

RIVERS EAST WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan



**An implementation plan for the
Region Q Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy (CEDS)**

**Rivers East Workforce Development
Board**

Mid-East Commission

**NC Dept. of Commerce – NC
Works Local Innovation Fund Grant**



Adopted May 20, 2020

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

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Introduction

The Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan for Region Q was funded by the Governor's NC Works Local Innovation Grant Fund through the NC Department of Commerce, which was awarded to the Rivers East Workforce Development Board in 2019. The Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan is an implementation plan for the Region Q Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Region Q includes Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin, and Pitt Counties and their municipalities.

CEDS are 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 funding assistance through federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs. A major update of the Region Q CEDS was completed in partnership with an Advisory Committee comprised of a diverse group of public, private and non-governmental organizations in 2017. The CEDS document provides an analysis of the regional economy and all 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.

The vision statement of the 2017-2022 Region Q CEDS is as follows.

"The 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."

The four goals of the Region Q CEDS are based on business recruitment, retention and marketing, physical infrastructure, healthy and safe communities, and small business and workforce development. The goals are as follows.

- Goal 1: Brand and market the 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.

After the 2017-2022 CEDS was adopted by the Mid-East Commission Board of Directors and approved by EDA, the question became, what is already happening across the region? What action steps are partner organizations already taking toward meeting identified goals and objectives? Where are there overlapping actions? Where are there gaps? What can be done for partner organizations to work together and move forward more efficiently?

The Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan intends to answer these questions, while utilizing the research conducted in the CEDS and incorporating related local plans. The plan includes asset mapping for the region and identification of community needs and resources. The process will foster collaborative partnerships to move the region forward in addressing issues together, instead of on a less efficient piecemeal basis. As an implementation plan for the CEDS, the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan provides an analysis of current actions being taken towards achieving goals and objectives and recommends actions for the region to move forward collaboratively.

A Steering Committee was formed to help guide development of the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan. The Steering Committee was comprised of a private industry representative, institute of higher education, elected official, economic development staff member (or county manager), and a community non-profit organization for each of the five counties in Region Q, along with regional and state organizations. The Steering Committee met in May, September, and December 2019, and in January and March 2020. A list of Steering Committee members can be located in Appendix A.

The asset mapping process required a large number of participants to be effective, much larger than could be reasonably incorporated into any one Steering Committee. Therefore, Subcommittees were formed in each county around the four goals of business recruitment, retention and marketing, physical infrastructure, healthy and safe communities, and small business and workforce development. These four subcommittees existed in all five counties for a total of twenty subcommittees.

A total of 17 subcommittee meetings were held between June and November 2019 (some subcommittees met jointly). Each subcommittee focused on asset mapping for that county around the four identified goals. Surveys were distributed to Subcommittee members in order to gather additional information for the asset mapping exercise. This information was reported back to the Steering Committee in order to complete regional asset mapping. Copies of survey questionnaires can be located in Appendix B. Public input was sought during two Public Open Houses conducted in February 2020. Resulting public input is summarized in Appendix C.

The Steering Committee and Subcommittee members across Region Q provide the start of a regional communication network. An online communication platform through the samepage software program provides a mechanism to form groups, share documents and action steps, issue live updates, share needs and resources, and continue networking and collaboration across the region. While the asset mapping conducted during this process represents a snapshot in time, it is the intention that the online communication platform will provide a mechanism for updates and provide a platform for continued collaboration into the future. It is anticipated that the regional communication network will continue to grow, and that new collaborative partnerships will be formed across the region.

The chapters of this plan are organized based around the four goals and related objectives of the Region Q CEDS. Asset mapping is presented first organized under each objective. Following the asset mapping there are two priority recommendations for each goal, with other recommendations for achieving that goal to follow. These recommendations represent recommended action steps to be taken in Region Q to implement the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Business Recruitment, Retention and Marketing

Goal 1: Brand and market the 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.

Regional Network

A regional network of organizations working toward achieving the above goal were identified. These organizations were invited to join the business recruitment, retention and marketing subcommittee for their respective county (or counties) and some organizations were also invited to join the main Steering Committee. A list of Steering Committee members and Subcommittee members for each county is available in Appendix A.

Asset Mapping

Objective 1.1: Identify the region's clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages.

Sources

Sources used to identify the region's clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages include adopted economic development plans and other related plans of partner organizations, economic development commissions/departments in each county, the NC East Alliance, and worksheet responses that were submitted by subcommittee members across the region.

Economic Development Plans

Adopted economic development plans, other plans with economic development components and work plans with economic development components are as follows.

- Regional
 - Region Q Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) (2017)
 - Rivers East Workforce Development Board: A New Strategic Direction (2019)
 - Eastern Triangle Economic Development Plan (includes Pitt County) (2013)
 - Roanoke River Partners Strategic Plan (includes Bertie, Martin Counties)
- Beaufort County
 - Beaufort County Economic Development Commission work plan
 - City of Washington Waterfront Visualization and Reinvestment Strategy / Harbor District Strategic Plan (2009)
 - Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce work plan

- Bertie County
 - Blueprint for Bertie: A Community Economic Development Plan (2014)
 - Bertie 2008: Strategically Planning for the 21st Century
- Hertford County
 - Town of Murfreesboro CPNI Workshop Report (2018)
- Martin County
 - Martin County Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011)
 - Update and Action Plan for Downtown Williamston (2017)
 - Williamston Downtown Inc. work plan
- Pitt County
 - City of Greenville Strategic Plan (2018)
 - Pitt County Development Commission Strategic Plan (2018)
 - Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitor's Bureau Marketing Plan and Advocacy Plan (2019)

Identified Clusters of Economic Development that offer competitive advantages

Identified clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages are listed below. Following the list is a word cloud. The greater number of times a source mentioned that cluster, the larger the cluster appears in the word cloud. (For example, if the cluster was mentioned in two economic development plans and was mentioned on three submitted worksheets, the count input for that cluster was five.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| • Advanced manufacturing | • Daycares |
| • Aerospace and defense | • Distribution/Warehousing |
| • Agriculture | • Downtown/historic district |
| • Agriscience | • Ecotourism |
| • Alternative/green energy | • Education |
| • Arts/culture businesses | • Electronics and appliance stores |
| • Attorneys | • Equestrian industry |
| • Attractions | • Fiber Industry |
| • Automotive dealers, parts, accessories Automotive parts/machining | • Financial |
| • Biopharma | • Food and beverage industry |
| • Biotechnology | • Forest and wood products |
| • Breweries | • Furniture and home furnishing stores |
| • Clothing stores | • General merchandise stores |
| • Coffee shops | • Government offices |
| • Concrete suppliers | • Grocery stores |
| • Convenience stores | • Hardware and garden stores |
| • Correctional facilities | • Healthcare |
| • Creative/knowledge sectors | • Hotel/accommodations |
| | • Insurance |

- Incubator space
- Life sciences
- Lining suppliers
- Local papers/publications
- Local producers/products
- Logistics
- Manufacturing
- Marine trades
- Metal recycling and fabrication
- Mining
- Offices
- Outfitters/guides
- Pharmaceuticals and medical devices
- Plastic and fiberglass
- Printing and marketing businesses
- Professional services
- Real estate
- Residential development
- Restaurants
- Retail/Commercial
- Roanoke River Partners cluster
- Service providers
- Small businesses
- Social assistance
- Soda/candy shop
- Specialty and boutique retail
- Steel/steel products manufacturing
- Sunflower oil producer
- Support businesses for major employers
- Tourism
- Upper floor apartments
- Value added agriculture
- Waterfront development

- Mid-East Commission / Rivers East Workforce Development Board
 - Federal and state grant administration
 - Partner with and assist county EDCs and local governments
 - Regional economic development planning
- Economic Development Commissions/Departments in each county
 - Generally, focus on industrial but touch other sectors as well
 - Recruit new businesses to the region through marketing and personal contacts
 - Advertise available sites
 - Assist in development of industrial parks/shell buildings
 - Referrals and networking
 - Assistance in applying for federal and state grants
 - Most offer local grants or incentives based on jobs created and taxable investment
- Local Governments
 - Services vary widely based on population and available staffing
 - Some recruit new businesses through marketing and personal contacts, advertise available sites, assist in development of industrial parks/shell buildings, offer local incentives, and/or provide services such as assistance in applying for federal or state grants.
 - Some local governments are not able to offer any of these services. Limited staffing is a common issue for both small towns and rural counties in the region.
- Downtown Organizations
 - Business recruitment for downtown areas through marketing and personal contacts
 - Assistance in applying for state/federal grants
 - Referrals and networking
 - Marketing and promotional events
 - Most offer façade grant programs
- Utility Companies
 - Some companies have economic development departments which are actively engaged in business recruitment and are often the first line of contact for potential businesses.
 - Some offer incentives for large accounts
 - Electric Membership Cooperatives provide support to economic development projects through community partners such as local governments, Economic Development Commissions and Committees of 100. They also manage a revolving loan fund for start-ups.
- Chambers of Commerce
 - Business recruitment through marketing and personal contacts
 - Marketing and promotional events
 - Referrals and networking
 - Individual local programs such as a foundation providing funding to start-ups in Beaufort County and a business succession assistance program in Martin County.

- Committees of 100
 - Provide funding for economic development projects through fundraising and membership dues
 - Partner with local governments and economic development commissions
- Visitors Centers/Convention Bureaus
 - Market and promote the region to both visitors and businesses
- Roanoke River Partners
 - Market and promote the region to both visitors and businesses

Challenges Recruiting and Retaining Businesses

Subcommittee members in each county answered questions regarding challenges their organization faces in recruiting new businesses and retaining existing businesses. The following challenges were identified:

- Lack of capacity to offer incentives and hire economic development staff
- Regional reputation of under skilled workforce
- Rural location
- High cost of utilities
- Lack of connection to interstate highway system
- Low population density
- Lack of adequate available sites and buildings
- Lack of disposable income amongst residents
- Lack of amenities (shopping, restaurants, etc.)
- Appearance of downtowns
- Broadband speeds and availability
- Lack of adequate cellular coverage
- Some businesses unwilling to adapt or take outside advice
- Competition with other regions
- High commercial vacancy rates
- Some building owners unwilling to sell or improve properties
- Lack of sewer system (common to smaller towns)
- Hiring and retaining qualified staff with a good work ethic
- Addressing system issues in some areas
 - While not often discussed, inconsistent addressing systems are a hinderance to business recruitment efforts in some areas of the region. (In extreme cases, it also causes issues for public safety related to emergency response.)

Resources for Recruiting and Retaining Businesses

Subcommittee members in each county answered questions regarding what resources would assist their organization with business recruitment and retention. By far the most requested

resources were marketing assistance and marketing materials. The following summarizes identified needed resources:

- Marketing assistance
- Print materials
- Social media materials
- Data about local economy and assets
- Data about industry trends for expansion/relocation
- Demographic data
- Knowledge of area
- Leads on new projects
- Targets to focus efforts on
- Training seminars
 - Social media marketing
- Information on funding opportunities

Competitive Advantages

Subcommittee members in each county were asked what competitive advantages their area has that help attract and retain businesses. Results by county are as follows:

- Beaufort County
 - Competitive tax rates
 - Solid business climate
 - Highly capable workforce (17% of the private workforce is engaged in manufacturing)
 - Three airports are located between 30 minutes to 120 minutes from Beaufort County providing daily flights via major air carriers.
 - Accessible via major US highways and interstates
 - Major deep-water ports within 120 minutes of Beaufort County
 - Rail service is provided by Norfolk Southern and CSX railways throughout the county.
- Bertie County
 - Cost of land
 - Eligible for funding opportunities for Tier 1 Counties
 - Rich natural and cultural assets
 - Existing and new partnerships/strong networking
 - Utility availability/capacity
- Hertford County
 - Cost of land
 - Available sewer capacity
 - Eligible for funding opportunities for Tier 1 Counties
 - Work ethic

- Chamber of Commerce services available at no cost to members, extensive network
- Martin County
 - Rich natural and cultural assets
 - Existing and new partnerships/strong networking
 - Located in an area that people pass through when traveling to Virginia and the northern NC Outer Banks
 - Quality of life
 - Sense of community
 - Easy commute to Greenville, Raleigh, Norfolk
 - “Crossroads of the East”
 - Low cost electricity
 - Eligible for funding opportunities for Tier 1 Counties
 - Availability of natural gas
 - Low property tax rate and reasonable valuations
- Pitt County
 - Available and trained workforce
 - Local training opportunities through Pitt Community College
 - East Carolina University
 - Proximity to interstate grade highways
 - Available water and sewer capacity
 - Responsive local government

Information Sources

Subcommittee members were asked where they go for information and data to support their organization’s mission. Networking and partnerships were the most common response. Responses are as follows:

- Networking/partnerships
- Local economic development agencies
- Federal Highways Administration resource website
- NC DOT resource website
- Trade associations
- Grantfinder.gov
- Email listservs
 - Planning, NC Main Street, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Clerks, etc.
- Council of Governments / Mid-East Commission
- UNC School of Government
- NC League of Municipalities
- NC Rural Water Association
- NC Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC)

- NC Retail Marketing Association
- NC Rural Center
- Member organizations

Current Business Grants

Federal

- US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Rural Business Development Grants
 - Designed to support targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas
 - Rural Business Enterprise Grants
 - Designed to promote economic development in rural areas and to assist businesses in creating and/or saving jobs in rural areas.
 - Value Added Producer Grants
 - Helps agricultural producers enter value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of new products.
 - Rural Development Fund Community Facility Grant
 - Town of Ahoskie had a successful application for a police car.
- Small Business Administration
 - Small business grants for veterans and some specific business types
 - Variety of low interest small business loans for qualified borrowers
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Grants distributed through state and local partners (governments, regional councils, utility companies, institutes of higher education, non-profit organizations)
 - Economic development and disaster recovery
- Industry Specific
 - Department of Defense
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on military technology
 - Department of Education
 - Grants for small businesses developing technology for literacy, STEM education, language learning, education administration and services for students with disabilities
 - Department of Energy
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on material and environmental science research and technology, as well as renewable energy
 - Department of Transportation
 - Grants for small businesses developing new or innovative technology for aviation and infrastructure engineering
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Grants for small businesses developing eco-friendly technology and environmentally sustainable innovation
- Homeland Security
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on cybersecurity, first responders, explosives, border security, and chemical or biological defense technology
- National Science Foundation
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on engineering, medicine and other scientific research
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on alternative, renewable and efficient energy, as well as engineering and building spacecraft
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture
 - Grants for small businesses doing agricultural research on food science, nutrition, forestry, animal protection and biofuel
- National Institutes of Health
 - Grants for small businesses researching or developing innovative biomedical technology
- National Institute of Standards and Technology
 - Grants for small businesses developing technology for cybersecurity, trade, manufacturing and software
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 - Grants for small businesses focusing on research and development in coastal communities, climate mitigation/adaptation and ocean monitoring

State of North Carolina

- NC Dept. of Commerce
 - One North Carolina Fund
 - Allows the Governor to respond quickly to competitive job-creation projects. Awards are based on the number of jobs created, level of investment, location of the project, economic impact of the project and the importance of the project to the state and region.
 - Building Reuse Grant
 - Job creation and wage requirements apply (ten jobs created to be a competitive application, five jobs minimum required). Can be used for:
 - The renovation of vacant buildings
 - The renovation or expansion of a building occupied by an existing North Carolina company wishing to expand in their current location
 - The renovation, expansion or construction of health care entities that will lead to the creation of new, full-time jobs.

Regional / Local

- Rivers East Workforce Development Board

- Grants, training, and technical assistance related to workforce training, job placement and business retention
- On-the-job training
- Incumbent worker training
- Customized training based on employer needs
- Career pathways
- Rapid response team
- Beaufort County
 - Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce
 - Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce Foundation
 - Used by businesses or organizations for start-ups as well as several other things
 - Foundation to Run Bright Futures
 - Have received four grants to fund this program
 - Partnership between Chamber and Beaufort County Schools
 - City of Washington
 - Façade Improvement Grant
 - Assists with renovation of downtown building facades
 - Beaufort County
 - Sales and Use Tax Exemption for qualifying businesses
 - Three categories: Electricity, fuel & natural gas, Machinery & equipment, Raw materials
- Hertford County
 - Town of Ahoskie
 - Façade Improvement Program
 - To improve building facades in downtown area
 - Ahoskie Tourism Development Authority
 - Grants to support tourism related activities/events
 - Hertford County
 - Hertford County Economic Development Incentive Grant
 - For qualifying new businesses and expansions. Amount based on number of new jobs and taxable investment
- Martin County
 - Williamston Downtown Inc.
 - Vibrancy Grant
 - For building facades in the downtown district.
 - Up to \$2,000 / 50% match
 - Martin County Tourism Development Authority
 - Grants for qualifying non-profit organizations and events projected to bring visitors to the county.
 - Martin County
 - Economic Development Grant
 - Based on jobs created/retained and taxable investment.

- Pitt County
 - Town of Farmville
 - Façade Improvement Grant
 - Assists with renovation of downtown building facades
 - Vacant Building Rehabilitation Grant
 - Assists with renovation of buildings that have been vacant for at least 1 year
 - Gateway and Landmark Building Improvement Grant
 - Assists with renovation of buildings that are in visually prominent locations in town
 - Residential Development Incentive Grant
 - Assists with construction of SF homes on vacant lots served by Farmville Utilities
 - City of Greenville
 - Façade Improvement Grants
 - Assists with renovation of building facades in eligible areas
 - Small Business Plan Competition
 - Awards grants of \$15,000 - \$30,000 to four small businesses twice per year for start-ups or expansions in eligible areas (center city / west Greenville)
 - Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program
 - Program that ensures minority and women owned businesses have an equal opportunity for public contracts (partnership with Greenville Utilities Commission).
 - Also provide tools, training, networking and resources to registered MWBE owners.
 - Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitor's Bureau
 - Have a program to help sponsor tourism related events and activities
 - Town of Ayden
 - Façade Improvement Grant
 - Assists with renovation of downtown building facades
 - Town of Winterville
 - Façade Improvement Grant
 - Assists with renovation of downtown building facades
 - Pitt County
 - Water, sewer and natural gas extensions
 - Railroad lead track extensions
 - Industrial Revenue Bonds
 - Low cost, long term fixed asset financing

Objective 1.3: Develop and implement a Regional Plan to leverage the Region’s competitive advantages.

Regional Plan

Development of this Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan fulfills this objective. Collaboration will continue in the future through the online communication platform.

Objective 1.4: Conduct an analysis that identifies the existing and improved place brand for the region.

and

Objective 1.5: Create a regional marketing image that reflect the quality of life and unique assets of each area, such as water resources, peanuts, glassworks, historic sites, sports arenas, campgrounds, etc.

Sources

Adopted taglines in the region were reviewed to assist in identifying an improved place brand for the region. Additionally, subcommittee members were asked what images they would choose to represent their area if a regional marketing image were created. Results for each county are summarized below.

Beaufort County:

- Taglines
 - Washington Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce – “Voice of Business”
- Regional marketing image
 - Rural
 - Peaceful
 - Friendly
 - Great schools
 - Pamlico River
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Lifestyle
 - Agriculture
 - Local foods
 - Bicycling
 - Historic downtown districts
 - Goose Creek State Park
 - Blackbeard
 - NC Estuarium
 - NC Fossil Museum
 - Beaufort County Community College
 - Mount Olive University
 - Sportsman atmosphere

- Hunter's Point
- Washington – Voted Best Small Town in NC

Bertie County:

- Taglines
 - Roanoke River Partners – “Progress through Partnerships”
 - Town of Windsor – “More Than a Lifestyle”
- Regional marketing image
 - Rural atmosphere
 - Sportsman atmosphere
 - Agriculture
 - Peanuts
 - Water
 - Roanoke River, Cashie River
 - Historic sites
 - Treehouses
 - Martin Community College

Hertford County:

- Taglines
 - Town of Ahoskie – “Ahoskie, The Only One!”
- Regional marketing image
 - Rural atmosphere
 - Sportsman atmosphere
 - Agriculture
 - Meherrin River
 - Historic sites
 - Fine dining
 - Chowan University
 - Roanoke-Chowan Community College

Martin County:

- Taglines
 - Roanoke River Partners – “Progress through Partnerships”
 - Martin County – “Where Your Adventure Begins!”
 - Town of Williamston – “Easy Living with Hometown Values”
- Agriculture
- Roanoke River
- Nature
- Campgrounds
- Equestrian
- Fort Branch
- Asa Biggs House

- Martin Community College
- Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center
- Sunnyside Oyster Bar
- Golf at Roanoke Country Club
- Manufacturing
- Agribusiness
- Deadwood
- East Carolina Motor Speedway
- Train in Parmele
- Parmalee band
- Rosenwald Schools
- Bicycling
- “Crossroads of the East”
- Festivals
- Technology

Pitt County:

- Taglines
 - City of Greenville / Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau – “Find Yourself in Good Company”
 - Town of Farmville – “Honoring Our Past, Shaping Our Future”
 - Town of Grifton – “Come Home to the Family Town!”
 - Town of Winterville – “A Slice of the Good Life!”
- Regional marketing image
 - Outdoor activities
 - Tar River
 - Greenways
 - East Carolina University
 - Pitt Community College
 - Sports complexes
 - Uptown Greenville
 - East Carolina Village and Farm Museum
 - Mild climate
 - Glass studio in Farmville
 - Festivals/events

Objective 1.6: Develop and implement a Regional Marketing Plan.

Regional Marketing Plan

The majority of identified economic development plans include some goals or strategies related to marketing. However, the only known marketing plan in the region is the Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau’s Marketing Plan. Marketing assistance was one of the

most requested resources from subcommittee members across all counties, lending further support toward development of a Strategic Marketing Plan for Region Q.

Objective 1.7: Identify new adaptive capabilities of the regional economy.

Sources

Subcommittee members were asked to identify adaptive capabilities of businesses in their area and to identify what related challenges businesses in their area face. Identified new adaptive capabilities of the regional economy are as follows:

- Workforce adaptability
- Workforce development programs
- Higher education
- Social capital/strong networking
- Social media
- Online sales and marketing
- Incorporation of new technologies
- Central location / transportation infrastructure access increases resiliency
- Customized training
- RAMP East organization / advanced manufacturing
- Short-term workforce training programs
 - To get displaced workers back to work quickly

Identified challenges that businesses face are as follows:

- Hiring new applicants vs. retraining the existing workforce
- Process issues / efficiency
- Struggle to adapt to new markets
- Availability of skilled workforce
- Angel investors / funding availability
- Difficulty incorporating new technology
- Resistance to change
- Lack of knowledge on what steps to take / where to start
- Access to adequate broadband and telecommunication service

Recommendations

For each goal, two priority recommendations for the region are identified. The priority recommendations for the business recruitment, retention and marketing goal are as follows:

- **Develop a Strategic Marketing Plan for Region Q.**
 - Include development of an improved place brand and creation of a regional marketing image within the process.
- **Allocate staff time through the Rivers East Workforce Development Board to managing the regional online communication platform website including keeping information updated, adding relevant new resources, and adjusting networking processes as needed.**

Other recommendations for the business recruitment, retention and marketing goal are as follows:

- Keep the cluster analysis updated in conjunction with updates to the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan and/or Comprehensive Economic Development Plan document.
- Recommend that Beaufort County and Hertford County adopt Economic Development Plans.
- Recommend that the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Martin County is updated within the next two years (at which time the plan will be ten years old).
- Recommend that communities across the region explore the option of free or low-cost economic development reports. Possible sources include the NC Dept. of Commerce, NC Growth, Electricities and Universities.
- Share adopted economic development reports for communities in the region via the online communication platform. Use report compilations to develop a consistent economic development strategy for the region that lines up at all levels, e.g. town/community, county, region, etc.
- Conduct a study of commuting patterns and analyze how this affects economic development in the region.
 - Large organizations can draw from a 10 – 20 county area for their employment base.
- Major updates of the Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan are recommended on a five-year cycle. Minor updates may occur in between as needed.
- Post information on the regional website to help businesses and partner organizations with adaptive capabilities; i.e. data on market trends, training opportunities for new technology customized by industry type, information on incorporating social media marketing into advertising, etc.
- Partner with school districts to provide professional development for teachers.
 - Grants are available for software and equipment but there is often a challenge with staff being trained to use it.

- Recommend that all local governments in the region currently on a block addressing system switch to an E-911 addressing system. It is also critical that county and municipal addressing systems are consistent with each other.

Physical Infrastructure

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.

Regional Network

A regional network of organizations working toward achieving the above goal were identified. These organizations were invited to join the physical infrastructure subcommittee for their respective county (or counties) and some organizations were also invited to join the main Steering Committee. A list of Steering Committee members and Subcommittee members for each county is available in Appendix A.

Asset Mapping

Objective 2.1: 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.

Maps of Service Area and Infrastructure

Service providers were asked whether they had maps of their service area and infrastructure available and whether these were detailed digital maps or less detailed paper maps. Results by county are as follows:

- Beaufort County
 - 100% of responding providers had detailed maps available both digitally and in print.
- Bertie County
 - No data
- Hertford County
 - 33.3% of responding providers had detailed maps available both digitally and in print.
 - 66.7% of responding providers had less detailed paper maps and did not have digital files.
- Martin County
 - 50% of responding providers had detailed maps available both digitally and in print.
 - 50% of responding providers had less detailed paper maps and did not have digital files.

- Pitt County
 - 100% of responding providers had detailed maps available both digitally and in print.

Service providers were asked whether maps are available to share. In general, service area maps were available to share while infrastructure maps were not because of data sensitivity. In some cases, infrastructure maps were available to share where the data sensitivity level was of low concern. Segments of infrastructure maps were generally available on a project by project basis.

Service providers utilizing digital mapping were asked what software programs their organization utilizes. The most common response was ESRI / ArcGIS. Other responses included myWorld, M4 Solutions, and StellarRad software.

Expansions of Service Area

Service providers were asked whether their organization had plans for expansion of their service area. Results were highly correlated with local population growth or lack of growth. Results by county are as follows:

- Beaufort County
 - 75% of responding providers had plans to expand their service area.
- Bertie County
 - No data
- Hertford County
 - No responding providers had plans to expand their service area.
- Martin County
 - No responding providers had plans to expand their service area.
- Pitt County
 - 100% of responding providers had plans to expand their service area.

Service providers were asked whether their organization had experienced any barriers to expansion of their service area. Identified barriers are as follows:

- Funding
- Legislative guidelines
- Assigned service area by statute (unique to Electric Membership Cooperatives)
- Service area agreements with surrounding providers
- Lack of a sewer system (common to smaller towns)

Utility Capacity Data

Service providers were asked for capacity data as compared to usage of their systems. Water systems in the region are running at an average of 40% capacity, with 60% available for use. The system with the least available capacity reported is running at approximately 55% capacity with 45% available for use.

Sewer systems in the region are running at an average of 46% capacity, with 54% available for use. The system with the least available capacity reported is running at approximately 65% capacity, with 35% available for use. Electric systems in the region are running at an average of 45% capacity with 55% available for use. The system with the least available capacity reported is running at approximately 50% capacity, with 50% available for use.

In general, the capacity of existing water, sewer, and electric systems across the region are in no danger of reaching capacity and can accommodate substantial future growth. This presents a benefit for economic development efforts.

Current Utility Grant Programs

Federal

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities Drinking Water Grant
 - Assists with projects to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, wide variety of project types
 - 55 % / 45% match, In-kind acceptable
- US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Rural Utilities Service (RUS)
 - Provides much needed infrastructure or infrastructure improvements in rural communities
 - Water and waste treatment, electric power and telecommunications/broadband services
 - A large variety of grant and loan programs are under the RUS
 - Town of Chocowinity has had a successful application for water and wastewater improvements
 - River Street Network (previously Tri-County Broadband) has had a successful application for broadband infrastructure
 - Town of Harrellsville has had a successful application for extension of water system
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Public Works Program
 - Helps distressed communities revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure
 - Traditional public works projects such as wastewater infrastructure along with projects such as industrial parks

- Must qualify under definition of distressed community

State

- NC Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) / Division of Water Infrastructure
 - North Carolina State Revolving Fund
 - Greenville Utilities Commission has had successful applications for grants and loans for water and wastewater infrastructure
 - Town of Winterville has had successful applications for water and wastewater infrastructure and inventory/assessment projects
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Infrastructure Program (non-entitlement)
 - Water and sewer infrastructure in low to moderate income areas
 - Wastewater Asset and Inventory Assessment Grants
 - Eligible projects include asset inventory, condition assessment of critical assets, other components of critical assets
 - Town of Chocowinity has had a successful application
 - Town of Murfreesboro has had a successful application
 - Merger/Regionalization Feasibility Grants
 - State Wastewater and Drinking Water Reserves Program
 - Planning, design and construction of critical water infrastructure
 - Project must qualify under definition of critical water infrastructure
- NC Dept. of Commerce
 - State Rural Grants – Economic Infrastructure Program
 - Water, sewer, natural gas, electric, broadband, access roads, etc. for job creating projects
 - North Carolina Industrial Development Fund
 - Infrastructure to serve industrial parks / qualifying industries
 - Greenville Utilities Commission in partnership with Pitt County had a successful application for water infrastructure extension to an industrial park

Private

- American Public Power Association
 - Demonstration of Energy and Efficiency Development (DEED) Grant
 - Awarded to utilities that have a pilot project with a goal to better serve customers
 - Greenville Utilities Commission had a successful application to aid in continuing to develop mobile applications for employees in the field with limited computer access
 - Greenville Utilities Commission also received a \$150,000 DEED Innovation grant for a peak-shaving battery energy storage pilot project

Objective 2.2: Develop multi-modal transportation plans that address existing and future year capacity deficiencies.

Transportation Data

NCDOT has some capacity data available for state roads. Real time road congestion data is available for major state roads and some secondary roads at <https://drivenc.gov/>. Traffic volume data for automobiles is available for most state roads at <https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/State-mapping/Pages/Traffic-Volume-Maps.aspx>. A capacity analysis is also conducted with the development and update of Comprehensive Transportation Plan documents for each county. In general, automobile transportation capacity data for state roads is adequate. However, capacity data for bicycle and pedestrian transportation is limited to non-existent in the region, except for the Greenville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area.

Roadway characteristic data is lacking for state roads in the region. The Greenville MPO maintains the Pitt County Travel Demand Model, which contains information on roadways including number of lanes, condition, shoulder width, presence of multi-modal facilities, lane width, right-of-way information, speed limits, etc. Outside of Pitt County, this data is largely not available for planning processes and must be gathered in a piecemeal fashion as needed for projects. It would be beneficial to have a readily accessible database showing roadway characteristics for state roads. Right-of-way information would be helpful for a variety of permitting processes. Other roadway characteristic information would provide needed data for long-range planning processes and save a great deal of staff time when these planning processes are undertaken.

Multi-Modal Transportation Plans

Multi-modal transportation plans across the region were identified. Identified plans are as follows.

- Regional
 - Eastern NC Regional Freight Mobility Plan
 - Northeast Regional Locally Coordinated Plan (Public Transit)
 - Fiscally Constrained Plans:
 - Division 1 and Division 2 Highway Maintenance Improvement Plans (HMIPs) are used to determine roads to be resurfaced in next 5 years
 - State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) shows projects funded by NCDOT and construction schedule for next 10 years (first 5 years committed, second 5 years planned but subject to reprioritization)
- Beaufort County
 - Beaufort County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Beaufort County Comprehensive Bicycle Plan
 - City of Washington Comprehensive Bicycle Plan

- City of Washington Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
- Bertie County
 - Bertie County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Town of Windsor Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Hertford County
 - Hertford County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Town of Ahoskie Comprehensive Bicycle Plan
 - Town of Murfreesboro Greenway Plan
- Martin County
 - Martin County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Walk Williamston: A Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
- Pitt County
 - Pitt County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Pitt County Greenway Plan
 - Town of Farmville Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
 - Town of Farmville Comprehensive Bicycle Plan
 - Town of Winterville Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
 - Town of Winterville Greenway Master Plan
 - Greenville MPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan
 - Greenville MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (fiscally constrained)
 - Greenville MPO Active Transportation Plan
 - Greenville MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
 - Short Range Transit Plan for GREAT bus system
 - MPO also has various small area and corridor plans

Transportation organizations were asked about key partnerships in plan implementation. The following key partnerships were identified:

- NCDOT Raleigh Office
- NCDOT Division 1
- NCDOT Division 2
- Mid-East RPO
- Peanut Belt RPO
- Local governments
- Local participation by residents/community leaders

Transportation organizations were asked about challenges in implementing plans. The following challenges were identified:

- Capital/funding
- The requirement for a 20% match for bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Difficult to estimate and plan a project and have those numbers serve as a usable baseline for construction.

- Project delivery issues
- Staff availability limits the number of in-house projects and processes that can be undertaken.
- Communication improvements between NCDOT Division 1 and 2 and RPOs is needed.
 - Projects such as bicycle lanes are most efficiently incorporated within the scope of a maintenance project. In addition, local governments need time to plan for delays due to construction and notify the public. In some cases, public comment may be desired by the RPO. Highway Maintenance Improvement Plans are fluid documents. They can be changed at any time at the NCDOT Division level without local governments or RPOs being notified. This has caused significant planning issues and inefficiencies or even omissions in project delivery.

Current Transportation Grant Programs

Federal

- US Department of Transportation (DOT)
 - Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant
 - \$7.1 billion for ten rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact
 - Intended to support large projects
 - Multi-modal transportation projects qualify
 - 50% must be spent in rural areas
 - 80%/20% match urban areas, no required match for rural areas
 - City of Greenville/Greenville MPO had a successful application for \$24 million in roadway and greenway projects
 - Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant
 - \$856 million 2019 funding cycle, 25% must be spent in rural areas
 - Projects that address critical issues facing our nation's highways and bridges
 - Both large and small projects eligible
 - Project must be highway, bridge, port, or railroad
 - 60% / 40% match (20% may be from other Federal sources)
- US DOT / Federal Aviation Administration
 - Airport Improvement Program
 - Funds capital items serving to develop and improve airports in areas of safety, capacity, noise compatibility, security, and environmental concerns.
 - 75% / 25% match – 95% / 5% match depending on project
- US DOT / Federal Transit Administration
 - Capital Investments Grant Program
 - Access and Mobility Partnership Grants
 - Improve coordination between transit and health agencies
 - Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program

Objective 2.3: Research existing service availability data, identify additional data needs, and develop and implement plans for the expansion of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure growth.

