



Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022



The following is submitted on behalf of the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments to the Economic Development Administration (EDA), a federal agency located within the United States Department of Commerce. The contents of this document have been made in accordance with 13 C.F.R. § 303.7

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Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments
County and Municipal Members

Franklin County

- Town of Bunn
- Town of Franklinton
- Town of Louisburg
- Town of Youngsville

Granville County

- Town of Butner
- City of Creedmoor
- City of Oxford
- Town of Stem
- Town of Stovall

Person County

- City of Roxboro

Vance County

- City of Henderson
- Town of Kittrell
- Town of Middleburg

Warren County

- Town of Macon
- Town of Norlina
- Town of Warrenton

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee Members

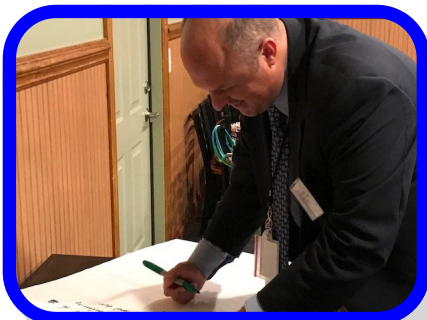
Mike Bailes, Franklin County Public Utilities
LaChaun Banks, UNC Kenan Institute
John Barnes, Henderson-Vance Chamber of Commerce
Jody Blackwell, Piedmont Community College
Ken Bowman, Warren County Economic Development
Bo Carson, Franklin County Economic Development
Doris Carver, Piedmont Community College
Jimmy Clayton*, Person County Commissioner
Mark Craig, NCDOT
Ginne Currin, Granville County Chamber of Commerce
C. Elton Daniels, Franklin County Government
Robert Davie, Town of Warrenton
Richie Duncan, Franklin County Economic Development
Tanya Evans, District Manager Duke Energy
Dale Fey, Vance-Granville Community College
Walter Gardner*, Mayor Town of Warrenton
Stuart Gilbert, Person County Economic Development
Ronnie Goswick, The Sunrock Group
Carolyn Fryberger, The Kenan Institute
Charles Halsall, Jr., NC Department of Commerce
Richard Hancock, NCDOT
Joey Hopkins, NCDOT
Mike Inscoe, City of Henderson Councilmember

Lauren Jones, Franklin County Schools
Ken Krulik, Warren County Planning
Mark Little, UNC Kenan Institute
Stuart Litvin, Vance County Economic Development
Sara Lloyd, Vance-Granville Community College
Travis Marshall, NCDOT
Bryce Mendendall, Franklin County Public Utilities
Harry Mills, Granville County Economic Development
Lindsay Mize, South Granville Water and Sewer Authority
Bryan Pffol*, The Sunrock Group
Turner Pride, Jr., Vance County Cooperative Extension
Darren Rhodes, NC Department of Commerce
T. Griffen Rice, Student, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Barry Richardson*, Kerr-Tar COG Board
Jacqueline (Jackie) Sergent, City of Oxford Mayor
Betty Jo Shephard, Office of United States Senator Richard Burr
Hillary Sherman, Economic Development Administration
Ashley Tucker, Student, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Tanya Weary, Vance-Granville Community College
Morris White, Vance County Cooperative Extension
Dexter Williams, CenturyLink
Nancy Wilson, Vance County Tourism Development Authority

**-Serves as Member of the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments Executive Committee*

Kerr-Tar TCOG Staff

Diane Cox, Executive Director
Vincent Gilreath, Workforce Development Director
Lou Grillo, WIA Business Services Representative
Jillian Hardin, Area Agency on Aging Director
Michael Kelly, Planning and Economic Development Director
Gina Parham, Senior Administrative/Office Manager
Mark Warren, Grants and Loan Officer





History of Kerr-Tar Regional COG

Councils of Governments were formed under the NC General Statutes 160-77.1 through 160-77.6 (current Statutes are: 160A-470 through 160A-478) which authorizes any two or more municipalities and counties to create a Regional Council of Local Officials. Under the leadership of Governor Bob Scott, seventeen (17) regions were designated throughout the State of NC. In late 1970, City and County officials banded together to explore forming a Council of Governments to serve Region K (counties of Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren and the 11 municipalities therein). Today the Kerr-Tar Region still consists of these 5 named counties and 16 municipalities; however, there are only 16 COGs across the state as some have combined.

Dr. W. M. Wester, Jr. served as the first Chairman of this Council during the organizational period. In May of 1971, the official name of the Council was selected: Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments, with its purpose being to promote intergovernmental cooperation by developing and formalizing policy recommendations concerning matters having area wide significance. Areas of interest and concern to the members organizing the Council of Governments were: solid waste, health services, regional water system, family planning, programs for the elderly, and manpower. Today the COG has the following programs: Aging, Economic and Community Development, Economic Development Administration, Business Loans, Planning, Transportation, and Workforce Development. It also provides Administrative Services for the Region K CAC and Kerr-Tar Regional Economic Development Corporation.

