses features which contribute to substandardness and inaccessibility:

1. At grade (highway level) perpendicular crossings of highways with rural roads and state routes
2. Tight curves
3. Occasional access to highway directly from private property
4. Complete breakdown of highway standards in urban centers

Truck and commuter dependent manufacturers and wholesalers will choose many other locations in the state prior to choosing Region “Q”, given these serious highway deficiencies mentioned above. Even the four-laning of US 13, US 17 and NC 11 is not adequate if one of these roads is not designed and built to Interstate standards. Similarly, on the east-west access (portions of US 264 and entire US 158) Interstate design standards are needed. Highway improvements within the region are not insufficient, but are in dire need of improvement.

Improvements to the east (the Outer Banks) would not tie into major production, distribution or subcontracting opportunities. New east bound highways would be a gamble since they
could either (1) tie Region “Q”\textquotesingle s tourism more closely to the Outer Banks tourism, or (2) draw more tourists on a fast run east through the region and to the Outer Banks or (3) both (1) and (2). Highway construction west of the region would greatly enhance production, distribution and subcontracting opportunities for Region “Q” to companies north and south along the urbanized Eastern Seaboard and west to the Piedmont cities of North Carolina.

Improvements on the north-south corridors will have a noticeably improved effect upon Region “Q”\textquotesingle s tourism as customers are pulled from the southeastern Virginia area and the Northeastern Seaboard without great difficulty. North-south access improvements alone should not greatly increase Outer Banks "through" movements. Tourism should be viewed as an economic development effort. Tourism is advantageous in that development occurs and produces a larger tax base with little or no increase in public service. Employment positions created are usually low wage, with few, if any, benefits.

However, the production, wholesaling and subcontracting opportunities from a new north-south access are less clear. Markets to the south are marked by smaller North Carolina cities such as Wilmington and New Bern. Final design decisions would play a major role in determining how accessible Tidewater Virginia markets would be to the north.

There has recently been two new Interstate designations in the region, including US 64/17 being designated as Future Interstate I-87, and US 264 being designated as Future I-587. Although it could be up to twenty years before these upgrades occur, these Interstates should have a positive impact on economic development in the region, as I-87 provides access to Tidewater Virginia and the Norfolk Port, and I-587 provides access to the Piedmont area of the state, including the greater Raleigh area.

**Air Passenger and Air Freight**

The Pitt-Greenville Airport (PGV) provides air freight and commuter service to Greenville, which is in the southwestern portion of the region. Commuter flights into or from the airport are commercial flights connected to the International Airport in Charlotte (Charlotte-Douglas).

Air freight into the region is generally infrequent and must be supplemented by common carrier freight hauls from the Norfolk-Virginia Beach and Raleigh-Durham Airports. An analysis here is that for the Mid-East Region, this level of service is marginal for the region’s current needs and totally inadequate for a future which could see high technology commerce and growth. The Global Transpark located in Kinston could one day support far greater air freight traffic into and from the area and greatly enhance economic development for a ten county area.
Rail Service

Freight rail service is found to be generally adequate to many of the industrialized locations within the region at present. Direct rail passenger service does not exist for the region; travelers must travel to Wilson (40 miles from Greenville) or Rocky Mount (40 miles from Ahoskie) for the nearest Amtrak stations.

In the near future, there will be a major intermodal CSX Hub constructed in Rocky Mount. As of this writing, the project has already been let for bid. This $270 million infrastructure project will serve as a major transportation hub in the Southeast, and will be a catalyst for substantial economic growth in the region and the state as a whole.

Port Service

The flow of goods between the region and the containerized ports (Norfolk, Wilmington and Morehead City) is considered adequate, with access to the ports by common carrier or rail. From Williamston in Martin County, it is 130 miles to Norfolk, 120 miles to Wilmington, and 80 miles to Morehead City. The recent expansion of Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) 20 by the port of Virginia and the expansion of FTZ 214 at the Global Transpark in Kinston provides cost advantages to companies involved in import/export activity, and should make becoming a satellite location easier.

Other

There are, of course, locational advantages and disadvantages for the Mid-East Region other than transportation access alone. For some, the very isolation of the region from the beaten path makes it an ideal location to vacation, to live, and occasionally even to conduct business. The region is rich in history and has excellent water-based outdoor activities. The region is rated “excellent for peace and quiet.” On the other hand, this isolation sometimes results in the loss of access to social and cultural opportunities and to specialized advanced medical procedures.

Impacts of Natural Disasters

The location of the Mid-East Region makes it susceptible to the effects of natural disasters, especially hurricanes.

Hurricane Floyd passed through the Region on September 15, 1999. All five counties in the Mid-East Region are severely constrained by the damage done during this storm. The worst damage was not caused by the high winds, as with many hurricanes. The rains that accompanied the storm caused the most severe and lasting damage to the region and all of eastern North Carolina. Flooding associated with this storm was and has been an economic burden to all of the Region “Q” counties.
One of the most pronounced and lasting effects of the flood has been to the low income segment of Region Q. The low income segment of any population is most likely to occupy the margin, or the most hazard prone areas. The population of Region Q was no exception. Many homes were completely destroyed or deemed uninhabitable.

Although all areas of the region were severely affected by the storm and the flood some were more visible than others were. Pitt County was the center of national news coverage for several weeks as the floodwater receded. One of the most widespread effects of this storm and flood was on the farmers of the region. The cash crops, these farmer's livelihoods, were destroyed or damaged beyond repair in many circumstances.

The region was unprepared for a natural disaster of this magnitude. Federal agencies such as FEMA were visible for years after the flood. Many areas of the Region will not be inhabited again because of flood risks. One of the major changes came in the updated FEMA flood-plain maps. As the maps are produced, it is more apparent as to how many areas of this Region are at risk for such disasters.

Hurricane Isabel made landfall and moved through the region on September 18, 2003. This Category 2 Storm, with wind speeds up to 90 miles per hour caused an estimated $170 million dollars in damage to insured property in North Carolina alone. There was a recorded 6 to 10 foot above normal tide level storm surge leaving many waterfront areas of the region inundated with storm water. Although the flood damage from this storm was not as extensive as Hurricane Floyd, it still caused major hardship for many areas of the region. The wind damage from this storm was very extensive and many local governments continue to suffer from the lasting economic effects of this storm.

Bertie and Hertford Counties, the two most northern counties in the region, sustained some of the worst damage during Hurricane Isabel. The winds downed both trees and power lines causing many secondary roads to become impassable. These two counties were without power in some areas for extended periods after the storm.

On October 8, 2008, Beaufort County was one of three counties in North Carolina named as a federal disaster area related to Tropical Storm Hanna. On Saturday August 27, 2011, Hurricane Irene hit the NC coast as a major hurricane with winds over 85 miles per hour. All five Mid-East counties were designated as federal disaster areas.

Hurricane Matthew brushed past the NC coast on October 8, 2016 bringing devastating flooding across central and eastern North Carolina. More than a foot of rain fell 100 miles inland, swelling streams and rivers to levels above what was seen in Hurricane Floyd in 1999. All five Mid-East counties were designated as federal disaster areas. Bertie and Pitt Counties in particular suffered major damage due to the flooding. Many of these areas are still in the process of recovering from the damage caused, including the Central Business District of Windsor in Bertie County. Federal disaster aid was far from sufficient to cover the damaged infrastructure.
Regional Profile Data

Population Information

Table 1.
Mid-East Commission Region Population Growth, 2000-2030

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>44,958</td>
<td>47,759</td>
<td>47,561</td>
<td>2,603</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>47,827</td>
<td>47,827</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>19,773</td>
<td>21,282</td>
<td>20,518</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>20,010</td>
<td>18,996</td>
<td>-1,522</td>
<td>(-7.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>22,601</td>
<td>24,669</td>
<td>24,368</td>
<td>1,767</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>24,309</td>
<td>24,080</td>
<td>-288</td>
<td>(-1.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>25,593</td>
<td>24,505</td>
<td>23,729</td>
<td>(-1,864)</td>
<td>(-7.3%)</td>
<td>23,263</td>
<td>22,296</td>
<td>-1,433</td>
<td>(-6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>133,798</td>
<td>168,148</td>
<td>173,798</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>179,437</td>
<td>187,251</td>
<td>13,453</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>246,723</td>
<td>286,363</td>
<td>289,974</td>
<td>43,251</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>294,846</td>
<td>300,450</td>
<td>10,476</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1 shows the population growth for the counties that are in the Mid-East region. It shows the total population for each county from 2000, 2010, and 2015 as well as the population and percentage growth during that timeframe. It also includes population projections for 2020 and 2030 with expected growth in numbers and percentage.

The data shows that Pitt County is much more populated than the other four counties. Pitt County also had a large growth percentage of 29.9% from 2000 to 2015. Hertford County (7.8%), Beaufort County (5.8%), and Bertie County (3.8%) all had moderate growth during the same timeframe. Martin County was the only County to lose population between 2000 and 2015, declining by 7.3%.

Population estimates through 2030 predict moderate population loss for Bertie and Martin Counties and small population loss for Hertford County. Beaufort County is expected to have a small population gain, while Pitt County is expected to have moderate growth. According to projections, the region is expected to grow by 3.6% between the years 2015-2030.
Table 2.  
Mid-East Commission Region Population by Race and Ethnic Group, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>% White</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>% African-American</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>% Other</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>% Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Non Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>% Non Hispanic or Latino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>32,551</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>12,223</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>2,985</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>3,166</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>44,593</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>7,488</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>13,296</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>21,015</td>
<td>98.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>8,786</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>14,933</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>24,025</td>
<td>97.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>13,019</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>10,651</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>23,736</td>
<td>96.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>99,075</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>57,257</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>11,816</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9,202</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>158,946</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>160,919</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>108,360</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>17,084</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14,048</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>272,315</td>
<td>95.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 Decennial Census)

Table 2 shows the 2010 census numbers for race and ethnicity. Race is broken down by White, African-American, and Other, while ethnicity is split into Hispanic or Latino and Non-Hispanic or Latino.

Beaufort (68.2%), Pitt (58.9%), and Martin (53.1%) Counties have a larger White population while Bertie (62.5%) and Hertford (60.5%) Counties have a higher percentage of African-Americans. Overall the region has a 56.2% White population and a 37.8% African-American population. Pitt has the largest Other population at 7% followed by Beaufort (6.3%), Hertford (3.9%), Martin (3.4%), and Bertie (2.3%). The Region’s Other population is 6%.

The ethnicity part of the table shows Hispanic or Latino populations of each county. Beaufort County had the largest percentage with 6.6%, followed by Pitt at 5.5%, Martin at 3.1%, Hertford at 2.6%, while Bertie County had the smallest Hispanic or Latino population at 1.3%. The region had a population of 4.9% Hispanic or Latino and 95.1% Non-Hispanic or Latino.
Table 3. Mid-East Commission Region Population by Age Group, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Under 18</th>
<th>% Under 18</th>
<th>18-44</th>
<th>% 18-44</th>
<th>45-64</th>
<th>% 45-64</th>
<th>Over 65</th>
<th>% Over 65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>10,527</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14,043</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>14,407</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>8,782</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>4,436</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>6,786</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>6,404</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>3,656</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>5,197</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>8,366</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>7,208</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>3,898</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>5,435</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>7,135</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>7,638</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>4,297</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>37,798</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>75,653</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>38,078</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>16,619</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63,393</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>111,983</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>73,735</strong></td>
<td><strong>25.8%</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,252</strong></td>
<td><strong>13%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 Decennial Census)

Table 3 shows the region’s population breakdown by age group and percentage for each county. Each county’s percentage of people 18 or younger is similar and ranges from 20.8% to 22.5%. The age group 18-44 has a larger difference in percentages, with 45% of the Pitt County population in this age group, which brings up the Region’s total to 39.1%. The other four counties are closer with their percentages in this age group and range from 29.4% to 33.9%.

In the 45-64 age group, Pitt County has the lowest percentage with 22.6%, while the other four counties range from 29.2% to 31.2%. When it comes to the oldest age group (over 65), Pitt County had the lowest percentage with 9.9%. Once again, the other four counties have closer percentages and range from 15.8% to 18.4%.
Table 4 shows the percentage urban population and percentage rural population for each county and the average for the region. Pitt County is demonstrably different from the other counties, with 74.6% of its population being urban and 25.4% being rural. The population of the other four counties is mostly rural. Bertie County is the most rural with a 16.8% urban population, followed by Martin with 21.9% urban, Hertford with 31.4% urban and Beaufort County with 34.4% urban. The region’s average is 55.3% urban and 44.7% rural, largely because of the urban population in Pitt County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Percent Urban Population</th>
<th>Percent Rural Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.3%</strong></td>
<td><strong>44.7%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 Decennial Census)
Table 5 shows the average annual wage for each county and the region for the years 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015. Also shown is the change from 2000-2010 as well as the percentage change from this same time period. The change and percent change for 2010-2015 is also given.

The 2010 annual average wage includes Pitt at $36,972, Beaufort at $32,396, Bertie at $31,824 and Hertford at $31,722. All four of these counties saw marked increases from 2000-2010. However, Martin County saw a 3.6% decrease in annual wages from 2000-2010. The region as a whole had an overall wage growth of 30.9% between 2000 and 2010.