NC Broadband Office Data

The NC General Assembly created the State Broadband Office as a division of the Dept. of Information Technology. A statewide Broadband Plan was adopted in 2017 with a lofty goal of 100% of households having broadband access by June 2021 with 50% of households having fiber access by that date. The Broadband Office has a Technical Assistance team which provides an on-the-ground resource to work with counties and municipalities across the state to provide needed broadband expertise. There is also a “Community Playbook” which help communities expand broadband access by identifying current broadband needs, taking stock of available assets, strengths and weaknesses, establish goals, and create and implement policies that help communities achieve their vision of the future.

There was a broadband service inventory conducted as part of the State Broadband Plan which identifies areas with adequate broadband access (defined as advertised speeds of 25 Mbps Download and 3 Mbps Upload). Results were also classified by the type of infrastructure providing broadband access (i.e. fiber, cable, DSL).

In general, this data is sufficient to identify areas in the region which lack adequate broadband access. The data shows significant gaps in broadband coverage in all five counties in the region. Map 2.1 shows broadband access and Map 2.2 shows the same data zoomed into Region Q. Map 2.3 shows broadband access by infrastructure type and Map 2.4 shows the same data zoomed into Region Q (NC Broadband Office).

Current Broadband Grant Programs

NC GREAT Grant:

The NC Broadband Office’s GREAT Grant (Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology) provides matching grant funds to internet service providers and electric membership cooperatives to expand broadband access in Tier 1 counties. The GREAT Grant Program was established by Session Law 2018-5. Eligible areas are census blocks or portions of census blocks in Tier One counties that lack access to a service providing a minimum of 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 1 Megabit per second upload speeds.

The current round of funding is providing up to \$30 million for eligible projects. Nearly \$10 million in funding was awarded in the previous grant cycle. Applicants are scored based on the number of households, businesses and agricultural operations they propose to serve, the average cost to serve those households and the speeds offered. Applicants receive higher awards for agreeing to provide higher speed service, defined as a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload.

This grant is a potential source of funding for expansion of broadband infrastructure in Bertie, Hertford and Martin Counties. The Roanoke Connect initiative through the Roanoke Electric Membership Cooperative successfully utilized this grant for broadband infrastructure expansion in Bertie and Hertford Counties (see case study at the end of this section). Unfortunately, Beaufort County and Pitt County do not currently qualify for this grant since they are Tier 2 counties, although both counties have significant broadband coverage issues that need to be addressed.

FCC Connect America Fund:

The Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Connect America Fund provides a total of \$1.98 billion in investment over a ten-year period to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service, both fixed and mobile, at reasonable rates. Fortunately, there are eligible areas identified in all five counties in the region. Map 2.5 shows areas eligible to apply for the Connect America Fund (FCC).

FCC E-Rate Program:

The FCC's schools and libraries universal service support program, commonly known as the E-rate program, helps schools and libraries to obtain affordable broadband.

Eligible schools, school districts and libraries may apply individually or as part of a consortium. Funding may be requested under two categories of service: category one services to a school or library (telecommunications, telecommunications services and Internet access), and category two services that deliver Internet access within schools and libraries (internal connections, basic maintenance of internal connections, and managed internal broadband services). Discounts for support depend on the level of poverty and whether the school or library is located in an urban or rural area. The discounts range from 20 percent to 90 percent of the costs of eligible services. E-rate program funding is based on demand up to an annual Commission-established cap of \$4.15 billion.

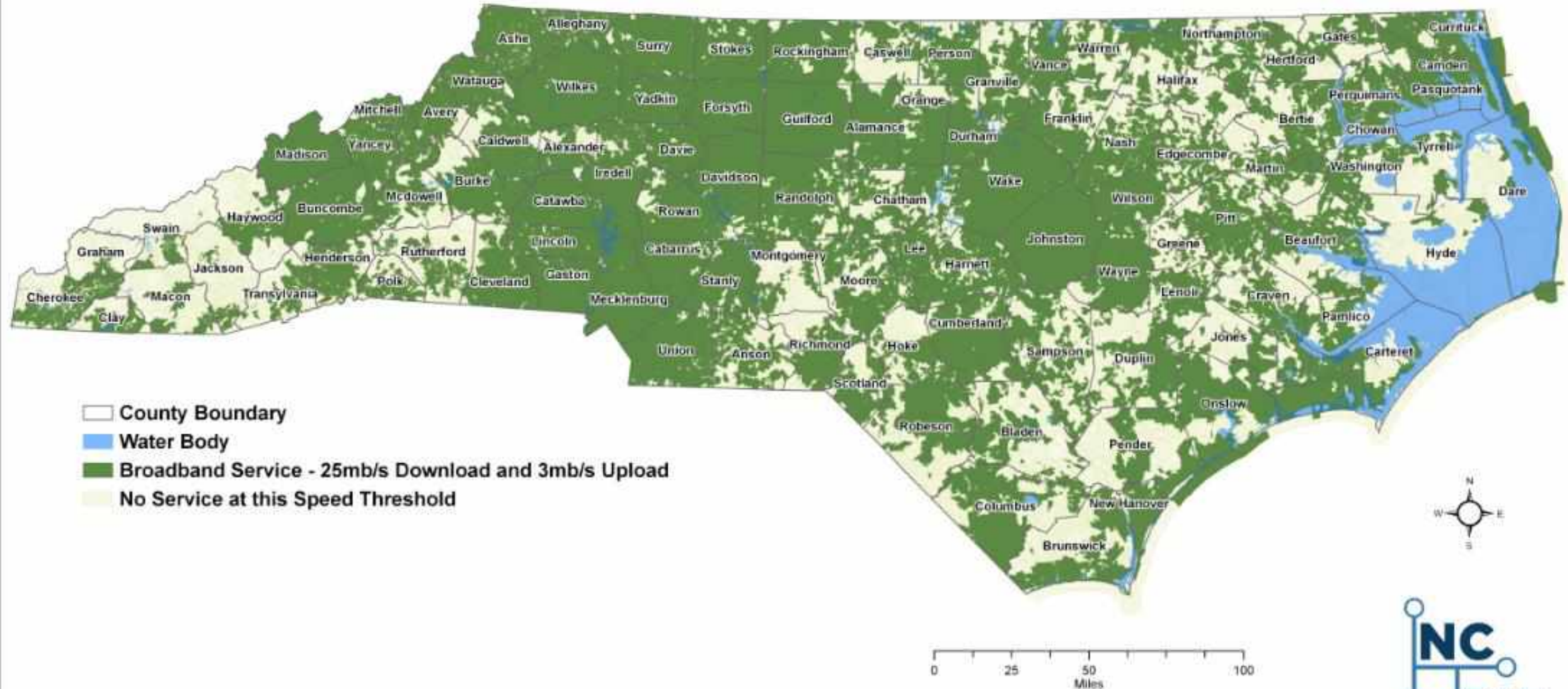
Map 2.1

North Carolina Broadband Service Inventory

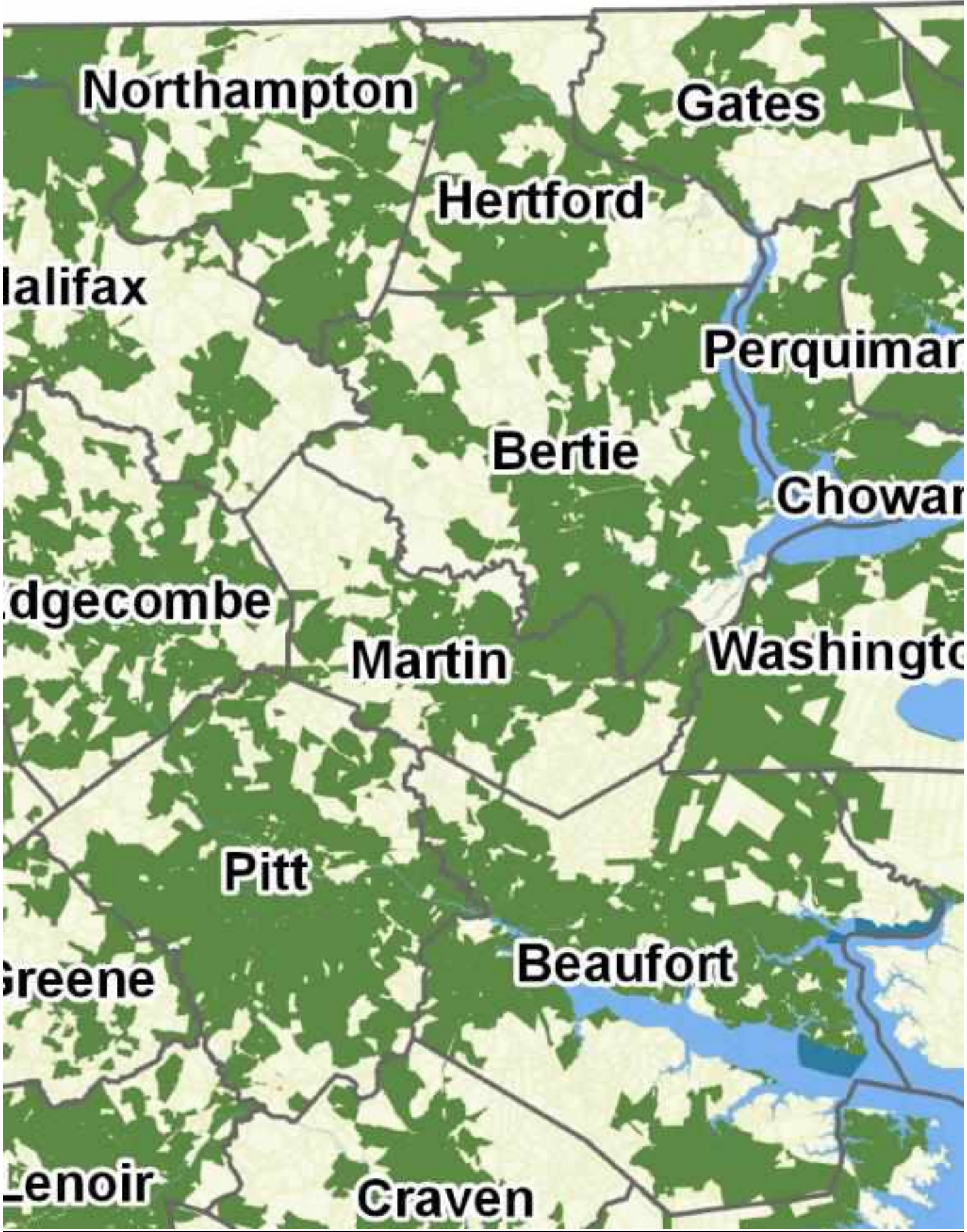
Advertised Speeds of at Least
25 Mbps Download and 3 Mbps Upload

Data derived from U.S. Federal Communications Commission Form 477 Data Release Dec. 2017.

Note: A provider that reports deployment of a particular technology and bandwidth in a census block may not necessarily offer that service everywhere in the block.



Map 2.2

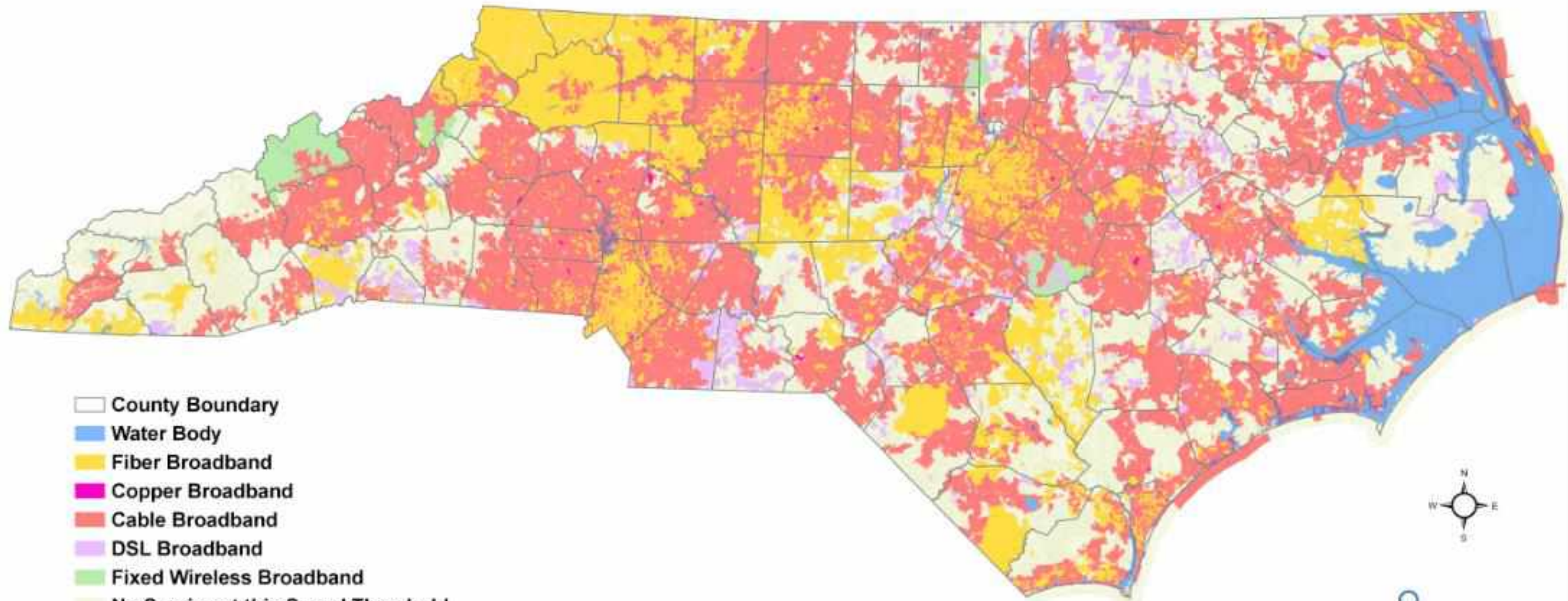









North Carolina Broadband Service Inventory

Advertised Speeds of at Least 25 Mbps Download and 3 Mbps Upload

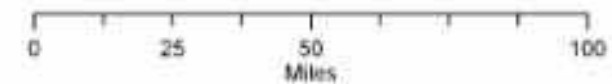
Data derived from U.S. Federal Communications Commission Form 477 Data Release Dec. 2017.

Note: A provider that reports deployment of a particular technology and bandwidth in a census block may not necessarily offer that service everywhere in the block.











-  County Boundary
-  Water Body
-  Fiber Broadband
-  Copper Broadband
-  Cable Broadband
-  DSL Broadband
-  Fixed Wireless Broadband
-  No Service at this Speed Threshold

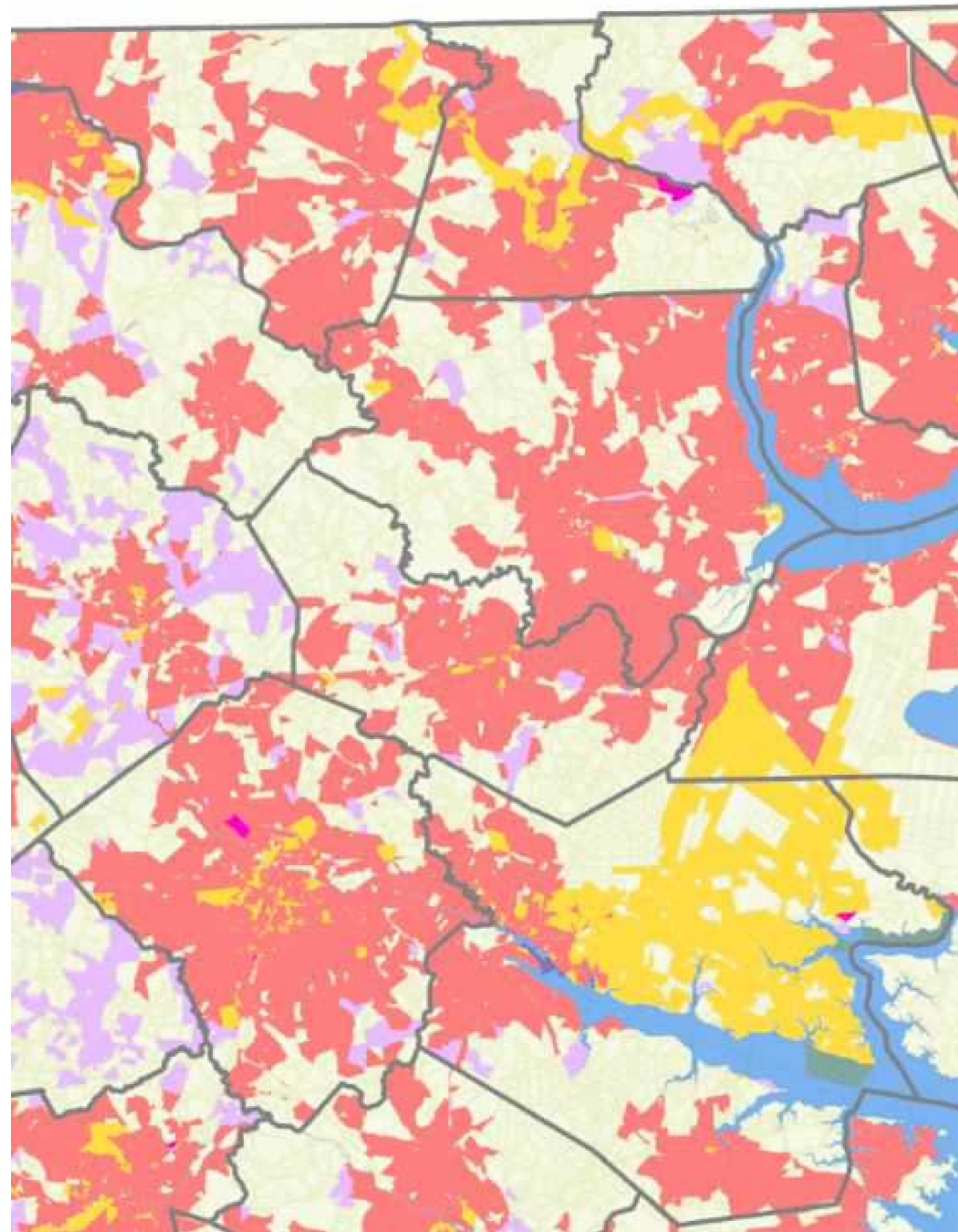
In areas where multiple service options are available this map shows the coverage layers in the order presented above.



Map 2.4

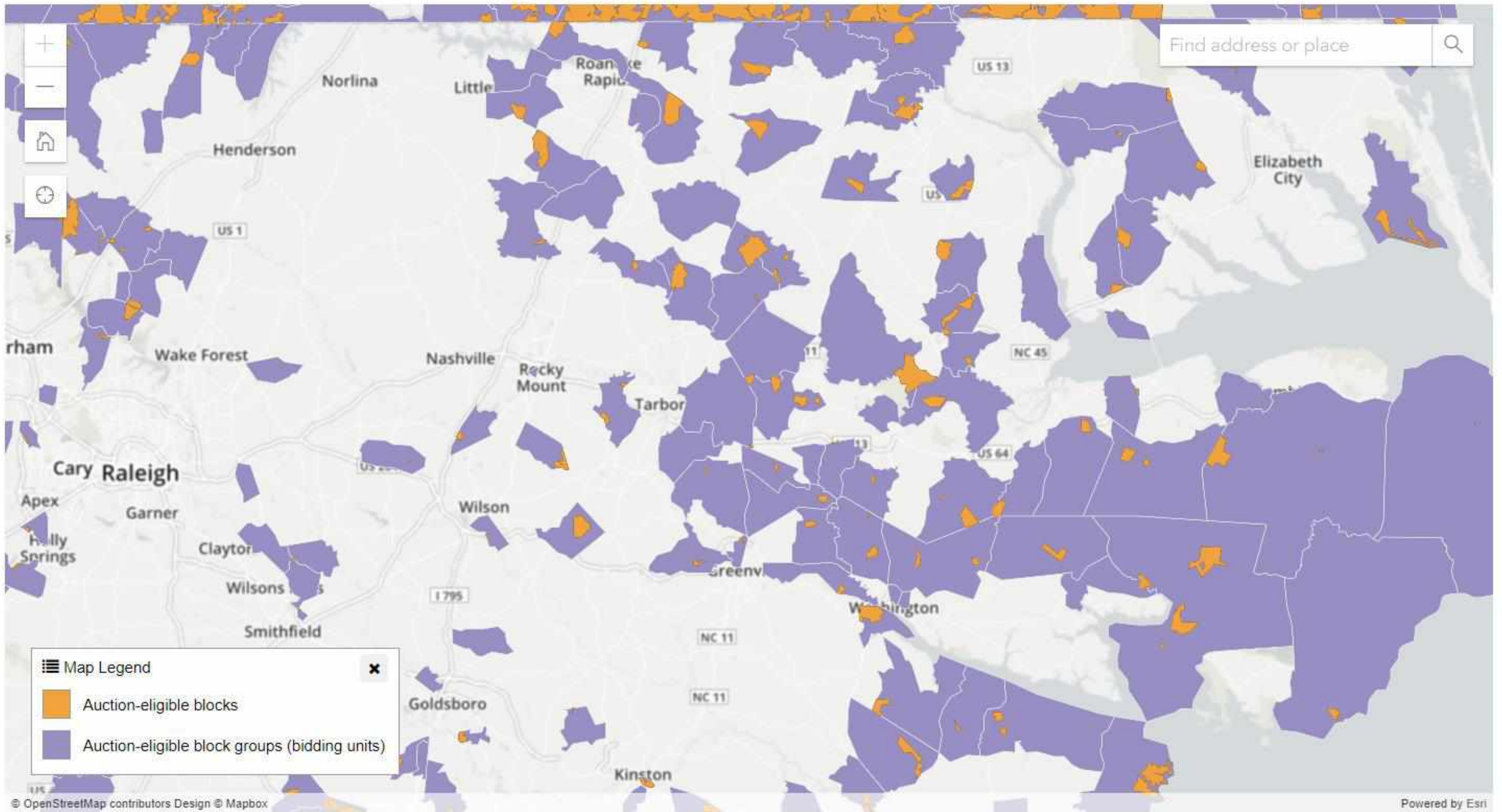
-  County Boundary
-  Water Body
-  Fiber Broadband
-  Copper Broadband
-  Cable Broadband
-  DSL Broadband
-  Fixed Wireless Broadband
-  No Service at this Speed Threshold

In areas where multiple service options are available this map shows the coverage layers in the order presented above.



Connect America Phase II Auction: Final Eligible Areas

Map 2.5



Recommendations

For each goal, two priority recommendations for the region are identified. The priority recommendations for the physical infrastructure goal are as follows.

- **Create a Regional Broadband Task Force.**
 - The task force would use available broadband infrastructure data through the NC Broadband Office to target areas for expansion and apply for available state and federal grants.
 - Current grant programs include NC Broadband Office's GREAT (Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology) grant program and the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Connect America grant program.
 - The Roanoke Connect initiative through Roanoke Electric Membership Cooperative provides a successful case study in the region.
 - The Taskforce could also take advantage of the opportunity to plan for accommodation of a 5G network throughout the region, the latest technology in mobile data solutions, which requires that towers are placed closer together than with the current 4G network.
 - In addition, the taskforce could lead a public outreach campaign to encourage citizens to participate in the "speed test" through the NC Broadband Infrastructure Office on their home and work computers in order to improve the accuracy of data for the region. The task force should take advantage of NC Broadband Office's on-the-ground Technical Assistance Team.
- **Develop a feasibility study for a regional greenway.**
 - Regional greenway would tie in with existing local greenways and the East Coast Greenway system (alternate NC coastal route).
 - NCDOT's State Planning and Research (SPR) Grant program is a potential source of funding for the study. Highlighting the ties between counties would be a potential boost to the application.

Other recommendations for the physical infrastructure goal are as follows:

- Conduct a study of water and wastewater rates across the region and make recommendations for systems where cost of service is a significant barrier to economic development.
- Seek funding to aid utility service providers in upgrading to digital service and infrastructure maps.
 - This service is needed in Bertie, Hertford, Martin Counties.
- Seek funding to assist small towns across the region with development of sewer systems or upgrades to existing sewer systems where needed. Continue to assist with grant applications through Mid-East Commission Planning & Economic Development Dept. as requested by local governments.

- Recommend continued advocacy to NCDOT to decrease the weight placed on congestion in the funding formula for the project prioritization process through Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) and partner organizations.
 - The emphasis placed on congestion in the funding formula causes most projects to be awarded in urban areas.
- Recommend continued advocacy to NCDOT to remove the 20% local match requirement for bicycle and pedestrian projects funded through the project prioritization process through RPOs and partner organizations.
 - The recently adopted Complete Streets policy removed the required match in cases where NCDOT is improving the road (excludes routine maintenance) and the project is in an adopted Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Standalone bicycle and pedestrian projects still currently require a 20% match if funded.
- Recommend partnering with NCDOT Raleigh Office to make right-of-way data and other road characteristic data available through DOT's online mapping platform.
- Recommend improved communication between NCDOT Division staff, RPO staff and local governments. Specifically improving communication on maintenance projects and projects funded through safety.
 - Updates to the Highway Maintenance Improvement Plans (HMIPs) for Division 1 and 2 not being communicated to RPOs is a key issue that should be addressed. RPOs can take the lead on informing local governments and the public at large when needed, giving Division staff a single point of contact to communicate updates.
- Recommend that RPO and MPO staff give Transportation 101 presentations at local government board meetings to help staff and elected officials understand how MPOs and RPOs work, how projects are planned and funded, etc.
 - One presentation every two years to each local government would help the information filter to newly elected board members.
- Recommend that RPO staff work with NCDOT Transportation Planning Division to ensure that local Land Use Plans are a key driving force in the development of Comprehensive Transportation Plans.
- Recommend that RPO staff work with NCDOT Transportation Planning Division to incorporate Transit project recommendations into Comprehensive Transportation Plan, including bus pull-outs and other needs of local transit organizations.
- Recommend that RPOs continue to partner with local governments across the region to assist with applications for NCDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant program.
- Recommend development of a Regional Comprehensive Bicycle Plan.
- Recommend that RPOs partner with NCDOT to gather bicycle and pedestrian AADT data through placement of counters in strategic areas.
- Recommend that RPOs continue to focus on increasing partnerships with transit providers, airports, and railroad companies.
- Recommend that local governments and RPOs continue to partner with NCDOT's Transportation Planning Division on updates of Comprehensive Transportation Plans for each county.

- Recommend that projects from adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans are added to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan as updates.
 - Funding strategy for NCDOT's Complete Street Policy.
- Partner with rural public transit agencies to add night hour operation and develop creative solutions to better serve rural areas such as park-and-ride, rideshare programs, etc.
- Partner with rural public transit agencies to increase coordination for trips to common facilities.
 - Many organizations are going to the same places such as Vidant Hospital and other medical providers in Greenville.

Healthy and Safe Communities

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.

Regional Network

A regional network of organizations working toward achieving the above goal were identified. These organizations were invited to join the healthy and safe communities subcommittee for their respective county (or counties) and some organizations were also invited to join the main Steering Committee. A list of Steering Committee members and Subcommittee members for each county is available in Appendix A.

Asset Mapping

Objective 3.1: Promote environmentally sustainable development patterns.

Activities Related to Environmentally Sustainable Development Patterns

Subcommittee members in each county answered questions regarding their organization's activities related to environmentally sustainable development patterns. The following summarizes these activities occurring across the region.

- Local governments
 - Primary entity regulating land use
 - Zoning, subdivision, and other development ordinances
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts in each county
- Private landowners and developers
- Federal
 - US Fish and Wildlife
 - Environmental Protection Agency
- State environmental departments/divisions
 - Data
 - Education
 - Enforcement of environmental laws
 - Small project funding
 - Technical assistance to both local governments and landowners/developers
 - NC Wildlife Resources Commission
 - NC Department of Environmental Quality
- Non-profit environmental organizations
 - Advocacy
 - Education

- Small project funding
- Technical assistance to both local governments and landowners/developers
- Sound Rivers Foundation
- NC Sierra Club Cypress Group

Ordinances and Incentives Related to Environmentally Sustainable Development Patterns

Development ordinances and incentives across the region are as follows.

- Beaufort County
 - City of Washington
 - Planned Unit Development option in Zoning Ordinance (Planned Unit Developments are a designed group of compatible mixed land uses in a walkable community setting. Smaller individual lot sizes are generally allowed with public open space and/or pedestrian and bicycle facilities provided as a trade-off.)
- Bertie County
 - Bertie County
 - Cluster and Planned Unit Development option in Subdivision Ordinance (Cluster subdivisions allow smaller individual lots to be subdivided with public open space provided as a trade-off.)
- Hertford County
 - Town of Ahoskie
 - Planned Unit Development option in Zoning Ordinance
- Martin County
 - Town of Williamston
 - Watershed Protection Ordinance (limits the percentage of impervious surface in the watershed protection area)
 - Cluster Development option in Subdivision Ordinance
 - Planned Unit Development option in Zoning Ordinance
 - Audubon Certified Sustainable Community (only one in the state)
- Pitt County
 - Pitt County
 - Watershed Protection Overlay District
 - Cluster Development option in Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances
 - City of Greenville
 - Residential Cluster Development option in Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances
 - Requirement for new sidewalks and greenway connections for new subdivisions and commercial developments
 - Transit Oriented Development District

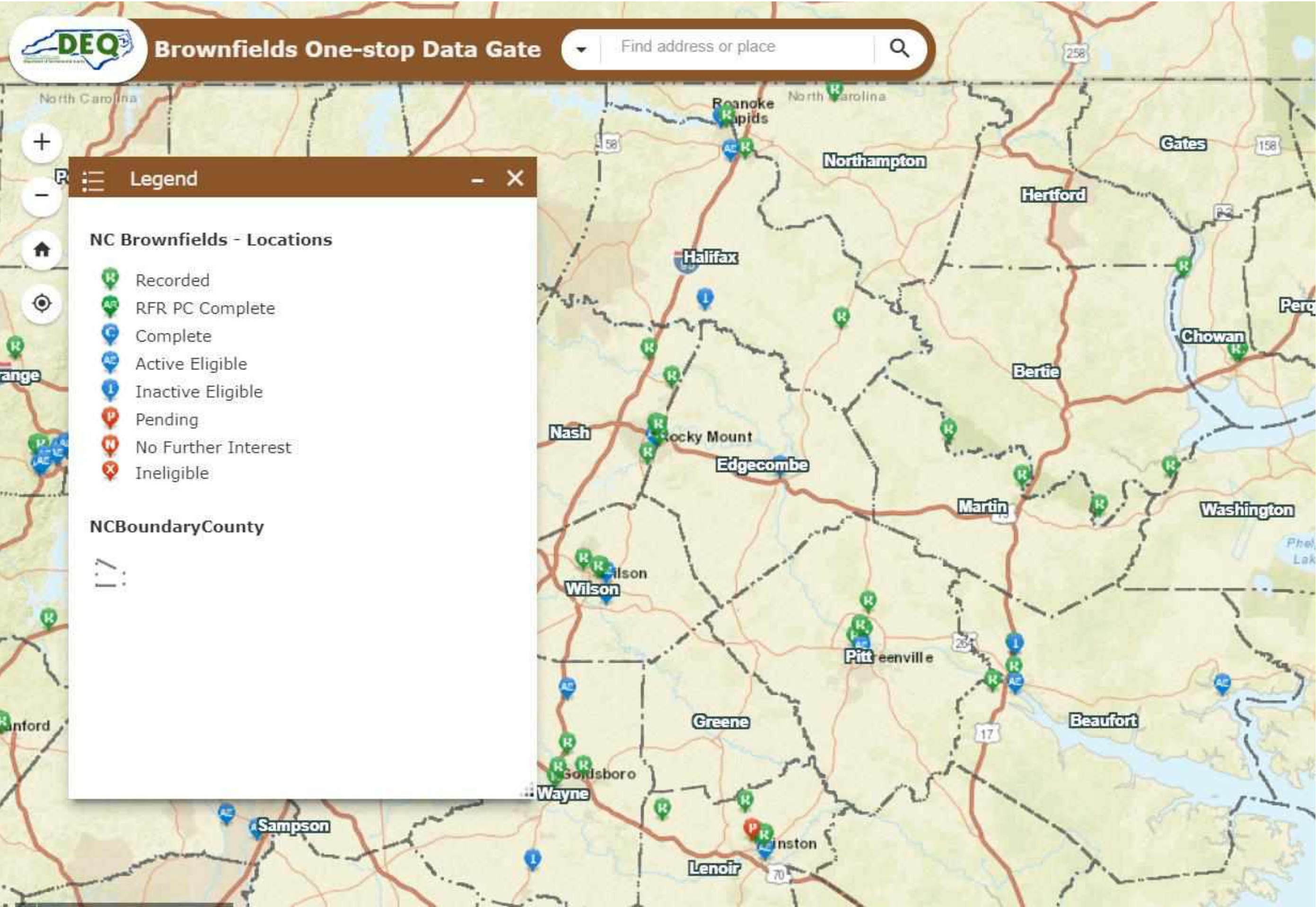
Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Each county has a Soil and Water Conservation District funded by the NC Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services. These county Soil and Water Conservation Districts are often an underutilized resource. The districts help with drainage problems to farmers, homeowners, business and industry, counties and municipalities. The districts also implement both state and federal programs to assist in installing best management practices and conservation planning with the goal of protecting our natural resources. Most districts also offer environmental education programs and resources to public, private, and home schools as well as to civic groups and organizations.

NC Brownfields Program

The NC Department of Environmental Quality manages the NC Brownfields Program. A brownfield is previously developed land that is not currently in use and is potentially contaminated. The NC Brownfields Program is authorized by the state statute known as the Brownfields Property Reuse Act and provides a mechanism to treat prospective developers of brownfield sites differently than the parties responsible for contaminating them. There are grants available for identification of brownfield sites and for the clean-up of contaminated properties. Identified brownfield sites in the region are shown on Map 3.1. The map also shows which brownfield sites have been remediated through the NC Brownfields Grant program.