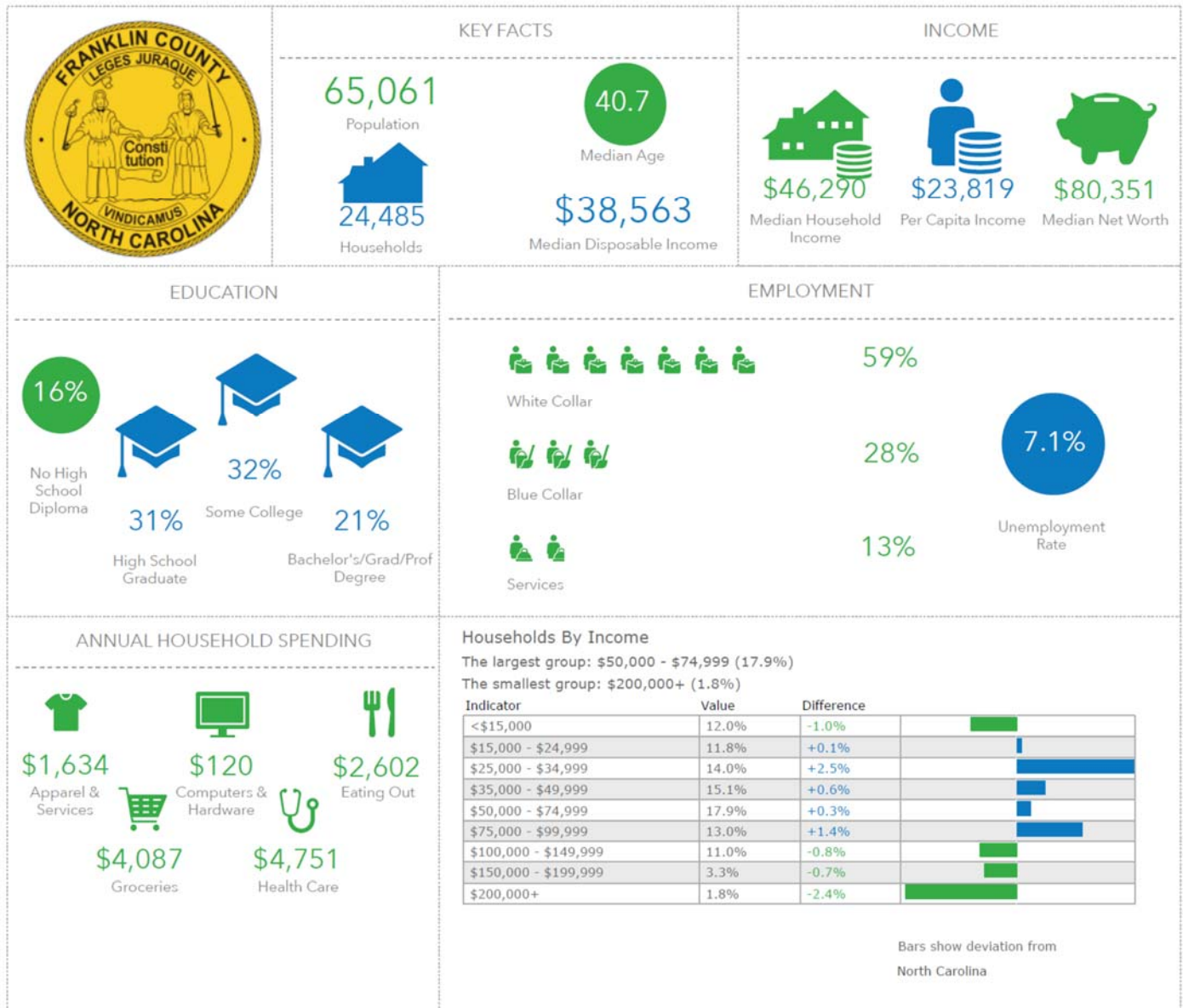
Background on the CEDS

In March 1975, the United States Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated the geographic area served by the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (COG) as an Economic Development District (EDD). As the administrative body of the Kerr-Tar EDD, the COG receives economic development planning funds from EDA and is eligible to participate in the development and administration of EDA-funded projects in the region. The COG is also responsible for preparation and maintenance of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the EDD.

The CEDS is both a document and a process. It is a process of analysis, planning, and taking action to generate new economic development activity and improve community infrastructure and services. Certification of this document by the EDA allows the counties and municipalities to qualify for funding from the various EDA grant programs. The purpose of the CEDS is to create a process that will "create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, improve living conditions and provide a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of people, organizations, local governments, and private industry concerned with economic development".