From 2010-2015, an opposite trend occurred. Martin County’s annual average wage grew by 4.1% and it was the only county to increase in wages. All four of the other counties showed a decrease from 2010-2015. Pitt County decreased the most, where the average annual wage declined by $5,812 or 15.7%. During this time period Hertford County’s average annual wage decreased by 14.7%, Bertie County decreased by 6.4%, and Beaufort County decreased slightly by 0.7%. The region combined saw a 7.3% decrease from 2010-2015. While total employment during this period increased, this data shows that a majority of the growth was in low wage jobs.
Table 6. Mid-East Commission Region Poverty Rates 2010 & Food Insecurity Rates 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>All Persons All Persons Poverty Rate (%)</th>
<th>Under 18 Under 18 Poverty Rate (%)</th>
<th>Food Insecurity Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>9,800</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>3,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>5,385</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>1,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>5,830</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>1,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>5,687</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>1,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>35,109</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>9,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>61,811</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>18,830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (Decennial Census), Feeding America 501(c) (3) non-profit (Hunger in America 2010 study)

Table 6 shows poverty rates and food insecurity rates. It shows the total number and percentage of all people in poverty as well as just those persons under the age of 18. The table also shows the food insecurity rate for each county as well as the region’s average.

The poverty rate for the region ranged from 20.5% in Beaufort County to 25.3% in Bertie County. The region’s poverty rate is at 21.6%. The percentage of persons under the age of 18 living in poverty was higher, with Pitt County the lowest at 26.3% and Bertie County the highest at 38.5%. The poverty percentage of persons under the age of 18 is 29.7% for the region. (It is worth noting that Pitt County’s poverty rate is impacted by a large student population from East Carolina University that work part-time for relatively low wages.)

The food insecurity rate for the region ranged from 17.9% in Beaufort County to 24.7% in Hertford County. The average food insecurity rate for the Region is 21.9%. All five counties are greater than the NC average food insecurity rate of 17.7%, although Beaufort County stands out as being very close to the state average. The national average food insecurity rate is 15.4%, putting the region significantly behind most of the country in food security.
Table 7 shows the median household income, per capita income, per capita living wage, and the difference between the per capita income and the per capita living wage. The region’s average median household income is $35,104. Pitt County had the highest median household income at $39,519, followed by Beaufort County at $38,194, Martin at $34,814, Hertford at $32,410 and Bertie County at $30,586.

The Region’s average per capita income is $19,751. Pitt County had the highest per capita income at $22,609, followed by Beaufort County at $22,356, Martin at $19,032, Hertford at $17,280 and Bertie County at $16,629. Bertie, Hertford and Martin Counties are all significantly below the per capita living wage, while Beaufort and Pitt Counties are slightly above the per capita living wage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
<th>Per Capita Living Wage</th>
<th>Difference in Per Capita Income &amp; Living Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>$38,194</td>
<td>$22,356</td>
<td>$21,548</td>
<td>$808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>$30,586</td>
<td>$16,629</td>
<td>$21,278</td>
<td>(-$4,649)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>$32,410</td>
<td>$17,280</td>
<td>$21,216</td>
<td>(-$3,936)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>$34,814</td>
<td>$19,032</td>
<td>$21,278</td>
<td>(-$2,246)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>$39,519</td>
<td>$23,461</td>
<td>$22,609</td>
<td>$852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Average</td>
<td>$35,104</td>
<td>$19,751</td>
<td>$21,586</td>
<td>(-$1,835)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 Decennial Census, 2015 American Community Survey), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT Living Wage Calculator)
Housing

Table 8.
Mid-East Commission Region Housing Units & Vacancy Rates, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Change 2000-2010</th>
<th>% Change 2000-2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>22,139</td>
<td>24,688</td>
<td>2,549</td>
<td>11.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>9,050</td>
<td>9,822</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>8.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>9,724</td>
<td>10,635</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>9.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>10,930</td>
<td>11,704</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>58,408</td>
<td>74,990</td>
<td>16,582</td>
<td>28.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Total</td>
<td>110,251</td>
<td>131,839</td>
<td>21,588</td>
<td>19.6 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau (2000 Decennial Census, 2010 Decennial Census)

Table 8 shows the number of housing units in 2000 and 2010, with the percent change from 2000-2010.

As expected, Pitt County has the most household units with 58,408 in 2000 and 74,990 in 2010. Their growth of 16,582, a 28.4% increase, was the highest and was three times more than the other four counties combined. Every other county saw growth in this ten year period. Beaufort at 2,549 units represented an 11.5% increase, Hertford at 911 units was a 9.4% increase, Martin at 774 units was a 7.4% increase, and Bertie County at 772 units was an 8.5% increase. Overall, the region saw a 19.6% increase in total housing units, largely due to the increase in Pitt County.
Table 9 shows the median home value, homeowner vacancy rate, rental vacancy rate, and percentage of units with no vehicle available for each county and also gives the region’s average.

Pitt County had the highest median home value at $135,300, followed by Beaufort County at $115,100, Martin at $85,500, Hertford at $83,000 and Bertie County at $78,400. The region’s average median home value is $99,460.

The homeowner vacancy rate ranged from 1.3% in Bertie County to 3.2% in Beaufort County, while the rental vacancy rate ranged from 7.6% in Beaufort County to 11.6% in Pitt County. Martin County had the lowest percentage of units without a vehicle available at 7.3%, followed by Beaufort County at 7.8%, Pitt at 7.9%, Bertie at 10% and Hertford County at 10.8%.
Table 10 shows the percentage of high school graduates age 25 and older, the percentage of people with a Bachelor’s Degree, and the percentage of people with a Graduate or Professional Degree in 2015. The North Carolina average High School graduation rate is 85.8%. The region is approximately 4% below that and only Pitt County has a higher percentage than the state average.

The North Carolina average for a Bachelor’s Degree or higher is 28.4%. The region is significantly below that with an 11% difference and only Pitt County has a higher percentage than the state average. The North Carolina average for a Graduate or Professional Degree is 9.9%. The region is approximately 4% below that and only Pitt County has a higher percentage than the state average.

Source: US Census Bureau (2015 American Community Survey)
Table 11. Mid-East Commission Region Crime Rate, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Crime Rate</th>
<th>Violent Crime Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>2,616 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>333 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>2,280 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>129 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>2,806 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>231 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>4,120 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>506 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>3,308 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>442 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Average</td>
<td>3,026 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>328 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>3,169 per 100,000 population</td>
<td>356 per 100,000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NC Dept. of Public Safety (Unified Crime Report, 2015)

Table 11 shows the total crime rate and violent crime rate for each County, the Region and the State. The total crime rate for North Carolina is 3,169 per 100,000 population. Bertie, Beaufort and Hertford Counties are significantly below the state crime rate, with the total crime rate in Bertie being 2,280 per 100,000, Beaufort 2,616 per 100,000 and Hertford County 2,806 per 100,000. Pitt County is slightly above the state crime rate at 3,308 per 100,000 population, and Martin County is significantly above the state crime rate at 4,120 per 100,000 population. The average crime rate for the region is 3,026 per 100,000 population, slightly less than the state crime rate.

The violent crime rate for North Carolina is 356 per 100,000 population. Bertie and Beaufort Counties are significantly below the state violent crime rate, with the violent crime rate in Bertie County at 129 per 100,000 population and Hertford County at 231 per 100,000 population. Beaufort County was slightly below the state violent crime rate with 333 per 100,000 population. Pitt County and Martin County were significantly above the state violent crime rate with Pitt County at 442 per 100,000 population and Martin County at 506 per 100,000 population. The average violent crime rate for the region is 328 per 100,000 population, slightly less than the state violent crime rate.
### Employment Information

**Table 12.**
**Mid-East Commission Region Employment, 2000-2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>18,189</td>
<td>16,848</td>
<td>16,076</td>
<td>18,786</td>
<td>-2,113</td>
<td>-11.6%</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>6,805</td>
<td>6,986</td>
<td>6,631</td>
<td>7,979</td>
<td>-174</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>9,601</td>
<td>9,558</td>
<td>9,224</td>
<td>8,568</td>
<td>-377</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
<td>-656</td>
<td>(-7.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>9,243</td>
<td>9,270</td>
<td>7,402</td>
<td>8,968</td>
<td>-1,841</td>
<td>-19.9%</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>66,249</td>
<td>66,985</td>
<td>69,729</td>
<td>82,353</td>
<td>3,480</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>12,624</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region Total</strong></td>
<td>110,087</td>
<td>109,647</td>
<td>109,062</td>
<td>126,654</td>
<td>-1,025</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>17,592</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 12 shows employment numbers by county for the years 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015. The region’s total is also displayed. Also shown is the change from 2000-2010 and the percentage change. The same information is given for the years 2010-2015 is also given.

From 2000 to 2010, Martin County had the largest percentage decrease in employment at 19.9%, followed by Beaufort County at 11.6%, Hertford County at 3.9% and Bertie County at 2.6%. During the same time frame, Pitt County was the only county in the region to have an increase, with 5.3% growth. Overall the regional employment numbers decreased slightly by 0.9% from 2000 to 2010.

From 2010 to 2015, Hertford County was the only county in the region to have a decrease in employment at 7.1%. All the other counties showed increases in employment, with Beaufort County at 16.9%, Bertie County at 20.3%, Martin County at 21.2%, and Pitt County at 18.1%. Overall, the regional employment numbers increased by 16.1% from 2010 – 2015, showing a comeback from the Great Recession of 2008.
Table 13. Mid-East Commission Local Businesses and Self-Employed, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Private Industry</th>
<th>Manufacturing Establishments</th>
<th>Available Industrial Buildings</th>
<th>Total Retail Businesses</th>
<th>Estimated Self-Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort</td>
<td>1,116</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>1,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>3,608</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>3,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,876</strong></td>
<td><strong>196</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,185</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,991</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

Table 13 shows total private industry, manufacturing establishments, available industrial buildings, total retail businesses and estimated self-employment for each county and the region. As expected, Pitt County had the highest total private industry with 3,608. Total private industry in Beaufort County was 1,116, Martin 451, Hertford 433 and Bertie County 268. Total private industry in the region was 5,876.

Pitt County and Beaufort County had the greatest number of manufacturing establishments, with Pitt having 98 and Beaufort having 52. Martin County had seventeen manufacturing establishments, Hertford had sixteen and Bertie County had thirteen. The region’s total number of manufacturing establishments was 196. Pitt County had 23 available industrial buildings. Available industrial buildings in the other counties included three in Bertie County, two in Beaufort County, two in Hertford County and one in Martin County. The total available industrial buildings in the Region was 31.

Pitt County had the greatest number of retail businesses with 1,344. Beaufort County had 389 retail businesses, Martin had 188, Hertford had 174 and Bertie County had 90 retail businesses. Total retail businesses in the region was 2,185. Estimated self-employment in Pitt County was 3,309, Beaufort was 1,354, Martin 515, Hertford 469 and Bertie County 344. The total estimated self-employment in the region was 5,991.
Beaufort County Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (250+ employees):

1. Beaufort County Schools
2. PCS Phosphate Company, Inc.
3. Vidant Medical Center
5. Beaufort County
6. Flanders Airpure NC Division
7. Austin Maintenance and Construction
8. Beaufort Community College
9. City of Washington
10. Executive Personnel Group, LLC

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs 2010-15</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2,804</td>
<td>2,760</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
<td>$54,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>2,247</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>-40.9%</td>
<td>$39,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>2,048</td>
<td>2,009</td>
<td>-1.9%</td>
<td>$24,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining</td>
<td>1,443</td>
<td>1,235</td>
<td>-14.4%</td>
<td>$36,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>+1.5%</td>
<td>$21,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>1,338</td>
<td>1,762</td>
<td>+31.7%</td>
<td>$13,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>1,540</td>
<td>+15.8%</td>
<td>$37,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services, except Public Administration</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>+9.6%</td>
<td>$31,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>$37,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>1,013</td>
<td>+10.6%</td>
<td>$55,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
<td>$39,312</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bertie County Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (100+ employees):

1. Perdue Products, Inc.
2. Bertie County Board of Education
3. NC Dept. of Public Safety
4. QSI
5. Bertie County
6. Avoca, Inc.
7. Vidant Medical Center

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs 2010-15</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2,043</td>
<td>1,629</td>
<td>-20.3%</td>
<td>$30,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>-24.4%</td>
<td>$33,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>$22,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>-16.1%</td>
<td>$35,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>+45%</td>
<td>$26,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services, except Public Administration</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>-51.6%</td>
<td>$18,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>-27.9%</td>
<td>$30,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>-20.6%</td>
<td>$14,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>-27.4%</td>
<td>$37,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>+37.4%</td>
<td>$22,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>-13%</td>
<td>$53,057</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hertford County Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (100+ employees):

1. Hertford County Board of Education
2. Vidant Medical Center
3. Nucor Corporation
4. Jernigan Oil Co., Inc.
5. Geo Corrections & Detention, Inc.
6. Chowan University
7. Hertford County
8. Roanoke-Chowan Community College
11. Carolinas Home Care, Inc.
12. Signature Payroll Services, LLC
13. Roanoke-Chowan Community Health Center
14. Home Life Care, Inc.
15. Solid Foundation
16. NC Dept. of Transportation
17. Enviva Management Company, LLC
18. Integrated Family Services, LLC
19. McDonald’s

Source NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>-23.4%</td>
<td>$34,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,825</td>
<td>1,409</td>
<td>-22.8%</td>
<td>$66,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>1,191</td>
<td>1,054</td>
<td>-11.5%</td>
<td>$23,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>-19%</td>
<td>$21,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>-4.6%</td>
<td>$29,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>+65.1%</td>
<td>$18,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services, except Public Administration</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>+73.1%</td>
<td>$28,184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Martin County Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (100+ employees):

1. Martin County Board of Education
2. Snacks Holdings
4. Martin General Hospital
5. Martin County
6. Martin Community College
7. Industrial Manufacturing Co., LLC
8. Care Services, LLC
9. Piggly Wiggly
10. Town of Williamston
11. Food Lion