Map 3.1



NC Wildlife Resource Commission & Green Growth Toolbox

The NC Wildlife Resource Commission's Green Growth Toolbox provides a valuable resource to local governments interested in environmentally sustainable development patterns. The Green Growth Toolbox consists of a handbook, a packaged GIS dataset, training workshops, tailored presentations, and technical assistance. All these resources are available at no charge. For communities who have participated in the free Green Growth Toolbox workshop, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission provides the following services as requested, also free of charge.

- Integrating the conservation data for green growth with County or City online GIS maps
- Training for local government staff
- Training for developers
- Write local habitat conservation plans
- Review and recommendations for:
 - Land Use Plans
 - Incentives and Ordinances
 - Development Review
- Habitat management plans for parks and open space
- Attending board and committee meetings to provide information

The Green Growth Toolbox website provides local governments interested in adopting environmentally friendly ordinances and development standards with examples and template ordinances from across the state at <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Conserving/Programs/Green-Growth-Toolbox/Greening-Ordinances>. Examples range from establishing conservation districts, cluster developments/conservation subdivisions, incentive-based model ordinances, low impact development, smart growth, and more.

The Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment is developed by the NC Natural Heritage Program and is part of the Conservation Planning Tool recommended by the Green Growth Toolbox. The Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat assessment identifies areas of high biodiversity and important wildlife habitat across the state. The Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment is shown on Map 3.2 and Map 3.3 shows the same data zoomed into Region Q. Other data layers in the mapping tool which can be utilized include agricultural lands assessment, forestry lands assessment, soil data, wetlands data, and more. The mapping tool is available at <http://ncnhde.natureserve.org/content/map>.

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission also offers the Partners for Green Growth grant, which is a cost-share program to support conservation-based land use planning work. Grants typically run for 18 months and are for \$10,000, requiring a 25% match. The commission also provides information on other grant programs that communities can apply to for conservation work.

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission considers themselves a partner in working alongside communities and landowners that wish to protect their environment. The challenge the commission faces is that there is not always the political willingness within communities to implement ordinances and plans that can sometimes appear to restrict economic development and private property rights. In some cases, this stems from a perspective that favors short-term economic gains over long-term avoided costs (e.g. building in the floodplain provides short-term economic gains but comes at a possible and probable long-term cost). There is also sometimes a lack of trust in studies that show economic benefits from natural resource protections.

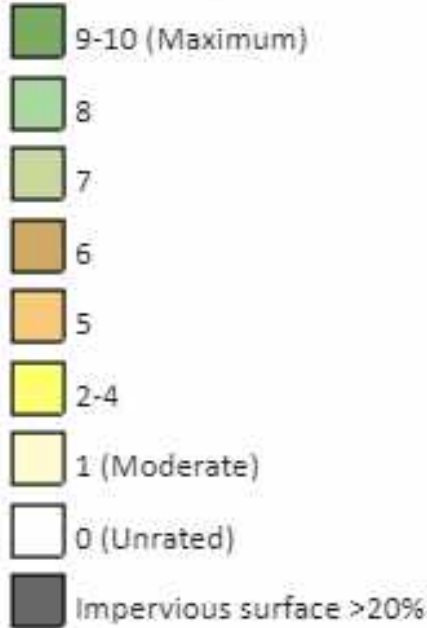
Challenges in working with the private sector include lack of interest and many landowners and developers being risk adverse. They are generally more interested in doing what they know, rather than trying something new. For example, if a developer sees that a conventionally designed subdivision sells, and they have never seen a conservation design subdivision, they don't know if it will sell as easily. There is a lot of potential in training developers, planning consultants and landscape architects to promote development designs that protect connected priority natural areas.

Map 3.2



Map 3.3

Biodiversity & Wildlife Habitat Assessment



Objective 3.2. 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.

Adopted Plans

Please refer to Objective 1.1 for adopted economic development plans and Objective 2.2 for adopted transportation plans. Other adopted plans related to healthy and safe communities are as follows.

- Regional
 - Albemarle Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Includes Hertford County
 - Neuse River Basin Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Includes Pitt County and municipalities
 - Northeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Includes Bertie and Martin Counties and municipalities
 - Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Includes Beaufort County and municipalities
- Beaufort County
 - Beaufort County Joint CAMA Land Use Plan
 - Includes municipalities except Bath and Washington
 - Town of Bath CAMA Land Use Plan
 - City of Washington CAMA Land Use Plan
 - City of Washington Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan
 - City of Washington Pride in the Past, Faith in the Future: 2023 Comprehensive Plan
 - Healthy, Fresh, Local Food: An Action Plan for Increasing Availability and Access in Beaufort County
- Bertie County
 - Bertie County Joint CAMA Land Use Plan
 - Includes municipalities except Windsor
 - Town of Windsor Comprehensive CAMA Land Use Plan
- Hertford County
 - Hertford County Joint CAMA Land Use Plan
 - Includes municipalities
 - Town of Murfreesboro Comprehensive Recreation Plan
- Martin County
 - Martin County Comprehensive Land Use Plan with a Health and Wellness Component
 - Town of Williamston Comprehensive Plan
 - Update and Action Plan for Downtown Williamston

- Pitt County
 - Pitt County 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan
 - Pitt County Southwest Bypass Land Use Plan
 - Pitt County Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
 - Pitt County Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Includes municipalities
 - Pitt County Stormwater Plan
 - Town of Farmville Comprehensive Land Use Plan
 - City of Greenville Horizon 2026: Greenville's Community Plan
 - Town of Winterville Comprehensive Land Use Plan
 - Town of Winterville Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan
 - Town of Ayden Community Vision 2030
 - Town of Fountain Community Master Plan

Subcommittee members were asked what strategies they have found helpful to engage underserved and distressed communities in the planning process and what challenges they have faced. Results are summarized below.

Strategies:

- Information in utility bills
- Hosting community events, especially geared toward children
- Partnering with local churches and libraries
- Signs and flyers placed at strategic locations
- Social media marketing, primarily Facebook

Challenges:

- Lack of internet access in many low-income households
- Lack of trust / hesitation to participate
- Residents lack available time to participate
 - Same challenge as community at large

Local Planning for Healthy Communities

The NC Department of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance created a comprehensive Guidebook on Local Planning for Healthy Communities available at https://files.nc.gov/nccommerce/documents/rural-development-division/mainstreet/Healthy_Communities_Planning_Guidebook_Final.pdf. The guidebook serves as an update to the state's land use planning guidebook and features a healthy communities focus. The guidebook provides resources and information to help local governments with long range planning, including land use planning, environmental planning,

access to healthy foods, physical activity and healthy living, healthy homes, healthy community infrastructure, increasing contact with nature, and more.

Objective 3.3. Develop a plan to promote the restoration and preservation of urban and town centers.

Main Street Communities and Downtown Organizations

Certified Main Street Communities and downtown organizations in the region are as follows.

- Beaufort County
 - Belhaven Small Town Main Street program
 - Washington Harbor District Alliance
- Martin County
 - Robersonville Small Town Main Street program
 - Williamston Downtown Inc.
- Pitt County
 - Ayden Main Street program
 - Farmville Downtown Partnership
 - Uptown Greenville

Downtown Revitalization

The NC Department of Commerce's Main Street and Rural Planning Center manages the NC Main Street program. There are options for certification as a Small Town Main Street program or a Main Street program based on population size.

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center is the Main Street America coordinating program for the state. NC Main Street staff are charged by the NC Department of Commerce to facilitate downtown economic development, using the Main Street America Four Point Approach, in designated communities. The Four Point Approach includes economic vitality, design, promotion and organization.

NC Main Street staff provide strategic downtown economic development planning and technical assistance, Main Street program guidance, and downtown development education and training to member organizations. In addition, there are grant opportunities for downtown revitalization which are only available to certified Small Town Main Street and Main Street communities.

Certification as a Small Town Main Street or Main Street community does require a certain amount of staff time to be dedicated to the program, attendance at training events twice per year, and a semi-annual reporting requirement. Some smaller towns in the region that have downtown districts which could benefit from the program experience staffing shortages that prevent them from participating.

Downtown Property Databases

Some downtown organizations and local governments have downtown property databases available which showcase available commercial properties in downtown areas for potential tenants or buyers. The NC East Alliance manages the regional Industrial Property database and they have recently added a Commercial and Historic Property database which showcases downtown properties and other commercial properties across the region. The database is available at <https://www.nceast.org/commercial-properties/>. The database has photos of properties and information on lease or sale price, contact information, square footage, number of floors, date built, etc.

The screenshot shows the NC East Alliance website's search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Investors & Partners', 'News & Events', 'The Alliance', and 'Contact Us'. Below this is a search bar with a 'Search' button and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. A teal navigation bar contains links for 'Overview', 'Eastern NC Advantages', 'Economy & Employers', 'Sites & Building Search', and 'Workforce & Training'. The 'Sites & Building Search' section is active, displaying a search form with fields for 'Search Terms', 'Location', 'Miles' (with a dropdown arrow), 'from', 'Lease Price Max', 'Sale Price Max', and 'Square Footage Min'. A 'SEARCH' button is located to the right of the 'Square Footage Min' field. Below the search form is a map of North Carolina with several red pins indicating property locations. The map includes labels for major cities like Charlotte, Raleigh, Durham, and Greensboro, as well as highways and geographical features. The map is credited to Google and dated 2020.

NC East Alliance Commercial and Historic Property Database

Objective 3.4. Collaborate with law enforcement on community policing initiatives.

Community Policing Program Assistance

The NC State Bureau of Investigation's Information Sharing and Analysis Center has a Community Outreach and Engagement program to assist local law enforcement agencies with implementing community policing programs. Information is available at

<https://files.nc.gov/ncdps/documents/files/NCISSACOutreachBrochure.pdf>. The program seeks to:

- Create training programs for law enforcement to address gaps in cultural competency as well as best practices for community engagement across the state.
- Provide on-going forums and programs for the community that address their needs and provide a better understanding of how the government and law enforcement function.
- Build, strengthen, and maintain relationships of trust between communities and federal and state government and law enforcement officials through sustained engagement.
- Act as a liaison between community leaders, advisory councils—both government and non-government—to help counter radicalization, violent extremism, and violent criminal behavior through community engagement and education.
- Create youth programs to involve the youth with state and federal government and non-government led programs to enhance their knowledge and involvement within and outside of the community.

Community Policing Programs

The City of Greenville in Pitt County has implemented a community policing unit to building trust with residents. They have events such as Community Policing Week, Police Athletic League, and a Cops and Barbers program. The Town of Williamston in Martin County has also implemented a community policing program with the town being divided into districts and officers being assigned to each district to make personal contacts with community members. These successful programs can serve as case studies for other law enforcement agencies in the region that are interested in implementing Community Policing programs.

Objective 3.5. Ensure that all residents have access to healthcare, education and affordable services. Identify areas that lack access or where access is not affordable.

Access to Healthcare

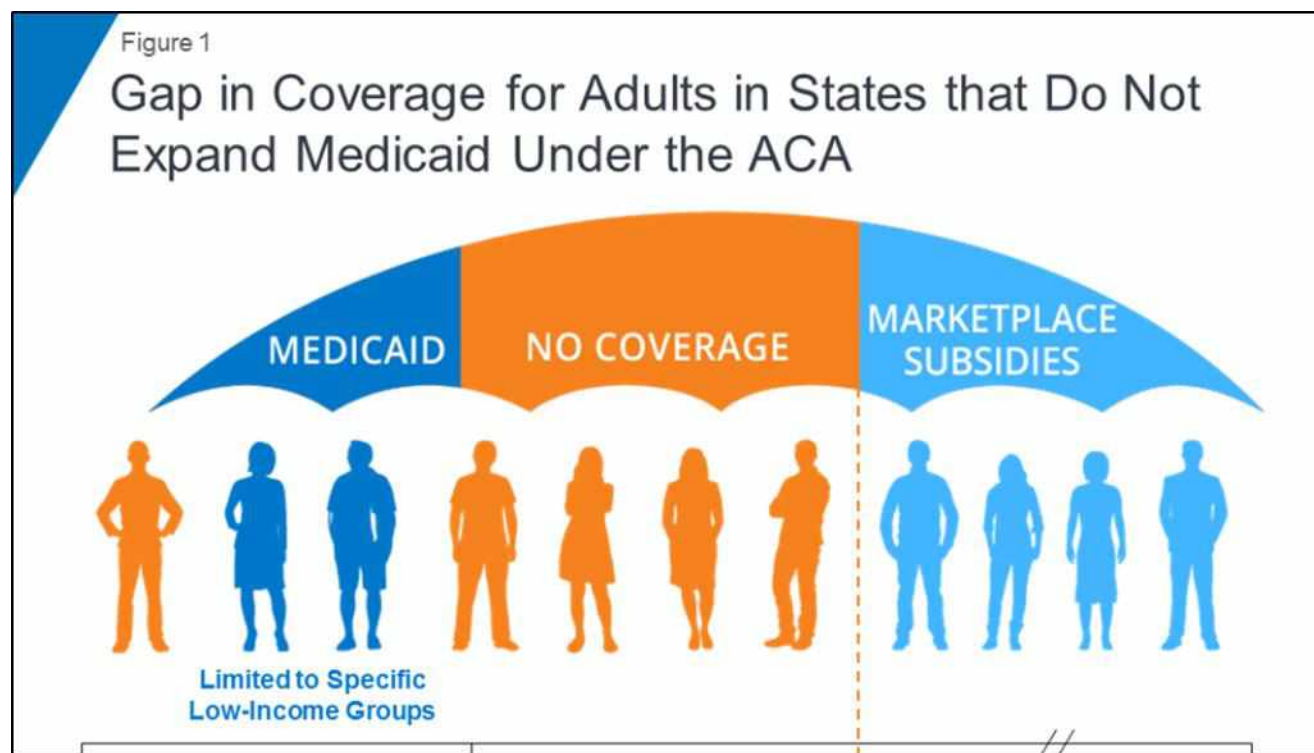
The US Health Resources and Services Administration provides information on areas with health professional shortages for primary care providers, dental health providers, and mental health providers. An area can be designated as having a shortage based on geographic shortage (shortage of services for the entire population within the geographic area), population shortage (shortage of services for a specific population subset such as Medicaid eligible persons), or facility shortage (public or non-profit private medical facilities with a shortage of healthcare providers). All counties in Eastern NC were identified as Health Professional Shortage Areas for primary care, dental health, and mental health.

However, there were some regional variations in scoring observed in the region. Eastern Beaufort County had scores significantly lower than the rest of the region for primary care providers and Martin County had scores significantly lower than the rest of the region for mental health providers. Although additional providers are needed throughout the region, the

data indicates a more critical shortage in these areas. Local governments have already taken proactive steps to address these known shortages, with the Vidant Multispecialty Clinic being constructed in Belhaven (eastern Beaufort County) and the Martin County Health Department adding mental healthcare as an available service.

Map 3.4 shows Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) for primary care providers, Map 3.5 shows HPSAs for dental health providers, and Map 3.6 shows HPSAs for mental health providers.

An additional concern regarding access to healthcare is access to health insurance. The so called “donut hole” or coverage gap affects approximately 215,000 adults in North Carolina. These residents make too much money to qualify for Medicaid, but too little to qualify for subsidies under the Affordable Care Act / Healthcare Marketplace. Most of these workers are employed in industries which do not generally offer employer sponsored healthcare. Unless Medicaid is expanded to cover these individuals or the income limit for subsidies through the Healthcare Marketplace is lowered, they will continue to have no realistic option for health insurance.



Type here to search data below

Or browse all data to map: [Reset view](#)

Sites/Areas

Health Centers and Other Sites

Shortage Areas

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

Primary Care HPSA

☐ Primary Care Facilities

☒ Primary Care Areas (HPSA Score)

Dental Health HPSA

☐ Dental Health Facilities

☐ Dental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

Mental Health HPSA

☐ Mental Health Facilities

☐ Mental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

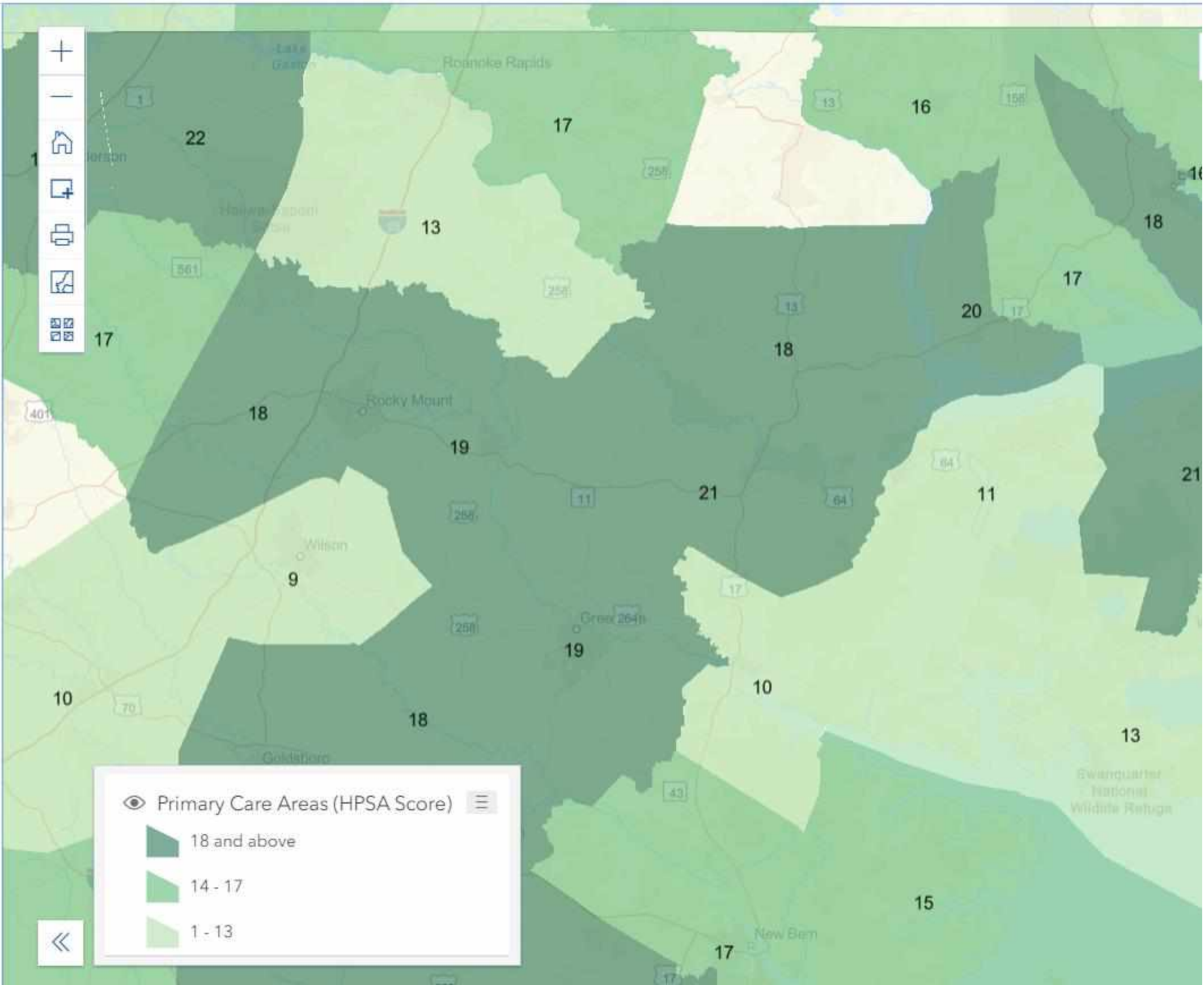
Medically Underserved Areas/Populations

Grants/Loans/Scholarships

Other Agencies

Your Data

Add Data



Type here to search data below

Or browse all data to map: [Reset view](#)

Sites/Areas

Health Centers and Other Sites

Shortage Areas

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

Primary Care HPSA

☐ Primary Care Facilities

☐ Primary Care Areas (HPSA Score)

Dental Health HPSA

☐ Dental Health Facilities

☒ Dental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

Mental Health HPSA

☐ Mental Health Facilities

☐ Mental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

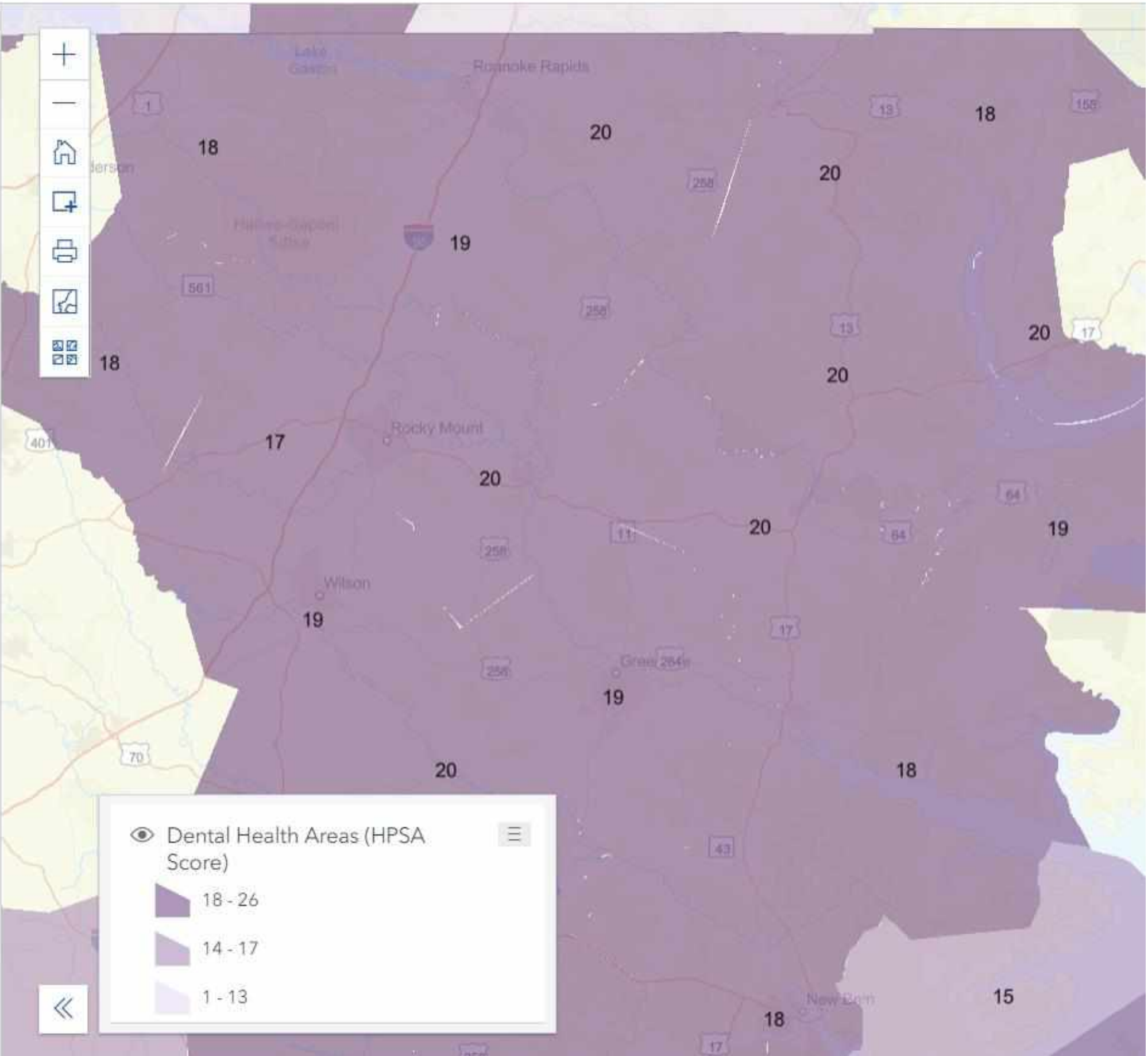
Medically Underserved Areas/Populations

Grants/Loans/Scholarships

Other Agencies

Your Data

Add Data



Type here to search data below

Or browse all data to map: [Reset view](#)

Sites/Areas

Health Centers and Other Sites

Shortage Areas

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

Primary Care HPSA

- ☐ Primary Care Facilities
- ☐ Primary Care Areas (HPSA Score)

Dental Health HPSA

- ☐ Dental Health Facilities
- ☐ Dental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

Mental Health HPSA

- ☐ Mental Health Facilities
- ☒ Mental Health Areas (HPSA Score)

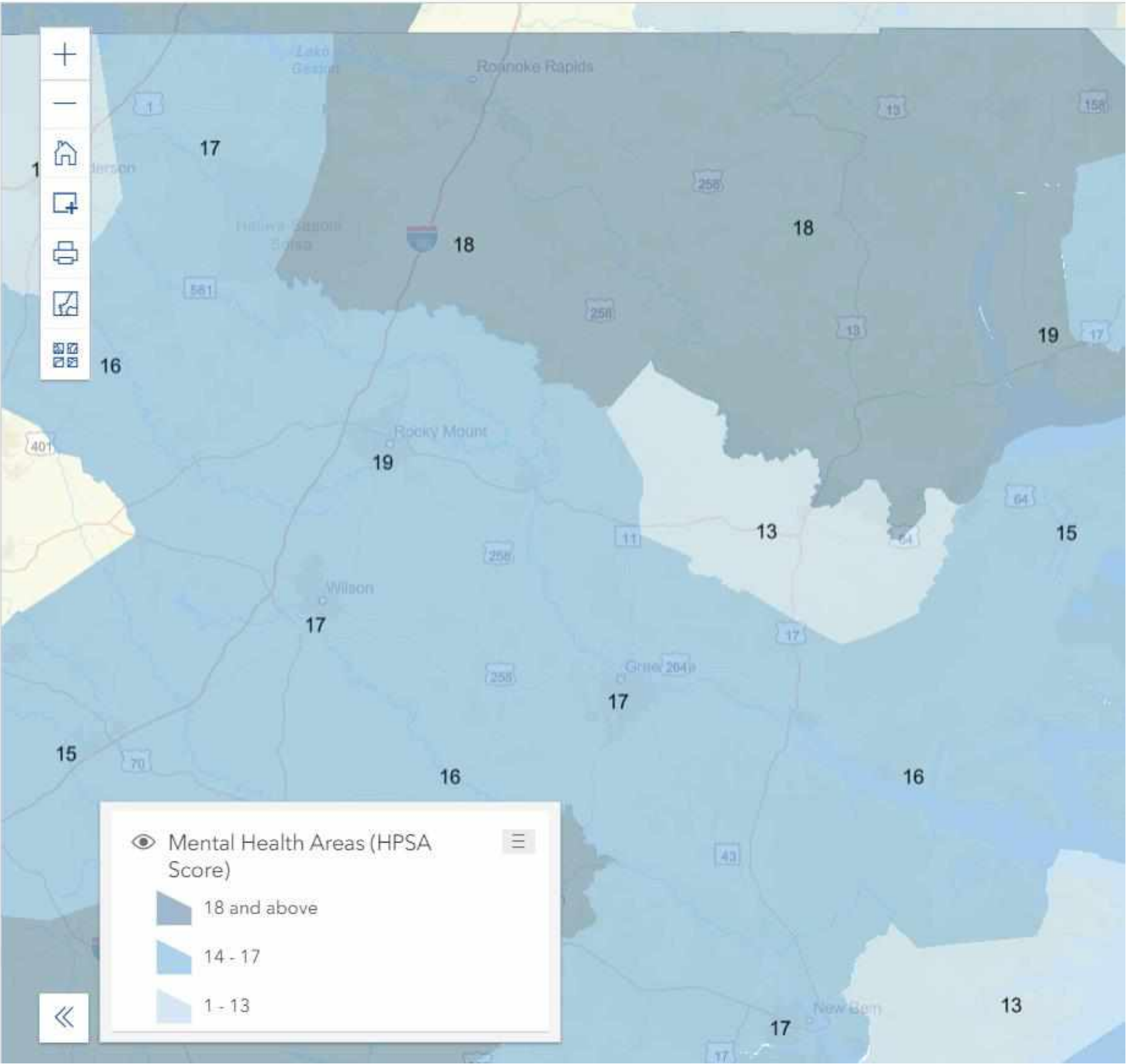
Medically Underserved Areas/Populations

Grants/Loans/Scholarships

Other Agencies

Your Data

Add Data



Daycare Assistance and Early Childhood Education Programs

Daycare assistance was identified as a critical need for the region during the 2017 major update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. There is a Childcare Subsidy program managed through the Department of Social Services in each county. Most parents pay a fee depending on their family size and their income. However, this program is not adequately funded. All counties in the region have a waiting list of people who qualify for daycare assistance but are not currently able to receive funding.

Smart Start funds are managed through Partnership for Children organizations. Smart Start is funded through state and private funds and provides a variety of services for children less than six years old and their families including developmental screenings, parenting classes, home visits, and more. The Head Start program is federally funded pre-school program that targets low income 3 and 4-year olds. The NC Pre-School program is specifically targeted to reach four-year olds at risk of school failure by providing a quality pre-school experience.

The NC Early Childhood Action Plan was adopted in 2019 and is available at <https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/ECAP-Report-FINAL-WEB-f.pdf>. Goals for daycare and early childhood education include increasing the level of income eligible children enrolled in Pre-K statewide from 47% to 75% and decreasing the percent of family income spent on childcare from 11% to 7%. Early childhood education experts are advocating for Universal Pre-K for four year old children. Florida, Georgia, and Oklahoma are the only states who have implemented Universal Pre-K programs at this time.

Access to Higher Education

Institutes of higher education in the region include the following.

- Beaufort County
 - Beaufort County Community College
 - Mount Olive University
- Bertie County
 - Served by Martin Community College
 - MCC Annex building located in county
- Hertford County
 - Chowan University
 - Roanoke-Chowan Community College
- Martin County
 - Martin Community College
- Pitt County
 - East Carolina University
 - Pitt Community College

Community colleges and universities across the region offer a wide variety of educational programs, certificate and degree options. Federal Pell Grants are widely accepted. Rural transit agencies generally provide transportation to community colleges at affordable rates (although rates may still be a challenge for low income residents to afford). Access to night classes may be a problem for those without vehicle access as most rural transit agencies only operate during the day.

Utility Assistance Programs

The Low Income Energy Assistance program is managed through county Departments of Social Services. The program helps people with winter heating bills. The amount awarded depends on income and heating costs and can range from \$200 - \$1,400. The average applicant receives \$500 toward winter heating costs. The program is generally adequately funded (everyone who applies and is eligible receives funding). The Crisis Intervention Program is also managed through county Departments of Social Services. Qualifying applicants must meet income requirements and have a household member who has a life threatening or health related emergency due to lack of heating or cooling access.

Some utility providers have their own assistance programs. For example, Tideland Electric Membership Cooperative has an Energy Assistance Grant for severe electric bills. Roanoke Electric Membership Cooperative has the Roanoke SolarShare program which uses donations to purchase solar panels' energy output on behalf of deserving families to reduce their electric bills, and Greenville Utilities has the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program where donations are matched to assist low-income families with winter heating bills.

Objective 3.6. Capitalize on natural resources and recreation opportunities in order to improve the quality of life for citizens and promote ecotourism.

Inadequate access to public parks is an issue in many areas of the region. The National Parks and Recreation Association defines a community park's service area to be 1-2 miles. Maps showing access to public parks are provided for Beaufort County (Map 3.7, Mid-East Commission), Bertie County (Map 3.8, Mid-East Commission), Hertford County (Map 3.9, Mid-East Commission), Martin County (Map 3.10, Mid-East Commission), and Pitt County (Map 3.11, Pitt County).

Bertie and Pitt are the only counties with Parks and Recreation Departments as part of the county government system. These maps provide evidence that investments in professional parks and recreation staff have gone a long way toward improving access to recreation opportunities for residents in these counties.

The NC Department of Public Instruction has produced a guide on Promoting Physical Activity Through Joint Use Agreements and provides template agreements for school districts interested in opening school playground and other school recreation facilities to the public outside of school areas. An initiative of this type could drastically change access to playgrounds

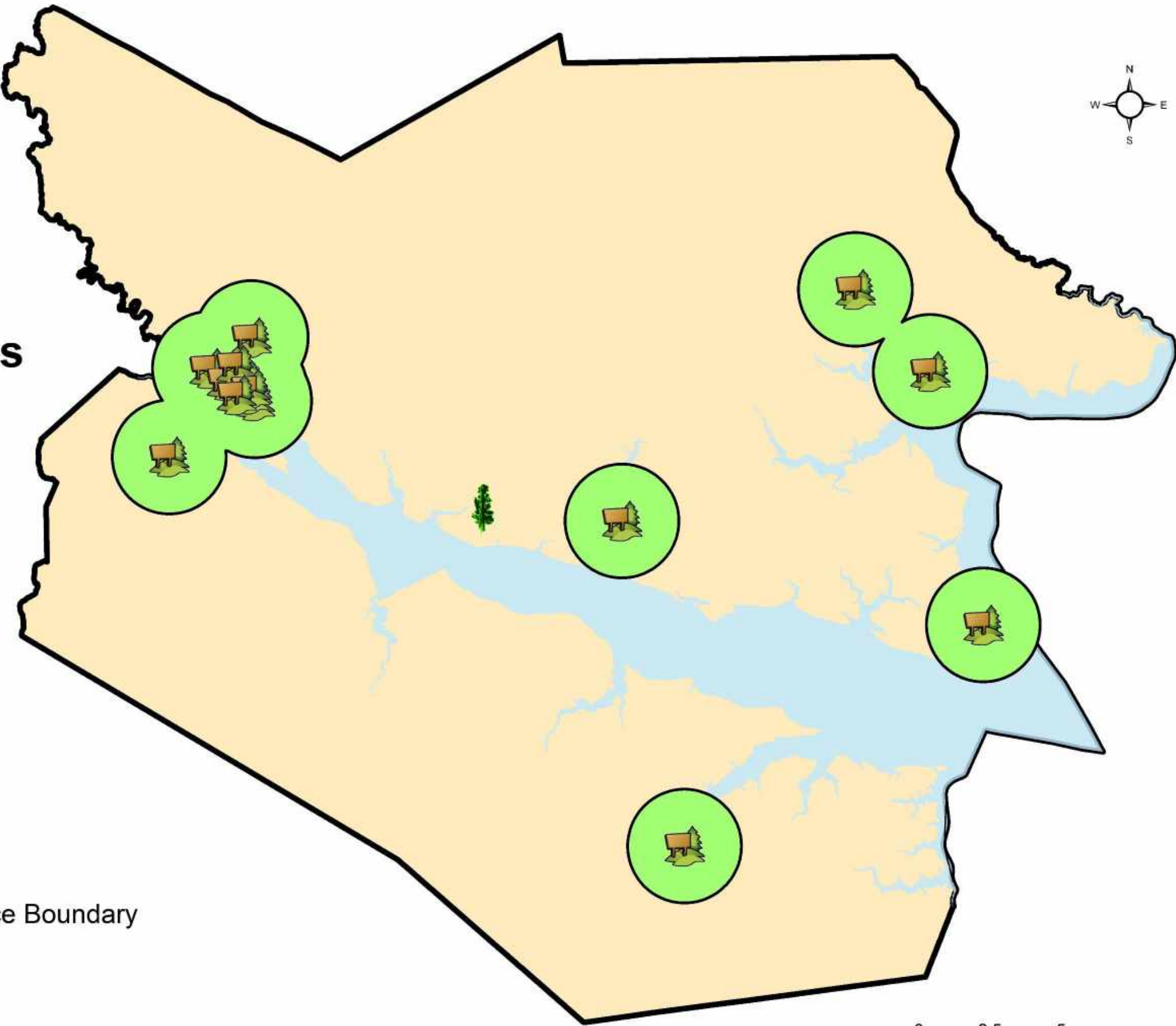
for children in the region while utilizing infrastructure that is already available. Currently, Pitt County has a Joint Use Agreement in place for all public schools and Bertie County as a joint use agreement in place for four public elementary school playgrounds. There are no known joint use agreements currently in place for Beaufort, Hertford or Martin Counties.