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,683</td>
<td>1,679</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
<td>$34,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>$30,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>1,211</td>
<td>+22.1%</td>
<td>$21,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>-49.0%</td>
<td>$51,466</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>-13.0%</td>
<td>$14,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>-16.3%</td>
<td>$38,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>+1.7%</td>
<td>$36,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>-4.4%</td>
<td>$30,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
<td>$26,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>$42,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>-48.9%</td>
<td>$47,736</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pitt County Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (500+ employees):
1. Vidant Medical Center
2. East Carolina University
3. Pitt County Board of Education
4. Pitt Community College
5. Patheon Manufacturing Services, LLC
6. Nacco Materials Handling Group, Inc.
8. Pitt County
9. City of Greenville
10. Alliance One International, Inc.
11. Wells Fargo Bank Na (A Corp.)
12. Asmo Greenville of North Carolina
13. Food Lion
15. Physicians East, PA
16. Aramark Food and Support Services

Source NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>10,650</td>
<td>11,930</td>
<td>+12%</td>
<td>$39,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>8,825</td>
<td>9,274</td>
<td>+5.1%</td>
<td>$25,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services</td>
<td>8,682</td>
<td>8,728</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
<td>$14,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>7,459</td>
<td>8,507</td>
<td>+14.1%</td>
<td>$56,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6,900</td>
<td>6,470</td>
<td>-6.2%</td>
<td>$20,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services</td>
<td>5,005</td>
<td>5,249</td>
<td>+4.9%</td>
<td>$57,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4,089</td>
<td>-18.2%</td>
<td>$43,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</td>
<td>3,985</td>
<td>3,654</td>
<td>-8.3%</td>
<td>$44,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services, except Public Administration</td>
<td>3,720</td>
<td>4,675</td>
<td>+25.7%</td>
<td>$25,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>2,859</td>
<td>4,116</td>
<td>+44%</td>
<td>$43,888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mid-East Region Employers & Occupations

Largest Employers (1000+ employees):

1. Vidant Medical Center
2. East Carolina University
3. Pitt County Board of Education
4. Perdue Products Inc.
5. Beaufort County Schools
6. Pitt Community College
7. Patheon Manufacturing Services, LLC
8. Nacco Materials Handling Group, Inc.
10. Pitt County

Source NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Change in Jobs</th>
<th>2015 Earnings per Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>16,070</td>
<td>16,850</td>
<td>+4.9%</td>
<td>$35,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>15,814</td>
<td>15,984</td>
<td>+1.1%</td>
<td>$48,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>13,883</td>
<td>14,226</td>
<td>+2.5%</td>
<td>$23,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services</td>
<td>11,535</td>
<td>12,128</td>
<td>+5.1%</td>
<td>$15,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10,192</td>
<td>9,730</td>
<td>-4.5%</td>
<td>$24,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>8,695</td>
<td>6,488</td>
<td>-25.4%</td>
<td>$39,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services</td>
<td>7,401</td>
<td>7,260</td>
<td>-1.9%</td>
<td>$55,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services, except Public Administration</td>
<td>5,861</td>
<td>6,879</td>
<td>+17.4%</td>
<td>$25,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance and Real Estate</td>
<td>5,782</td>
<td>5,270</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
<td>$39,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>5,485</td>
<td>6,583</td>
<td>+20.0%</td>
<td>$35,890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of the Area

The economic development assessment of the Mid-East Region can be directly stated through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis as follows:

**Strengths**

- The work ethic and ongoing training of the workforce.
- The leisurely and quiet lifestyle as a contributor to the quality of life.
- Land is reasonable to lure new employers as a “traditional” attraction strategy.
- Rail freight services in all five counties.
- Higher education and employment-related training at four Community Colleges, East Carolina University, Chowan University, Mt. Olive College and Shaw University.
- Natural resources utilized to support manufacturing and mining jobs, some of which are high wage jobs.
- High paying jobs exist in industries not supported by local natural resources such as Health Care, Transportation, Machinery, and Pharmaceuticals & Chemicals.
- Manufacturing and Health Care employment in the region represent a higher percentage of total employment than at the state and national levels.
- Small town sense of community, hospitality, and personal identity contributes to the quality of life.
- Vidant Health Hospitals in Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford and Pitt Counties, the Brody School of Medicine, and Martin General Hospital.
- Water-based natural environment as a potential recreational tourism draw.
- Pitt County’s development as a technology and medically based, and research-supported growth center.
- Industrial development incentives from the State Department of Commerce.
- Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RPO) are operational.
- Intercoastal Waterway bisects the region for both tourism and commercial/industrial use.
- Historical and cultural amenities.
- Proximity to ports.
- Improvements to Hwy 17, Hwy 13, Hwy 11, Hwy 64 and Hwy 264.
- Access to highly skilled tech and government retirees.
- High tech metal fabrication.
- Future designation of Interstates.
- Proximity to CSX hub in Rocky Mount.
- Access to larger metropolitan areas.
- Entrepreneurial spirit of the region.
- Business friendly regulatory and tax environment.
- Economic Development Corporations in each county.
- Proximity to Free Trade Zones (FTZ).
- Large areas of land.
- New businesses are opening in some areas.
- Experienced agricultural workforce.
- Can do attitude and desire for progress.
- Diversity of the population.
- New Atlantic Coast pipeline will bring natural gas to Eastern NC.
- Cost of living is reasonable.
- Four seasons of weather to enjoy.
- Access to health care.
- Population growth is occurring in Pitt County.
- Property taxes are low in Beaufort County and reasonable in Pitt County.

**Weaknesses**

- Additional jet service is needed for better air passenger service.
- High number of medically uninsured and indigent population.
- Low lying areas and proximity to large water bodies that are subject to flooding of both land and private public utilities.
- Frequency of natural disasters such as hurricanes.
- Average public educational achievement lags behind North Carolina averages, which lag noticeably behind national averages.
- Noticeable segments of the workforce are either illiterate or ill prepared in basic work readiness, or both.
- The low wage economy fails to provide discretionary income to adequately support the retail and service sectors.
- Use of the “cheap labor” syndrome as an attraction strategy.
- While regional cooperation is generally good, parochialism comes into play on a few issues, such as new highway location.
- Development difficulties occur due to the vast extent of water-bodies and hydric soils.
- The northern rural counties have weak tax bases which are strained to provide education and basic services such as water and sewer.
- The cost of infrastructure to support economic development remains a challenge.
- Private capital is generally not available to job creating, high-risk start-up businesses.
- Lack of financial resources to provide competitive incentives to lure business/industry.
- Need for additional training and retraining for certain sectors.
- The aging of infrastructure, specifically as it relates to water/wastewater distribution.
- Lack of adequate access to natural gas.
- General health of population.
- Loss of manufacturing jobs in northern rural counties.
- Overreliance on certain industries.
- Lack of basic life skills in some segments of the population.
- Drive to excel and motivation is lacking in some segments of the workforce.
- Lack of high-speed internet access in rural areas.
- There is a need for more affordable housing.
- Lack of big city amenities in much of the region (culture, dining, entertainment).
• Decreasing population in northern rural counties. Losing best and brightest young people due to perceived or actual lack of opportunity.
• Resistance to change can be a barrier to progress.
• More services are needed for underserved and minority populations.
• It can be difficult for employers to retain skilled workers.
• High utility costs exist in some areas, creating hardship for low income citizens and limiting the industrial growth that could lift those areas out of poverty.
• There is an aging workforce in the region with a large percentage of the workforce due to retire in the next decade.
• There is a need for additional public transportation service.
• Property taxes are high in northern rural counties.

Opportunities

• Continued training and retraining of the current adult workforce can yield results in attracting higher skill, higher wage employers.
• Promote technical training and trade school opportunities for students not going to college.
• Increased collaboration between institutes of higher education and major employers.
• Creation of disaster resistant jobs by upgrading the skills of the local population.
• Active marketing of the existing tourist attractions in our region and the surrounding area.
• Development of waterfront areas for tourism and residential development where appropriate.
• At the very least, Pitt, Beaufort and Martin Counties could grow in higher wage employment if the Global TransPark in Kinston (Lenoir County) develops. Bertie and Hertford County could also benefit.
• Availability of underutilized natural resources such as timber.
• The distance from metropolitan markets could disappear if the region aggressively pursues voice, image and data hook-up to North Carolina’s “Information Highway”.
• Alternative fuels production presents opportunities for new and expanded markets.
• In all counties, strategically placed investments in water, sewer, and natural gas can make key industrial buildings and parcels available for growth and occupancy.
• In Pitt County, East Carolina University, Vidant Health, the city and county can work together to further develop concepts such as a Biotechnology Park, an Incubator and a Medical/Technology Park.
• The activity related to biotechnology offers an opportunity to decentralize economic development potential throughout the region.
• Availability of amenities to support residential and retirement communities.
• Opportunities for procurement of services related to the military.
• A Region Wide Transportation Plan comprised of our five counties as well as the thirty-five other counties located east of I-95 is in the process of being incorporated into the North Carolina Statewide Transportation Plan.
The recent increase in road development will increase access for potential new businesses.
The Pitt-Greenville Airport runway has been extended to facilitate larger airplanes and more frequent commuter flights.
Natural gas lines are being extended and installed, selectively, throughout the region.
Identifying and tapping into the retired talent in the area.
Exploring more regional solutions to solve problems, such as regional infrastructure authorities where appropriate.
Concept of a regional High School.
Incorporating life skills training in K-12 education.
The newly established Pharmaceutical Services Network’s ability to attract pharma manufacturers and suppliers.
Agritourism opportunities for farmers.
Capitalizing on the proximity to ports and the CSX rail hub in Rocky Mount.
Marketing the area to attract tourists, focusing on the unique assets of each community/area.
Capitalize on the tourist traffic heading to and returning form the Outer Banks.
Development of specialized residential communities, such as live/work communities for artists and certified Retirement Friendly Communities.
Identify successful private manufacturers who have moved to the region and work with them to determine their reasons for locating here. Use knowledge gained for marketing to manufacturers both nationally and overseas.
Brand the region for marketing purposes, possibly partnering with other counties east of I-95 to create one master region for branding.
Expand and market the services available for small businesses.
Recruit more airlines and provide flights out of Pitt-Greenville Airport to other destinations (currently only flights to Charlotte are offered).
Smaller communities can explore outreach opportunities with various East Carolina University Departments, including the Arts Department.
Work with the NC East Alliance to recruit early retirees interested in owning a business.
Work with the state to increase storm water retention upstream and on clearing/snagging rivers downstream to reduce flooding risk.
Promote the purchase of flood insurance.
Promote regional collaboration on STEM education.
Encourage entrepreneurship and provide local economic developers, including Downtown Development and Tourism Agencies, information on service providers that support entrepreneurship.

**Threats**

- The strong manufacturing base is insufficiently diversified. Downturn in one or more key industries would have severe consequences.
- Continued devastation from frequent natural disasters such as hurricanes and associated flooding.
• The failure to make a strong link to the fiber optic network on a timely basis would severely damage the region’s ability to both attract and serve business.
• Failure to assertively speak in a united fashion to external decision makers on highway access could severely restrain economic development and prolong the region’s isolation for another generation.
• The absence of appropriate land use and/or environmental regulations could render economic development far more difficult.
• Lack of zoning and land use regulations in some areas prevents orderly growth.
• Natural disasters such as hurricanes have the ability to affect the entire region including but not limited to flooding and wind damage. Resources for planning and recovery need to be maintained.
• Terrorism is a threat to the region’s infrastructure. Resources for planning and recovery need to be established.
• Lack of representation based on redistricting (less relative population than other more urban areas).
• Depletion of natural resources, especially related to water.
• Current stagnant international market.
• Health issues in a large segment of the population.
• Substandard secondary roads in some areas.
• The continuation of poverty and the lack of education in the population.
• The continued deterioration of our water/wastewater infrastructure and the aging of our power distribution systems.
• Competition from urban areas in attracting potential employers.
• Inter-regional competition could hurt large scale development of roadways and shared systems.
• Northern rural counties are losing population as young adults leave for college and don’t come back. Lack of economic opportunity in these areas makes retaining young adults more difficult.
• Lack of affordable rental units for low to moderate income workers in northern rural counties.
• Lack of understanding among community leaders of the diverse needs of the region and their direct relationship with surrounding communities.
• Drug abuse, specifically the opioid epidemic, is both a local and national problem.
Economic Resilience

The Mid-East Region is steeped in history and community values, and offers a relaxed atmosphere that contributes to the quality of life of its citizens. From quaint, friendly small towns dotted throughout the region, to quiet rural areas, to big city amenities and entertainment in Greenville, there is something to offer for every lifestyle. Picturesque woodlands, agricultural fields and rivers serve as the backdrop for the diverse communities in the region. A strong, resilient regional economy is critical to the long-term growth and stability of these communities.

In general, resiliency can be thought of as the ability to bounce back after a hardship or disruption. In the context of economic development, resiliency is inclusive of three primary attributes: the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock all together (EDA 2017). It is critical to incorporate both steady-state and responsive initiatives into any economic resilience strategy. Steady-state initiatives are long-term efforts that seek to bolster a community or region’s ability to withstand or avoid a shock, while responsive initiatives include establishing capabilities to be responsive to the region’s recovery needs following an incident (EDA 2017). A multi-phased approach was used to plan for economic resiliency in the Mid-East Region, beginning with identification of vulnerabilities and moving onto identifying both steady-state and responsive initiatives to counteract the identified vulnerabilities.

Vulnerability:

- Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and drought.
- Man-made disasters such as terrorism, nuclear disaster, and infrastructure failure.

Steady State Initiatives:

- Incorporate resiliency into all infrastructure planning
  - No new wastewater systems in floodplain and flood proof existing systems in floodplain.
  - Buyout or elevate properties destroyed by flood.
  - Address flooding issues on roads and bridges which would be used as evacuation routes.
- Improvements to land drainage throughout the region.
- Continue County Resilient Redevelopment Planning efforts.
- Educate farmers on the use of non-water intensive methods such as drip irrigation for appropriate crops.
- Keep information on infrastructure such as water lines and natural gas lines classified as necessary.
- Maintain in good condition infrastructure such as bridges and dams, which cause loss of life and property when failure occurs.
Responsive Initiatives:
- Continue Regional Hazard Mitigation Planning efforts.
- Continue providing education on how to get recovery assistance to homeowners, small business owners and others who have property damage and/or are displaced following disaster.
- Establish a disaster response communication network that includes all levels of government, non-profits and private industry. Identify roles and actions of each agency and any gaps in needed disaster response and recovery services. Use this network to analyze emergency response methods post-disaster in order to make needed improvements.
- Maintain evacuation shelters throughout the region.
- Maintain emergency warning systems throughout the region.
- Provide adequate resources for emergency response units in each community.
- Ensure that emergency responders are trained to respond to a wide variety of disaster scenarios.

Vulnerability:
- Loss of a major employer.
- Large segment of the workforce does not have education/capabilities to switch between jobs or industries.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Develop target industry clusters to diversify the economic base of the region.
- Incorporate resiliency training (i.e. importance of learning new skills and ability to switch between jobs and industries) into workforce training programs.
- Support existing businesses to help make sure they prosper.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Support existing Rapid Response Teams to get employees of closed industries back to work. This could include assistance in finding new employment or retraining for employment in another sector.
- Establish Rapid Response Teams in counties where they do not currently exist.
- Market vacant industrial/commercial properties and the benefits of locating in the region to potential new employers.
Vulnerability:
- Downturn in national and/or international economy.
- Economic downturn in key industries.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Help develop a strong, diversified regional economy with prospering businesses that can withstand and recover from a temporary downturn.
- Develop value chains for major industries that close gaps in supply chains and allow complementary industries and service based businesses to open in the region, helping to insulate the regional economy against national/international downturns.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Provide support services to businesses affected by a downturn and help identify financial resources to keep them from closing if needed.

Vulnerability:
- Declining population in rural counties.
- Brightest students leaving upon graduation.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Provide the amenities desired by the millennial generation, such as active communities with walkable downtowns, entertainment options, greenways, parks, etc.
- Ensure that a variety of housing types are available, including apartments at affordable rental rates.
- Help develop a strong, diversified regional economy, where there are employment opportunities for young adults upon graduation from college.
- Develop business incubator facilities throughout the region and support an entrepreneurial spirit that encourages young entrepreneurs to open businesses in their hometowns.
- Market local events and updates of interest to young people through social media.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Provide scholarships for graduating High School students who are not eligible for federal Pell Grants to attend Community College for two years prior to transferring to a University.
- Support and advocate for programs that encourage students to return to rural areas after graduating from college, i.e. student loan forgiveness programs.
Vulnerability:
- Expanding social unrest and political polarization.
- Widening gulf between rich and poor.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Strive to include all stakeholders and work together to solve regional issues.
- Leadership that brings political parties together and encourages people to understand each other is vital.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Support programs that assist low to moderate income workers, such as daycare assistance and affordable housing.
- Each individual must make an effort to respect and understand others who have opinions differing from their own.

Vulnerability:
- Lack of economic opportunity for disadvantaged populations.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Start students not going to college on Career Paths in High School.
- Continue outreach programs for dropout prevention.
- Ensure availability of affordable housing in safe neighborhoods.
- Educate students on building resumes and interview skills starting in High School.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Offer daycare assistance for low to moderate income workers.
- Support minority and low income scholarship programs.
- Expand qualification for the Federal Pell Grant program.
- Continue to provide free employment services through NC Works.

Vulnerability:
- Retirement in skilled trades and lack of skilled workers to replace retirees.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Start students not going to college on Career Paths in High School.
- Work with Community Colleges to advertise training programs for in demand fields.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Companies can start apprenticeship programs in anticipation of key personnel retiring. The most promising apprentices could receive paid Community College tuition to be certified in the trade and eventually replace the retiree.
Vulnerability:
- Criminal justice system reform is needed.
- There is a lack of mental health support services and addiction recovery support services.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Treat addiction and mental health disorders as diseases and ensure that proper treatment is given, not just a cycle of arrest and release.
- Criminal justice reform is needed to focus on rehabilitation rather than just punishment. This would involve changes to policy at all levels of government and changes to the criminal justice education system.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Advocate for state and federal support for mental health physicians and addiction treatment centers to get people the help they need without long waiting lists.
- Work with Universities to provide incentives for mental health professionals to locate in rural areas.

Vulnerability:
- Lack of education on workforce needs and retraining needs of certain sectors.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Inventory existing higher education, workforce and vocational training related to each industry and conduct a gap analysis to determine unmet needs.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Establish a network for the communication of business workforce development needs. Include representatives from each industry, workforce development professionals, Community Colleges and Universities, economic development entities, etc. to determine short-term and long-term workforce development needs for each industry.

Vulnerability:
- Lack of comprehensive, coherent immigration policy.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Education on the importance of migrant workers to the agriculture and construction industries.
- Provide vocational training for migrant workers and market these services in partnership with community non-profit organizations.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Advocate for immigration policy reform at the federal level. Develop a clear path for obtaining work visas and for citizenship.
Vulnerability:
- Youngest children are not reaching education milestones in many cases.
- The region’s High School graduation rate is below the state average, which is below the national average. The region’s College graduation rate is significantly below the state and national average.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Continue dropout prevention programs and other initiatives to improve the High School graduation rate, which is getting close to the state average.
- Continue the recently created Early College program, where students can get college credits during High School free of charge.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Support existing tutoring programs and start tutoring programs in schools where they don’t exist.
- Support and expand Head Start programs so that quality Pre-K education is available to all children.
- Support scholarship programs and grant programs that allow promising students to attend college.

Vulnerability:
- Automation, globalization and consolidation of industry.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Include the most recent technological innovations in workforce training.
- Provide competitive incentives for businesses to headquarter in the region.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Retrain workers displaced by automation and/or consolidation of industry.
- Each industry must take the initiative to adapt to and profit from globalization.

Vulnerability:
- Lack of shared vision for the region.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Continue Regional Planning efforts such as the CEDS and Regional Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Encourage every municipality and county to develop a Comprehensive Plan and combine these documents into a Regional Comprehensive Plan (includes integration of land use, hazard mitigation, transportation, housing, recreation, economic development and other planning efforts).
Responsive Initiatives:
- Create a coalition of counties East of I-95 and brand the region for marketing purposes. Create a Regional Marketing Plan.
- Create a visual marketing piece that highlights the benefits of each community.
- Develop an easy to use platform for local governments, non-profits and private industry to share success stories and ideas for improving the region.

Vulnerability:
- Lack of representation in State Legislature.
- The formula for state investment favors urban areas.

Steady State Initiatives:
- Start an advocacy group for the region that will lobby for rural needs in Raleigh.

Responsive Initiatives:
- Examine state investment formulas and lobby for appropriate changes to benefit rural areas.
- Advocate for Legislative representation based on area instead of population, or for an equal number of Representatives from each county/district.

Diversification of the regional economy is a key goal in planning for economic resiliency. Determining what existing clusters form the economic base of the Region is the first step in planning for additional target sectors, as well as planning for value chains for existing clusters and the targeting of complementary businesses. The following section outlines a cluster analysis conducted for each county and the region.
Cluster Analysis

This cluster analysis was developed in conjunction with the NC East Commission, the NC Northeast Commission and each county’s Economic Developer.

Beaufort County

Beaufort County is well represented in all three areas classified as primary economic drivers. Agriculture, mining and manufacturing all employ a great number of people and generate a tremendous amount of income. Opportunities exist in all sectors of general manufacturing with an emphasis on metalworking, plastic and fiberglass molding, agri/bio life sciences and alternative energy. The health care sector will continue to grow in Beaufort County as it will everywhere due to the demographics. The county will support initiatives by the NC Department of Commerce and its partnerships that will drive business to Beaufort County and will improve opportunities for its citizens.

Bertie County

In Bertie County, the Perdue Farms Facility-a poultry processor located in Lewiston-Woodville is the largest employer within the county and is the largest driving economic force. The Bertie County Correctional Facility is also a major employer. The County’s Economic Development Commission is interested in continuing to recruit support services for this major complex.

The next highest employment sectors are health care and education, as is the case for much of the State. The Economic Development Commission is also focusing on all types of manufacturing. Their preference is marine trades and agricultural biotechnology business sectors. The county is already home to AVOCA, which is a bio-mass extraction company.

Bertie County also recognizes the potential for waterfront and retirement residential development. Possible cluster opportunities include alternative energy- methane gas at landfill, biomass and solar; food production and distribution; automotive; and tourism including, but not limited, to adventure tourism and the Lost Colony.

Hertford County

Nucor Steel and the GEO Group Correctional Facility are two major economic forces in Hertford County. The county’s location along the North Carolina and Virginia border offers direct business and employment ties to the Richmond and Hampton Roads area, which includes military and shipyards located there. The local Economic Development Commission indicates that metal recycling and fabrication are also major business clusters for them.

Alternative energy, specifically solar and biomass, is also a growing cluster. Hertford County is also identified as a multi-county mini-hub for health care and retail shopping.
Hertford County is dominated by the health care sector. Hertford County also recognizes the potential for waterfront and retirement residential development.

**Martin County**

The current cluster areas for Martin County are forest and wood products, food, applied manufacturing and green energy. Domtar has the largest manufacturing presence in Martin County, followed by Ann’s House of Nuts. Martin County and Pitt County have jointly developed a regional industrial park, Lands East.

The Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center is the largest equine facility in North Carolina. It hosts equine events from the Mid-Atlantic and Southern states, adding to Martin County’s tourism economy.

Martin County and the Towns of Williamston, Robersonville and Hamilton have completed a Comprehensive Economic Development Plan to enhance Martin County’s position as a regional hub for business and tourism. Possible cluster opportunities include biotechnology and alternative energy - solar, biomass, and bio-fuels.

**Pitt County**

The Pitt County Economic Development Commission has identified three of its top business sectors for recruitment as medical devices, bio-pharma, and plastics, along with their ancillary businesses. The county leadership has worked for many years with multiple partners to position Pitt County as a leader in bio-pharma and related industries in North Carolina.

Assets include East Carolina University, Brody School of Medicine, School of Dental Medicine, Vidant Medical Center, Pitt Community College, NCCCS BioNetwork Bio-processing Center, the Technology Enterprise Center of Eastern Carolina, and the Health Sciences Academy. Notable support partners include North Carolina’s Eastern Region, the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, SBTDC and ECU’s Entrepreneurial Initiative and Technology Transfer divisions. Patheon Inc. (formerly DSM Pharmaceuticals), Mayne Pharma (formerly Metrics), and other private sector firms provide research and/or product development for the biotechnology, medical device, and related business sectors, as well as clinical trial production runs.

Two other identified target business sectors that Pitt County is recruiting are distribution centers related to import/export markets and automotive parts/machining. Additional cluster opportunities include advanced manufacturing, defense and aerospace, nonwovens, and value-added agriculture. Translational research (“from the bench to the bedside”) and creative/knowledge sectors are also areas of continuing great potential. Pitt County continues to be a leader in the health care, educational and retail sectors.
**Mid-East Region**

Health care/ social assistance and manufacturing dominate the regional economy. The Region Q Workforce Development Board has identified health care/biotechnology as two growth sectors for the region. This combines the region’s top two current employment sectors.

Many of the regional assets for biotechnology are centered in Pitt County. However, there are five hospitals and many primary physicians throughout the region that can participate in clinical trials. Avoca, Inc. is a bio-mass facility located in Bertie County. Pot Ash Corp-Aurora, Weyerhaeuser and Perdue are also national leaders in agricultural biotechnology. Each of these has major processing facilities that are located in the region, yet they are located outside of Pitt County.

Educational opportunities related to biotechnology are spreading throughout the region. East Carolina University and the Community College system throughout the region are leading the way with educational programs designed to prepare individuals for work in biotechnology and related fields. All of the region’s Community Colleges are in a biotechnology consortium. Additionally, training for this area is filtering down to the High School level.

The region has a broad base of industries in the manufacturing sector that includes heavy process to light manufacturing.

Large public sector employers throughout the region include East Carolina University, Vidant Health, each of the Community Colleges, and each County Board of Education.