Map 3.7

Beaufort County North Carolina Public Park Access

Legend

-  Public Parks
-  Goose Creek State Park
-  Public Park 2-mile Service Boundary
-  Surface Water
-  County Boundary



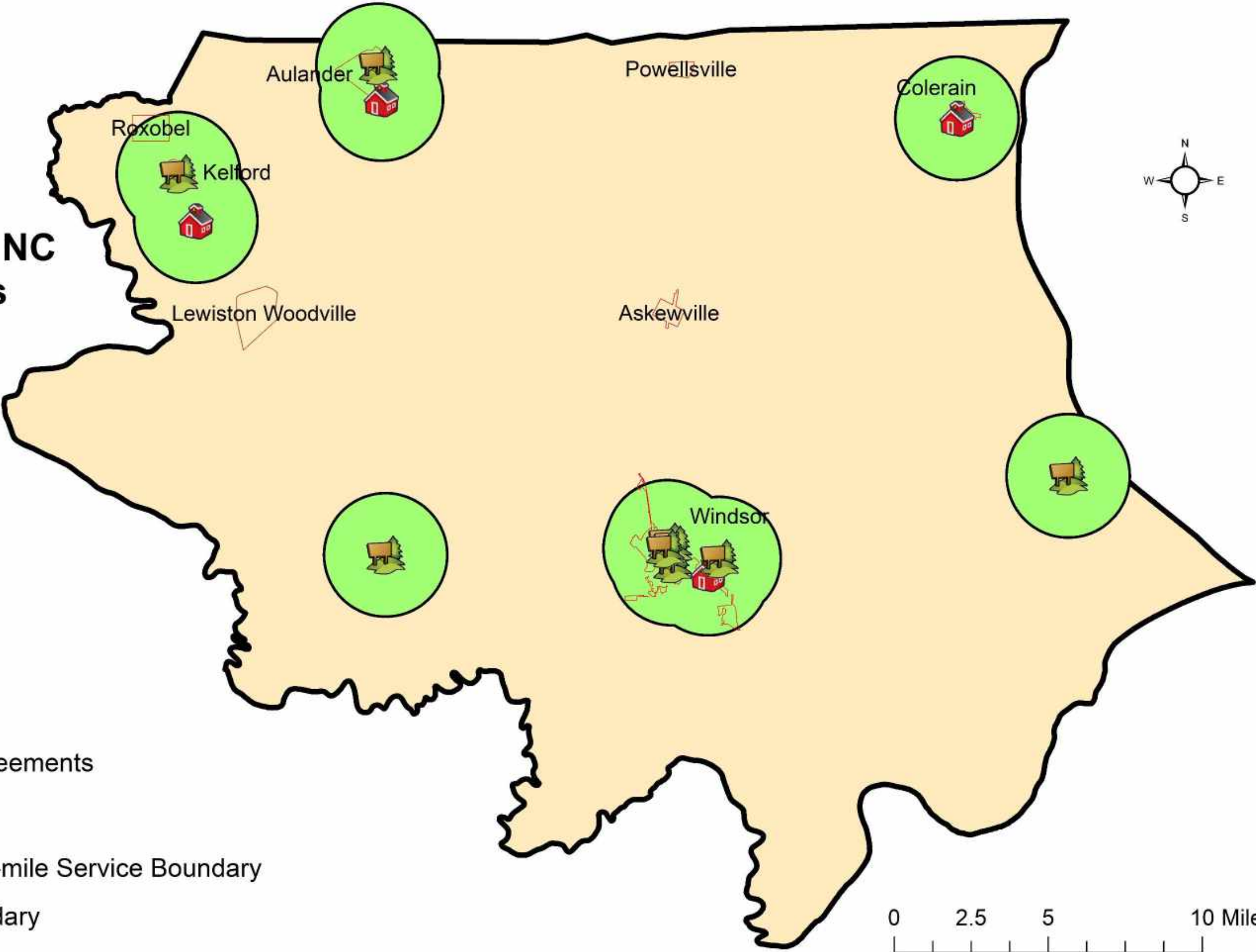
0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Map 3.8

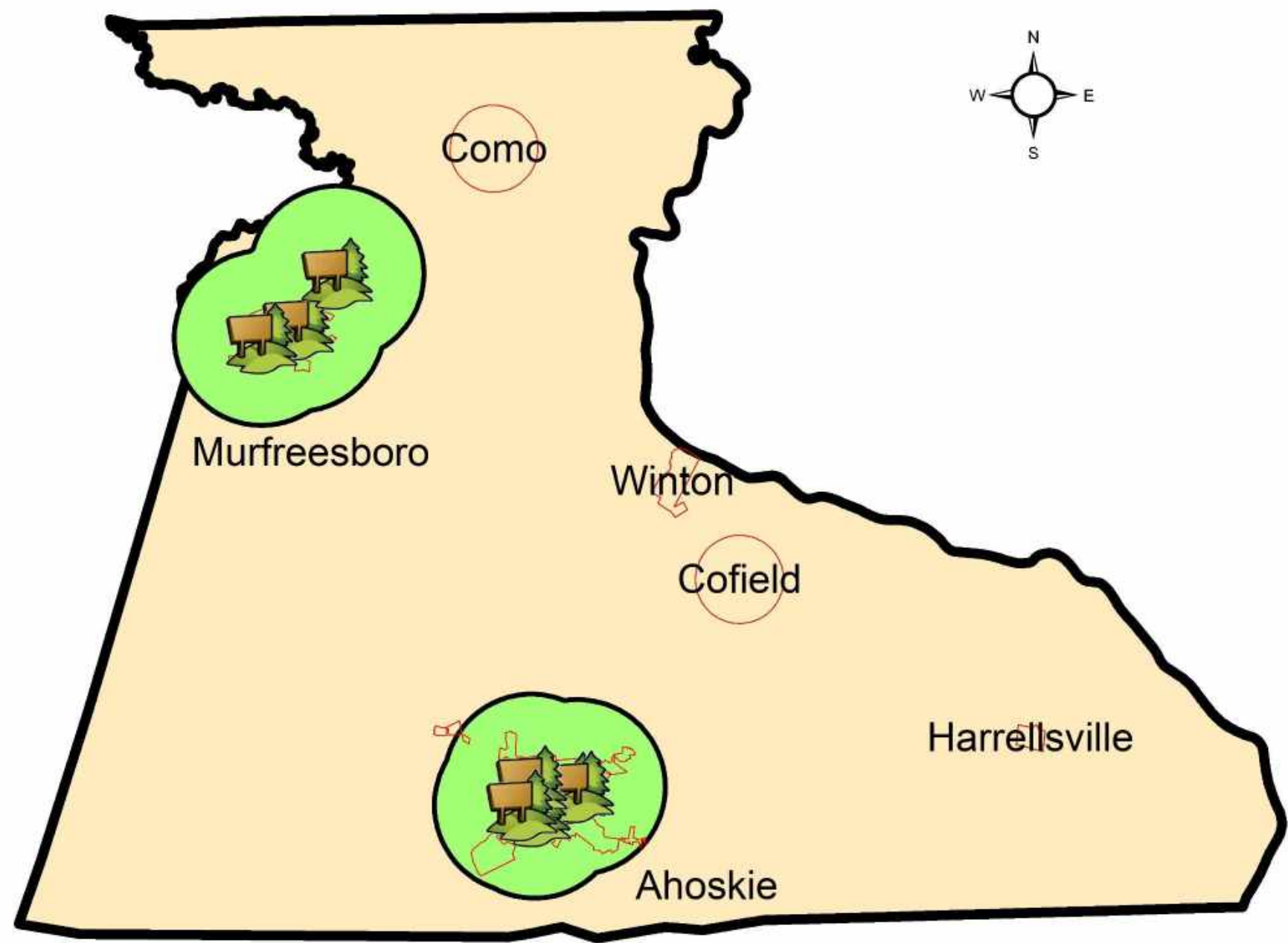
Bertie County, NC Park Access

Legend

-  Public Parks
-  Joint Use Agreements
-  Municipalities
-  Public Park 2-mile Service Boundary
-  County Boundary



Map 3.9



Hertford County, NC Park Access

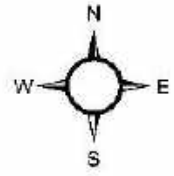
Legend

-  Public Parks
-  Public Park 2-mile Service Boundary
-  Municipalities
-  County Boundary



Map 3.10

Martin County, NC Park Access



Legend



Public Parks



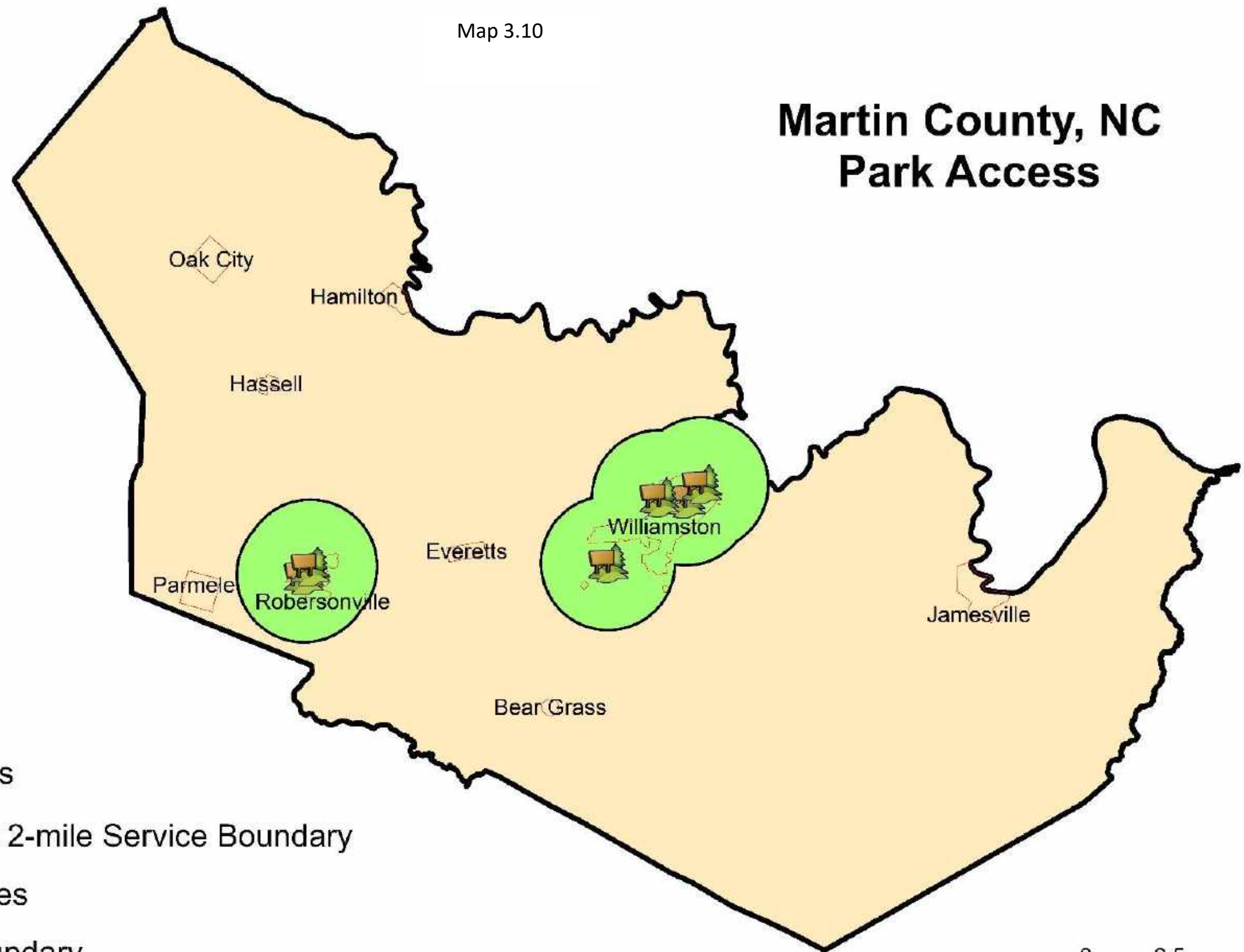
Public Park 2-mile Service Boundary



Municipalities



County Boundary



0 2.5 5 Miles

Parks & Walking Trails In Pitt County

Map 3.11



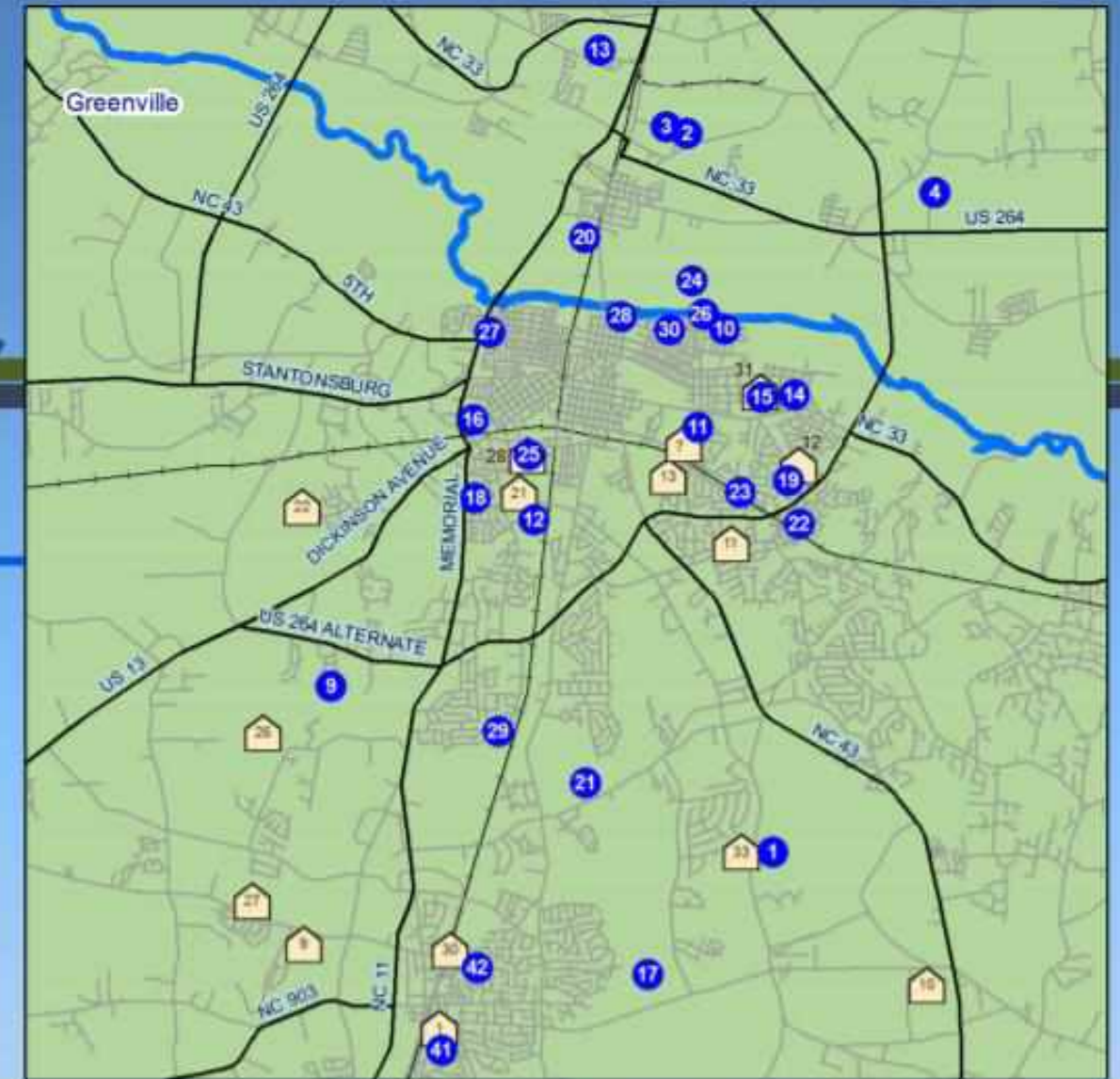
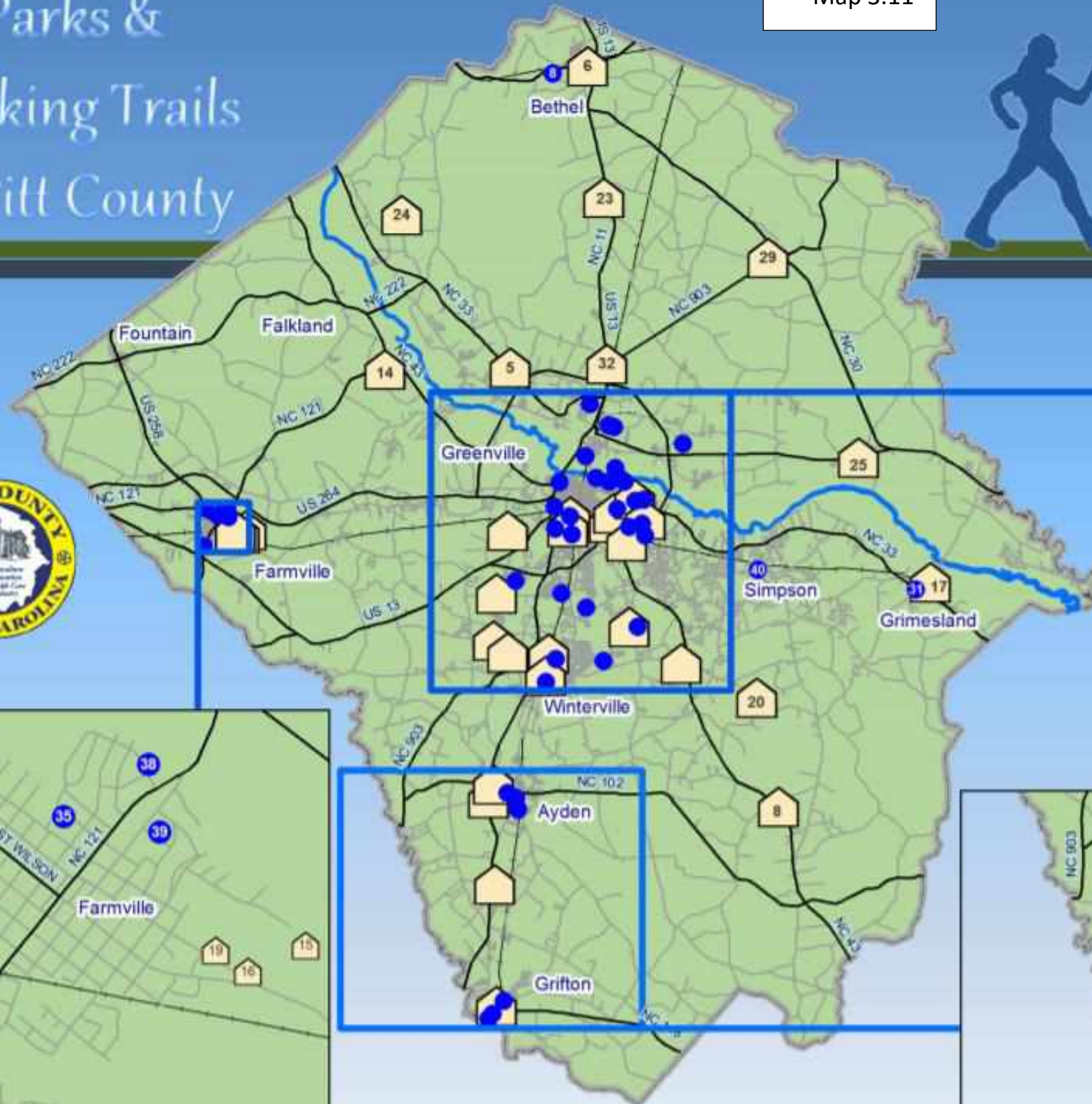
Farmville

Map Produced By
Pitt County Planning Department

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Legend

- Parks in Pitt County
- Pitt County Schools



Greenville/Winterville



Ayden/Grifton



Ecotourism

Region Q is blessed with abundant natural resources including rivers and streams, wetlands, woodlands, and picturesque agricultural fields. Ecotourism is a prime opportunity for economic development in the region which has not been capitalized on. Convention bureaus, visitor's centers, Chambers of Commerce, environmental non-profit organizations and other groups have observed this opportunity, and ecotourism related activities such as kayaking, hiking, horseback riding and fishing are included in many of the marketing materials across the region.

Roanoke River Partners has maintained a series of camping platforms along the Roanoke River as part of the Roanoke River Paddle Trail in partnership with member local governments since 1997. The paddle trail consists of over 200 miles of interconnected creeks, rivers, and swamps along the Roanoke and runs through both Bertie and Martin Counties. A study by NC Growth showed that annual expenditures related to the Roanoke River Paddle Trail contributed approximately \$340,000 annually to the economy in the Roanoke River Region (2015).

More recently, Sound River Foundation has constructed camping platforms along the Tar-Pamlico River. The Tar-Pamlico River Water Trail runs through both Beaufort and Pitt Counties are well used by both residents and visitors. Fortunately, there is an outfitter, Knee Deep Adventures, in Greenville which can rent kayaks to persons interested in utilizing the camping platforms. There is a prime opportunity in Martin and Bertie Counties for a similar type of outfitter along the Roanoke River Paddle Trail. Currently people are only able to utilize the platforms if they have their own kayak or canoe, making it difficult for tourists to participate. An outfitter in one of these more rural counties may need to include other types of gear to be successful, such as selling hiking and fishing equipment in addition to kayak rentals.

The Four Rivers RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development) Paddle Trail System includes the Meherrin River running through Hertford County and may be an underutilized and undermarketed resource in the county. The Meherrin River does not currently have camping platforms, but the Town of Murfreesboro has plans to construct three platforms in their recently adopted Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. There is the potential opportunity for an outfitter in Hertford County, although more initial marketing may be needed for the paddle trail than in the other four counties, where the paddle trails are already well utilized.

More information on the Roanoke River Paddle Trail can be found at <https://www.roanokeriverpartners.org/>. More information on the Tar-Pamlico Water Trail can be found at <https://www.tarpamlicowatertrail.org/>. There is not readily accessible information online regarding the Four Rivers RC&D Paddle Trail System, indicating an additional need for marketing the paddle trail. There is information about the trail posted on a sign at the NC Wildlife Boating Access site in the Town of Murfreesboro.

Greenways and bicycle routes also provide an opportunity to attract ecotourism dollars to the region. In Martin and Pitt Counties, Greenville's greenway system and Williamston's Skewarkee Rail Trail have already been designated as a portion of the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile

greenway system connecting 15 states and 450 cities from Maine to Florida. The primary route of the East Coast Greenway through North Carolina runs through the Raleigh-Durham Triangle area and has already been constructed. The alternate NC coastal route of the East Coast Greenway will branch off from the main route in Virginia, and after going through the Elizabeth City area of North Carolina is planned to run south through Bertie County, then through Martin County connecting with the Skewarkee Rail Trail in Williamston, then through Pitt County connecting with Greenville's Greenway System, then following the Tar-Pamlico River east through Beaufort County, utilizing the ferry to Aurora and existing the county southbound toward New Bern. Map 3.12 shows the planned alternate coastal route of the East Coast Greenway. (While Hertford County is not included on the route, there is the potential to construct a local greenway system that connects to the East Coast Greenway route and takes advantage of that user base once constructed.)

The East Coast Greenway organization is not funding the construction of the greenway, but they are providing the organizational mechanism and partnering with local governments, DOTs, non-profits and other groups to get the greenway constructed. The alternate coastal route is sure to be popular amongst tourists. The East Coast Greenway will be a major attraction drawing visitors from around the world, like the impact of the Appalachian Trail which attracts two million visitors and \$27 million in local spending annually to communities in the Appalachian Mountain region (Rails-to-Trails Conservancy). It is important for local governments and other partner organizations to start planning for construction of this greenway now, as the alternate coastal route is not set in stone and Region Q could miss out on the project if other areas are more proactive in their planning efforts.

While an official study has not been conducted for the region, we know that bicycle tourism has a significant economic impact in the region. A study showed that bicycle tourism generated \$43 million in annual revenue in Western North Carolina (Asheville on Bikes) and another study showed that bicycle tourism generated \$60 million in annual revenue in the Northern Outer Banks (Adventurecycling.org). The East Coast Greenway will be open to both hikers and bicyclists, which indicates the potential economic impact to be even higher than the Appalachian Trail, which is only open to hikers. There are already major bicyclist groups regularly coming to the region for events, such as Cycle NC and Race Across America.

In addition to the planned East Coast Greenway route, there are three official NC State Bicycle Routes that run through Region Q. NC Bicycle Route 2, the Mountains to Sea Route, runs through Beaufort County and Pitt County. NC Bicycle Route 3, the Ports of Call Route, runs thorough Bertie County and Beaufort County. NC Bicycle Route 4, the North Line Trace Route, runs through Hertford County. (None of the state bicycle routes run through Martin County but there is the potential for local bicycle routes to connect with the state routes and take advantage of that user base.) Most of the roads along these routes have been designated by the state but have not had improved bicycle facilities installed. This represents a need across the region which should be considered and addressed in local Comprehensive Bicycle Plan documents. Map 3.13 shows designated NC Bicycle Routes.

There are currently successful bicycle outfitter businesses in Beaufort and Pitt Counties. There is the potential for outfitter businesses in Bertie, Hertford and Martin Counties as well. Again, with the lower population density in these counties, outfitters may need to have multiple things available to be successful, i.e. a bicycle outfitter may also be a kayak outfitter. There is also the potential opportunity for increased marketing of bicycle tourism, which is likely an undercapitalized economic driver in most of the region.

More information on the East Coast Greenway is available at <https://www.greenway.org/>.
More information on the NC Bicycle Routes is available at <https://www.ncdot.gov/travel-maps/maps/Pages/bike-routes.aspx>.

Additionally, there are a variety of opportunities for niche marketing related to ecotourism. Some of these niches have already been developed and it is simply a matter of marketing what is already out there. An example is the NC Birding Trail, which is a driving trail that links birders and nature-based tourists with great birding sites across the state and the local communities in which they are found. More information about the NC Birding Trail can be found at <https://www.ncbirdingtrail.org/>.

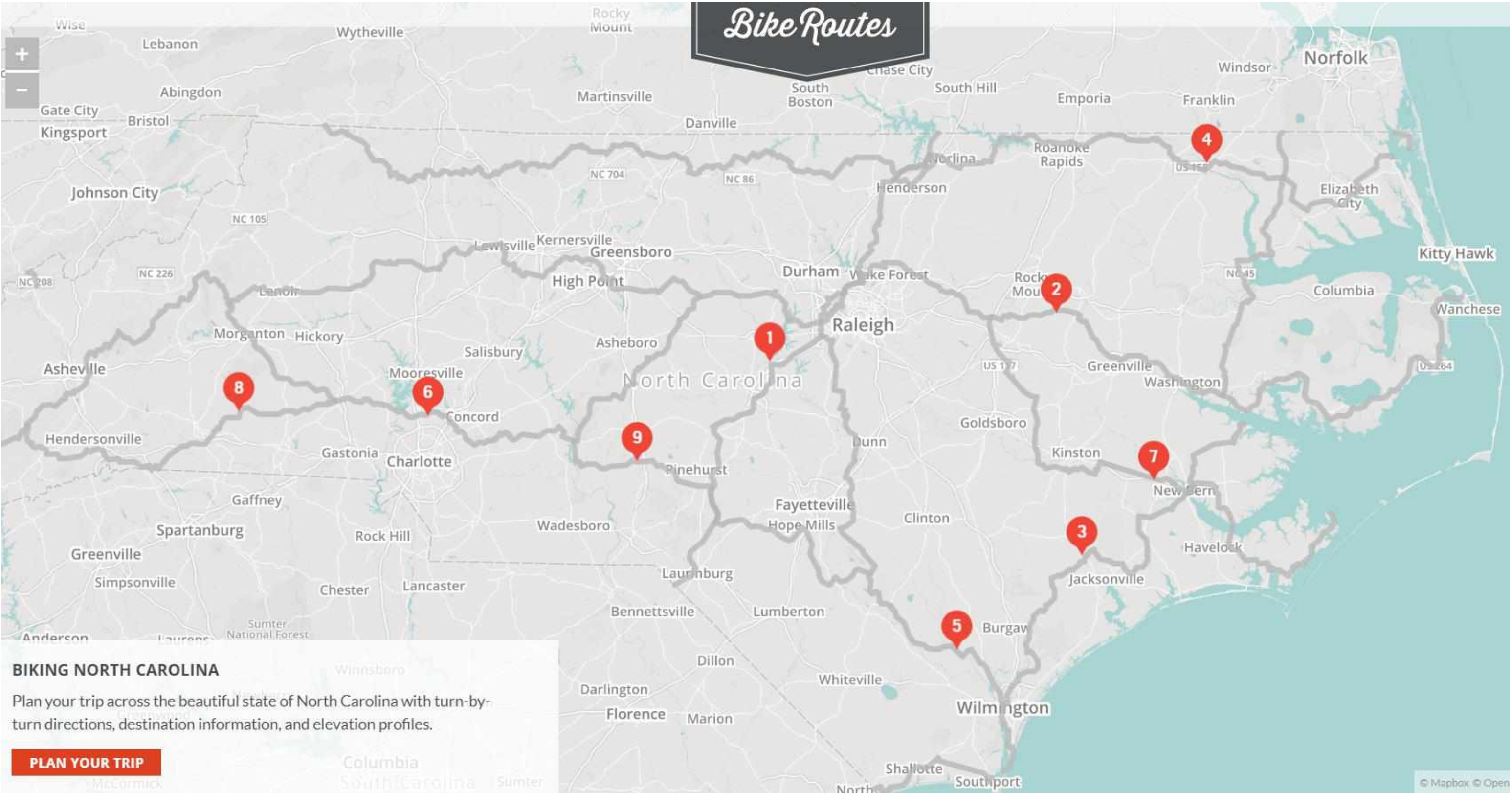


East Coast
Greenway.

Map 3.12



Map 3.13



Objective 3.7. 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.

Local Food Deserts

There is a significant issue with localized food deserts in rural areas of the region. These areas are not always picked up through the US Dept. of Agriculture's (USDA) food desert mapping system. The reason is that the mapping system uses the Census Tract as the geographic input, and Census Tract boundaries are so large in rural areas that some areas may only have two census tracts covering a whole county. A rural food desert is identified by USDA if one-third or more of that census tract is further than ten miles from the nearest grocery store. This method does identify the largest food deserts in the country but misses many localized issues.