The NC East Alliance has identified Advanced Manufacturing, Value Added Agriculture, Life Sciences, Marine Trades, Tourism, Aerospace & Defense, Biotechnology, Renewable Energy, Food, Marine, Aerospace, and Motor Vehicle Assembly/Parts Manufacturing as the region’s existing clusters.
Goals and Objectives

Regional Service Priorities

Members of the CEDS Advisory Committee and attendees at public input meetings were asked to rank the following regional service priorities on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest priority. They were asked to use each number only once. The following graph represents the mean average of their responses. In addition to available funding, the responses provide guidance for staff on which goals and objectives to focus on first.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NC Tomorrow</th>
<th>BUILD ON EACH REGION’S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND LEVERAGE THE MARKETPLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Number One</strong></td>
<td>Brand and market the Mid-East Region in order to support existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, highlight educational opportunities, foster continued development of target clusters, attract new employers, diversify the regional economy, and retain the millennial generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1</strong></td>
<td>Identify the region’s clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | • Begin with existing plans that have been developed already in other counties and by regional organizations.  
• Develop a cluster analysis for each county and a regional cluster analysis.  
• Update the cluster analysis regularly.  
• Identify competitive advantages the region has to offer. |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | • East Carolina University |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | • Mid-East Commission  
• NC East Alliance  
• Region Q Workforce Development Board  
• County Economic Development Commissions |
| **Action(s)** | • Collect and compare any existing cluster analysis reports  
• Interview key private companies and developers about what they consider makes them competitive.  
• Identify competitive advantages the region has to offer.  
• Repeat the process every 2-3 years. |
| **Estimated Costs** | • $25,000 |
| **Alignment of Resources** | • EDA  
• NC East Alliance |
| **Barriers/Issues** | • Financial resources  
• Tool to meet with employers  
• Unwillingness to participate in a regional effort |
<p>| <strong>Performance Measures</strong> | • Creation of cluster analysis; competitive advantages identified |</p>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2</strong></td>
<td>Use the cluster analysis to target existing businesses and start-ups and market the benefits of locating in the region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | • Advertise in industry and entrepreneurial magazines and journals and online.  
• Targeted mailings to businesses that may be interested in expanding.  
• Market the region as entrepreneurial friendly to attract start-up businesses.  
• Offer competitive incentives for new employers to locate in the region.  
• Continue assisting new businesses in apply for and administering state grants. |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | • Mid-East Commission |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | • NC East Alliance  
• Region Q Workforce Development Board  
• County Economic Development Commissions  
• Counties and Municipalities |
| **Action(s)** | • Create a visual marketing image highlighting the benefits of locating in the region for advertising purposes.  
• Advertise in industry and entrepreneurial magazines/journals as often as financially feasible.  
• Advertise online on related websites and via social media regularly.  
• Look into the Certified Entrepreneurial Community program.  
• Create a database showing all local tax incentives and other local incentives for new businesses and existing businesses looking to expand.  
• Research incentives in surrounding areas.  
• Identify any additional incentives that can be implemented to make the region more competitive. |
- Create a database of grant programs, historic tax credits, etc. that business owners can get assistance applying for.
- Create a regional database that shows available industrial and commercial buildings.
- Create a targeted mailing package that shows the visual marketing image, other information that highlights quality of life, the cluster analysis, the incentives available, grant programs and appropriate available buildings.
- Research businesses in target clusters that may be interested in expanding and mail them the package.
- Follow up on targeted mailings with phone calls. Offer to give a tour of the region or a specific building/location.
- Continue providing assistance in applying for and administering state grants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>$100,000</th>
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<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
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<td>NC East Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barriers/Issues</td>
<td>Financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finding out what businesses may be interested in expanding for targeted mailings.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unwillingness to participate in a regional effort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Measures</td>
<td>Creation of marketing materials</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of advertisements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Number of targeted mailings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of tours given as a result of targeted mailings/advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of new businesses opened and number of jobs created as a result of targeted mailings/advertisements</td>
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## NC Tomorrow

**BUILD ON EACH REGION’S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND LEVERAGE THE MARKETPLACE**

### Goal Number One

Brand and market the Mid-East Region in order to support existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, highlight educational opportunities, foster continued development of target clusters, attract new employers, diversify the regional economy, and retain the millennial generation.

### Objective 3

Develop and implement a regional plan to leverage the region’s competitive advantages.

### Strategies to Meet Objective

- Compare existing plans from the NC East Alliance, other Regional Economic Development Plans, and any local Economic Development Plans.
- Meet with industry leaders.
- Utilize CEDS to use identified strengths and opportunities.

### Lead Agency Partner

- Mid-East Commission

### Strategic Public/Private Partnerships

- NC East Alliance
- East Carolina University
- Counties & Municipalities
- Society of Mfg Engineers
- Society of Chemical Engineers
- Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers
- Key Manufacturers that are part of our targeted Cluster (i.e. Marine, Pharm, etc.)
- County Economic Development Commissions

### Action(s)

- Survey/Input from Successful Manufacturers with our Target Clusters
- Develop a detailed Mid-East Region Economic Development Plan with action steps, organization responsible, and timeline.
- Have regular meetings to discuss progress on implementation.
- Update the plan every five years.
- Review performance measures annually.

### Estimated Costs

- $20,000

### Alignment of Resources

- EDA
- Golden Leaf

### Barriers/Issues

- Financial resources
- Proprietary information

### Performance Measures

- Development of regional plan for the Mid-East Region.
- Number of new businesses opened and number of new jobs created as a result of implementing the plan
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<tr>
<td>Objective 4</td>
<td>Conduct an analysis that identifies the existing and potential improved place brand for the region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Explore the possibility of partnering with other regions east of I-95.  
• Create a brand for the Mid-East Region and/or Eastern NC Region  
• Golden Leaf as a proponent/funding vehicle for a branding campaign.  
• Interview Tourism Authorities and community leaders to identify the current “perceived” brand. |
| Lead Agency Partner | • Mid-East Commission |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • East Carolina University  
• Local, county and regional economic development resources  
• Tourism Authorities  
• Tourism related businesses and non-profit organizations  
• NC East Alliance  
• Counties and Municipalities  
• State of NC Tourism Dept.  
• Mid-East Commission |
| Action(s) | • Scope a RFQ that can go out to potential “branding” companies.  
• Develop a list of interview questions.  
• Make list of potential interviewees in the region.  
• Set specific action items with deliverable dates.  
• Create an Executive Summary of conducted interviews and the associated analysis of data obtained.  
• Develop a logo based on the branding campaign for marketing purposes. |
| Estimated Costs | • $10,000 |
| Alignment of Resources | • EDA  
• Golden Leaf |
| Barriers/Issues | • Diverseness of region  
• Building alignment between all entities |
| Performance Measures | • Identification of a brand for the Mid-East Region and/or the Eastern NC Region.  
• Development of a logo for marketing purposes. |
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**Objective 5**

Develop and implement a Regional Marketing Plan.

**Strategies to Meet Objective**
- Hire a qualified private advertising/marketing agency.
- All partners work with the consultant to develop the Regional Marketing Plan.

**Lead Agency Partner**
- NC East Alliance

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**
- Need input from both public and key private cluster manufacturers
- East Carolina University
- Tourism Authorities
- Private advertising/marketing agency
- Community Colleges
- Vidant Health
- Mid-East Commission

**Action(s)**
- Identify a funding mechanism.
- Select a private agency to develop the Regional Marketing Plan.
- Determine target markets.
- Ensure that the Regional Marketing Plan includes detailed action steps, responsible organizations and timelines.
- Have regular meetings to discuss progress on implementation.
- Update the plan every five years.
- Review performance measures annually.

**Estimated Costs**
- $100,000

**Alignment of Resources**
- EDA
- Golden Leaf

**Barriers/Issues**
- Building consensus
- Cost
- Diversity of region

**Performance Measures**
- Creation of a Regional Marketing Plan.
- Progress made towards implementation.
**NC Tomorrow**  BUILD ON EACH REGION’S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND LEVERAGE THE MARKETPLACE

**Goal Number One**  Brand and market the Mid-East Region in order to support existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, highlight educational opportunities, foster continued development of target clusters, attract new employers, diversify the regional economy, and retain the millennial generation.

**Objective 6**  Create a marketing image that reflects the quality of life and unique assets of each area, such as water resources, peanuts, glassworks, historical sites, sports arenas, campgrounds, etc.

**Strategies to Meet Objective**
- Use research that was done for the branding campaign and/or Regional Marketing Plan to create the marketing image.

**Lead Agency Partner**
- Mid-East Commission

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**
- East Carolina University
- Tourism Authorities
- NC East Alliance
- Counties and Municipalities
- Tourism related businesses & non-profit organizations

**Action(s)**
- Use research conducted for the branding campaign and/or Regional Marketing Plan to identify unique assets of each area.
- Create the marketing image using graphic design software.
- Get feedback from all local governments and make edits if needed.

**Estimated Costs**
- $10,000

**Alignment of Resources**
- EDA
- Golden Leaf

**Barriers/Issues**
- Building consensus
- Diversity of region

**Performance Measures**
- Creation of a regional marketing image.
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<tr>
<td>Objective 7</td>
<td>Identify new adaptive capabilities of the regional economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Market region from a quality of life standpoint (four seasons)  
• Affordable cost of living  
• Close water access  
• Open and receptive to creative ideas (i.e. start-up’s encouraged and welcomed)  
• Workforce training programs that emphasize the most recent technology.  
• Instead of being good at one thing, each company must be good at learning how to do new things. |
| Lead Agency Partner | • East Carolina University |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • Community Colleges  
• Public and private economic and workforce development organizations  
• Agricultural leaders  
• Entrepreneurs  
• NC Brownfields Program  
• Mid-East Commission |
| Action(s) | • Develop an inventory of vacant or contaminated structures in the region.  
• Make punch list of five attainable, new, adaptive capabilities for the region  
• Identify a half dozen “successes” that we can promote and share nationally  
• Incorporate the newest technology into workforce training programs in partnership with Universities and Community Colleges.  
• Educate companies on the importance of adaptive capabilities. |
| Estimated Costs | • $15,000 |
| Alignment of Resources | • EDA  
• Brownfield program  
• EPA |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers/Issues</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Building alignment</td>
<td>• An attainable and sustainable list of five new, adaptive capabilities for the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cost</td>
<td>• Complete database of vacant and/or contaminated structure/sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some workers may have difficulty learning new</td>
<td>• Number of employees learning about new technology through workforce training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advanced skills.</td>
<td>• Number of companies working adaptive capabilities into their business strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NC Tomorrow

**ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A ROBUST REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Goal Number Two**
Complete and maintain the physical infrastructure needed to support industrial, commercial and residential development in rural areas, including broadband service, multi-modal transportation connections, and affordable housing.

**Objective 1**
Identify the region’s infrastructure assets (transportation, workforce, water/sewer/gas, broadband, housing, education, healthcare, green space, access to capital and energy assets) and assess whether infrastructure assets can accommodate future growth.

**Strategies to Meet Objective**
- Compile existing infrastructure data from development commissions, state government, county and municipal governments.
- Determine whether infrastructure assets can accommodate future growth.

**Lead Agency Partner**
- Mid-East Commission

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**
- NC East Alliance
- Region Q Workforce Development Board
- NC Rural Center
- NC DOT
- NC DOC
- NC Broadband
- County Economic Development Commissions
- Public/Private Universities
- Community Colleges
- Utility Companies
- Broadband Companies
- Vidant Healthcare
- RPOs
- SBTDC
- Local affordable housing organizations

**Action(s)**
- Contact key agencies and request reports
- Interview leaders in key organizations
- Compile an infrastructure assett database.
- Gather data on growth projections from various sources such as US Census population forecasts, NC DOT traffic demand analysis, etc.
- Determine whether infrastructure assets can accommodate future growth.
- Identify priority infrastructure projects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>• $20,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Alignment of Resources | • EDA  
|                   | • Golden Leaf  
|                   | • NC Rural Center |
| Barriers/Issues | • Time  
|                | • Cost  
|                | • Low density population |
| Performance Measures | • Infrastructure asset database  
|                     | • Analysis determining whether infrastructure can accommodate future growth completed  
<p>|                     | • Priority infrastructure projects identified. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NC Tomorrow</th>
<th>ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A ROBUST REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal Number Two</td>
<td>Complete and maintain the physical infrastructure needed to support industrial, commercial and residential development in rural areas, including broadband service, multi-modal transportation connections, and affordable housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Develop multi-modal transportation plans that address existing and future year capacity deficiencies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Compile existing data from development commissions, county and municipal governments, and NC DOT  
  • Gather input from stakeholders such as NCDOT, NCDOC, and county Economic Developers.  
  • Timely update of Comprehensive Transportation Plans  
  • Comprehensive Transportation plans include all modes |
| Lead Agency Partner | • Mid-East RPO and Peanut Belt RPO |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • NCDOT  
  • Counties & Municipalities  
  • Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Organizations  
  • Transit agencies  
  • Airports  
  • Walk/Bike NC  
  • Active Routes to School |
| Action(s) | • Contact key agencies  
  • Request reports  
  • Update Comprehensive Transportation Plans  
  • Ensure that Comprehensive Transportation Plans are truly multi-modal, including highway, bicycle and pedestrian, airport, ferry, public transit and rail.  
  • Advocate for removal of the local match requirements for Tier 1 Counties (10% for public transit projects, 20% for bicycle and pedestrian projects). |
| Estimated Costs | • $15,000 |
| Alignment of Resources | • RPOs  
  • NC DOT |
| Barriers/Issues | • Deciding the highest priority/need for improving multi-modal transportation  
  • Funding |
| Performance Measures | • Update of all Comprehensive Transportation Plans within the next five years  
  • Comprehensive Transportation Plans include all modes of transportation. |
<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Research existing service availability data, identify additional data needs, and develop and implement plans for the expansion of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Conduct a regional broadband assessment.  
• Utilize future growth projections to engage utility companies and determine need.  
• Create a plan for the expansion of broadband infrastructure in the region. |
| Lead Agency Partner | • Mid-East Commission |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • Public/private broadband companies  
• Local governments  
• NC Broadband  
• NC DOC  
• County Economic Development Commissions  
• NC East Alliance  
• NC Rural Center |
| Action(s) | • Contact key agencies  
• Request reports.  
• Compile existing data on the region’s broadband capacity and service areas, including the last mile in rural areas.  
• Define broadband / high speed internet.  
• Determine which areas do not have access and which areas need speed upgrades.  
• Create a plan to expand broadband infrastructure in the region, including the last mile in rural areas.  
• Implement the plan in partnership with broadband companies and local governments. |
| Estimated Costs | • $20,000 |
| Alignment of Resources | • EDA  
• NC Rural Center |
| Barriers/Issues | • Should consider alternative energy sources in planned growth, aging and quality infrastructure  
• Low density populations |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection and analysis of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping of areas that lack broadband access and areas that need speed upgrades.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of a plan for expansion of broadband infrastructure in the region.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of areas receiving broadband speed upgrades.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new areas receiving broadband service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Number Two</td>
<td>ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A ROBUST REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 4</td>
<td>Research the current housing stock, identify additional needs, and develop and implement a plan for the availability of a variety of housing options.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies to Meet Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Utilize existing Land Use Plans in place through local governments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compile existing data from stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Input from stakeholders such as NCDCA, local CDC’s, Housing Authorities, and Habitat for Humanity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement financial management courses starting in High School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage local governments to make affordable housing a priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage local governments to make a variety of housing options, including apartments, a priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure availability of a variety of housing options for people of all income levels and lifestyle preferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Agency Partner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mid-East Commission</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Public/Private Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Housing Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CDC’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Local governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NC Housing Finance Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• USDA-RD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Local affordable housing organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community colleges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Create a regional group to address and promote affordable housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a financial management curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gather housing data and assess the need for additional housing types and additional affordable housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach to local governments encouraging them to include a variety of housing options as a priority in their Comprehensive Plans, Land Use Plans and Zoning Ordinances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a database of funding sources for affordable housing projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partner with private developers on low to moderate income housing projects by assisting with grant applications and administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barriers/Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Measures</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NC Tomorrow</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Number Three</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | **- Identify existing models of success**  
**- Engage Architects and Engineers within the region.**  
**- Educate the public.**  
**- Educate developers.**  
**- Clean-up contaminated properties in the region.** |
| **Lead Agency/Partner** | **- Mid-East Commission** |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | **- NC DEQ**  
**- Environmental Engineers (NCSU)**  
**- College of Design (NCSU)**  
**- East Carolina University**  
**- Private developers**  
**- Partnerships for the Sounds**  
**- Vernon James Center**  
**- NC Cooperative Extension**  
**- A&E design firms**  
**- American Planning Association**  
**- Downtown Development Associations**  
**- Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program**  
**- Counties and Municipalities** |
| **Action(s)** | **- Provide and share information regarding appropriate methods to promote environmentally sustainable development patterns.**  
**- Conduct a survey following a public education campaign to determine demand for sustainable developments such as conservation subdivisions.**  
**- Encourage local governments to zone for environmentally sustainable development and/or provide incentives for environmentally sustainable development.**  
**- Educate developers on local demand and data showing that conservation subdivisions and similar developments bring higher profits.**  
**- Apply for Brownfield Grants to clean-up contaminated properties.** |
| **Estimated Costs** | **- $5,000** |
| **Alignment of Resources** | **- NC Brownfield Program** |
- Conservation fund
- Developers

| Barriers/Issues | • Time  
|                | • Lack of zoning  
|                | • Lack of vision  |

| Performance Measures | • Creation and distribution of education materials through workshops and/or other means.  
<p>|                      | • Ordinance changes and new incentives to encourage environmentally sustainable development. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NC Tomorrow</th>
<th>CREATE REVITALIZED, HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal Number Three</td>
<td>Support and help revitalize safe, walkable communities with vibrant urban and town centers, thriving rural areas, a variety of housing options, affordable services, and healthy citizens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2**
Develop a plan for accelerating investments in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods and ensure that underserved and distressed communities are engaged in the planning process.

**Strategies to Meet Objective**
- Identify funding sources
- Meet with leaders passionate to the objective
- Review current plans
- Work with NCDOT and local governments
- Educate communities on the planning process

**Lead Agency/Partner**
- Mid-East Commission

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**
- NCDOT
- RPOs
- Local governments
- Local police
- Vidant Health
- Community Colleges
- East Carolina University
- Boys & Girls Club
- Area Agency on Aging
- UNC School of Government
- NC Rural Center
- League of Municipalities

**Action(s)**
- Develop Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Plans
- Hold public input meetings when developing plans
- Assist in applying for and administering Bike and Ped grants, PARTF grants, and CDBG grants
- Advocate for removal of 20% local match requirement for bicycle and pedestrian projects
- Hold regular meetings to assess progress made towards implementation.
- Submit projects through RPOs if 20% local match is available.

**Estimated Costs**
- $7,500

**Alignment of Resources**
- NC DOT

**Barriers/Issues**
- Funding
- Lack of space
- Public nuisances

**Performance Measures**
- Number of pedestrian access plans
- Number of new sidewalk, bicycle lane and greenway projects completed
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Develop a plan to promote the restoration and preservation of urban and town centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Educate the public on resources available for restoration and/or preservation.  
• Identify strengths and weaknesses of urban and town centers  
• Identify grant opportunities  
• Identify and analyze models of success |
| Lead Agency/Partner | • East Carolina University |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • NC Main Street Program  
• Municipalities  
• Chambers of Commerce  
• Downtown Development Associations  
• NC Rural Center STEP Program  
• NC DEQ  
• County Arts Councils  
• Mid-East Commission |
| Action(s)         | • Educate and assist municipal governments on programs available.  
• Create a grantor list.  
• Create a success list.  
• Conduct a needs assessment for all urban and town centers in the region.  
• Create a database of available commercial properties in urban and town centers.  
• Advocate for removal of blight in downtown areas.  
• Encourage local incentives and public-private partnerships for historic building rehabilitation  
• Continue to assist local governments in administering grants for historic property rehabilitation  
• Promote downtown areas through historic walking tours, festivals, small business events, etc.  
• Market downtown areas as great places to live, work and play.  
• Encourage mixed-use zoning in downtown areas.  
• Incorporate public art and pocket parks in downtown areas.  
• Slow traffic and maintain pedestrian infrastructure in downtown areas.  
• Widen sidewalks to allow sidewalk cafes where possible. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>$15,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
<td>NC Dept. of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers/Issues</td>
<td>Economy, unemployment rates, Lack of funding, Out-migration, Condition of buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Measures</td>
<td>Creation of resource list, Database of available properties in downtown areas, Needs assessment completed, Number of rehabilitated historic properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Tomorrow</td>
<td>CREATE REVITALIZED, HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES</td>
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<td>Support and help revitalize safe, walkable communities with vibrant urban and town centers, thriving rural areas, a variety of housing options, affordable services, and healthy citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 4</td>
<td>Collaborate with law enforcement on community policing initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strategies to Meet Objective | • Gather local success stories  
• Encourage all local police departments to implement community policing initiatives  
• Encourage Community Watch organizations |
| Lead Agency/Partner | • Local police departments |
| Strategic Public/Private Partnerships | • Mid-East Commission  
• Downtown Development Associations  
• Counties & Municipalities  
• Community Watch organizations  
• Community leaders  
• Local business owners |
| Action(s) | • Identify which police departments already have community policing initiatives in place.  
• Gather local success stories on community policing initiatives, including pictures when possible.  
• Share success stories with police departments who are not implementing community policing initiatives  
• Encourage development of Community Watch organizations. |
| Estimated Costs | • $5,000 |
| Alignment of Resources | • Local governments |
| Barriers/Issues | • Time  
• Lack of public participation in Community Watch organizations |
| Performance Measures | • Creation and distribution of success stories  
• New community policing initiatives enacted  
• New Community Watch organizations created |
<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 5</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that all residents have access to healthcare, education, and affordable services. Identify areas that lack access or where access is not affordable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | • Determine which areas lack access to services, and where services are inadequate or unaffordable.  
• Identify funding sources for needed improvements. |
| **Lead Agency/Partner** | • Mid-East Commission |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | • K-12 Schools  
• Universities  
• Community Colleges  
• Vidant Health  
• Utility Companies  
• Broadband Companies  
• Water/Sewer Authorities  
• Local non-profits serving underserved communities  
• NC Rural Center |
| **Action(s)** | • Conduct an analysis of availability, adequacy and affordability of healthcare, K-12 education, higher education, electric service, natural gas, and water service.  
• Where access is not available, plan for access and identify funding sources.  
• Where access is inadequate, determine why and work with partners on improvements.  
• Where access is unaffordable, determine why and identify funding sources to improve affordability and/or assist low to moderate income citizens.  
• Advocate for needed funding if not available. |
| **Estimated Costs** | • $5,000 |
| **Alignment of Resources** | • NC Rural Center |
| **Barriers/Issues** | • Time  
• Lack of funding for improvements |
| **Performance Measures** | • Analysis of availability, adequacy, and affordability of services completed.  
• Plan for improving access completed.  
• Number of improvements to access, adequacy, and affordability of services in all communities. |
Goal Number Three  | Support and help revitalize safe, walkable communities with vibrant urban and town centers, thriving rural areas, a variety of housing options, affordable services, and healthy citizens.
---|---
Objective 6  | Capitalize on natural resources and recreation opportunities in order to improve the quality of life for citizens and promote ecotourism.

### Strategies to Meet Objective
- Marke the region for ecotourism
- Development of parks and greenways across the region
- Promote rivers for ecotourism

### Lead Agency/Partner
- Mid-East Commission

### Strategic Public/Private Partnerships
- NC DEQ
- NC Wildlife Resources
- Tourism Development Authorities
- Sound Rivers
- Roanoke River Partners
- Counties and Municipalities
- Ecotourism related businesses

### Action(s)
- Work with Tourism Authorities to advertise the area for ecotourism through niche marketing, i.e. hikers, bird watchers, kayakers, etc.
- Encourage local governments to have Ecotourism Zoning Districts where appropriate.
- Assist local governments in applying for and administering grants for greenways and park development.
- Identify ecotourism related businesses that may be interested in expanding and reach out to them.
- Market existing camping platforms/blue trails on the Tar-Pamlico and Roanoke Rivers.

### Estimated Costs
- $50,000

### Alignment of Resources
- PARTF Grants
- Tourism Authorities
- Conservation Fund

### Barriers/Issues
- Time
- Lack of zoning
- Lack of vision

### Performance Measures
- Number of ecotourism related advertisements
- Number of new ecotourism businesses opened
- Number of new greenways and parks developed
- Increased rentals of camping platforms
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 7</strong></td>
<td>Address food deserts where there is a lack of options for healthy, fresh foods. Develop healthy eating resources to address dietary challenges in low income rural areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategies to Meet Objective**
- Gather existing data on food deserts and determine any additional data needs.
- Plan for access to healthy foods in food desert areas.
- Expand HEAL programs to each county.

**Lead Agency/Partner**
- Mid-East Commission

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**
- NC Cooperative Extension
- East Carolina University
- American Nutrition Association
- Feed America non-profit organization
- USDA
- Health Departments
- Beaufort Community College’s Healthy Eating & Active Living Collaborative (HEAL)
- Local non-profit organizations

**Action(s)**
- Start HEAL organizations in each county.
- Gather existing data from USDA, NC Cooperative Extension, Feeding America, etc. Determine any additional local data needs. Gather data down to the block group level if not already available.
- Work with developers/business owners on grocery store development in food desert areas where feasible.
- Explore the option of co-op grocery stores and co-op kitchens.
- Work with convenience store owners on offering healthy food choices and accepting WIC & SNAP benefits.
- Start weekly Farmer’s Markets in food desert areas and vouchers for SNAP recipients.
- Provide weekly transportation to County Farmer’s Markets if not feasible to locate a Farmer’s Market within walking distance.
- Start community gardens in food desert areas.
- Healthy shopping & cooking classes with transportation available if not within walking distance.
- Food trucks offering healthy foods traveling between food desert areas, like mobile grocery stores.
- Support free breakfast and lunch programs and summer meal programs at low to moderate income schools.
- Continue and expand Meals on Wheels programs for low income seniors.
- Educate children on nutrition beginning in Elementary School.
- Continue improvements to healthy school meals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>$100,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate B. Reynolds Foundation – Healthy Places NC Initiative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>USDA – Healthy Food Financing Initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Dept. of Health &amp; Human Services – Community Economic Development Fund</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>US Dept of Treasury – Community Development Financial Institutions Fund</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>State Employees Credit Union Community Foundation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NC Dept. of Agriculture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Healthy Food for Small Retailers Initiative</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Community Garden Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Barriers/Issues |
| Time |
| Funding |
| Developers/business people interested in opening businesses that address food deserts |
| Finding local leaders to get community buy in on initiatives such as community gardens |

| Performance Measures |
| Local data on food deserts gathered down to block group level for entire region |
| Number of new grocery stores, co-op stores, or co-op kitchens in food desert areas |
| Number of new Farmer’s Markets in food desert areas |
| Number of new food trucks serving food deserts areas |
| Number of convenience stores that add healthy food options |
| Number of community gardens started |
| Number of new HEAL organizations started |
**Goal Number Four**

Develop a workforce with 21st Century skills by retaining the millennial generation, expanding access to higher education, workforce, and vocational training, increasing collaboration with employers, expanding access to entrepreneurial support, and providing incubator spaces for small businesses.

**Objective 1**

Foster the development, recruitment and retention of a workforce with 21st Century skills.

**Strategies to Meet Objective**

- Work with representatives from all educational entities, as well as private industry and other major employers.
- Continue to utilize workforce development partnerships.
- Education on 21st Century skills starts in Elementary School and continues through High School and College or workforce/vocational training.