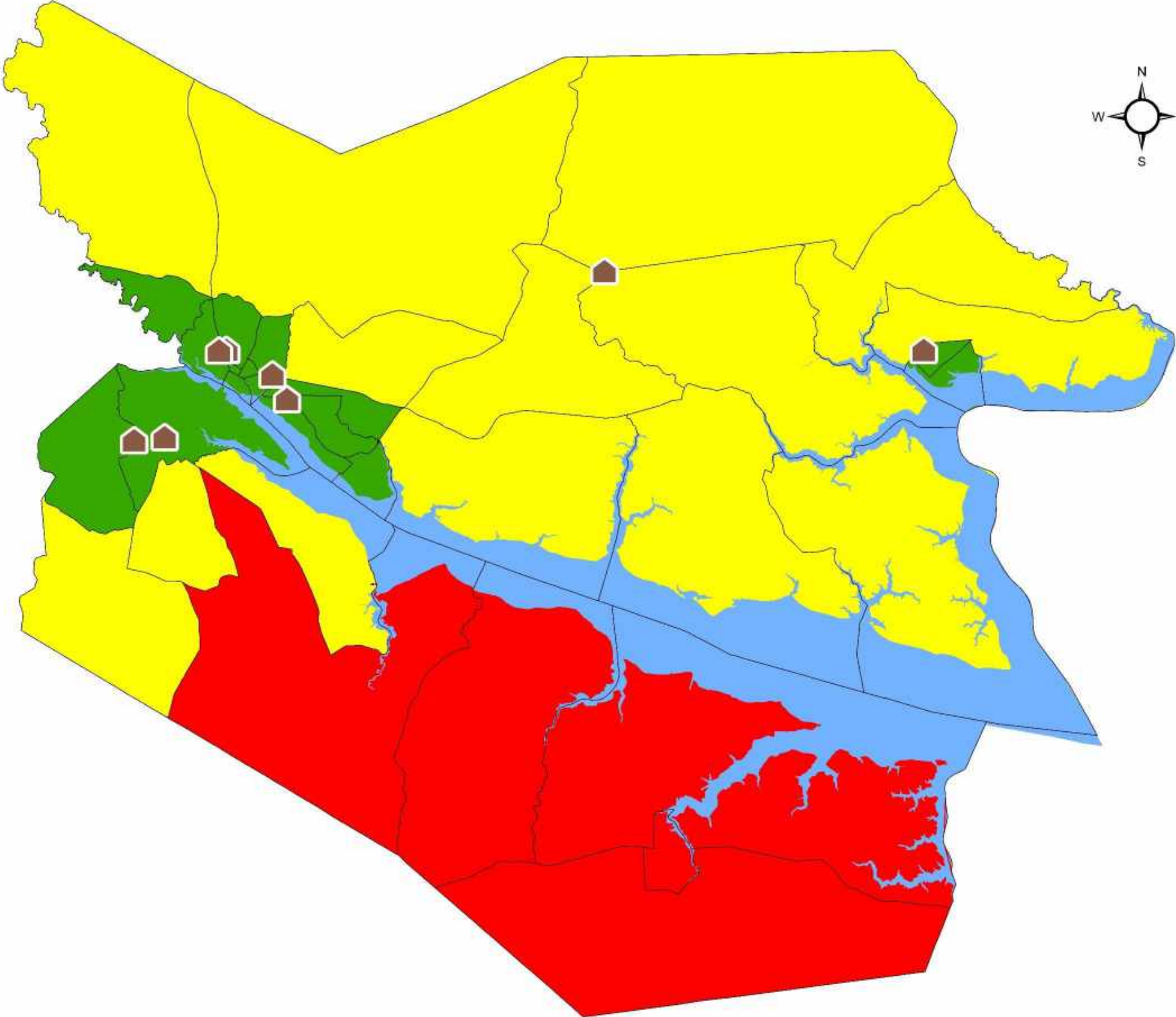
In keeping with the methodology utilized by USDA, local food deserts were mapped in the region by changing the geographic input to the census block group level. Census block groups were selected as food deserts if one-third or more of that block group was further than ten miles from the nearest grocery store. Food deserts are shown for Beaufort County (Map 3.14), Bertie County (Map 3.15), Hertford County (Map 3.16), Martin County (Map 3.17), and Pitt County (Map 3.18).

Map 3.14

Beaufort County, NC Food Deserts

Legend

-  Grocery Stores
-  Surface Water
-  Census Block Groups
-  Within 5 miles of grocery store
-  5 - 9 miles from grocery store
-  Food Deserts (10+ miles from grocery store)

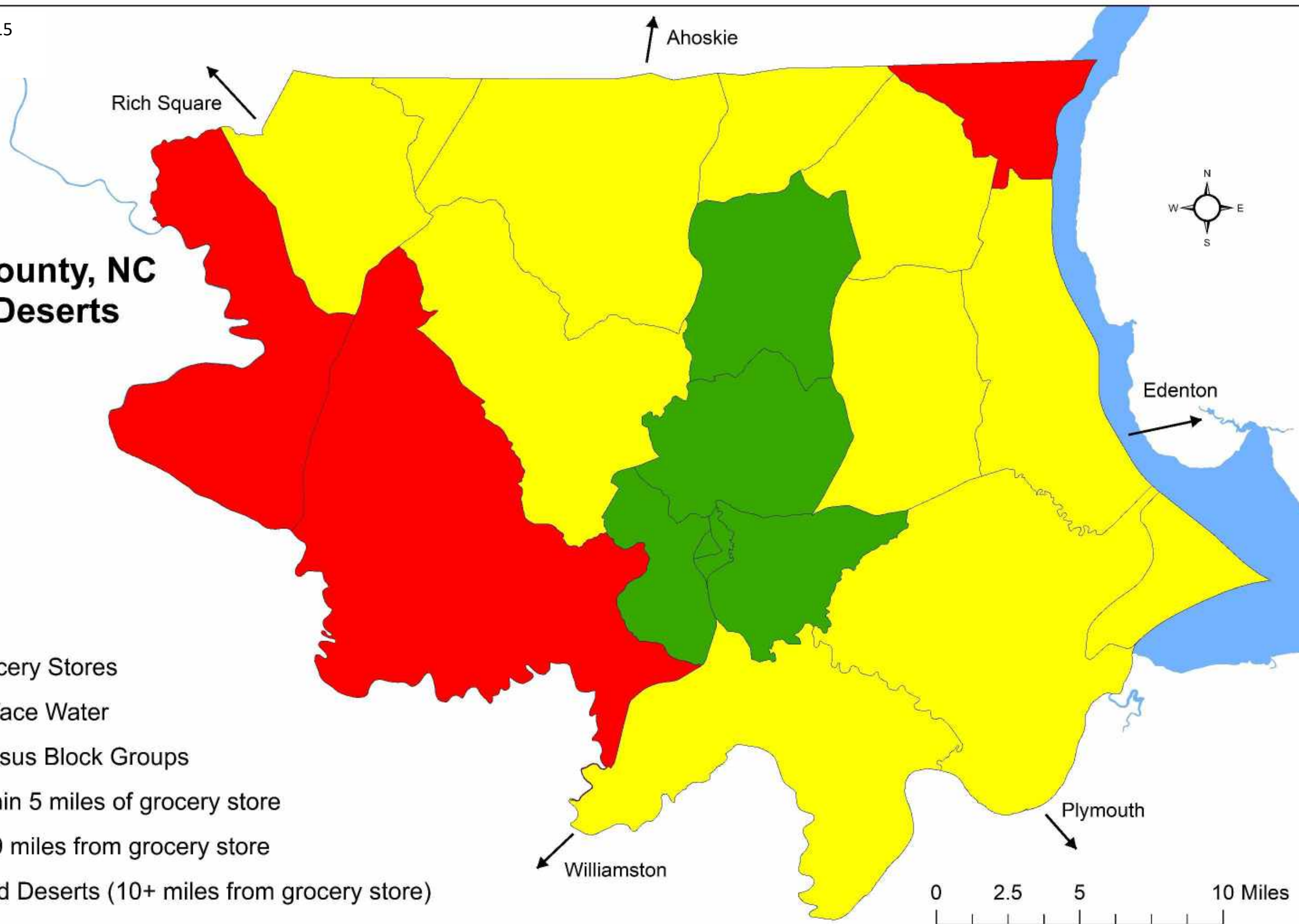


Map 3.15

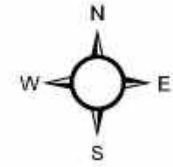
Bertie County, NC Food Deserts

Legend

-  Grocery Stores
-  Surface Water
-  Census Block Groups
-  Within 5 miles of grocery store
-  5 - 9 miles from grocery store
-  Food Deserts (10+ miles from grocery store)



Map 3.16



Hertford County, NC Food Deserts

Legend



Grocery
Stores



Surface
Water



Census
Block
Groups



Within 5
miles of
grocery
store

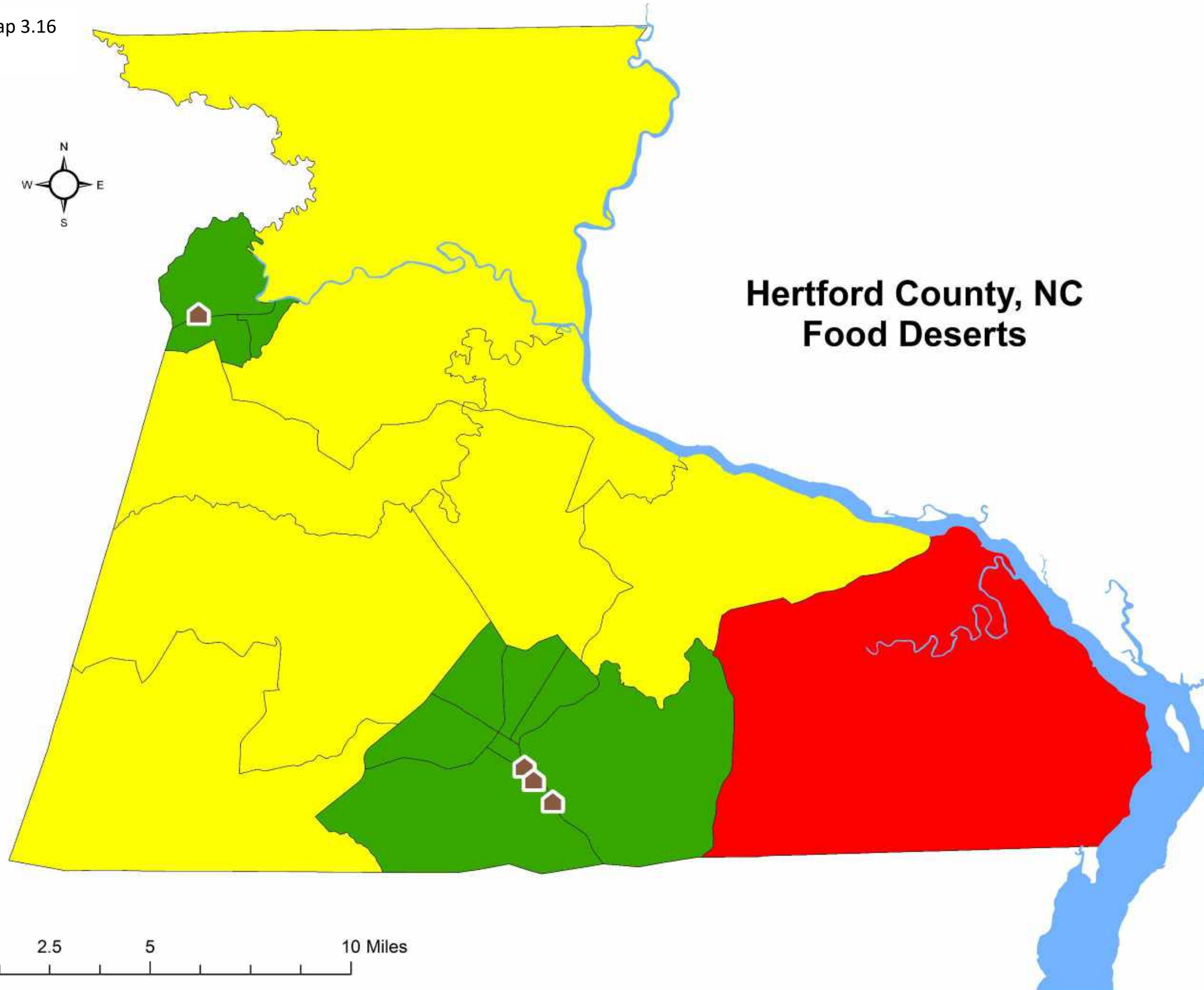


5-9 miles
from
grocery
store

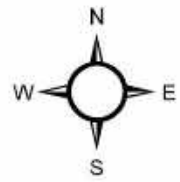


Food
Deserts
(10+
miles
from
grocery
store)

0 2.5 5 10 Miles



Map 3.17

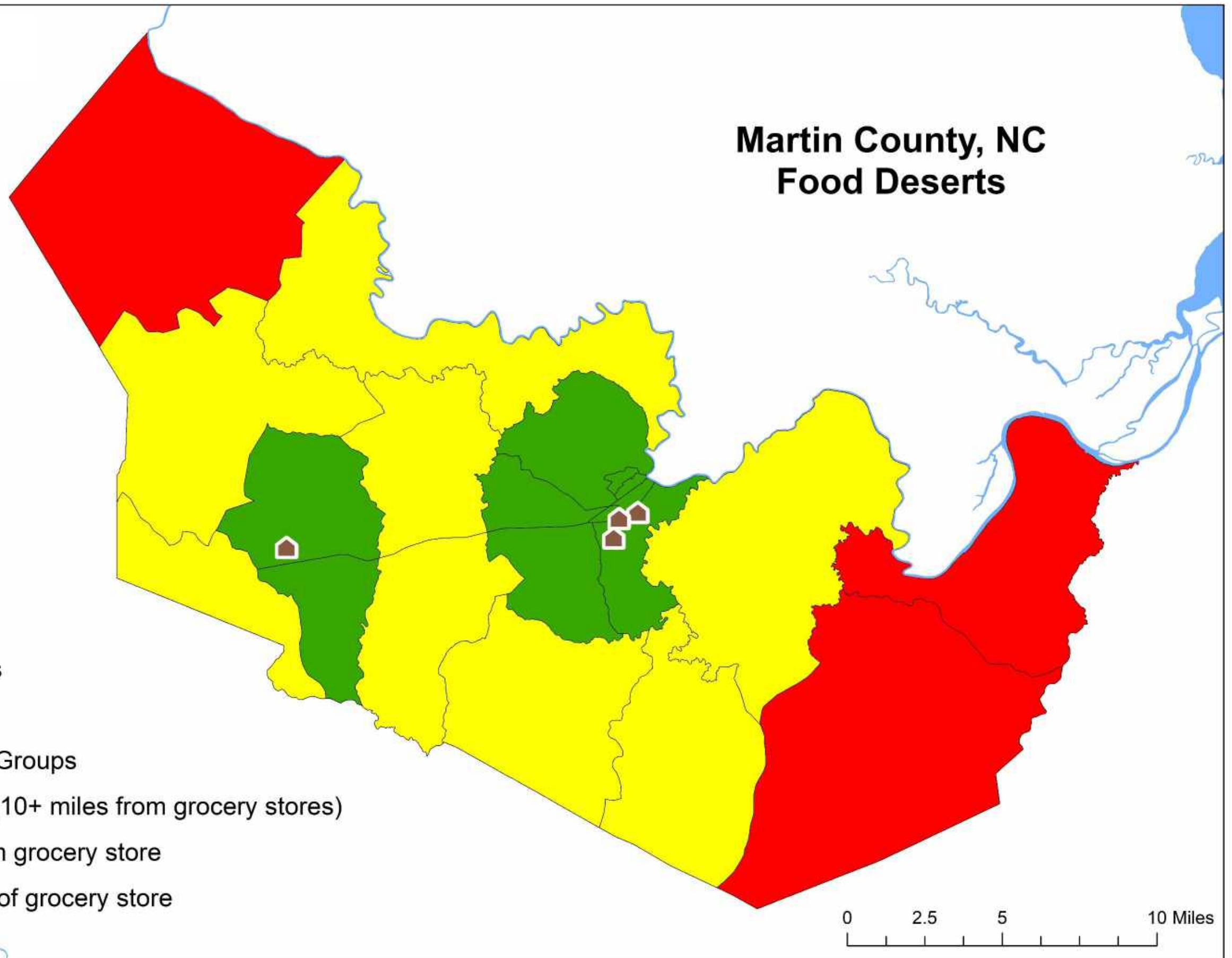


Martin County, NC Food Deserts

Legend

-  Grocery Stores
-  Surface Water
-  Census Block Groups
-  Food Deserts (10+ miles from grocery stores)
-  5 - 9 miles from grocery store
-  Within 5 miles of grocery store

0 2.5 5 10 Miles



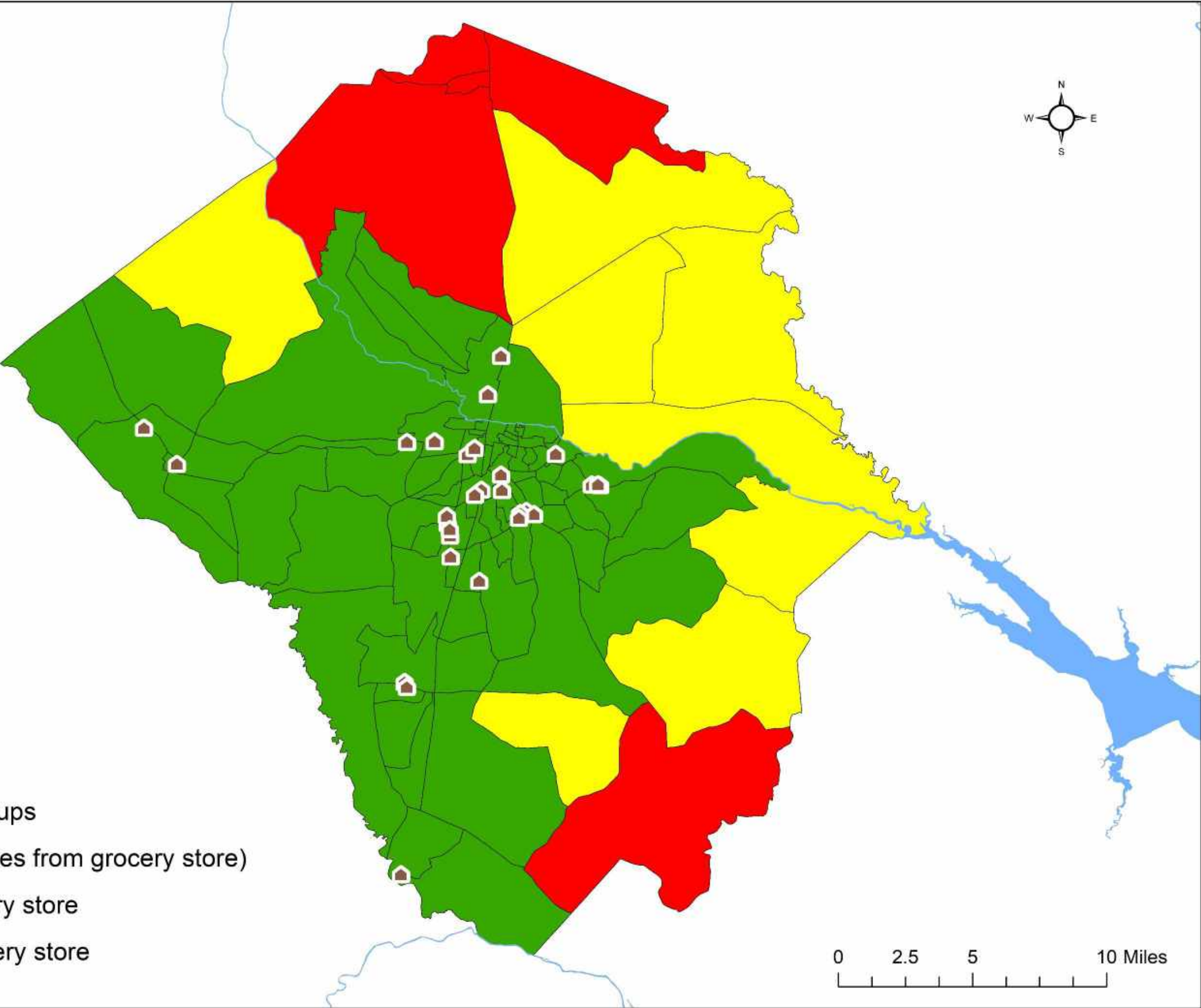
Map 3.18

Pitt County, NC Food Deserts



Legend

-  Grocery Stores
-  Surface Water
-  US Census Block Groups
-  Food Deserts (10+ miles from grocery store)
-  5 - 9 miles from grocery store
-  Within 5 miles of grocery store



Food Banks and Local Food Pantries

There are two food banks serving Region Q, Food Bank of the Albemarle (Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin Counties) and Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC (Pitt County). These Food Banks have warehouse locations to collect, sort, store and distribute food to local food pantries for distribution to people experiencing food insecurity. Food banks also work with the USDA to prepare and distribute food boxes for the Community Supplemental Food Program and Emergency Food Assistance Program. In addition, food banks work with partner agencies including local school districts to provide after school, summertime and weekend food programs for children living in households experiencing food insecurity. Major donors to Food Banks include grocery food chains and local farmers for bulk fresh produce. Local businesses, non-profit organizations, and individuals also contribute.

Local food pantries must register through an application process and the food bank provides oversight and training. Local food pantries receive food from the food bank and distribute the food locally to people experiencing food insecurity. Soup kitchens are distinct from food pantries in that they prepare hot meals to serve to the homeless. Food pantries generally provide food for people to prepare at home. Food pantries and soup kitchens in the region are as follows.

Beaufort County

- Eagle's Wing Food Pantry

Bertie County

- Good Shepherd Food Pantry

Hertford County

- Ahoskie Food Pantry

Martin County

- Faith Community Outreach Food Pantry

Pitt County

- Hope of Glory Ministries Food Pantry
- Koinonia Christian Center Church Mobile Food Pantry
- Love Ministries Church Food Pantry
- Pentecostal Temple Holy Church of Deliverance Food Pantry
- Philippi Church of Christ Food Pantry
- South Greenville Church of Christ Food Pantry
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church Food Pantry
- St. Peter Catholic Church Food Pantry
- Word of Truth Anointed Ministries Food Pantry
- Joy Soup Kitchen

Food banks and local food pantries were asked what challenges they face addressing food deserts in low income rural areas. Identified challenges are as follows.

- Funding to cover operational costs of food banks
 - Warehouse operations, trucks and forklifts, professional truck drivers, refrigeration units, waste management, etc.
- Providing enough food
- Succession problems in local food pantries
- Equipping partner agencies in rural areas with electrical and refrigeration needs to accept fruit, vegetables and meat
- Reaching senior citizens in rural areas trying to stay in their homes on fixed low incomes
- Not enough volunteers who are physically able to perform duties at food pantries that require lifting
- Need for mini grocery carts at local food pantries
- Inadequate building space at some local food pantries
- Some people are unable to travel to local food pantries due to lack of transportation or poor health. Most food pantries lack vehicles to develop mobile solutions.

Unified Subsistence Inland/Coastal Recreational Fishing License Waiver

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission provides a Unified Subsistence Inland/Coastal Recreational Fishing License Waiver. Residents who receive Medicaid, Food Stamps, or Work First Family Assistance through their county Department of Social Services are eligible to receive a free annual fishing license. The license includes fishing in joint waters. There are also reduced cost or free licenses available for veterans and disabled people. Blind residents are eligible to receive free lifetime fishing licenses. Annual hunting licenses normally cost between \$20 - \$36. Lifetime hunting and fishing licenses for resident veterans and disabled people are sold at a reduced cost of \$10. There are a variety of game lands available for hunting throughout the region.

Home Delivered Meals for Seniors

The Area Agency on Aging offers home delivered meals for seniors. There is funding available for the meals five days per week, but there is not funding available for deliveries. Finding volunteers to deliver meals to seniors is a consistent challenge. There are many local area churches which also provide home meal deliveries to seniors and disabled people.

Rural Grocery Stores

More times than not attracting a large chain grocery store to a rural food desert area is not feasible due to the low population density. There are options for alternative ownership models that can make grocery stores profitable in these areas. The four primary ownership models for grocery stores in rural communities include independent retailer, community owned, cooperative, and school based (Center for rural affairs 2010). The independent retailer model is the traditional model of ownership, but these retailers now face numerous challenges.

As independent retailers struggle to survive and close their doors, rural areas without the population density to attract chain grocery stores become food deserts. The new ownership models have arisen to address this issue. Cooperative and community owned models are similar. In the cooperative model, a cooperative entity is established, and the members of that cooperative own the grocery store. In the community owned model, each citizen of the community owns an equal share of the grocery store (CRA 2010).

A relatively new ownership model is the school-based grocery store. These initiatives are generally in small, isolated rural communities that have no prospects of developing a grocery store through any of the other ownership models. The school-based grocery store is generally small, not a comprehensive grocery store and has limited hours (CRA 2010).

Cooperative and community owned models of rural grocery store ownership present a potential opportunity for addressing localized food deserts in the region. More information on rural grocery store ownership models can be found at <http://files.cfra.org/pdf/rural-grocery-ownership-models.pdf>.

Increasing Availability of Fresh Foods at Existing Rural Stores

In some cases, it is not possible to develop a full-scale rural grocery store, especially in cases where the community is unable or unwilling to buy into the model. In these areas, there is the potential to increase access to fresh produce and other healthy foods by making these items available in existing convenience stores and dollar stores. There have been state grant programs which provide funding to cover costs such as refrigeration to qualified businesses. There is a Pitt County Farm and Food Council has recently started a local program to add healthy foods in convenience and dollar stores in food desert areas of the county.

Objective 3.8. Research the current housing stock, identify additional needs and develop and implement a plan for the availability of a variety of housing options.

Housing Organizations

Public housing organizations and non-profit housing organizations in the region are as follows.

Regional

- Mid-East Regional Housing Authority
- Choanoke Area Development Associates
- Greene Lamp Incorporated
- USDA Rural Development (Greenville regional office)

Beaufort County

- Metropolitan Housing
- Washington Housing Authority

Bertie County

- None present (except for regional organizations)

Hertford County

- Ahoskie Housing Authority

Martin County

- Robersonville Housing Authority
- Williamston Housing Authority

Pitt County

- Farmville Housing Authority
- Greenville Housing Authority

Housing organizations and local governments were asked to identify any known housing needs in their areas. Identified needs are as follows.

- Apartments
- Low income rental options
- Middle income rental options
- Funding for removal of blighted residential properties
- Life skills courses and programs offered on site at public housing developments

Housing Units by Type

Housing units by type are gathered by the US Census American Community Survey. Housing units by type for each county and Region Q are as follows (ACS 2017). Multi-family housing availability is lacking in most of the region, apart from the urban areas of Pitt County.

	1-unit detached	1 unit attached	2 units	3 or 4 units	5 to 9 units	10 to 19 units	20 or more units	Mobile home	Boat, RV, van, etc.	Total housing units
Region	56.10%	4.50%	3.20%	2.10%	6.60%	5.30%	3.50%	18.70%	0.02%	135,724
Beaufort Co.	65.3%	0.9%	1.6%	1.6%	2.4%	0.9%	0.9%	26.3%	0.1%	25,773
Bertie Co.	59.8%	0.9%	1.8%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	36.5%	0.0%	9,853
Hertford Co.	62.9%	1.1%	6.0%	2.6%	1.0%	0.4%	1.2%	24.7%	0.0%	10,645
Martin Co.	69.5%	0.8%	2.6%	2.4%	2.0%	0.2%	0.7%	21.9%	0.0%	11,610
Pitt Co.	49.6%	7.1%	3.7%	2.4%	10.3%	8.8%	5.5%	12.6%	0.0%	77,843

Housing Affordability

The North Carolina Housing Coalition has mapped the housing insecurity ranking by county. Many data sources were included in the scoring process including the cost of housing and the average income of residents. The housing insecurity ranking of each county was ranked as either moderate, high, very high, or severe. The housing insecurity ranking for Beaufort and Hertford Counties was high while the ranking for Bertie, Martin and Pitt Counties was very high. Map 3.19 shows the housing insecurity ranking for the region (NC Housing Coalition).

The average annual energy cost burden was also ranked for each county. Categories were based on the average annual energy cost compared to average income expressed as a percentage. Categories included greater than 8%, 6% - 8%, 3% - 6%, and less than three percent. Beaufort and Pitt Counties were in the 3% - 6% category, while Bertie, Hertford and Martin Counties were in the 6% - 8% category. Map 3.20 shows the average annual energy cost burden for the region (NC Housing Coalition).

North Carolina Housing Coalition



Layers

Map 3.19

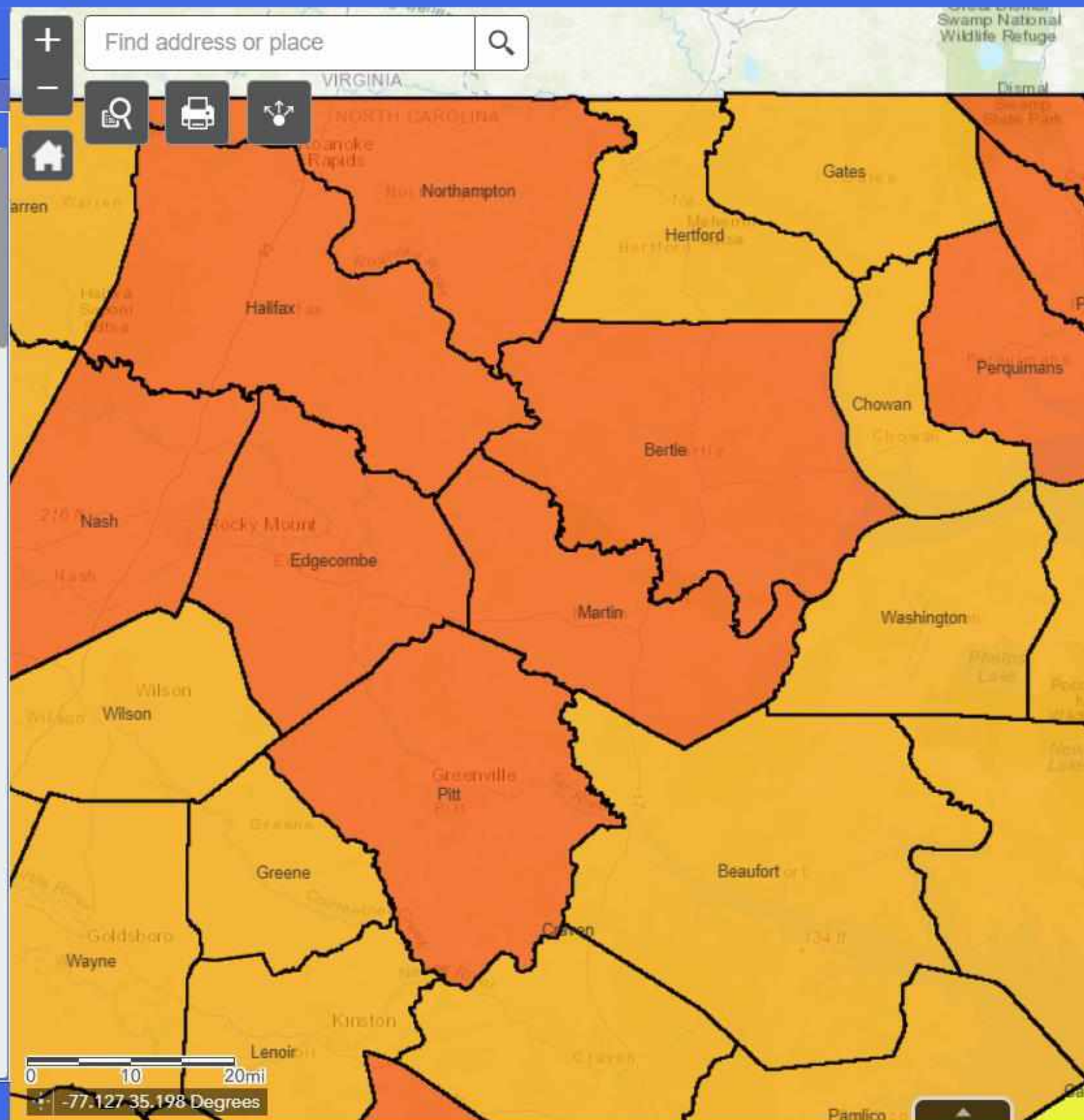
A red trapezoid with a black outline, representing the 'Before' state of the shape.

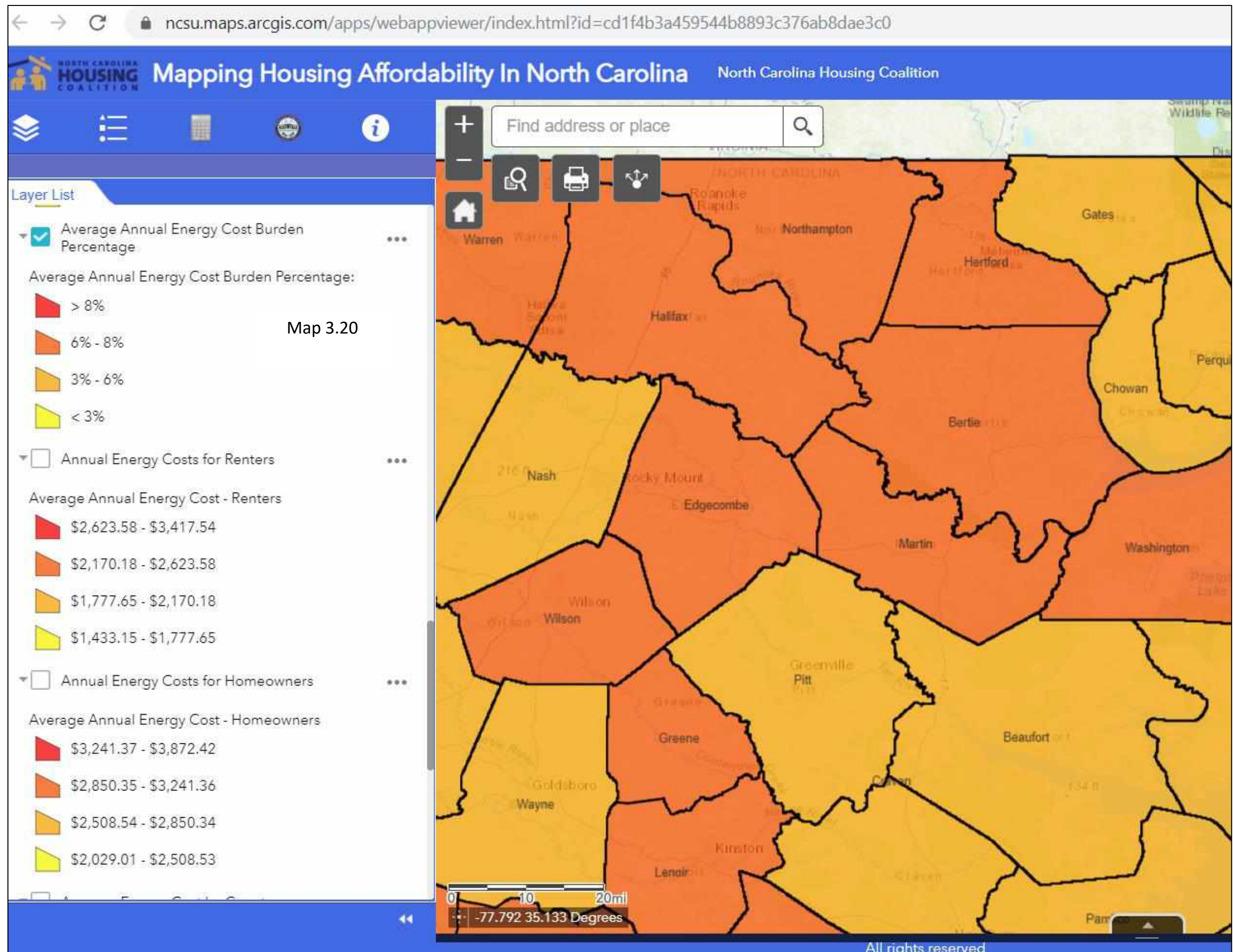
Percentage of Cost Burden Homeowners Facing Foreclosure

Percentage of Cost Burden Renters Facing Eviction



43% - 78%





Recommendations

For each goal, two priority recommendations for the region are identified. The priority recommendations for the healthy and safe communities goal are as follows:

- **Create an Advocacy Taskforce to advocate for the needs of Region Q and Eastern NC at the state and federal levels (policy changes to benefit rural areas, infrastructure funding, community resources, etc.).**
 - Develop a strategic political and economic strategy so the region(s) can present a united front.
- **Partner with local governments and non-profit organizations to explore the feasibility of developing cooperative-owned or community-owned grocery stores in rural food desert areas.**

Other recommendations for the healthy and safe communities goal are as follows:

- Explore ways to incorporate the third division into regional planning efforts; i.e. urban, suburban, and rural, instead of just the urban/rural divide.
- Partner with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to host a Green Growth Toolbox workshop in the region and invite all member governments to attend.
- Link to the Green Growth Toolbox via the online communication platform.
- Explore the feasibility of partnering with NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Sound Rivers, APNEP, and other environmental organizations to host regional seminars geared toward developers.
- Develop ways to promote the protection of natural resources as a strategy to support community resiliency to climate-related hazards such as flooding.
- Explore the feasibility of creating a downtown development planner position in the Mid-East Commission Planning Department to assist local governments across the region with becoming certified and maintaining membership in the NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street programs.
- Develop ways to promote diversity of interests and niche markets, especially related to downtown revitalization opportunities (i.e. a unique shopping experience).
- Help promote the commercial and historic property database available through the NC East Alliance. Link to the database from the online communication platform. Encourage downtown organizations, local governments, economic development organizations, and real estate agents to help keep the database updated.
- Recommend continued advocacy to the NC Department of Commerce to allow part-time equivalents to count toward job creation requirements for Building Reuse Grants and other grants tied to job creation.
- Explore the feasibility of creating Parks and Recreation Departments within the county government system in Beaufort, Hertford, and Martin Counties.