**Lead Agency Partner**

- East Carolina University
- Region Q Workforce Development Board

**Strategic Public/Private Partnerships**

- Community Colleges
- K-12 School Systems
- IES and private businesses involved in STEM (i.e. pharmaceutical, manufacturing, engineering design firms, etc.)
- Other industries and major employers (including industrial, commercial and service based businesses)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Regional partnerships

**Action(s)**

- Get buy in from lead agency
- Pulling together a cross section of interested participants
- Marketing of employment opportunities to young people
- Work with leaders from each industry and other major employers to determine 21st Century skills that the workforce is lacking.
- Have Workforce Development, Community Colleges, and other training providers incorporate 21st Century skills that are lacking into workforce/vocational training programs.
- Keep up to date on most recent technology so it can be incorporated into training programs.
- Incorporate globalization, creativity & innovation, critical thinking & problem solving, and life & career skills needed in the 21st Century into training programs.
- Continue offering workforce training for employees at their work place at a discounted rate to the business.
owner, incorporating 21st Century skills into the training.

- Employers can offer to pay for computer classes and other related classes at Community Colleges for those employee’s who are behind in 21st Century skills but have a desire to learn.
- Maintain Work Ready Community Certification in Beaufort, Hertford and Pitt Counties. Obtain this certification in Bertie and Martin Counties.
- Continue 21st Century Skills Initiative in NC Public Schools.
- Continue Early College programs in High Schools.
- Start students not going to College on Career Paths in High School, focusing on 21st Century skills needed for their chosen field, as well as training for adaptability in a fast paced globalizing world. Emphasize the need for continuing education throughout their career.

<table>
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<th>Estimated Costs</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
<td>Region Q Workforce Development Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers/Issues</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of employment opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of a skilled workforce</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of desire to learn new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Measures</td>
<td>Track enrollment at Community Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creation of metric for jobs created and retained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All counties certified as Work Ready Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Addition of 21st Century skills to current workforce/vocational training programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of employers satisfied with 21st Century skills of the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Tomorrow</td>
<td>DEVELOP TALENTED AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Number Four</strong></td>
<td>Develop a workforce with 21\textsuperscript{st} Century skills by retaining the millennial generation, expanding access to higher education, workforce, and vocational training, increasing collaboration with employers, expanding access to entrepreneurial support, and providing incubator spaces for small businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2</strong></td>
<td>Identify and analyze all educational, workforce, and vocational training resources and conduct a gap analysis based on employer needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | - Conduct survey of High Schools, Community Colleges, Universities, and employers.  
- Create an inventory of training resources.  
- Conduct a gap analysis. |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | - Region Q Workforce Development Board |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | - East Carolina University  
- Chowan University  
- Community Colleges  
- NC DOC  
- Major employers from all industries |
| **Action(s)** | - Get buy in from lead agency to drive this process  
- Develop surveys pertinent to targets  
- Form a group that includes representatives from each industry and other major employers, workforce development professionals, Community Colleges, and others involved in workforce/vocational training.  
- Work with the group to determine workforce development needs that are lacking.  
- Perform an inventory of training programs including workforce training, vocational training and higher education.  
- Conduct a gap analysis to see where training needs are not being met.  
- Connect employers to any resources they are not aware of.  
- Incorporate identified needs into workforce training, vocational training and higher education.  
- Continue offering workforce training for employees at their place of work at a discount to employers. Customize the training to fit employer needs.  
- Hold regular meetings to assess progress and update the gap analysis every 2-3 years. |
<p>| <strong>Estimated Costs</strong> | - $10,000 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Alignment of Resources</strong></th>
<th>• Region Q Workforce Development Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• East Carolina University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers/Issues</strong></td>
<td>• Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Measures</strong></td>
<td>• Identification of funding source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Completion of gap analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Needs identified in gap analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* incorporated into training programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Tomorrow</td>
<td>DEVELOP TALENTED AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Number Four</strong></td>
<td>Develop a workforce with 21st Century skills by retaining the millennial generation, expanding access to higher education, workforce, and vocational training, increasing collaboration with employers, expanding access to entrepreneurial support, and providing incubator spaces for small businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 3</strong></td>
<td>Develop ways to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem across the region which supports existing small businesses and fosters the development and growth of new small businesses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | - Identify entrepreneurial education options in the region.  
- Celebrate entrepreneurs.  
- Provide regional forum opportunities.  
- Get more private industries that have experienced the start-up process involved and engaged.  
- Develop business incubator facilities across the region. |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | Community College SBC's |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partners** | SBTDC at ECU  
Chambers of Commerce  
NC East Alliance  
Angel, private equity, and venture capital companies with an interest in helping our region grow  
County Economic Development Commissions  
Mid-East Commission  
Small Business Association  
Committees of 100  
Counties and Municipalities  
Carolina Small Business Development Fund  
Business Link NC (BLNC)  
NC Retail Merchants Association  
Electricities  
Local non-profit organizations |
| **Action(s)** | Promote educational options through workshops and educational materials.  
Create a database of available local, state, and federal support and training resources for entrepreneurs. |
| **Action(s)** | Support events such as the Martin County Entrepreneur Expo and explore the possibility of expanding to a regional expo or starting the event in each county.  
|              | Create a regional guide for entrepreneurs showing resources for training and support, zoning/permit assistance, potential grants, low interest loans, available properties, market analyses, etc.  
|              | Look into the Certified Entrepreneurial Community program.  
|              | Market the region as being entrepreneur friendly.  
|              | Identify and address any gaps in entrepreneur training and support services.  
|              | Market training and support services available to entrepreneurs. There are many free options that entrepreneurs may not be aware of.  
|              | Continue providing grant administration services for new businesses and expanding businesses.  
|              | Develop business incubator facilities across the region. Each can specialize in certain types of businesses so that equipment can be shared.  
|              | Identify funding sources for incubator facilities.  
|              | Create a regional forum for entrepreneurs and small business support organizations. Have an easy to use platform to share resources and success stories.  
|              | Develop residential neighborhoods focusing on segments of entrepreneurs. An example is artist districts where artists live, share incubator space, and have a venue to sell their products. | **Estimated Costs** | $50,000 (not including incubator facilities) |
| **Alignment of Resources** | NC DOC  
|                            | EDA  
|                            | SBA  
|                            | Golden Leaf  
|                            | MEC Revolving Loan Fund  
|                            | NC Rural Center  
|                            | Carolina Small Business Development Fund |
| **Barriers/Issues** | Funding for incubator facilities  
|                     | Getting participation in regional forum |
| **Performance Measures** | Track number of people that received business counseling  
|                        | Track inquiries for RLF Program  
|                        | Creation of regional forum  
|                        | Number of new incubator facilities  
<p>|                        | Number of entrepreneur related events |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NC Tomorrow</th>
<th>DEVELOP TALENTED AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 4</strong></td>
<td>Develop Career Paths that recognize the needs of employers and start students in developing on these pathways in High School.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | • Get buy in from local High Schools  
• State Board of Education develops initiative  
• Develop Career Paths for students not attending four-year Universities. |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | • High Schools  
• Region Q Workforce Development Board |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | • Community Colleges  
• Other vocational training institutions  
• NC Dept. of Education  
• County School Boards  
• Representatives from private industry sectors |
| **Action(s)** | • Introduce the concept to local High Schools.  
• Get a High School to start the program as a Pilot School.  
• Introduce the concept to the State Board of Education and ask them to develop the initiative.  
• Workforce development professionals, vocational training professionals, and private industry representatives form a Task Force to develop Career Paths.  
• Training programs will be in line with needs of employers.  
• Employers can offer apprenticeship programs for students on Career Paths.  
• Vocational training can begin in High School, similar to the Early College Program. |
| **Estimated Costs** | • $10,000 |
| Alignment of Resources                                | • NC Dept. of Education  
|                                                    | • Region Q Workforce Development Board  
| Barriers/Issues                                     | • Getting buy in from High Schools  
|                                                    | • Getting buy in from State Board of Education  
|                                                    | • Getting adequate participation on Task Force  
| Performance Measures                                | • Development of Career Paths  
|                                                    | • Number of High Schools implementing Career Paths  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NC Tomorrow</strong></th>
<th><strong>DEVELOP TALENTED AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Goal Number Four</strong></td>
<td>Develop a workforce with 21st Century skills by retaining the millennial generation, expanding access to higher education, workforce, and vocational training, increasing collaboration with employers, expanding access to entrepreneurial support, and providing incubator spaces for small businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 5</strong></td>
<td>Provide the atmosphere and amenities desired by the millennial generation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Strategies to Meet Objective** | - Infrastructure improvements  
- Recreation  
- Entertainment  
- Community events  
- Robust regional economy  
- Entrepreneur friendly |
| **Lead Agency Partner** | - Counties & Municipalities |
| **Strategic Public/Private Partnerships** | - Chambers of Commerce  
- NC East Alliance  
- County EDC’s  
- Mid-East Commission  
- NC DOT  
- County Arts Councils  
- Community College SBC’s  
- Downtown Development Organizations  
- Private businesses |
| **Action(s)** | - Support vibrant, walkable, mixed-use downtown districts.  
- Develop more greenways and parks.  
- Develop more sidewalks and bicycle lanes.  
- Attract businesses millennials are drawn to, such as microbreweries.  
- Encourage local governments to have zoning that allows mixed-uses downtown, including microbreweries and upper story apartments.  
- Host community activities of interest to young people.  
- Develop a robust regional economy, with jobs available for those wanting to return to their hometowns after graduating from College. |
- Support entrepreneur friendly communities and business incubator facilities across the region.
- Market the region to millennials through social media.
- Incorporate public art into communities.
- Offer scholarships for students to attend Community College prior to transferring to a University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>TBD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of Resources</td>
<td>NC DOC&lt;br&gt;CDBG Grants&lt;br&gt;PARTF Grants&lt;br&gt;Golden Leaf&lt;br&gt;NC DOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers/Issues</td>
<td>Having jobs available for millennials&lt;br&gt;Funding for infrastructure projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Measures</td>
<td>Population decline being reversed&lt;br&gt;Number of related infrastructure projects&lt;br&gt;Number of new community events geared towards young people&lt;br&gt;Number of local governments using social media to market to millennials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vital Projects

This section identifies regional projects, programs and activities designed to implement the goals and objectives of the CEDS. The vital project list is general rather than location specific.

1. Establishment of business incubator facilities throughout the region.
2. Construction or expansion of workforce training centers.
3. Creation of disaster resistant jobs through workforce training, vocational training and education with a focus on 21st Century skills.
4. Completion of infrastructure throughout industrial and/or technology parks.
5. Extension of infrastructure including water, wastewater, roads, electric, rail, gas and broadband to new industries.
6. Foster continued development of agri/bio sector, aquaculture, healthcare and advanced manufacturing.
7. Regionalization of water and wastewater systems where appropriate.
8. Revitalization of downtown areas throughout the region.
9. Expand treatment capacity of existing water and wastewater treatment plants as needed.
10. Further develop tourism opportunities throughout the region through a unified branding campaign that shows benefits and highlights of our counties and counties in surrounding regions, including a visual map for marketing purposes.
11. Continued improvements to highways throughout the region.
12. Enhance the regional meeting capabilities throughout the region.
13. Mitigate damage from natural disasters by protecting public utilities from flooding where feasible and improving land drainage across the region.
14. Continued improvements to air passenger service to the region.
15. Expand hotels/accommodations for visitors to the region.
16. Conduct place-making exercises throughout the region.
17. Explore additional cross-county and regional cost sharing opportunities for infrastructure and services.
18. Attract retirees by marketing the benefits of retiring in the region and through certification programs such as “Retirement Friendly Communities”.
19. Start a group for advocacy to the state and federal government for investment in the region.
20. Create a regional partnership to ensure that high-speed broadband internet access is available in all areas of the region, including the last mile in rural areas. Define high-speed to ensure that all areas have access to a high-speed connection.
21. Ensure access to a variety of housing options and quality K-12 education in all areas of the region.
22. Identify best practices throughout the region and create an easy to access platform to share ideas and successes.
23. Incorporate the arts, cultural activities and festivals in the economic development strategy for the region.
24. Develop additional affordable housing stock, including apartments, and promote affordable housing to encourage growth in communities.
25. Foster the development of new, desirable industrial buildings (shell buildings) which can be customized to meet the needs of a variety of industries.

Funding for past projects and these prospective projects has/will come from a combination of the following sources:

1. Local Government Funds
2. Economic Development Administration
3. NC Community Development Block Grant- Economic Development
4. NC Industrial Development Fund
5. NC Rural Center- Economic Infrastructure and Building Reuse
6. NC Community Development Block Grant- Infrastructure
7. NC Golden LEAF Foundation
8. Clean Water Management Trust Fund
9. NC DOT- Rail Industrial Access Program
10. NC Broadband

Evaluation Criteria

The following performance measure will be used to evaluate the Mid-East Commission’s successful development and implementation of the CEDS:

1. Number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS
2. Number and types of investments undertaken in the region
3. Number of jobs retained in the region
4. Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS
5. Changes in the economic environment of the region

Opportunity Zones

An Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community where private investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for capital gain tax incentives. Opportunity Zones were created under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to stimulate economic development and job creation, by incentivizing long-term investments in low-income neighborhoods. (EDA)

Investments made by qualified entities known as Opportunity Funds into certified Opportunity Zones will receive three key federal incentives to encourage investment in low-income communities including (NC Dept. of Commerce):

- Temporary tax deferral for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund
- Step-up in basis for capital gains reinvested in an Opportunity Fund
- Permanent exclusion from taxable income of long-term capital gains
Opportunity Zones promise to drive billions—even trillions—of dollars in long-term investment into low-income urban and rural census tracts across the country. But to make that happen, community stakeholders, state and local government leaders, investors and developers must work together to engage responsibly with this powerful but untested tool, and to help create the kinds of communities that benefit residents and the U.S. economy as a whole. For community stakeholders, that engagement demands careful, collaborative and inclusive planning, establishing incentives and guardrails for investment, collecting metrics on community impact, and reporting on outcomes in a transparent and accessible manner. (Rural LISC)

There are more than 8,760 designated Qualified Opportunity Zones located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and five United States territories (EDA). The federal law allows each state to designate up to 25 percent of its total low-income census tracts as zone candidates. North Carolina has just over 1,000 of these tracts, so only 252 census tracts could be selected as Opportunity Zones (NC Dept. of Commerce).