- Promote joint use agreements across the region to expand access to recreation facilities in partnership with K-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and faith-based organizations. Template joint use agreements are available through NC Healthy Schools.
 - Bertie and Pitt Counties have joint use agreements with the school district that can serve as case studies.
- Increase marketing of current joint use agreements to the public in Bertie and Pitt Counties.
- Continue to assist local governments across the region with development of Comprehensive Recreation Plans and with public park site design.
- Continue to assist local governments with PARTF and other grant applications to fund public parks.
- Incorporate ecotourism into regional marketing efforts.
- Explore the feasibility of niche marketing related to ecotourism, such as promotion of the NC Birding Trail.
- Promote the availability of public game lands for ecotourism activities other than hunting.
- Develop strategies to attract ecotourism related businesses and support existing ecotourism businesses.
- Seek funding to support refrigeration, electrical, small equipment, and food handling training needs of food pantry organizations in rural areas.
- Partner with institutes of higher education, food banks and local food pantries to create internship positions for students in social and human services fields of study.
- Encourage employer programs which support food banks and local food pantries. Publicize regional success stories.
- Organize available meal home delivery programs into a regional database and explore strategies to increase volunteer participation in these programs.
- Create a section of the regional website that has volunteer opportunities and contact information for available volunteer groups.
- Partner with Cooperative Extension offices to support the development of community gardens in food desert areas.
- Explore the feasibility of partnering with Cooperative Extension offices and local food pantries to host home gardening and cooking classes in food desert areas.
- Develop ways to support creation of Farmer's Markets and mobile food pantry solutions in food desert areas.
- Market state and local programs which provide funding to bring healthy food options such as fresh produce to convenience stores and dollar stores in food desert areas. Assist business owners in food desert areas with grant applications.
- Partner with the Mid-East Regional Housing Authority to seek funding for a pilot program to implement life skills courses and programs on site at public housing developments.
- Promote the availability of mobile GED classes offered by community colleges if at least ten people enroll. Explore the feasibility of offering this program on site at public housing developments.

- Explore the feasibility of offering free tutoring classes for students on site at public housing developments, possibly in partnership with a local university.
- Advocate for demolition of blighted residential properties as a CDBG program for non-entitlement communities.
- Develop market studies showing the need for rental properties and multi-family housing options in small towns and rural areas across the region.
- Partner with daycare providers to make second and third shift hours available.
- Incorporate resources for disaster recovery within the online communication platform. This can serve as a central storehouse of information when events occur.

Small Business and Workforce Development

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.

Regional Network

A regional network of organizations working toward achieving the above goal were identified. These organizations were invited to join the small businesses and workforce development subcommittee for their respective county (or counties) and some organizations were also invited to join the main Steering Committee. A list of Steering Committee members and Subcommittee members for each county is available in Appendix A.

Asset Mapping

Objective 4.1: Foster the development, recruitment and retention of a workforce with 21st Century skills.

21st Century Skills

Education providers, workforce development providers and partner organizations were asked their opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of the local workforce regarding 21st Century skills. Participating employers were asked their opinion on how prepared the average employee is in terms of 21st Century skills and where they have observed strengths and weaknesses. Identified strengths and weaknesses are as follows.

Strengths

- Digital literacy and technical skills
- The number and variety of available workforce training and education programs and resources
- Resiliency and resourcefulness of workforce
- New generation more willing to ignore entrenched social boundaries of race, gender, wealth, etc. which makes them better team players
- Many workers have information technology related degrees

Weaknesses

- Most people have social media experience but lack experience and depth in being truly technology literate
- Lack of critical thinking skills (students taught to memorize facts rather than think critically)
- Lack of workers with vocational skills such as welding, heating and refrigeration, mechanical and electrical maintenance

- Lack of coordination between agencies, groups often administer complementary programs
- Lack of internal motivation in a large segment of the workforce
- Different generational social norms causing standards regarding work soft skills to differ between employers and their bosses

Education providers, workforce development providers and partner organizations were asked how modern technologies are incorporated into workforce training and education programs and what related challenges their organization has faced. Identified strategies and challenges are as follows.

Strategies

- Utilizing applications such as Tratify in classrooms and career centers
- Bringing modern technologies such as simulation video games into classrooms as a tool for career awareness
- Workforce training and education programs are always striving to be up to date in incorporating new technologies

Challenges

- Expense of keeping up with technology
 - Need to update at least every three years to keep up with most software
 - Major equipment purchases can be even more challenging
- Lack of broadband access in some areas
- Lack of up-to-date equipment such as computers and tablets

Education providers, workforce development providers, partner organizations, and participating employers were asked their opinion on what workforce development challenges have arisen as a result of globalization and where there are opportunities for the local workforce. Identified challenges and opportunities are as follows.

Challenges

- Fewer people staying with companies long-term
- Lack of tolerance for diversity in some communities/areas
- Lower skilled jobs that moved overseas were replaced with highly skilled positions in many cases, but the workforce was not prepared for those roles
- Retail chains struggle from online competition
- Homogenous materials (metals, alloys, ceramics, etc.) have become difficult to create efficiently and cost effectively
- Low wages due to outsourcing of jobs to other countries

Opportunities

- Communicating the understanding that post-secondary training and credentials are needed to remain competitive in the new economy
- Service providers such as electricians, plumbers, automotive repair, heating and refrigeration, etc. still retain advantage locally

- Create niche or regional specific goods in order to compete in the global marketplace
- Workers must have a specific, desired skill set

Education providers, workforce development providers, partner organizations, and participating employers were asked what resources would assist their organization with incorporating 21st Century skills training into workforce development and education programs. Results are as follows.

- Sharing of opportunities and available programs
- Equal access to broadband
- Training counselors and career advisors at NC Works Centers to use and incorporate technology into career readiness programs
- Access to new technologies
 - 3D printing programs
 - Electric motor programs with new battery technology
 - Advanced manufacturing equipment for educational purposes
- More partnerships with local industry including serving on Advisory Committee and sponsorship of students through internships and apprenticeships
- More marketing of manufacturing career opportunities

All public schools are participating in the 21st Century Skills initiative. The initiative focuses on building the “Four-C’s” into K-12 education including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. A guidebook on the 21st Century Skills initiative in public schools is available at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>.

Objective 4.2. Identify and analyze all educational, workforce and vocational training resources and conduct a gap analysis based on employer needs.

Identified educational, workforce and vocational training resources are as follows.

- Association of Mexican’s in NC (AMEXCAN)
- Beaufort County Community College (BCCC)
- Beaufort County Development Center (BCDC, vocational)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Chowan University (CU)
- East Carolina University (ECU)
- Eastern Carolina Vocational Center (ECVC)
- Martin Enterprises (vocational)
- Economic Development organizations
- Hertford County Sheriff’s Office Inmate Training Program (Partnership with RCCC)
- K-12 School Districts and Private Schools
- Life of NC / Strive NC
- Martin Community College (MCC)

- Mount Olive University (MOU)
- NC Dept. of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions
- NC Works Career Centers in each county
- NENC Career Pathways
- Pitt Community College (PCC)
- Pitt County Sheriff's Office Inmate Training Program (Partnership with PCC)
- Rivers East Workforce Development Board
- Roanoke-Chowan Community College (RCCC)
- STEM Northeast
- Title 5 Program for senior workforce

Participating employers were asked what types of workforce development and education programs would be most beneficial to their organization. Results are as follows.

- Machinery repair
- CNC machine training
- Engineering
- Operational accounting
- Operational management
- Mechanical and electrical maintenance
- Welding and fabrication
- Heating and refrigeration
- Nursing
- Employers cited difficulty attracting qualified candidates to fill these position types.
- Soft skills were also a frequently cited need

A gap analysis was conducted based on these identified employer needs. Program databases of education, workforce and vocational training providers were searched to determine what education and training opportunities exist for each identified job category. Results are as follows.

Machinery repair

- Mobile Equipment Maintenance and Repair Pathway, BCCC
- Industrial Systems Technology, Facility Maintenance Certificate, MCC
- Industrial Systems Technology, PCC
- Mobile Equipment Maintenance and Repair Pathway, BCCC
- Industrial Equipment Maintenance and Repair certificate, RCCC

CNC machine training

- Machinist Certificate, Machinist Advanced Certificate, Machinist Diploma, BCCC
- Computer Integrated Machining, PCC

Engineering

- Variety of Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering programs, BCCC

- Variety of Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering programs, PCC
- Electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, industrial and systems engineering degrees, ECU

Operational accounting

- Accounting master's degree focused on advanced placement in industry, ECU
- Accounting bachelor's degrees with a variety of options, ECU
- Accounting certificate, RCCC
- Accounting associate degree, PCC
- Financial services associate degree, PCC
- Accounting and finance associate degree, MCC
- Accounting minor, CU

Operational management

- Industrial Management Technology associate degree, PCC
- Industrial Management bachelor's degree, ECU
- *Opportunity may exist for Industrial Management programs at other community colleges*

Mechanical and electrical maintenance

- Industrial Machinery Mechanics associate degree, BCCC
- Mechanical Engineering Technology associate degree, PCC
- Industrial Systems Technology Facility Maintenance certificate, MCC
- Industrial Systems Technology Mechanical Installation certificate, MCC
- Industrial Systems Technology, electrical, mechanical, PLC automation, RCCC

Welding and fabrication

- Welding technology certificate, Welding technology diploma, specialty certificates, BCCC
- Welding technology certificate, Welding technology Associate Degree, MCC
- Welding technology certificate, Welding technology diploma, specialty certificates, PCC
- Welding technology diploma, specialty certificates RCCC

Heating and Refrigeration

- Variety of programs through Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology, MCC
- Variety of programs through Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology, PCC
- Variety of programs through Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology, RCCC

Nursing

- Nursing Bachelor's degree with specializations available, ECU
- Nursing Associate degree, Beaufort County Community College
- Nursing Associate degree, Pitt Community College
- Practical Nursing diploma, Beaufort County Community College

There are a variety of appropriate certificate and degree programs at institutes of higher education across the region, yet employers cite difficulty hiring people in these job categories. This could be an issue of supply and demand, i.e. there are more jobs available than students

entering the field. The other factor could be that students from these programs are moving out of the area post-graduation. The data indicating a lack of interest in the skilled trades amongst young people lends support to the former theory for these position types. (For example, community colleges are offering courses in CNC machining and automation in response to employer needs, but not many students are signing up for these courses). For positions requiring higher level degrees, the out migration post-graduation is likely more of a factor.

Another potential contributing factor to difficulty attracting qualified candidates to fill positions is that salaries offered in Eastern NC are generally lower than urban areas of the state, causing an out migration of many students post-graduation. However, this is not the case with some companies which are offering higher than average salaries and still cite issues hiring qualified employees to fill positions, indicating that other factors are at play. An additional challenge is the lack of knowledge on jobs that companies have to offer amongst potential qualified applicants.

Soft skills were a frequently cited need by participating employers. A focus on soft skills was also a high priority identified in the 2017 major update of the CEDS. Existing programs focusing on soft skills are as follows.

Programs focusing on Soft Skills

- NextGen program through Rivers East WDB
- Association of Mexican's in NC workforce training (AMEXCAN)
- Beaufort County Development Center (BCDC, vocational)
- ECVC Vocational Training
- Martin Enterprises Vocational Training
- Life of NC/Strive NC Vocational Training
- Career Readiness Certificates available at each Community College have components of soft skills
- Pitt Community College Soft Skills Program
- Beaufort County Community College (BCCC)
- *Opportunity exists to work soft skills education in at the high school level.*
- *Opportunity exists for other community colleges to use PCC's Soft Skill Program as a template.*

A gap analysis was conducted for the top ten employers in each county and for each of the four adopted career pathways. Program databases of education, workforce and vocational training providers were searched to determine what education and training opportunities exist for each identified job category. Results are as follows.

Programs	Beaufort County Community College	Chowan University	East Carolina University	Martin Community College	Mount Olive University	Pitt Community College	Roanoke Chowan Community College
Programs by Career Pathway							
<i>Advanced Manufacturing Pathway</i>							
Accounting Master’s degree focused on advanced placement in industry			X				
Advanced Manufacturing Institute (AMI)	X			X		X	X
Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Technology				X		X	X
Computer Integrated Machining						x	
Electrical Engineering Technology Associate degree	X			X		X	
Electrical Engineering Technology	x					x	
Electrical Engineering Technology Bachelor’s degree			X				
Electrical Systems Technology				X		X	
Electronics Engineering Technology Associate degree	X					X	
Engineering Associate degree						X	
Industrial and Systems Engineering			X				
Industrial Equipment Maintenance and Repair Certificate							X
Industrial Machinery Mechanics Associate degree	X						
Industrial Machinery Mechanics Diploma/Certificate	X						
Industrial Management Technology Associate degree						X	
Industrial Management Technology Bachelor’s degree			X				
Industrial and Systems Technology Bachelor’s degree			X				
Industrial Systems Technology			X	X		X	X
Industrial Systems Technology Mechanical Installation Certificate				X			
Industrial Systems Technology PLC Automation Certificate							X
Industrial Systems Technology Facility Maintenance Certificate				X			
Machinist Certificate/Diploma	X						
Mechanical Engineering Technology Associate degree	X					X	
Mechanical Engineering Technology Bachelor’s degree			X				
Mechanical Engineering Technology Diploma/Certificate				X			
Mobile Equipment Maintenance and Repair	X						
Welding Technology Associate degree	X			X		X	
Welding Technology Diploma/Certificate	X						
<i>Agriscience & Biotechnology Pathway</i>							

Programs	Beaufort County Community College	Chowan University	East Carolina University	Martin Community College	Mount Olive University	Pitt Community College	Roanoke Chowan Community College
Agribusiness Technology Associates	X						
Agribusiness Technology Certificate	X						
Biotechnology Bachelor's degree			X				
Biotechnology Associate degree				X		X	X
Business Support Services Pathway							
Accounting Bachelor's degree			X				
Accounting Associates degree				X		X	
Accounting Certificate							X
Accounting Minor		X					
Advertising and Graphic Design Associate degree						X	
Administrative/Secretarial Services Associate degree							X
Business Administration Master's degree			X				
Business Administration Associate degree	X			X		X	X
Business Administration Diploma/Certificate	X						
Business Management Bachelor's degree					X		
Finance Bachelor's degree			X				
Financial Services Associate degree						X	
Information Technology Associate degree	X			X		X	
Information Technology Certificate	X						
Management Minor		X					
Management/Supervision Certificate				X			
Marketing Bachelor's degree			X				
Marketing Associate degree						X	
Microsoft Office Certificate				X			
Office Administration Associate degree	X			X		X	X
Office Administration Diploma/Certificate	X			X		X	X
Office Finance Associate degree						X	
Software Applications Specialist Certificate	X						
Word Processing Specialist Certificate	X						
Healthcare Support Services Pathway							
Advanced Medical Coding Associate degree						X	
Basic Medical Terminology Certificate				X			
Dental Assisting Diploma				X			
Emergency Medical Science Associate degree						X	
Health Information Technology Associate degree						X	
Healthcare Billing and Coding Certificate				X			
Healthcare Management Technology Associate degree						X	
Medical Assisting Associate degree				X		X	
Medical Lab Technician Associate degree	X						
Medical Office Administration Associate degree	X			X		X	
Medical Office Administration Diploma	X						

Programs	Beaufort County Community College	Chowan University	East Carolina University	Martin Community College	Mount Olive University	Pitt Community College	Roanoke Chowan Community College
Medical Sonography Associate degree						X	
Medication Aide Certificate				X			
Nuclear Medicine Technology Associate degree						X	
Nursing Bachelor's degree			X				
Nursing Associate degree	X					X	
Occupational Therapy Assistant Associate degree						X	
Pharmacy Technician Certificate				X			
Phlebotomy Certificate				X			
Physical Therapy Assistant Associate degree				X			
Practical Nursing Diploma	X						
Radiography Associate degree						X	
Other Programs							
<i>Architecture and Construction</i>							
Architectural Technology Associate degree						X	X
Building Construction Technology Associate degree						X	
<i>Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement</i>							
Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET)	X			X		X	
Criminal Justice Bachelor's degree			X				
Criminal Justice Technology Associate degree	X			X		X	X
Criminal Justice Technology Diploma/Certificate	X			X			X
Emergency Medical Services Training	X			X		X	
Fire/Rescue Training	X			X		X	
Public Safety Certificate				X			
<i>Local Government</i>							
Environmental Engineering Bachelor's degree			X				
Environmental Health Bachelor's degree			X				
GIS Bachelor's degree			X				
GIS Certificate			X				
Public Administration Master's degree			X				
Public Health Master's degree			X				
Public Health Bachelor's degree			X				
Recreation and Leisure Studies Bachelor's degree					X		
Recreation and Parks Management Bachelor's degree			X				
Recreation Sciences Bachelor's degree			X				
Urban and Regional Planning Master's degree			X				
Urban and Regional Planning Bachelor's degree			X				
Water and Wastewater Operator Certification (minimum five students needed to have class)	X						

Programs	Beaufort County Community College	Chowan University	East Carolina University	Martin Community College	Mount Olive University	Pitt Community College	Roanoke Chowan Community College
<i>Mental Health</i>							
Clinical Counseling Master’s degree			X				
Mental Health Services Technology Associate degree							X
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Bachelor’s degree			X				
Psychology Master’s degree			X				
Psychology Bachelor’s degree			X		X		
Substance Abuse Counseling Associate degree							X
Ward Clerk Certificate							X
<i>Social Services</i>							
Human Services Technology Associate degree	X					X	X
Human Services Technology Certificate/Diploma	X						
Social Work Master’s degree			X				
Social Work Bachelor’s degree			X				
<i>Other</i>							
Activity Director Training				X			X
Associate in Arts	X			X		X	X
Associate in Fine Arts						X	X
Associate in General Education	X			X		X	X
Associate in Science	X			X		X	X
Automotive Systems Technology Associates	X			X			
Automotive Systems Technology Diploma/Certificate	X			X			
Auto Safety Inspector Training				X			X
Barber Training	X						X
Basic Rider Course	X						X
Commercial Truck Driver Training	X					X	
Community Spanish Interpreter Certificate	X						
Communication Science Disorders Bachelor’s degree					X		
Culinary Training							X
Cosmetology Associate degree	X			X			
Cosmetology Certificate/Diploma	X						
Cosmetology Instructor Certificate	X						
Defensive Driving Training							X
Early Childhood Education Associate degree	X			X		X	
Early Childhood Education Diploma/Certificate	X						
Effective Teacher Training				X			X
Entrepreneurship Associate degree				X		X	
Equine Business Associate degree				X			
Equine Training Associate degree				X			
General Occupational Technology Diploma/Certificate	X						
Manicuring/Nail Technology Certificate	X						

Programs	Beaufort County Community College	Chowan University	East Carolina University	Martin Community College	Mount Olive University	Pitt Community College	Roanoke Chowan Community College
Ministry Leadership Certificate							X
Notary Public Training				X		X	X
Real Estate program	X					X	
Sign Language program						X	
Vehicle Escort Driver Training						X	
Taxidermy Training	X			X		X	X
Speech and Hearing Sciences Bachelor's degree			X				
Therapeutic Massage Associate degree						X	

The findings from the gap analysis were similar to the findings for the gap analysis of participating employer needs reported in the survey. The educational and workforce development programs available across the region are robust in their availability and variety. Nearly every job that each examined organization would require has education and training options available within the region. This lends further support to the theory that a lack of available education and training options is not a factor contributing to the reported difficulty employers experience in attracting qualified candidates. Rather than availability of programs, the issues in attracting qualified job applicants are related to either a lack of enrollment in desired programs compared to job demand, or graduates moving out of the region post-graduation. Likely, these are both contributing factors.

There were a few opportunities identified in the gap analysis. There is the potential to develop nursing programs at the community colleges which do not currently offer those programs, including Martin Community College and Roanoke Chowan Community College. Many healthcare organizations in the region are relying on traveling nurses because of a lack of qualified applicants to fill permanent nursing and CNA positions. An additional need in the healthcare industry is for gerontology specialists.

A potential opportunity related to local government services is building inspections, which is a job category that local governments in the region often have difficulty filling when a vacancy arises. An additional job opportunity in that category is a private sector building inspector. There is the potential opportunity for one of the community colleges to add an associate degree option for Building Inspection Technology. This may make the most sense at Pitt Community College, where there is already an established Building Construction Technology Department and an existing course on Building Codes. If a stand-alone associates degree in Building Inspections Technology is not feasible, it could be added as a concentration option to the current Building Construction Technology associate degree option.

Another potential opportunity related to local government services is Drinking Water and Wastewater Operator Certification classes and testing. Currently Beaufort County Community College offers the program if at least five students enroll. Often local governments only have one or two employees to send, so they go to the closest year-round certification school, in Raleigh. There is the potential for local governments to sign employees up at the regional level in order to create enough demand for local hosting of the certification program.

The final opportunity identified is for additional community colleges to add programs on Industrial Operations Management. East Carolina University offers a bachelors degree and Pitt Community College offers an associate degree in Industrial Operations Management. This is a position type that is in high demand by industrial businesses across the region. While degree options are offered within Pitt County, it would be beneficial to offer an associate degree option for Industrial Management Technology at an additional community college within the region. Beaufort Community College, Martin Community College, and Roanoke Chowan Community College all have well established Industrial Technology Departments, making the addition of this degree option very feasible.

An additional deep dive survey or focus group with more participating employers from across the region could identify additional employer needs. With additional information on employer needs, the gap analysis could be expanded and used to draw out additional opportunities and recommendations for education and workforce training programs in the region.

Objective 4.3. 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.

Small Business Resources

Small Business Centers at each Community College are a high quality, free resource to help guide local entrepreneurs through the steps of considering, planning, developing, opening, and operating a small business. Each Small Business Center offers seminars on a variety of topics, including how to start a business, writing a business plan, financing your small business, basics of bookkeeping, marketing your business, and more. Small Business Centers also offer confidential one-on-one counseling to entrepreneurs and small business owners, again at no cost. Other identified small business resources in the region are as follows.

- Business Link NC (BLNC)
- Carolina Small Business Development Fund
- City of Greenville Minority and Women Business Enterprise Program (MWBE)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Downtown organizations
- East Carolina Angels Fund
- Economic development organizations
- ECU's College of Business School of Entrepreneurship
- ECU's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC)
- IMAF East Angel Fund
- Local governments
- Mid-East Revolving Loan Fund
- NC East Alliance
- NC Rural Center
- Rivers East Workforce Development Board
- Small Business Centers at each Community College
- USDA's Small Business Program
- US Small Business Administration

The above organizations were asked what programs, resources, and/or incentives their organizations offer to small businesses and entrepreneurs. Identified programs, resources and incentives are as follows.

- Small Business Center seminars
- Free confidential one-on-one small business counseling, unlimited sessions (Small Business Centers, ECU's SBTDC)
- City of Greenville/Greenville Utilities Company Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program
- Small Business Competition (City of Greenville)
- Business Skills Boot Camp (Greenville MWBE program)
- MWBE Enterprise Loan Fund
- MWBE Small Business Guide
- ECU partnership for succession and transition planning
- Martin County Chamber of Commerce Business Succession program
- Referrals, providing information, and connecting with resources (Small Business Centers, ECU's SBTDC, local governments, downtown organizations, Chambers of Commerce, US Small Business Administration)
- Networking opportunities (Small Business Centers, ECU's SBTDC, some local governments, downtown organizations, Chambers of Commerce)
- Assistance locating properties (some local governments, downtown organizations)
- Assistance applying for state grants (some local governments, downtown organizations)
- Provide information on state resources and meeting state requirements for business registration, taxes, etc. (BLNC)
- Provide low cost loans to small businesses (Carolina Small Business Development Fund, NC Rural Center, US Small Business Administration)
- Business Coaching Program (Carolina Small Business Development Fund)
- Work Based Learning Program, Maximize Carolina Program, Incumbent Worker Training Program (Rivers East Workforce Development Board)

Organizations serving entrepreneurs and small businesses were asked what challenges they face in meeting the needs of entrepreneurs and small business owners. Identified challenges are as follows.

- Helping entrepreneurs find funding
- Lack of incubator space for start-ups
- Available retail space at cost effective rates
- Lack of clear information on community resources
- Lack of information at middle and high school levels for entrepreneurs
- Getting businesses in the door to take advantage of available resources
- Entrepreneurs' ability to meet requirements such as liability insurance

Organizations serving entrepreneurs and small businesses were asked what resources would help their organization increase collaboration with small business owners and entrepreneurs. Identified needs are as follows.

- Increasing collaboration and partnerships

- Funding
- Starter pack / single document with information on how to start a business
- Resource booklet for entrepreneurs
- Marketing available programs to small business owners

Local governments, downtown organizations and Chambers of Commerce were asked whether their area has any events that celebrate entrepreneurs or small businesses. Identified events are as follows.

- Awards given through Chambers of Commerce
- Beaufort County Business Expo (annual)
- Business NC Magazine Small Business Recognition Program (accepts nominations)
- East Carolina University's Pirate Challenge
- Farm Bureau Agribusiness Sponsorship Event
- Minority Enterprise Development Week (Greenville)(annual)
- Martin County Entrepreneur Expo (2017)
- NC Rural Center Small Business Recognition Program (accepts nominations)
- Pitt County Business Expo (annual)

Incubator Facilities

Business incubator facilities offer small businesses and start-ups shared operation space at rental rates significantly below the market rate for renting an individual office building. Most incubator facilities offer shared equipment such as computers, printers, and telecommunications. Some incubators offer in house professional staff to aid business owners with tasks such as accounting and marketing.

Incubator facilities may be generalized facilities or may specialize in serving certain business types and provide access to advanced equipment that would be difficult for small businesses and start-ups to afford on their own. For example, a business incubator may specialize in serving technology companies and provide access to equipment such as 3D printers. Another business incubator may specialize in serving artists and provide access to pottery wheels, kilns, and possibly studio space to sell products. Yet another business incubator might be a kitchen incubator providing a licensed commercial kitchen for caterers, food truck proprietors and chefs.

Development of business incubator facilities across the region was identified as a high priority during the 2017 major update of the CEDS. The need for business incubator facilities was also highlighted as a need in survey responses received from subcommittee members, lending further support to the need for development of incubator facilities to serve entrepreneurs and small business owners in the region.

Currently there are eight known incubator facilities in the region. The Beaufort County Economic Development Skills Center Incubator in Washington, Regional Small Business Incubator in Ahoskie (Hertford County), the NC Telecenter in Williamston (Martin County), the Nucleus Uptown Coworking Space in Greenville (Pitt County), the SEED (Support Economic and Entrepreneurial Development) Business Incubator (Pitt County), and the Windsor-Bertie Chamber of Commerce Small Business Incubator (Bertie County) are generalized business incubator facilities providing small business assistance and professional office incubator space.

The Technology Enterprise Center in Greenville (Pitt County) serves technology-based businesses and provides office, laboratory, and light manufacturing space on a short-term lease basis. The Farmville Small Business Incubator (also in Pitt County) serves emerging light industry and has a manufacturing area with two separate work bays and a training center with a conference room and two offices. Additional opportunities exist for the development of incubator facilities of a diversity of types across the region.

Objective 4.4. Develop Career Paths that recognize the needs of employers and start students in developing on these pathways in High School.

Northeast NC Career Pathways

The Northeast NC (NENC) Career Pathways organization is the lead agency managing career paths for the region. The organization was founded in 2013 after a successful pilot study in 2012 with four school districts in northeastern NC (Beaufort, Martin, Halifax and Washington Counties). NENC Career Pathways is managed by three workforce development boards (Rivers East, Turning Point, Northeast) and has grown to represent twenty counties and their twenty-two Local Education Agencies (school boards), four charter schools, one regional high school, nine community colleges, eleven NC Works Career Centers, and three universities.

There are currently four career pathways, healthcare support, advanced manufacturing, agri-science and biotechnology, and business support services. Industry sectors were chosen by determining their high-growth outlook. The pathways represent a regional framework so partners within local areas are encouraged to work together on developing their own implementation strategies so that students have definitive resources to use within their career pathways.

The agri-science and biotechnology career pathway is pending state certification while the other three are already certified. North Carolina's pathway initiative contains a set of required elements that have been developed with and approved by the state's primary workforce development partners. These elements are foundational to Certified Career Pathways in the state and endorsed by the NC Works Commission. All four of these pathways were developed regionally and represent the first career pathways that have been certified in the state of North Carolina, a major accomplishment for the Rivers East Workforce Development Board and its partner organizations.

Staff of the NENC Career Pathways organization was asked how career pathways are incorporated at the High School level, into higher education, and into workforce training programs. Identified strategies are as follows.

- Collaboration between partner agencies to ensure Career Pathways are addressed at all levels; K-12, community colleges, and adult learners.
- Formation of Strategic Planning Committees for each Career Path.
- Work directly with CTE Directors, career development counselors, and teachers to share resources such as Tratify, GADJ and templates which include high school courses/credentials which can put students on a pathway.
- Currently developing information sessions that will be geared towards parents and students.
- Each NC Works Career Center has a Career Pathways “Champion”. The champion attends Career Pathways meetings and takes the lead on filtering information to career center staff and incorporating into programs. NENC Career Pathways staff also hold training events on site at career centers.

NENC Career Pathways staff was asked whether there is a need for development of additional Career Pathways. There is a need for development of additional Career Pathways in the future, but the current effort is focused on implementing existing Career Pathways. There is still a lot of work to do in partnering with high schools and community colleges. Most schools in the region have developed or are working toward developing programs around pathways and need support until processes are streamlined.

Initial research is being done on creation of an Education Career Pathway to develop a pipeline for teachers and support positions. The Education Career Pathway would be a state-wide initiative. There is also the potential for a pathway around skilled trades such as plumbing, electrical, heating and refrigeration, welding, etc. In addition, the number of tracks under current pathways could be increased.

NENC Career Pathways staff were asked what resources would help facilitate Career Pathways. Identified needed resources are as follows.

- More employer involvement in Strategic Planning Committees for each Career Pathway
- More involvement/buy in from staff at NC Career Centers
- Sector strategy partnerships
- Assistance with marketing and outreach
 - Very little funding for marketing, mostly has been word of mouth between partner organizations

Recommendations

For each goal, two priority recommendations for the region are identified. The priority recommendations for the small business and workforce development goal are as follows:

- **Continue seeking funding for development of incubator facilities across the region. Explore the feasibility of developing specialized incubator facilities serving a variety of business types in different areas of the region, thereby creating local niches.**
- **Seek funding for strategic outreach of Career Pathways to the community.**
 - Currently there is little to no funding for outreach and most has been through word of mouth between partner organizations and students.

Other recommendations for the small business and workforce development goal are as follows:

- Explore the feasibility of creating a regional purchasing group to obtain software licensing discounts.
- Post grant opportunities for projects utilizing innovative solutions and new technologies on the regional online communication platform website.
- Increase partnerships between local industries and community colleges.
 - Internship and apprenticeship programs for students
 - Having industry professionals teach some courses
 - Post-graduate career services and career fairs
- Develop a program to train counselors and career advisors at NC Works Career Centers to use and incorporate technology into career readiness programs.
 - i.e. Tratify software
- Continue programs such as Incumbent Worker Training to retrain existing employees in incorporation of new technologies.
- Create a regional group of local governments to sign up for Drinking and Wastewater certification programs within the region.
 - The program is currently offered if at least five people are available to register.
- Explore the feasibility of offering a Building Inspections Technology associates degree at Pitt Community College or offering this as a concentration option under the existing Building Construction Technology degree.
- Explore the feasibility of adding an associate degree program for Industrial Operations Management at Beaufort County Community College, Martin Community College, or Roanoke-Chowan Community College.
- Explore the feasibility of adding nursing programs at Martin Community College and Roanoke-Chowan Community College.
- Develop strategies to attract nurses and CNAs to jobs in the region.
- Develop strategies to attract gerontology specialists to jobs in the region.
- Continue implementing strategies to attract high school students to enter careers in skilled trades and advanced manufacturing.

- Conduct a regional salary study for jobs in which employers have difficulty hiring qualified candidates.
- Conduct an additional deep dive survey or focus group with more participating employers from across the region to identify additional employer needs and expand the gap analysis.
- Incorporate entrepreneurship into regional marketing efforts.
- Post opportunities for available grant opportunities, low interest loans, and incentive programs for entrepreneurs and small business owners through the regional online communication platform website. Link to Small Business Centers at community colleges and other small business organizations.
- Increase partnerships between Small Business Centers, local governments, downtown organizations and other partner organizations.
 - Create a Small Business group via the online communication platform to assist in collaborative efforts.
- Partner with Small Business Centers and other organizations serving entrepreneurs and small businesses to encourage small business owners to complete HUB certification.
- Explore the feasibility of implementing entrepreneurship curriculums at the middle school and high school level.
- Download or create a resource booklet to hand out to entrepreneurs and small business owners which catalogs agencies, available programs, and contact information.
- Increase the number of events across the region which celebrate entrepreneurs.
- Explore the feasibility of obtaining the Certified Entrepreneurial Community designation for each county or for the region.
- Market the need for employers and sector/industry specific professionals to serve on Strategic Planning Committees for each Career Path.
- Develop additional strategies to educate staff at NC Career Center on incorporating Career Pathways into job seeker programs.
- Continue development of information sessions to educate parents and students on Career Pathways.
- Continue strategic planning efforts to implement current Career Paths. Evaluate implementation strategies and make improvements where needed.
- Continue working with high schools and community colleges to support programs developed around Career Pathways.
- Continue development of additional Career Pathways which align with employer needs.
- Create a Career Pathways Training Guide reference document.
 - Career pathways definition needs to be consistent and align between partner agencies.
- Explore the feasibility of creating Career Coach positions to serve local high schools.
 - Raising career awareness could start even at the middle school level.

Appendix A: Steering Committee and Subcommittee Membership

REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Beaufort County

Private Industry:	Randy Roark idX Impressions randy.roark@idxnorthcarolina.com
Institutes of Higher Education:	Beaufort County Community College Sara Watson, Director of Customized Training & Apprenticeships Sara.watson@beaufortccc.edu
Elected Officials:	Jerry Evans BCEDAB Vice Chairman Beaufort County Commissioner (252)945-0121 jerry.evans@co.beaufort.nc.us
Staff:	Martyn Johnson, Economic Developer Martyn.johnson@beaufortedc.com
Community Organization:	Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce Catherine Glover, Director cglover@wbcchamber.com

Bertie County

Private Industry:	Carl Bond (agriculture representative) Retired from USDA (252)398-7855 Ck_45baddog@yahoo.com
Institutes of Higher Education:	Martin Community College Maureen Green, Director of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness Maureen.green@martincc.edu

Elected Officials:

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Juan Vaughan II, Interim County Manager
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Community Organization: Vivian Saunders, Executive Director
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Hertford County

Private Industry: Curtis Wynn, President & CEO
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Susan Tann
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Institutes of Higher Education: Dr. Stanley Elliott, President
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Elected Officials:

Staff:

Community Organization: Daryl Williams, Director
Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce
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Martin County

Private Industry:

Institutes of Higher Education: Martin Community College

Maureen Green, Director of Institutional Research and
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Elected Officials:

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Dempsey Bond, County Commissioner
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Staff:

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Community Organization:

Pitt County

Private Industry:

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Community Organization: Rob Lee, Executive Director
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Regional

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State

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Chocowinity
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Washington Tourism Development
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Washington Harbor District Alliance
Meg Howdy, Director
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Aurora/Richland Chamber of Commerce
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Belhaven Chamber of Commerce
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Business Representatives

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Beaufort County Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee

Transportation

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Len White, Division Planning Engineer
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Eliud De Jesus, Mid-East RPO

Infrastructure Grants

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Utilities

Multi-Service Utility Providers:

Aurora – provides water and sewer service in-town.
Terry Groome, Public Works Director
aurorapwd@embarqmail.com

Bath – provides water and sewer service in-town.
Keith Tankard, Utilities Director
townofbath@embarqmail.com

Belhaven – provides electric, water and sewer service in-town.
Paul Wood, Public Works Director
Utilities@belhavennc.us

Chocowinity – provides water and sewer service in town.
Kevin Brickhouse, Public Works Director
kbtoc@suddenlinkmail.com

Pantego – provides water and sewer service in town.
Need elected official in charge of Public Works. Town Clerk is Bobbi Ricks.
thetownofpantego@gmail.com

Washington – provides electric, water and sewer service in town and to some surrounding areas.
Adam Waters, Public Works Director
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Water Providers:

Beaufort County – provides water service in Beaufort County.

Christina Smith, Director

Christina.smith@co.beaufort.nc.us

Electrical Service Providers:

Dominion Power – provides electrical service to northwest Beaufort County

Bryan Smith, Economic Development Manager – Eastern Virginia, North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley

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Duke Energy – provides electrical service to southwest Beaufort County

Donna Phillips, Economic Development Director East Region

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Tideland EMC – provides electrical service to eastern Beaufort County

Paul Spruill, General Manager and CEO

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Heidi Smith, Marketing Manager

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Natural Gas Providers:

Piedmont Natural Gas – provides natural gas service to Beaufort County.

www.piedmontng.com

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Broadband/Telecommunications

Suddenlink Communications (now owned by Altice)

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Scottie Barker, Construction Manager

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Century Link

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MCNC

MCNC is a technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Beaufort County Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

Local Governments

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Chocowinity

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Pantego

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Washington

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Washington Park

Dennie Dale, Clerk

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NC Wildlife Resources Commission
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Food Banks

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Food Bank of the Albemarle
Liz Reasoner, Director
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Health

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Vidant Beaufort Hospital
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Housing

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Law Enforcement

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City of Washington Police Dept.
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Town of Belhaven Police Dept.
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Town of Chocowinity Police Dept.
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Recreation / Ecotourism

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Chocowinity Parks and Recreation Dept.
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Washington Parks and Recreation Dept.
Kristi Roberson, Director
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Goose Creek State Park
goose.creek@ncparks.gov

Inner Banks Outfitters
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Tar-Pamlico Guide Service
Richard Andrews, Owner
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Shelters

Bertie-Martin-Beaufort Shelter Home (temporary children's shelter)
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(252)792-1883

Open Door Community Shelter (homeless women and children's shelter)
Marcia Norwood, Executive Director
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Zion Shelter and Kitchen (men's shelter)
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Social Services

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Tourism

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Beaufort County Small Business and Workforce Development Subcommittee

Workforce Development

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Career Pathways

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Chambers of Commerce

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Employers

IDX Impressions
Randy Roark
randy.roark@idxnorthcarolina.com

Nutrien
Kim Toler
kim.toler@nutrien.com

Local Governments

Same as Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

NC Works Career Center

Wes Watson, Beaufort Co. NC Works Manager
wes.watson@nccommerce.com

Rivers Workforce Development Board Members

Jennie Brown, Chair
Vidant Beaufort Hospital
jennie.brown@vidanthealth.com

Mary Pinkston
Iconic Marine Group
mpinkston@iconicmarinegroup.com

Kim Toler
Nutrien
Kim.toler@nutrien.com

Small Business

Beaufort County Community College Small Business Center
Lentz Stowe, Director
lentz.stowe@beaufortccc.edu

Small Business Grants
Mid-East Commission
Kevin Richards
krichards@mideastcom.org

Small Business
Iconic Marine Group
Mary Pinkston (WDB member)

Bertie County Business Recruitment, Retention and Marketing Subcommittee

Carl Bond, Retired from USDA
Ck_45baddog@yahoo.com

Business Grants

Kevin Richards, Mid-East Commission
krichards@mideastcom.org

Local Governments

Bertie County
Steve Biggs, Economic Developer
Steve.biggs@bertie.nc.gov
Scott Sauer, County Manager
Scott.sauer@bertie.nc.gov
Juan Vaughan II, Interim County Manager
juan.vaughan@bertie.nc.gov

Town of Askewville
Gloria Bryant, Mayor
(252)794-2426

Town of Aulander
Renee Benton, Town Clerk
townofaulander@gmail.com

Town of Colerain
Shirlie Davenport, Town Clerk
townofcolerain@mediacombb.net

Town of Lewiston-Woodville
James Earl Pugh, Mayor
lewistonwoodville@gmail.com

Town of Kelford
Marie Garris, Town Clerk
Townofkelford@gmail.com

Town of Powellsville
James Peele, Mayor
(252)332-5340

Town of Roxobel
Gary Johnson, Mayor
townofroxobel@centurylink.net

Town of Windsor
Allen Castelloe, Town Administrator
Windsor.admin@mchsi.com

Billy Smithwick, Tourism/Marketing
(252)724-0994

Community Organizations

Bertie-Windsor Chamber of Commerce
Lewis Hoggard, Director
windsorbertie@gmail.com

Choanoke Area Development Associates
Melvin Powers, Director
mpowers@nc-cada.org

Community Enrichment Group of Roxobel
Danielle Baker
dbaker@bakerspeanuts.com

Roanoke River Partners
Carol Shields, Director
cjshields57@wildblue.net

Bertie County Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee

Transportation

NC DOT Division 1
Michael Hill, District Engineer
mrhill@ncdot.gov

Peanut Belt RPO
Cathy Scott, Interim Transportation Planner
cathyscott@halifaxdevelopment.com

Infrastructure Grants

Kevin Richards, Mid-East Commission
krichards@mideastcom.org

Multi-Service Utility Providers

Askewville – provides water and sewer service in-town.

Gloria Bryant is Mayor (252)794-2426

Aulander - provides water and sewer service in-town.

Renee Benton is Clerk
townofaulander@gmail.com

Colerain – provides water and sewer service in-town.

Shirley Davenport is Clerk.
townofcolerain@mediacombb.net

Lewiston-Woodville – provides water and sewer service in-town.

James Earl Pugh is Mayor
Lewistonwoodville@gmail.com

Windsor – provides electric, water and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas.

Matt Wilson, Public Works Director
Mswilson21@gmail.com

Water Providers

Bertie County – provides water service in Bertie County.

Rick Spivey, Director
Ricky.spivey@bertie.nc.gov

Kelford – provides water service in-town.

Marie Garris is Clerk
townofkelford@gmail.com

Powellsville – provides water service in-town.

James Peele is Mayor
(252)332-5340

Electrical Service Providers

Dominion Power – provides electrical service in central and eastern Hertford County

Bryan Smith, Economic Development Manager – Eastern Virginia, North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley (based out of VA, may be local appointee)
Bryan.smith@dominionenergy.com

Roanoke Electric Cooperative – provides electrical service to Bertie County

Curtis Wynn
Marshall Cherry
Susan Tann
cwynn@roanokeelectric.com
mcherry@roanokeelectric.com
stann@roanokeelectric.com

Natural Gas Providers

Piedmont Natural Gas – provides natural gas service to Bertie County.

Tammy Thurman, Community Relations Manager
Tammy.thurman@duke-energy.com

Broadband/Telecommunications

Media Com – Provides service in most of Bertie County
Kim Mason, Director of Area Operations
kmason@mediacomcc.com

Spectrum (Previously Time Warner) – Provides service in Aulander
Scott Pryzwansky, Senior Director of Communications, Carolinas Region
Scott.pryzwansky@charter.com

Century Link
Lisa Flanagan, Area Director LifeCycle Management
Lisa.flanagan@centurylink.com

MCNC
MCNC is a technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Bertie County Healthy and Safe Communities Subcommittee

Local Governments

Bertie County

Traci White, Planning Director

traci.white@bertie.nc.gov

Juan Vaughan II, Interim County Manager

juan.vaughan@bertie.nc.gov

Town of Askewville

Gloria Bryant, Mayor

(252)794-2426

Town of Aulander

Renee Benton, Town Clerk

townofaulander@gmail.com

Town of Colerain

Shirlie Davenport, Town Clerk

townofcolerain@mediacombb.net

Town of Lewiston-Woodville

James Earl Pugh, Mayor

lewistonwoodville@gmail.com

Town of Kelford

Marie Garris, Town Clerk

Townofkelford@gmail.com

Town of Powellsville

James Peele, Mayor

(252)332-5340

Town of Roxobel

Gary Johnson, Mayor

townofroxobel@centurylink.net

Town of Windsor

Allen Castelloe, Town Administrator

Windsor.admin@mchsi.com

Mid-East Commission Planning Dept. (provide planning services for some local governments)
Nola Roberts, Planning Technician
nroberts@mideastcom.org

Education

Martin County Community College
Maureen Green
maureen.green@martincc.edu

Bertie County Schools
Otis Smallwood, Superintendent
osmallwood@bertie.k12.nc.us

Lawrence Academy
Jason Wynne, Principal
jwynne@lawrenceacademy.org

Environmental

Bertie County Soil & Water Conservation District
William Blount Knowles, District Supervisor
(252)794-5305

NC DEQ
Division of Water Resources
APNEP
Jimmy Johnson, Coastal Habitats Coordinator
jimmy.johnson@ncdenr.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Coastal Management (CAMA)
Jonathan Howell, District Manager
jonathan.howell@ncdenr.gov

NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Brooke Massa, Conservation Biologist
brooke.massa@ncwildlife.org

Food Pantries

Food Bank of the Albemarle
Liz Reasoner, Director
lreasoner@foodbank.org

Good Shepherd Food Pantry of Bertie County
Deborah Freeman, Director
(252)484-3889

Health

Bertie County Health Dept. / Albemarle Regional Health Services
Jerry Parks, Director
jparks@arhs-nc.org

Vidant Bertie Hospital
Debbie Swicegood, Director
(252)794-6600

Housing

Mid-East Regional Housing Authority
Lynn Alligood, Director
lynn@merha.org

Choanoke Area Development Associates
Melvin Powers, Director
mpowers@nc-cada.org

The Hive House
Vivian Saunders, Director
saunders239@yahoo.com

Law Enforcement

Bertie County Sheriff's Dept.
John Holley, Sheriff
john.holley@bertie.nc.gov

Town of Aulander Police Dept.
Jimmy Barmer, Police Chief
(252)345-3181

Town of Lewsiston-Woodville Police Dept.
Officer Chris Cordon
(252)325-2277

Town of Windsor Police Dept.
Justin Jackson, Police Chief
(252)794-3121 ext. 310

Partnership for Children

Albemarle Alliance for Children and Families
Angela Langdon-Charlton
alcharlton@albemarleacf.org

Recreation / Ecotourism

Bertie County Parks and Recreation Dept.
Donna Mizelle, Director
donna.mizelle@bertie.nc.gov

Town of Windsor
Billy Smithwick, Tourism & Marketing
(252)724-0994

Roanoke Cashie River Center
Joe Huff, Director
(252)794-2001

Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge
roanokeriver@fws.gov

Roanoke River Partners
Carol Shields, Director
cjshields57@wildblue.net

Shelters

Bertie-Martin-Beaufort Shelter Home (temporary children's shelter)
Pamela Moore-Hardison, Director
(252)792-1883

Roanoke Chowan SAFE (domestic violence victims' temporary shelter)
Tammie McCarter, Director
rcsafe2000@yahoo.com

Social Services

Bertie County Social Services Dept.
Cindy Perry, Director
cindy.perry@bertiedss.com

Bertie County Small Business and Workforce Development Subcommittee

Workforce Development

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Jennie Bowen

jbowen@mideastcom.org

Wayne Rollins

wrollins@mideastcom.org

Career Pathways

NENC Career Pathways

Brandi Bragg, Career Pathways Facilitator

brandi.bragg@nencpathways.org

Chambers of Commerce

Bertie-Windsor Chamber of Commerce

Lewis Hoggard, Director

windsorbertie@gmail.com

Economic Developers

Bertie County

Steve Biggs, Economic Developer

Steve.biggs@bertie.nc.gov

Education / Vocational Training

Martin County Community College

Maureen Green

maureen.green@martincc.edu

Kenneth Boham, Interim President

kenneth.boham@martincc.edu

Bertie County Schools

Otis Smallwood, Superintendent

osmallwood@bertie.k12.nc.us

Employer

Agricultural Representative
Carl Bond, Retired USDA
Ck_45baddog@yahoo.com

Local Governments

Same as Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

NC Works

John Powell, Bertie Co. NC Works Center Manager
jpowell@rossworks.com

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Ronald Roberson, R Ron Properties Inc.
R08ronron@aol.com

Vivian Saunders, The Hive House
saunders239@yahoo.com

Small Business

Martin Community College Small Business Center
Charles Banks, Director
charles.banks@martincc.edu

Small Business Grants
Mid-East Commission
Kevin Richards
krichards@mideastcom.org

Ronald Roberson (WDB member)
R Ron Properties

Hertford County Business Recruitment, Retention and Marketing Subcommittee

Business Grants

Kevin Richards, Mid-East Commission
krichards@mideastcom.org

Local Governments

Hertford County
Loria Williams, County Manager
Loria.williams@hertfordcountync.gov

Town of Ahoskie
Marty Northcott, Code Enforcement
inspections@ahoskienc.gov

Town of Cofield
Penny Hall, Town Clerk
townofcofield@embarqmail.com

Town of Como
Susan Kennington, Town Clerk
Swk1028@yahoo.com

Town of Harrellsville
Dina White, Town Clerk
harrellsville@centurylink.net

Town of Murfreesboro
Carolyn Brown, Town Administrator
cbrown@murfreesboronc.net

Town of Winton
townofwinton@gmail.com

Community Organizations

Hertford County Committee of 100
Amy Braswell, President
abraswell@ahoskiechamber.net

Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce
Daryl Williams, Director
murfreesborochamber@gmail.com

Ahoskie Chamber of Commerce
Amy Braswell, Director
abraswell@ahoskiechamber.net

Ahoskie Tourism Development Authority
Jimmie Rowe, Mayor and Chairperson
info@ahoskie.org

Choanoke Area Development Associates
Melvin Powers, Director
mpowers@nc-cada.org

Hertford County Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee

Transportation

NC DOT Division 1
Michael Hill, District Engineer
mrhill@ncdot.gov

Peanut Belt RPO
Cathy Scott, Interim Transportation Planner
cathyscott@halifaxdevelopment.com

Infrastructure Grants

Mid-East Commission
Kevin Richards
krichards@mideastcom.org

Utilities

Multi-Service Utility Providers:

Ahoskie – provides water and sewer service in town.

Stephen Lassiter, Public Works Director
sslassiter@ahoskie.org

Cofield – provides water and sewer service in town.

Penny Hall, Town Clerk
townofcofield@embarqmail.com

Murfreesboro – provides water and sewer service in town.

Carolyn Brown, Town Administrator
cbrown@murfreesboronc.net

Winton – provides water and sewer service in town.
townofwinton@gmail.com

Water Providers

Harrellsville – provides water service in town.

Jerry Hunnicutt, Public Works Director
Harrellsville@centurylink.net

Hertford County – provides water service in Hertford County outside municipalities and in the Town of Como.

Rebecca Turner, Public Works Manager
Rebecca.turner@hertfordcountync.gov

Electrical Service Providers

Dominion Power – provides electrical service in central and eastern Hertford County

Bryan Smith, Economic Development Manager – Eastern Virginia, North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley (based out of VA, may be local appointee)
Bryan.smith@dominionenergy.com

Roanoke Electric Cooperative – provides electrical service to northern and western Hertford County

Curtis Wynn
Marshall Cherry
Susan Tann
cwynn@roanokeelectric.com
mcherry@roanokeelectric.com
stann@roanokeelectric.com

Natural Gas Providers

Piedmont Natural Gas – provides natural gas service to Hertford County.

Tammy Thurman, Community Relations Manager
Tammy.thurman@duke-energy.com

Broadband/Telecommunications

Spectrum (Previously Time Warner)
Scott Pryzwansky, Senior Director of Communications, Carolinas Region
Scott.pryzwansky@charter.com

Century Link

Lisa Flanagan, Area Director LifeCycle Management

Lisa.flanagan@centurylink.com

MCNC

MCNC is a technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Hertford County Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

Local Governments

Hertford County

Loria Williams, County Manager

Loria.williams@hertfordcountync.gov

Town of Ahoskie

Marty Northcott, Code Enforcement

inspections@ahoskienc.gov

Town of Cofield

Penny Hall, Town Clerk

townofcofield@embarqmail.com

Town of Como

Susan Kennington, Town Clerk

Swk1028@yahoo.com

Town of Harrellsville

Dina White, Town Clerk

harrellsville@centurylink.net

Town of Murfreesboro

Carolyn Brown, Town Clerk

cbrown@murfreesboronc.net

Town of Winton

townofwinton@gmail.com

Mid-East Commission Planning Dept. (provide planning services for some local governments)

Nola Roberts, Planning Technician

nroberts@mideastcom.org

Education

Roanoke Chowan Community College

Dr. Stanley Elliott, President

sjelliott@roanokechowan.edu

Chowan University

Dr. Brenda Tinkham, Associate Provost

tinkhb@chowan.edu

Hertford County Schools
Dr. William Wright, Superintendent
wwright@hertford.k12.nc.us

Ahoskie Christian School
Elaine Pool, Principal
ahoskiefwb@gmail.com

Ridgcroft School
Russell Johnson, Principal
rhjohnson@ridgcroft.org

Environmental

Hertford County Soil & Water Conservation District
Brian Saunders, District Conservationist
brian.saunders@nc.usda.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Water Resources
APNEP
Jimmy Johnson, Coastal Habitats Coordinator
jimmy.johnson@ncdenr.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Coastal Management (CAMA)
Jonathan Howell, District Manager
jonathan.howell@ncdenr.gov

NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Brooke Massa, Conservation Biologist
brooke.massa@ncwildlife.org

Food Banks & Pantries

Food Bank of the Albemarle
Liz Reasoner, Director
lreasoner@foodbank.org

Ahoskie Food Pantry
Bill Arrington, Director
(252)209-0540
Health

Hertford County Health Dept. / Albemarle Regional Health Services

Vidant Roanoke-Chowan Hospital
Gloria Jones, HR Recruiter
gloria.jones@vidanthealth.com

Housing

Choanoke Area Development Associates
Melvin Powers, Director
mpowers@nc-cada.org

Ahoskie Housing Authority
Edgar Lowers, Interim Director
elowers@ahoskieha.org

Law Enforcement

Bertie County Sheriff's Dept.
Dexter Hayes, Sheriff
hfdcounty.sheriff@hertfordcountync.gov

Town of Ahoskie Police Dept.
Troy Fitzhugh, Chief of Police
chieffitzhugh@ahoskienc.gov

Town of Murfreesboro Police Dept.
David Griffith, Chief of Police
(252)398-4151

Main Street / Downtown programs

None

Partnership for Children

Hertford-Northampton Smart Start for Children
Stacey Henderson, Director
shendersonhnpfc@embarqmail.com

Recreation

Ahoskie Parks and Recreation Dept.
(252)332-4811

Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Dept.
Carolyn Brown, Town Administrator
cbrown@murfreesboronc.net

Shelters

Roanoke Chowan SAFE (domestic violence victims' temporary shelter)
Tammie McCarter, Director
rcsafe2000@yahoo.com

Social Services

Hertford County Social Services Dept.
Brenda Brown, Director
brenda.brown@hertfordcountync.gov

Tourism

Ahoskie Tourism Development Authority
Amy Braswell, Board Member
abraswell@ahoskiechamber.net

Hertford County Small Business and Workforce Development Subcommittee

Workforce Development

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Jennie Bowen

jbowen@mideastcom.org

Wayne Rollins

wrollins@mideastcom.org

Career Pathways

NENC Career Pathways

Brandi Bragg, Career Pathways Facilitator

brandi.bragg@nencpathways.org

Chambers of Commerce

Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce

Daryl Williams, Director

Murfreesborochamber@gmail.com

Ahoskie Chamber of Commerce

Amy Braswell, Director

abraswell@ahoskiechamber.net

Economic Developers

None

Education / Vocational Training

Roanoke Chowan Community College

Dr. Stanley Elliott, President

sjelliott@roanokechowan.edu

Chowan University

Dr. Kirk Peterson, President

president@chowen.edu

Hertford County Schools

Dr. William Wright, Superintendent

wwright@hertford.k12.nc.us

Employer

Nucor Steel
Bill Vaughan
bill.vaughan@nucor.com

Local Governments

Same as Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

NC Works Center

Tamara Cumbo, Hertford County NC Works Center Manager
tamara.cumbo@nccommerce.com

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Amy Braswell, Ahoskie Chamber of Commerce
abraswell@ahoskiechamber.net

Wendell Hall, Hall's Motivational Services
i_wendell_hall@yahoo.com

Small Business

Roanoke Chowan Community College Small Business Center
Mark Alt, Director
malt@roanokechowan.edu
Andrea Fennell
adfennell@roanokechowan.edu

Small Business Grants
Mid-East Commission
Kevin Richards
krichards@mideastcom.org

Small Business
Hall's Motivational Services
Wendell Hall
i_wendell_hall@yahoo.com

Martin County Business Recruitment, Retention and Marketing Subcommittee

Local Governments

Martin County

Jason Semple, Economic Developer
jsemple@martincountyedc.com

Dempsey Bond, County Commissioner
dempseybond@suddenlink.net

Bear Grass

Charlotte Griffin, Mayor of Bear Grass
Gabby45@suddenlink.net

Everetts

Mayor William Ray Dean

Hamilton

Annie Jones, Town Clerk
anniej@town-of-hamilton.org

Hassell – Will invite Town Clerk or Board member.

Town Clerk
Mayor.michelledavis@gmail.com

Jamesville

Kim Cockrell, Town Clerk
jamesville@embarqmail.com

Oak City

Vonetta Porter, Town Clerk
Oakcity204@embarqmail.com

Parmelee

Jerry McCrary, Mayor
mayorjerrym@gmail.com

Robersonville

Libby Jenkins, Town Manager
lwjenkins@suddenlinkmail.com

Williamston
Cameron Braddy, Town Planner
cbraddy@townofwilliamston.com

Community Organizations

Electricities
Brenda Daniels, Director of Economic Development
Brenda.daniels@northcarolina-electricities.com

Martin County Committee of 100
Dean McCall, President
deanmccall001@gmail.com

Martin County Chamber of Commerce
Chase Conner, Director
director@martinnccchamber.com

Martin County Tourism Development Authority
Barney Conway, Director
tourism@visitmartincounty.com

Williamston Downtown Inc.
Zach Dickerson, Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator
zdickerson@townofwilliamston.com

Roanoke River Partners
Carol Shields
cjshields57@wildblue.net

Martin County Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee

Transportation

NC DOT Division 1
Jerry Jennings, Division Engineer
jjennings@ncdot.gov

Eliud De Jesus, Mid-East RPO
edejesus@mideastcom.org

Infrastructure Grants

Kevin Richards, Mid-East Commission
krichards@mideastcom.org

Multi-Service Utility Providers

Hamilton – provides electrical, water and sewer service in-town.

William Freeman, Maintenance Director
townmaintenance@town-of-hamilton.org

Jamesville – provides water and sewer service in-town.

Kim Cockrell, Town Clerk
jamesville@emabarqmail.com

Oak City – provides water and electric service in-town.

Vonetta Porter, Town Clerk
Oakcity204@emabarqmail.com

Robersonville – provides electrical, water, and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas including Everetts and Parmele.

Mutt Smith, Public Works Director
rfdmsmith@suddenlinkmail.com

Williamston – provides water and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas.

Kerry Spivey, Public Works Director
kerryspivey@townofwilliamston.com

Water Providers

Martin County – provides water service in Martin County.
<https://www.martincountyncgov.com/water>

Ed Warren, Water Manager
ewarren@martincountyncgov.com

Electrical Service Providers

Dominion Power – provides electrical service to Williamston and some surrounding areas. www.dom.com/dominion-north-carolina-power#

Bryan Smith, Economic Development Manager – Eastern Virginia, North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley
Bryan.smith@dominionenergy.com

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC – provides electrical service to areas in western Martin County. (252) 823-2171. www.ememc.com

Winston Howell, CEO
winston.howell@ememc.com

Halifax EMC – Provides electric service in northwest corner of Martin County.

Brady Martin, Manager of Marketing and Economic Development
BAMartin@halifaxemc.com

Natural Gas Providers

Piedmont Natural Gas – provides natural gas service to Martin County. www.piedmontng.com

Tammy Thurman, Community Relations Manager
Tammy.thurman@duke-energy.com

Broadband/Telecommunications

Suddenlink Communications (now owned by Altice)
Spencer Walston, Regional Vice President
Spencer.walston@alticeusa.com

Scottie Barker, Construction Manager
scottie.barker@AlticeTechServicesUSA.com

Century Link

Lisa Flanagan, Area Director LifeCycle Management

Lisa.flanagan@centurylink.com

MCNC

MCNC is a technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Martin County Healthy and Safe Communities Subcommittee

Local Governments

Martin County

David Bone, County Manager
dbone@martincountyncgov.com

Bear Grass

Charlotte Griffin, Mayor
gabby45@suddenlink.net

Everetts

Ray Deans, Mayor
(252)799-8732

Hamilton

Annie Jones, Town Clerk
anniej@town-of-hamilton.org

Hassell

Town Clerk
Mayor.michelledavis@gmail.com

Jamesville

Kim Cockrell, Town Clerk
jamesville@emabarqmail.com

Oak City

Vonetta Porter, Town Clerk
Oakcity204@embarqmail.com

Parmelee

Jerry McCrary, Mayor
mayorjerrym@gmail.com

Robersonville

Libby Jenkins, Town Manager
lwjenkins@suddenlinkmail.com

Williamston

Cameron Braddy, Town Planner
cbraddy@townofwilliamston.com

Mid-East Commission Planning Dept. (provide planning services for some local governments)
Nola Roberts, Planning Technician
nroberts@mideastcom.org

Education

Martin Community College
Maureen Green
maureen.green@martincc.edu

Martin County Schools
Chris Mansfield, Superintendent
cmansfield@martin.k12.nc.us

Environmental

Martin County Soil & Water Conservation District
Ruben Torres, District Conservationist
ruben.torres@nc.usda.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Water Resources
APNEP
Jimmy Johnson, Coastal Habitats Coordinator
jimmy.johnson@ncdenr.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Coastal Management (CAMA)
Jonathan Howell, District Manager
jonathan.howell@ncdenr.gov

NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Brooke Massa, Conservation Biologist
brooke.massa@ncwildlife.org

Food Pantries and Food Banks

Food Bank of the Albemarle
Liz Reasoner, Director
lreasoner@foodbank.org

Faith Community Outreach Food Pantry
Jason Whitfield, Director
jwhitfield@robersonvillehousing.com

Health

Martin County Health Dept.
(252)792-7811

Martin General Hospital
Becky Edwards, Human Resources Director
(252)809-6300

Housing

Choanoke Area Development Associates
Melvin Powers, Director
mpowers@nc-cada.org

Mid-East Regional Housing Authority
Lynn Alligood, Director
lynn@merha.org

Robersonville Housing Authority
Jason Whitfield, Director
jwhitfield@robersonvillehousing.com

Williamston Housing Authority
Michael Gaddy, Executive Director
exd@suddenlinkmail.com

Law Enforcement

Martin County Sheriff's Dept.
Tim Manning, Sheriff
tim.manning@martincountyncgov.com

Town of Williamston Police Dept.
Travis Cowan, Chief of Police
traviscowan@townofwilliamston.com

Main Street / Downtown programs

Williamston Downtown Inc.
Zach Dickerson, Planning and Downtown Marketing Coordinator
zdickerson@townofwilliamston.com

Partnership for Children

Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children
Sharon Cooper, Director
scooper@mppfc.org

Recreation / Ecotourism

Williamston Parks and Recreation Dept.
Allen Overby, Director
allenoverby@townofwilliamston.com

Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge
roanokeriver@fws.gov

Roanoke River Partners
Carol Shields, Director
cjshields57@wildblue.net

Shelters

Bertie-Martin-Beaufort Shelter Home (temporary children's shelter)
Pamela Moore-Hardison, Director
(252)792-1883

Social Services

Martin County Social Services Dept.
Letecia Loadholt, Director
letecia.loadholt@martincountyncgov.com

Tourism

Martin County Tourism Development Authority
Barney Conway, Director
tourism@visitmartincounty.com

Martin County Small Business and Workforce Development Subcommittee

Workforce Development

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Jennie Bowen

jbowen@mideastcom.org

Wayne Rollins

wrollins@mideastcom.org

Career Pathways

NENC Career Pathways

Brandi Bragg, Career Pathways Facilitator

brandi.bragg@nencpathways.org

Chambers of Commerce

Martin County Chamber of Commerce

Chase Conner, Director

admin@martinnccchamber.com

Economic Developers

Jason Semple, Martin County Economic Developer

jsemple@martincountyedc.com

Education / Vocational Training

Martin Community College

Maureen Green, Martin Community College

maureen.green@martincc.edu

Dr. Kenneth Boham, Interim President

kenneth.boham@martincc.edu

Martin County Schools

Chris Mansfield, Superintendent

cmansfield@martin.k12.nc.us

Employer

Jaret Warren

Metcore Industrial Solutions

jwarren@metcoreindustrial.com

Local Governments

Same as Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee

NC Works

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krista.wood@nccommerce.com

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

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Keisha Manson-Rodgers
Manson Mortuary
mizkmv@yahoo.com

John Maiolo
Dominion Power
CSSLU50@gmail.com

Small Business

Martin Community College Small Business Center
Charles Banks, Director
charles.banks@martincc.edu

Small Business Grants
Mid-East Commission
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krichards@mideastcom.org

Small Business
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Pitt County Business Recruitment, Retention, and Marketing Subcommittee

Business Grants

Mid-East Commission
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Local Governments

Pitt County
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Jonas Hill, Planner III
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Town of Ayden
Stephen Smith, Planning Director
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Town of Bethel
Tom Asbell, Town Manager
betheltownmanager@suddenlinkmail.com

Town of Falkland
Vickie Wells, Town Clerk
vickiewells@hotmail.com

Town of Farmville
Justin Oakes, Planning Director
joakes@farmvillenc.gov

Town of Fountain
Letha Hines, Town Clerk
Tofclerk2001@aol.com

City of Greenville
Jared Stalling, Economic Developer
jstalling@greenvillenc.gov

Town of Grifton
Mark Warren, Interim Town Manager
townmanager@grifton.com

Town of Grimesland
Barbara Chitmon, Town Clerk or Jaime Moles, Deputy Clerk
grimeslandtown@embarqmail.com

Village of Simpson
Susan Ellsworth, Village Clerk
simpson@suddenlinkmail.com

Town of Winterville
Stephen Penn, Economic Development Planner
Stephen.penn@wintervillenc.com

Community Organizations

Electricities
Brenda Daniels, Director of Economic Development
Brenda.daniels@northcarolina-electricities.com

Pitt County Committee of 100
Spence Cosby, Chairman
scosby@sentinelra.com

Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce
Kate Teel, President
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Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Andrew Schmidt, Director
andrew@visitgreenvillenc.com

Uptown Greenville
Meredith Hawke, Director
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Farmville Downtown Partnership
Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce
Anna Newsome, Director
Anna@farmvillencchamber.org

Ayden Main Street Program
Stephen Smith, Planning Director
ssmith@ayden.com

Ayden Chamber of Commerce
Laura Todd, Director
chamber@ayden.com

Winterville Chamber of Commerce
Debbie Avery, Director
davery60@hotmail.com

Pitt County Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee

East Carolina University

Office of Engagement, Innovation, and Economic Development
Merrill Flood
Floodm18@ecu.edu

Transportation

City of Greenville, Public Works Director/Greenville MPO Chairperson
Kevin Mulligan
kmulligan@greenvillenc.gov

NC DOT Division 2
Len White
lenwhite@ncdot.gov

Eliud De Jesus, Mid-East RPO
edejesus@mideastcom.org

Ryan Purtle
Greenville MPO
rpurtle@greenvillenc.gov

Infrastructure Grants

Mid-East Commission
Kevin Richards
krichards@mideastcom.org

Multi-Service Utility Providers

Ayden – provides electrical, water, and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas.
4144 West Ave., Ayden. (252) 481-5821.