Region Q contains eight Opportunity Zones. Opportunity Zone boundaries coincide with census tract boundaries. Opportunity Zones exist in all five counties, with one Opportunity Zone in Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, and Martin Counties, and four Opportunity Zones in Pitt County. The following map shows certified Opportunity Zones in the region.
Demographic data for each Opportunity Zone in the Mid-East Region is summarized in Table 20, including total population, median household income, percent of households in poverty, total jobs, and total businesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction(s)</th>
<th>Census Tract</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>% Households in Poverty</th>
<th>Total Jobs</th>
<th>Total Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaufort County</td>
<td>37013930400</td>
<td>5,251</td>
<td>$30,728</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>3,863</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Washington (northern section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie County</td>
<td>37015960200</td>
<td>3,620</td>
<td>$34,388</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Aulander</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertford County</td>
<td>37091950100</td>
<td>7,157</td>
<td>$31,177</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>1,740</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Como</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Murfreesboro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin County</td>
<td>37117970200</td>
<td>4,276</td>
<td>$30,848</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4,310</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Williamston (eastern section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt County</td>
<td>37147000900</td>
<td>8,675</td>
<td>$38,400</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>4,644</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Greenville (northeastern section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt County</td>
<td>37147000800</td>
<td>3,550</td>
<td>$32,800</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>4,631</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Greenville (northern section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt County</td>
<td>37147000701</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>$21,950</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Greenville (north-central section)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Greenville (central section)</td>
<td>37147000702</td>
<td>2,855</td>
<td>$21,210</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>3,821</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2016 American Community Survey, 2017 ESRI business data)
The question at hand is how the Mid-East Region can take advantage of Opportunity Zones and use these designations as catalysts to help achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS. Rural LISC has developed an Opportunity Zone Playbook for community stakeholders which recommends the following action steps:

1. Hold a stakeholder meeting.
2. Embark on a plan for work in the Opportunity Zones.
3. Incentives and guardrails in the Opportunity Zones.
4. Collaborate to build pipeline and leverage local expertise.
5. Ramp up your investor marketing.
6. Develop impact metrics and encourage transparency.

The CEDS Advisory Committee is uniquely qualified to lead the way on action steps one and two above, holding a stakeholder meeting and embarking on a plan for work in the Opportunity Zones. There are already a number of public, private, and non-profit organizations represented on the committee from across the region. A recommendation for the next CEDS update is to add private developers and investment firms to the Advisory Committee membership and include a plan for work in the Opportunity Zones in conjunction with the update.

The planning phase is a critical opportunity to bring a range of community stakeholders to the table, to safeguard an equitable and inclusive process, and to elevate the community’s voice. For Opportunity Zones to fulfill their intended purpose, this aspect of the process is crucial (Rural LISC).

Action step three refers to identification and creation of incentives and guardrails in the Opportunity Zones. Outside of the federal incentives discussed previously, there are currently no state or local incentives for Opportunity Zones investments in Region Q. The Rural LISC playbook recommends principal financing tools that can be harnessed for launching Opportunity Zone projects, including:

- **Tax Increment Finance (TIF)**
  - Tax Increment Finance (TIF) is a mechanism for capturing the future tax benefits of real estate improvements to cover the present costs of those improvements. This tool is used to pay for infrastructure, land acquisitions, demolition and planning on sites where development would not otherwise occur. TIF districts, which extend from 10 to 40 years, depending on jurisdiction, could be created in or around Opportunity Zones to support key infrastructure.

- **Private activity bonds**
  - Private Activity Bonds are issued by a state or local authority on behalf of a nongovernmental project, such as the expansion of a small manufacturer or hospital. When these bonds are “qualified,” by being issued for one of several defined purposes, they are exempt from federal income taxes. The tax exemption enables the project to access capital at a lower interest rate than could otherwise be achieved, thereby facilitating a larger or more secure project.

- **Access to capital tools**
  - Entrepreneurs, start-ups and small businesses often have a difficult time accessing capital, as they may not have the credit or sufficient business history to qualify for conventional financing. This presents an opportunity for state and local entities to create new financing tools or target existing ones to these types of businesses in Opportunity Zones, including revolving loan funds and micro-loan funds, both of which currently exist in Region Q.
• Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)
  o Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) is an innovative tool that allows property owners to access affordable financing for energy efficiency improvements on their homes or businesses—and could encourage investments in older, less efficient buildings that may otherwise sit vacant. Over 30 states including North Carolina have PACE legislation.
• Tax incentives and abatements
  o State and local incentives, primarily in the form of tax abatements, are one of the most popular and efficient forms of direct development assistance. They can offer relief from sales, income or other tax liabilities, typically with strict performance based award requirements and due diligence measures to ensure the abatement creates the desired effect. Tax abatement programs could attract investors and developers to Opportunity Zones.
• Federal financing tools
  o There are more than 100 different federal programs that support economic development. Many provide funding to state or local governments, while others directly finance a business, industry or intermediary. Knowing the landscape of federal programs will help state and local practitioners take advantage of opportunities that may apply to Opportunity Zone projects. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is one applicable example of a program that could be utilized in conjunction with Opportunity Zones.

The Rural LISC playbook also recommends the following guardrails for Opportunity Zone projects:

• Adhere to existing Comprehensive Plans.
  o Existing Comprehensive Plans for Region Q are already categorized in a database.
• Create impact standards required to receive additional state and local incentives.
• Find private partners dedicated to creating impact.
• Review and revise existing zoning ordinances.
  o Many local governments are currently in the process of doing this due to new North Carolina General Statutes 160d legislation.
• Clearly articulate types of projects desired in an Opportunity Zone Investment Prospectus.

Action step four refers to collaborating to build a pipeline and leverage local expertise. One recommendation is to form a state or regional consortium, which can also be thought of as an implementation committee. The CEDS Advisory Committee has been designated as an Implementation Committee, and recently completed the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan, an implementation plan for the CEDS. With the addition of key representation including private developers and investment firms, the existing CEDS Implementation Committee is uniquely qualified to lead the way on this action step in Region Q.

Another recommended approach to advance the process is financial feasibility modeling, where models are created for the financial feasibility of particular asset class priorities that emerge in the planning process. By doing a preliminary analysis of development costs and sources of capital (including Opportunity Zone proceeds) and reconciling these sources and uses with operating projections, stakeholders can sharpen what strategies and resources they will need to create critical neighborhood assets such as affordable housing, day care centers, health centers, commercial and other community facilities.
Action step five refers to ramping up investment marketing. Marketing is also a common theme throughout the CEDS and the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan, with committee members stressing the importance of increased marketing for the region as a priority goal. Once there’s a plan in place for Opportunity Zones, local officials must cultivate strategies to attract Opportunity Zone investors. A prospectus is a key way to highlight the potential for investment, describe the types of financing needed, emphasize work that has already been done to develop neighborhoods, and define a vision for the future. This prospectus could then be marketed to developers inside and outside of the region.

Moreover, community partners can leverage the interest in Opportunity Zones to attract attention to their tracts. Presenting at Opportunity Zone forums beyond the region can generate interest. State, regional and local officials, meanwhile, could create interactive websites to help investors identify the various Opportunity Zones within a particular jurisdiction and assess the resources, incentives and development possibilities that exist. A consortium or Implementation Committee website could also send a strong signal to investors and developers that stakeholders are working together to develop their Opportunity Zones.

The final action step refers to developing impact metrics and encouraging transparency. Rigorous evaluation and accessible reporting are keys to inclusive and equitable success in the Opportunity Zones. One of the chief concerns about Opportunity Zones, especially for community leaders and government officials, is that some investments will prioritize profit over the needs and desires of communities. Currently, Opportunity Funds are not required to demonstrate that they are providing tangible benefits to communities.

There are different approaches to measuring the impact of these investments, ranging from voluntary and self-defined monitoring to required equity-related benchmarks. Some experts advocate for fund-level monitoring of investments; others seek to track community changes over time. Rural LISC recommends that state, regional and local government leaders collaborate with communities to establish specific, reasonable Opportunity Fund reporting requirements. With input from community residents and organizations, they can help encourage transparency and accountability, and point Funds toward community-benefiting activities. Rural LISC also recommends that reporting focus on the direct connection between investments and outcomes, not just on broader indicators.

Economic Opportunity Zones in Region Q provide an opportunity to help implement many of the goals and objectives of the CEDs. Goals and objectives for which implementation projects could take direct advantage of Opportunity Zone legislation include the following:

- **Goal 1**: Brand and market the Mid-East Region in order to support existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurship, highlight educational opportunities, foster continued development of target clusters, attract new employers, diversify the regional economy, and retain the millennial generation.
  - Objective 2: Use the cluster analysis to target existing businesses and start-ups and market the benefits of locating in the region.
- **Goal 2**: Complete and maintain the physical infrastructure needed to support industrial, commercial and residential development in rural areas, including broadband service, multi-modal transportation connections, and affordable housing.
  - Objective 3: Research existing service availability data, identify additional data needs, and develop and implement plans for the expansion of telecommunications and
broadband infrastructure growth.
  o Objective 4: Research the current housing stock, identify additional needs, and develop and implement a plan for the availability of a variety of housing options.

- Goal 3: Support and help revitalize safe, walkable communities with vibrant urban and town centers, thriving rural areas, a variety of housing options, affordable services, and healthy citizens.
  o Objective 3: Develop a plan to promote the restoration and preservation of urban and town centers.
  o Objective 6: Capitalize on natural resources and recreation opportunities in order to improve the quality of life for citizens and promote ecotourism.
  o Objective 7: Address food deserts where there is a lack of options for healthy, fresh foods. Develop healthy eating resources to address dietary challenges in low income rural areas.

- Goal 4: Develop a workforce with 21st Century skills by retaining the millennial generation, expanding access to higher education, workforce, and vocational training, increasing collaboration with employers, expanding access to entrepreneurial support, and providing incubator spaces for small businesses.
  o Objective 3: Develop ways to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem across the region which supports existing small businesses and fosters the development and growth of new small businesses.

Identified vital projects which could take direct advantage of Opportunity Zone legislation include the following:

- Establishment of business incubator facilities throughout the region.
- Construction or expansion of workforce training centers.
- Completion of infrastructure throughout industrial and/or technology parks.
- Extension of infrastructure including water, wastewater, roads, electric, rail, gas and broadband to new industries.
- Foster continued development of agri/bio sector, aquaculture, healthcare and advanced manufacturing.
- Regionalization of water and wastewater systems where appropriate.
- Revitalization of downtown areas throughout the region.
- Expand treatment capacity of existing water and wastewater treatment plants as needed.
- Enhance the regional meeting capabilities throughout the region.
- Expand hotels/accommodations for visitors to the region.
- Create a regional partnership to ensure that high-speed broadband internet access is available in all areas of the region, including the last mile in rural areas. Define high-speed to ensure that all areas have access to a high-speed connection.
- Develop additional affordable housing stock, including apartments, and promote affordable housing to encourage growth in communities.
- Foster the development of new, desirable industrial buildings (shell buildings) which can be customized to meet the needs of a variety of industries.

As emphasized previously, communicating the benefits of investing in Opportunity Zones to developers and investors will be key to using the Opportunity Zone legislation as a
catalyst to get projects on the ground.
## Appendix A

### Past and Present EDA Investments

<table>
<thead>
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<th>FY (yyy)</th>
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<td>$31,623,436.00</td>
<td>$45,782,900.00</td>
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</table>
Appendix B

2017 CEDS Strategy Committee Members

**Beaufort County**

Randy Roark, Director of Operations
idX Impressions

Archie Griffin, Farmer
Griffin Farms

Tim Barrett, Operations Manager
ITW Medical

**Bertie County**

Vivian Saunders, Executive Director
The Hive House

Lewis Hoggard, Executive Director
Windsor-Bertie Chamber of Commerce

Carl Bond
Retired from USDA

**Hertford County**

Curtis Wynn, President & CEO
Roanoke Electric Cooperative

Terry Hairston, Environmental Manager
Nucor Steel

**Martin County**

Roy Lilley, Principal
Lilley & Johnson CPA

Callie Northern-Herring, Owner
Red Heron Café

Dr. Dean McCall, Physical Therapist
Chairman, Martin County Committee of 100
**Pitt County**

Pattie Mills, Farmer  
Family Farms

Tom Kulikowski, President  
Penco Products, Inc.

Tony Khoury, PE, President/Principal  
The East Group, PA

**Institutes of Higher Education**

Dr. Kenneth Boham, President  
Martin Community College

Kenny Flowers, Director  
Office of Engagement, Innovation and Economic Development  
East Carolina University

**Workforce Development**

Quinton Turman  
Region Q Workforce Development Board

Joyce Jones, Executive Director  
LIFE of NC, Inc.

**Minority**

Ferdinand Rouse, M/WBE Coordinator  
City of Greenville, NC

Juvencio Rocha-Peralta, Executive Director  
Amexcan (Association of Mexicans in NC)

**Transportation**

Ben Rogers  
Peanut Belt RPO

Jamie Heath  
Mid-East RPO

**Regional Economic Development Offices**

John D. Chaffee, President & CEO  
NC East Alliance
Public Officials

Jerry Evans
BCEDAB Vice Chairman
Beaufort County Commissioner

Ron Wesson
Bertie County Commissioner

Veronica Roberson
Winterville Town Council

State of North Carolina

Tim Ivey, Director of Regional Operation, Northeast Zone
Economic Partnership of North Carolina