Keith Murphy, Interim Director of Public Works and Utilities
kmurphy@ayden.com (252)378-5142

Bethel – provides water and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas. P.O. Box 337, Bethel. (252) 818-0891. Director of public works: Todd Bullock. www.bethelinc.org

John Nelson, Director of Public Works
bethelpublicworks@suddenlinkmail.com

Farmville – provides electrical, water, and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas. 3672 N. Main St., Farmville. (252) 753-5774.

Wess Thomas, Director of Public Works
wthomas@farmvillenc.gov

Fountain – provides electrical, water, and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas. P.O. Box 134, Fountain. (252) 749-2881.

Ronnie Williams, Utility Supervisor
tofclerk2001@aol.com

Greenville Utilities Commission – provides electrical, water, sewer, and natural gas service to Greenville and surrounding communities in Pitt County. 401 S. Greene St, Greenville. (252) 752-7166. www.guc.com

Tony Cannon, CEO and General Manager
cannonac@guc.com

Kathy Howard, Business Development Specialist
howardkp@guc.com

Grimesland – provides water and sewer service in-town and to some areas outside of town. (252) 752-6337. www.grimesland.org

Lee Latham, Director of Public Works
llatham@embarqmail.com

Grifton – provides water and sewer service in-town and to some areas outside of town. 437-B Creekshore Drive, Grifton. (252) 524-5168. www.grifton.com

Bill Raynor, Utilities Supervisor
utilitiesdir@outlook.com

Winterville – provides electrical, water, and sewer service in-town and to some surrounding areas. 2571 Railroad St., Winterville. (252) 756-2221. Public Works director: Travis Welborn. www.wintervillenc.com

Travis Welborn, Director of Public Works
travis.welborn@wintervillenc.com

Electrical Service Providers:

Dominion Power – provides electrical service to areas in northern Pitt County. (866) 366-4357. www.dom.com/dominion-north-carolina-power

Bryan Smith, Economic Development Manager – Eastern Virginia, North Carolina, Shenandoah Valley (based out of VA, may be local appointee)
Bryan.smith@dominionenergy.com

Duke Energy Progress – provides electrical service to areas of Pitt County near Farmville, Grifton, and Grimesland. (800) 452-2777. www.progress-energy.com

Donna Phillips, Economic Development Director East Region
Donna.Phillips@duke-energy.com

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC – provides electrical service to areas in northern Pitt County. (252) 823-2171. www.ememc.com

Winston Howell, CEO
winston.howell@ememc.com

Pitt & Greene EMC – provides electrical service to areas of Pitt County near Farmville. (252) 753-3128. General manager: Mark Suggs. www.pgemc.com

Mark Suggs Receptionist will forward
Customer_care@pgemc.com

Water Providers:

Eastern Pines Water Corporation – 5442 Eastern Pines Rd., Greenville. (252) 752-7420. www.epwc.org

Barry Sutton, Manager
bsutton@epwc.com

Bell Arthur Water Corporation – 2474 Bell Arthur Rd., Greenville. (252) 752-6252. www.bawater.org

Ray Baldree, General Manager
bawater@embarqmail.com

Stokes Regional Water Corporation – 3607 NC 30, Stokes. (252) 757-7751. <https://sites.google.com/site/srwcwater>

Bruce Bland Jr., Manager
Bbland.srwc@gmail.com

Natural Gas Providers

Piedmont Natural Gas – provides natural gas service to Farmville. (800) 752-7504. www.piedmontng.com

Tammy Thurman, Community Relations Manager
Tammy.thurman@duke-energy.com

Broadband/Telecommunications

Suddenlink Communications (now owned by Altice)
Spencer Walston, Regional Vice President
spencer.walston@alticeusa.com

Century Link
Lisa Flanagan, Area Director LifeCycle Management
Lisa.flanagan@centurylink.com

MCNC

MCNC is a technology non-profit that builds, owns, and operates a leading-edge broadband infrastructure for North Carolina's research, education, non-profit healthcare, and other community institutions.

Pitt County Healthy and Safe Communities Subcommittee

Local Governments

Pitt County

Jonas Hill, Planner III

james.rhodes@pittcountync.gov

Town of Ayden

Stephen Smith, Planning Director

ssmith@ayden.com

Town of Bethel

Tom Asbell, Town Manager

betheltownmanager@suddenlinkmail.com

Town of Falkland

Vickie Wells, Town Clerk

vickiewells@hotmail.com

Town of Farmville

Justin Oakes, Planning Director

joakes@farmvillenc.gov

Town of Fountain

Letha Hines, Town Clerk

Tofclerk2001@aol.com

City of Greenville

Thomas Barnett, Director of Community Development

tbarnett@greenvillenc.gov

Town of Grifton

Mark Warren, Interim Town Manager

townmanager@grifton.com

Town of Grimesland

Barbara Chitmon, Town Clerk or Jaime Moles, Deputy Clerk

grimeslandtown@embarqmail.com

Village of Simpson

Susan Ellsworth, Village Clerk

simpson@suddenlinkmail.com

Town of Winterville
Stephen Penn, Economic Development Planner
Stephen.penn@wintervillenc.com

Mid-East Commission Planning Dept. (provide planning services for some local governments)
Nola Roberts, Planning Technician
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Education

Pitt County Community College
Dr. Lawrence Rouse, President
llrouse@email.pittcc.edu
Kathy Carnes
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Pitt County Schools
Ethan Lenker, Superintendent
lenkere@pitt.k12.nc.us

East Carolina University
Merrill Flood, Office of Engagement, Innovation and Economic Development
Floodm18@ecu.edu

St. Peter Catholic School
Dr. Michael Fedewa, Superintendent
mfedewa@spcsnc.net

Oakwood School
Dan Quesnel, Principal
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Greenville Christian Academy
Mike Lopez, Administrator
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John Paul II Catholic High School
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cconticchio@jp2highschool.com

Christ Covenant School
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Walton Academy
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Greenville Montessori School
Lesley Byrne-Steedly, Administrator
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Environmental

Pitt County Soil & Water Conservation District
PJ Andrews, Director
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NC DEQ
Division of Water Resources
APNEP
Jimmy Johnson, Coastal Habitats Coordinator
jimmy.johnson@ncdenr.gov

NC DEQ
Division of Coastal Management (CAMA)
Jonathan Howell, District Manager
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NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Brooke Massa, Conservation Biologist
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Food Banks and Pantries

Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC
George Young, Eastern Regional Director
gyoung@foodbankcenc.org

Joy Soup Kitchen
Vivian Bryant or Shirley Ann House, staff
(252)561-7519

Shepherd's Food Pantry
Word of Truth Anointed Ministries
sbwilliams@suddenlink.net

Health

Pitt County Health Dept.
John Silvernail, Director
john.silvernail@pittcountync.gov

Vidant Hospital Greenville
Charlene Wilson, Vice President of Human Resources
(252)847-4100

Housing

Mid-East Regional Housing Authority
Lynn Alligood, Director
lynn@merha.org

Greenville Housing Authority
Wayman Williams, Executive Director
williamsa@ghanc.net

Farmville Housing Authority
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USDA Rural Development
Lisa Yocum, Area Director
lisa.yocum@nc.usda.gov

Law Enforcement

Pitt County Sheriff's Dept.
Paula Dance, Sheriff
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City of Greenville Police Dept.
Mark Holtzman, Chief of Police
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Town of Ayden Police Dept.
Barry Stanley, Chief of Police
bstanley@ayden.com

Town of Bethel Police Dept.
Amanda Tyndall, Chief of Police
artyndall@suddenlinkmail.com

Town of Farmville Police Dept.
Donnie Greene, Chief of Police
dgreene@farmvillenc.gov

Town of Grifton Police Dept.
Brian Silva, Chief of Police
(252)524-4161

Town of Winterville Police Dept.
Ryan Willhite, Chief of Police
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Main Street / Downtown programs

Uptown Greenville
Meredith Hawke, Director
meredith@uptowngreenville.com

Farmville Downtown Partnership
Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce
Anna Newsome, Director
Anna@farmvillencchamber.org

Ayden Main Street Program
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Partnership for Children

Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children
Sharon Cooper, Director
scooper@mppfc.org

Recreation / Ecotourism

Ayden Parks and Recreation Dept.
Tommy Duncan, Arts and Recreation Director
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Farmville Parks and Recreation Dept.
Chris Stokes, Sports & Facilities Coordinator
cstokes@farmvillenc.gov

Greenville Parks and Recreation Dept.
Gary Fenton, Director
gfenton@greenvillenc.gov

Winterville Parks and Recreation Dept.
Evan Johnston, Director
evan.johnston@wintervillenc.com

Friends of Greenville Greenways
frogsgreenville@gmail.com
East Carolina Velo Cycling Club
Matthew Long, President
president@ecvelo.org

Knee Deep Adventures
Kelsey Curtis, Owner
kneedeepoutdooradventures@gmail.com

Shelters

Community Crossroads Center
Ken Becker, Director
ed@greenvillecommunityshelter.org

New Directions Safe House (domestic violence victim shelter)
(252)758-4400

Social Services

Pitt County Social Services Dept.
Jan Elliott, Director
jan.elliott@pittcountync.gov

Tourism

Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Andrew Schmidt, Director
andrew@visitgreenvillenc.com

Pitt County Small Business/Workforce Development Subcommittee

Workforce Development

Rivers East Workforce Development Board

Jennie Bowen

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Wayne Rollins

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Career Pathways

NENC Career Pathways

Brandi Bragg, Career Pathways Facilitator

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Chambers of Commerce

Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce

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kate@greenvillenc.org

Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce

Anna Newsome, Director

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Ayden Chamber of Commerce

Laura Todd, Director

chamber@ayden.com

Winterville Chamber of Commerce

Debbie Avery, Director

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Economic Developers

Pitt County Development Commission

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Town of Winterville

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Town of Ayden
Mallory Denham, Economic Development Director
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Education / Vocational Training

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Cc Kathy Carnes on emails
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Pitt County Schools
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Life of NC/Strive NC
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Employer

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Local Governments

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Rivers East Workforce Development Board

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Small Business

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Small Business Grants
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Small Business
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Robert Williams, Owner
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Small Business
Knee Deep Adventures
Kelsey Curtis, Owner
kneedeepoutdooradventures@gmail.com

Appendix B: Subcommittee Questionnaires

Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan

Business Recruitment, Retention & Marketing Subcommittee Worksheet

Please keep the following goal and objectives of the Region Q Comprehensive Development Strategy in mind as you answer the below questions. These questions are designed to assist in the completion of the business recruitment, retention and marketing asset mapping for your county (i.e. what is already being done to achieve these objectives.)

Goal 1: Brand and market the 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.

- Identify the Region's clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages.
- Use the cluster analysis to target existing businesses and start-ups and market the benefits of locating in the Region.
- Develop and implement a Regional Plan to leverage the Region's competitive advantages.
- Conduct an analysis that identifies the existing and potential improved place brand for the Region.
- Develop and implement a Regional Marketing Plan.
- Create a marketing image that reflects the quality of life and unique assets of each area, such as water resources, peanuts, glassworks, historic sites, sports arenas, campgrounds, etc.
- Identify new adaptive capabilities of the regional economy.

Please return this worksheet to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019:

jheath@mideastcom.org

Fax: (252)946-5489

1. What is the name of your organization?

2. What type of organization?

3. What is your name and title?

4. Does your organization offer any grants? If yes, please describe.

5. Does your organization have any community outreach programs? If yes, please describe.
6. Has your organization been successful in applying for grant funds in the past? If yes, what grants have you received? Please briefly describe the project(s) that each grant funded.
7. Has your organization participated in any public-private partnerships? If yes, please describe.
8. Does your organization collaborate or partner with other organizations locally?
9. Does your organization collaborate or partner with state or federal organizations?
10. Where does your organization go to find information and available resources to support your mission?
11. Does your organization have any adopted Economic Development plans or Marketing Plans? If yes, please provide the name of the plan and a link or information on how to obtain a copy.
12. Does your organization have any other adopted plans (i.e. Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Recreation Plan, Workforce Development Plan, etc.)? If yes, please provide the name(s) and a link or information on how to obtain a copy.

13. What types of businesses are located in your jurisdiction? Are there any business clusters (interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions) you are aware of?
14. Does your organization offer any services or programs to support existing businesses (i.e. façade grant programs, marketing, technical assistance, internships, workforce development services, etc.)? If yes, please describe.
15. Does your organization have any other strategies for retaining existing businesses? If yes, please describe.
16. To your knowledge, what types of businesses is your organization interested in recruiting (i.e. industrial, large commercial/big box, small business, specific sectors such as information technology, healthcare, biotechnology, manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, financial services, distribution and wholesale, etc.)?
17. Does your organization have any competitive advantages that help attract and retain businesses? If yes, please describe.
18. Does your organization have an adopted logo and/or an adopted slogan/tagline? If yes, please describe or provide a link.
19. Does your organization have any materials for marketing to potential new businesses or for marketing to visitors/tourists (i.e. brochures, listing of available commercial real estate, websites/social media pages, etc.)? If yes, please describe or provide a link.
20. Does your organization offer any incentives for new businesses (i.e. local tax deferment, assistance in applying for state grants, etc.)? If yes, please describe.
21. Does your organization have any other strategies for recruiting new businesses? If yes, please describe.

22. If a regional marketing image were created, what images would reflect the quality of life and unique assets of your jurisdiction (i.e. water resources, peanuts, glassworks, education, entrepreneurship, historic sites, sports arenas, campgrounds, equestrian, fine dining, etc.)?
23. In your opinion, do businesses in your jurisdiction generally have adaptive capabilities (i.e. readily incorporating new technology, continuing workforce education, resilience to changes in supply chains and other economic factors, etc.)? What related challenges do you think businesses face?
24. Does your organization face any challenges in recruiting new businesses or retaining existing businesses? If yes, please describe.
25. What resources or information would assist your organization with business recruitment, retention and marketing?

Closing Questions:

26. Can you think of any other people/organizations that we should send this worksheet to?
27. Can we contact you if we have additional questions? If yes, please provide your phone number and/or email below.
28. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Thank you for your time!

Please return this worksheet to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019:

jheath@mideastcom.org

Fax: (252)946-5489

Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan Physical Infrastructure Subcommittee Worksheet

Please keep the following goal and objectives of the Region Q Comprehensive Development Strategy in mind as you answer the below questions. These questions are designed to assist in the completion of physical infrastructure asset mapping for your county (i.e. what is already being done to achieve these objectives.)

Goal: 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.

- 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.
- Develop multi-modal transportation plans that address existing and future year capacity deficiencies.
- Research existing service availability data, identify additional data needs, and develop and implement plans for the expansion of telecommunications and broadband infrastructure growth.

Please return this worksheet to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019:

jheath@midwestcom.org

Fax: (252)946-5489

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. What type of organization?
3. What is your name and title?
4. Does your organization offer any grants? If yes, please describe.

5. Does your organization have any community outreach programs? If yes, please describe.
6. Has your organization been successful in applying for grant funds in the past? If yes, what grants have you received? Please briefly describe the project(s) that each grant funded.
7. Has your organization participated in any public-private partnerships? If yes, please describe.
8. Does your organization collaborate or partner with other organizations locally?
9. Does your organization collaborate or partner with state or federal organizations?
10. What resources or data would help your organization achieve its mission?
11. Where does your organization go to find information and available resources to support your mission?

If you are with a utility provider (electric, water, sewer, gas), a broadband or telecommunications provider, or a related organization, please answer the questions below (this includes local governments that provide utility services):

12. Does your organization have maps of your service area available? If yes, how detailed are these maps (i.e. can you look at the map and identify whether a given address is served, what service is available to them, etc.)? Are you able to share these maps?

13. Does your organization have maps of your infrastructure (i.e. aerial and underground lines, transformers, wells, storage tanks, etc.)? If yes, are these maps digital or print? If digital, what software program was used? Are you able to share these maps?
14. Does your organization have any plans for future expansion of your service area? If yes, have specific areas been identified? Are you able to share this information?
15. Are there any barriers that are preventing your organization from expanding its service area? If yes, please describe.

If you are with a transportation related organization, please answer the below questions:

16. Does your organization have maps/inventory tables identifying current conditions of roadways (i.e. condition, shoulder width, ROW width, presence of multi-modal facilities, etc.)? If yes, are you able to share this data?
17. Does your organization collect data on existing and future capacity deficiencies? If yes, is this data collected for automobile users only, or do you also collect bicycle and pedestrian network usage data? Are you able to share this data?
18. What transportation related plans has your organization participated in developing, adopted, endorsed, or referred to on a regular basis (i.e. Comprehensive Transportation Plans, Bicycle Plans, Greenway Plans, Transit Plans, etc.)?
19. Does your organization use these plans as the primary tools for selecting new projects to fund or submit for funding? If no, what is the primary way projects are selected?

20. What partnerships are key in implementing these plans (i.e. working with surrounding communities, working with DOT Divisions to incorporate multi-modal improvements in with resurfacing projects, etc.)?

21. What challenges has your organization faced in implementing these plans?

Closing Questions:

22. Can you think of any other people/organizations that we should send this worksheet to?

23. Can we contact you if we have additional questions? If yes, please provide your phone number and/or email below.

24. Is there anything else you would like to share?

(As a follow up question by email utility providers were asked to provide capacity data for their systems as compared to usage expressed as a percentage value.)

Thank you for your time!

Please return this worksheet to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019:

jheath@mideastcom.org

Fax: (252)946-5489

Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan

Healthy & Safe Communities Subcommittee Questionnaire

Goal: 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.

Questions are organized by objective and organization type. Please answer as many or as few questions as you are able to, and feel free to share with others in your organization for input. Answers will help us with asset mapping and help us plug you into resources to help your organization achieve its mission.

Please email this questionnaire back to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019.

jheath@mideastcom.org

Thank you for your time!

Objective 1

Promote environmentally sustainable development patterns.

Local Governments

Has your jurisdiction adopted any environmentally friendly development standards or ordinances? If yes, please describe.

Does your jurisdiction offer any incentives for environmentally sustainable development (i.e. tax incentives for infill development, voluntary agricultural districts, density bonuses, grants for small scale stormwater projects, etc.)?

Do you feel like you have enough information to implement these types of ordinances and incentives?

What challenges do you see with achieving this objective in your jurisdiction?

Are there any potential brownfield sites in your jurisdiction that you are aware of?

Environmental Organizations

Does your organization offer any educational materials, programs or services to help local governments promote environmentally sustainable development patterns (i.e. data, ordinance samples, technical assistance, training classes, etc.)?

Does your organization offer any grants to help local governments and/or developers implement environmentally friendly projects?

Does your organization offer any educational materials, programs or services to help developers incorporate environmentally friendly standards?

What do you see as your organization's role in achieving this objective?

What challenges have you faced in partnering with local governments to achieve this objective?

What challenges have you faced in partnering with developers to achieve this objective?

Are there any success stories that you would like to share?

Does your organization offer any educational materials, programs or services to help local governments promote environmentally sustainable development patterns (i.e. data, ordinance samples, technical assistance, training classes, email listservs, etc.)?

Does your organization offer any educational materials, programs or services to help developers incorporate environmentally friendly standards?

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.

Local Governments

Does your jurisdiction have any related long-range plans (i.e. downtown plans, neighborhood plans, safety related plans, bicycle and pedestrian plans, etc.)? If yes, please describe and/or provide link.

Have you been successful in applying for related grants? If yes, please describe.

What strategies have you found helpful to engage underserved and distressed communities in the planning process?

What challenges have you faced in engaging underserved and distressed communities in the planning process?

Shelters, Food Banks, Soup Kitchens, etc.

What service area does your organization cover?

What services and programs does your organization offer to the community?

What challenges do you face in achieving your mission?

What resources would help your organization achieve your mission?

Other Organizations

Does your organization have any related long-range plans or policies?

Does your organization offer any services or programs geared toward underserved and distressed communities? If yes, please describe.

Objective 3

Local Governments and Downtown Organizations

Do your organization have any downtown or urban revitalization related plans?

Does your organization maintain a database of available commercial properties?

Does your organization offer any local incentive programs for downtown/historic building rehabilitation?

Have you been successful in applying for related grants? If yes, please describe.

What challenges does your organization face in achieving this objective?

Do you have any success stories you would like to share?

Other Organizations

Does your organization offer any programs or services to assist local governments and/or developers in promoting the restoration and preservation of urban and town centers (i.e. design assistance, data, economic development reports, grant programs, property databases, etc.)?

Objective 4

Collaborate with law enforcement on community policing initiatives.

Law Enforcement Organizations

Does your organization have any community policing initiatives (i.e. police on bikes, policy for officers stopping in businesses, partnerships with neighborhood organizations, etc.)? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization have any community outreach programs (i.e. community days, officer events like “Coffee with a Cop”, officer ride along programs, etc.)? If yes, please describe.

Are there any Community Watch Organizations in your jurisdiction that you are aware of?

What challenges do you face in implementing these types of programs?

What resources would assist you in implementing these types of programs?

Do you have any success stories you would like to share?

Objective 5

Ensure that all residents have access to healthcare, education and affordable services. Identify areas that lack access or where access is not affordable.

K-12 Schools

Is there a joint use agreement in place for school playgrounds?

If no, is this something you think the school board would consider?

If yes, do you need assistance in marketing the joint use agreement to the public?

What are the primary funding needs or priority projects for K-12 schools?

What are the primary challenges faced by K-12 schools?

Are there curriculum needs that are not addressed due to lack of resources or other concerns (e.g. lack of music and art programs, lack of sports programs, life skills courses, foreign language courses, transportation for after school programs, field trips, incorporation of innovative projects or methods, etc.)? If yes, please describe.

Has your school/district incorporated life skills (such as financial management, interview skills, soft skills, etc.) into the curriculum? If yes, please describe.

Have Career Pathways been incorporated into the High School curriculum?

Has your school/district been successful in applying for grants? If yes, please describe.

What challenges does your school/district face in providing quality education opportunities for all children?

Are there any success stories or innovative projects you would like to share?

Early Childhood Education / Partnership for Children

What early childhood education services does your organization offer, manage or refer clients to?

Are services available to all children or only to children with developmental issues which need to be addressed before kindergarten?

Is there a need to expand access to preschool programs such as Head Start? If yes, please describe.

Is there a need for additional early childhood education services in the area? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization maintain data on availability and affordability of daycare?

What are the challenges with access to early childhood education in the area(s) that you serve?

What resources would help your organization expand access to early childhood education services and/or expand on early childhood education service offerings?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Social Services

What programs are managed by your organization?

Please describe any energy assistance programs managed by your organization.

Please describe any daycare assistance programs managed by your organization.

Does your organization maintain data on local utility service affordability?

Does your organization maintain data on uninsured or underinsured residents?

Does your organization maintain data on availability and affordability of daycare?

Is there a need for expansion of programs to assist with energy costs? If yes, please describe.

Is there a need for expansion of access to health insurance programs? If yes, please describe.

Is there a need for addition/expansion of daycare assistance programs? If yes, please describe.

What affordability issues exist in the county you serve (e.g. housing, water/sewer, electricity, health insurance, etc.)?

What challenges does your organization face?

What resources or policy changes would help your organization expand access to programs and services?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Healthcare

What medical services does your organization provide?

Does your organization have any plans for expansion of services? If yes, please describe.

Are there any medical service needs in the area that you are aware of (e.g. lack of mental health services, substance abuse treatment facilities, primary care providers, dental providers, specialist providers, large uninsured population, etc.)?

What challenges does your organization face in providing quality healthcare while keeping rates affordable?

In your opinion, how successful have programs designed to encourage graduates from medical programs to serve in rural areas been? What are some successes and challenges of these programs?

Has your organization been successful in applying for grants? If yes, please describe.

What resources would help your organization expand access to additional residents and/or expand on the medical services provided?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Objective 6

Capitalize on natural resources and recreation opportunities in order to improve the quality of life for citizens and promote ecotourism.

Recreation, Tourism, Ecotourism Organizations

Does your organization/area have any facilities geared toward ecotourism (fishing piers, camping platforms, canoe and kayak launches, paddle trails, greenways, etc.)?

Are you aware of any ecotourism related businesses in the area?

Do you have marketing materials related to ecotourism? If yes, please describe or provide a link.

What challenges do you see in recruiting ecotourism related businesses and bringing ecotourism visitors to the county?

What resources do you think could help promote ecotourism in the area?

Do you have any success stories you would like to share?

Ecotourism Businesses

What factors contributed to the location decision for your business?

In your opinion, what are potential opportunities for expanding ecotourism in the region?

Do you have any ideas for branding and marketing the region to attract ecotourism?

Local Governments

Is ecotourism a priority for your jurisdiction?

What related challenges and opportunities are you aware of?

Recreation Organizations

What recreation facilities does your organization offer?

What recreation programs does your organization offer?

Does your organization have any land acquisition needs? If yes, please describe what purpose the land is needed for.

Does your organization have any facility improvement needs? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization have any program expansion needs? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization have a Comprehensive Recreation Plan, Master Plans for park sites, or other related plans? If yes, please describe or provide a link.

Has your organization been successful in applying for related grants? If yes, please describe.

Has your organization developed any new public parks in the past five years? If yes, please describe.

What challenges does your organization face in providing recreational opportunities for all citizens?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

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.

Food Banks, Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, etc.

What area does your organization serve?

What services and programs does your organization provide?

How do food banks coordinate with food pantries and other partner organizations?

Do you offer any mobile food services (i.e. meal deliveries, produce vans, etc.)? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization maintain data on food deserts? If yes, please describe or provide a link.

What challenges does your organization face in addressing food deserts and dietary challenges in low income rural areas?

What resources would help your organization address food deserts?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Local Governments and Other Organizations

Does your area have any community gardens that you are aware of? If yes, please describe or provide link.

Does your area have any farmer's markets that you are aware of? If yes, please describe or provide link.

Does your area have any coop kitchens or stores that you are aware of? If yes, please describe or provide link.

Does your organization have any plans, programs or services related to food deserts or access to healthy foods? If yes, please describe.

Objective 8

Research the current housing stock, identify additional needs and develop and implement a plan for the availability of a variety of housing options.

Local Governments

Does your organization have a housing plan or a Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Plan, or other plan that addresses housing? If yes, please describe or provide a link.

Does your organization have any local incentives or programs for affordable housing?

Do your jurisdiction's development related ordinances allow for a variety of housing types?

Are there any needs in the local housing stock that you are aware of (e.g. lack of rental properties, lack of multi-family dwellings, lack of middle range income options, lack of public housing developments, lack of emergency shelters, need for demolition or repair of blighted buildings, etc.)?

Housing Organizations

What area does your organization serve?

What housing programs and services does your organization offer?

Does your organization maintain any housing related data?

What are the primary housing needs in the area(s) you serve (e.g. lack of rental properties, lack of multi-family options, lack of middle range income options, lack of public housing, lack of emergency shelters, etc.)?

If your organization manages a public housing development, do you have a waiting list for new residents? If yes, how long is the average wait?

If your organization manages a public housing development, do you have any facility upgrade, expansion, or maintenance needs? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization have any programs related to the promotion of affordable housing? If yes, please describe.

Has your organization been successful in applying for related grants? If yes, please describe.

What challenges has your organization faced in promoting affordable housing and the availability of a variety of housing options?

What resources would help your organization achieve its mission?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

All Organizations

Is there anyone else we should send this questionnaire to? (Please see Subcommittee membership list.)
If so, please provide contact information if available.

Please email responses to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019.

jheath@mideastcom.org

Thank you for your time!

Regional Collaborative Strategic Plan

Small Business & Workforce Development Subcommittee Questionnaire

Goal: 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.

Questions are organized by objective and organization type. Please answer as many or as few questions as you are able to, and feel free to share with others in your organization for input. Answers will help us with asset mapping and help us plug you into resources to help your organization achieve its mission.

Please email this questionnaire back to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019.

jheath@mideastcom.org

Thank you for your time!

Objective 1

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

Education Providers / Workforce Development Providers and Partners

In your opinion, what are the strengths of the local workforce regarding 21st Century skills? What are the weaknesses?

How are modern technologies incorporated into workforce training and education programs? What related challenges does your organization face?

In your opinion, what workforce development challenges have arisen as a result of globalization? Where are there opportunities for the local workforce?

What resources would assist your organization with incorporating 21st Century skills into workforce development and education programs?

Are there any creative or innovative approaches or success stories you would like to share?

Employers

Do you have any unmet workforce development needs in relation to technology or 21st Century skills? If yes, please describe.

In your opinion, how prepared is the average employee in terms of 21st Century skills? Where are there strengths and challenges?

Have you experienced any issues with recruiting and/or retaining employees with 21st Century skills? If yes, please describe.

Objective 2

Identify and analyze all educational, workforce, and vocational training resources and conduct a gap analysis based on employer needs.

Education Providers / Workforce Development Providers and Partners

What programs and resources does your organization offer to employers and/or individuals? (Please provide a link or list and describe specific programs. This information will be used to catalog programs and conduct a gap analysis.)

Are any of these programs and resources geared toward the under developed or at risk workforce?

Do you partner with employers on apprenticeships, internships or work based learning programs? If yes, please describe.

Are there any gaps or unmet needs that you are aware of?

How are soft skills (i.e. financial management, interview skills, communication skills, time management, etc.) incorporated into workforce development and education programs? What related challenges does your organization face?

How do you partner with employers to determine their workforce training and education needs? What related challenges does your organization face?

How do you customize programs to meet identified employer needs? What related challenges does your organization face?

What resources would help your organization increase collaboration with employers?

Are there any innovative or creative approaches or success stories you would like to share?

Employers

What workforce development programs has your organization utilized?

Do you feel well informed about available programs? How do you obtain information on available programs?

What types of workforce development and education programs would be most beneficial to your organization?

Do you have any unmet employee training needs? If yes, please describe.

Do you have any unmet employee recruitment needs? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization offer any apprenticeship, internship, or other work based learning programs? If yes, please describe.

How does your organization partner with workforce development providers and education providers?

What related challenges does your organization face?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

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.

Small Business Centers / Workforce Development Providers and Partners

What programs, resources and/or incentives does your organization offer to small business owners and entrepreneurs?

Are there any gaps or unmet needs that you are aware of?

How do you partner with small business owners and entrepreneurs to determine their needs? What related challenges does your organization face?

How do you customize programs to meet identified needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs? What related challenges does your organization face?

In your opinion, are incubator facilities or other developments for small businesses and entrepreneurs needed? Where are there potential opportunities?

How do you partner with local governments and other partners to serve small businesses and entrepreneurs? What are related challenges your organization faces?

What resources would help your organization increase collaboration with small business owners and entrepreneurs?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Small Business Owners

What small business or workforce development programs have you utilized?

What incentive programs have you utilized (i.e. grants, tax incentives, low interest loans for small businesses, etc.)?

Do you feel well informed about available programs and incentives? How do you obtain information on available programs and incentives?

What types of small business and workforce development programs would be most beneficial to your business?

Do you have any unmet training, workforce, or technical assistance needs? If yes, please describe.

How does your organization partner with workforce development providers and small business centers? What related challenges does your organization face?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Local Governments and Downtown Organizations

Does your organization have any programs or services to support entrepreneurs or small businesses? If yes, please describe.

Does your area have any events that celebrate entrepreneurs or small businesses? If yes, please describe.

Does your organization have any plans for development of an incubator facility? Do you think there is a need for an incubator facility in the area?

What challenges do you face in marketing your jurisdiction as entrepreneur friendly? Where are there related opportunities?

What resources would help your organization increase collaboration with entrepreneurs and small business owners?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

Objective 4

Develop Career Paths that recognize the needs of employers and start students in developing on these pathways in High School.

NENC Career Pathways / Education Providers / Workforce Development Providers and Partners

What career pathways have been developed?

How are career pathways incorporated at the High School level? What related challenges does your organization face?

How are career pathways incorporated into higher education and workforce training programs? What are related challenges?

How are career pathways aligned with employer needs? What are related challenges?

Is there a need for program and class expansions for current career pathways? If yes, please describe.

Is there a need for development of additional career pathways? If yes, please describe.

What resources would help your organization facilitate career pathways?

Are there any success stories you would like to share?

All Organizations

Is there anyone else we should send this questionnaire to? (Please see Subcommittee membership list.)
If so, please provide contact information if available.

Please email responses to Jamie Heath by November 22, 2019.

jheath@mideastcom.org

Thank you for your time!

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