The CEDS process begins with the appointment of the "CEDS Committee." The committee is responsible for convening the planning process and overseeing implementation of the plan. The committee must be representative of the economic development community within the region including business, industry, government, non-profit organizations, and educational entities.

The CEDS includes a summary background, the results of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), regional resiliency analysis, CEDS Strategies by topic and CEDS Performance Measures.

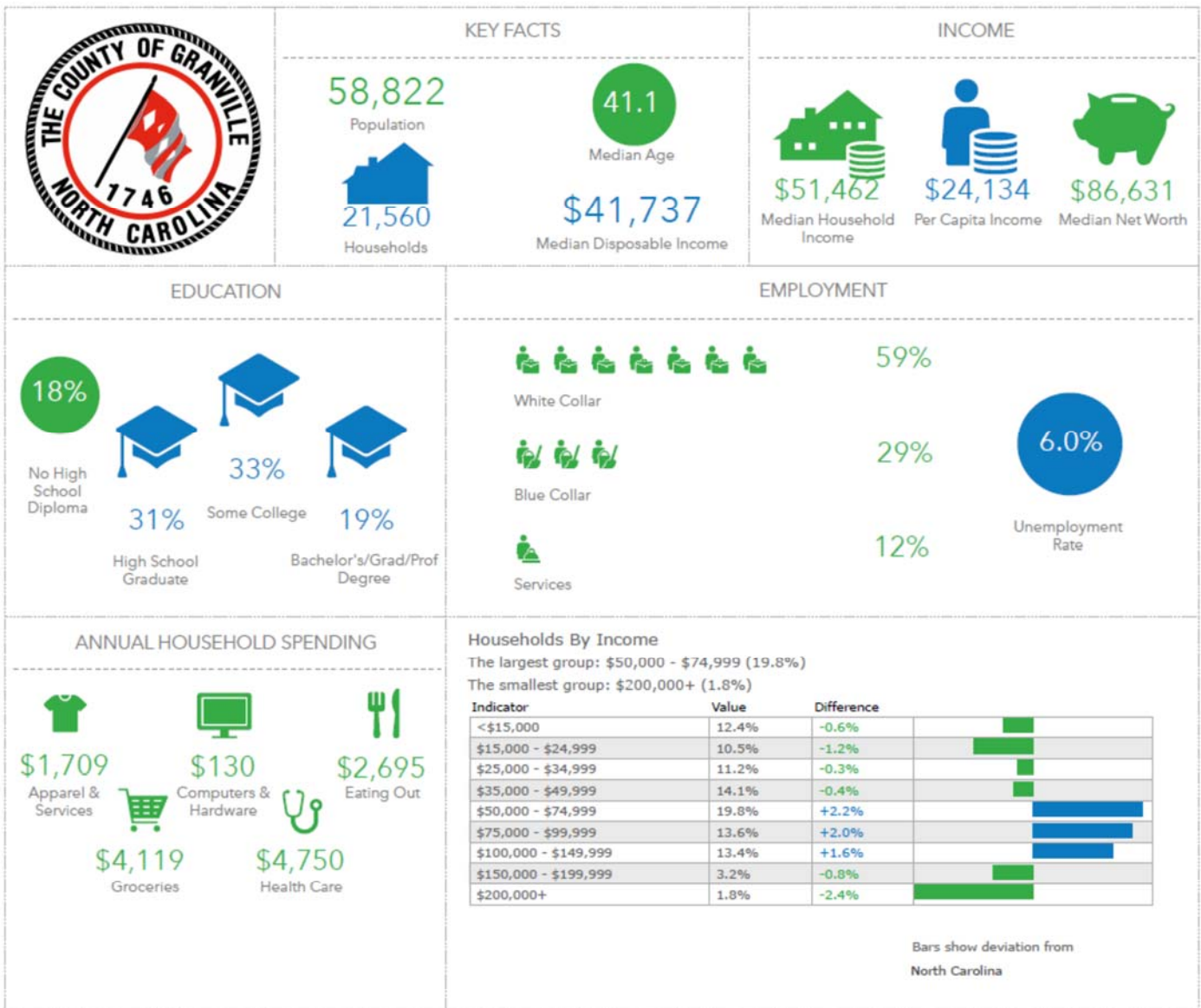


Source: Esri, Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top Employers in Franklin County, North Carolina

Rank	Company Name	Industry/Sector	Employment Range
1	Franklin County Schools	Education & Health Services	1,000+
2	Franklin County	Public Administration (Local Government)	500-999
3	Novozymes North America, Inc.	Manufacturing	500-999
4	Captive-Aire Systems, Inc.	Manufacturing	100-249
5	Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages by Largest Employers through Q1 2017.

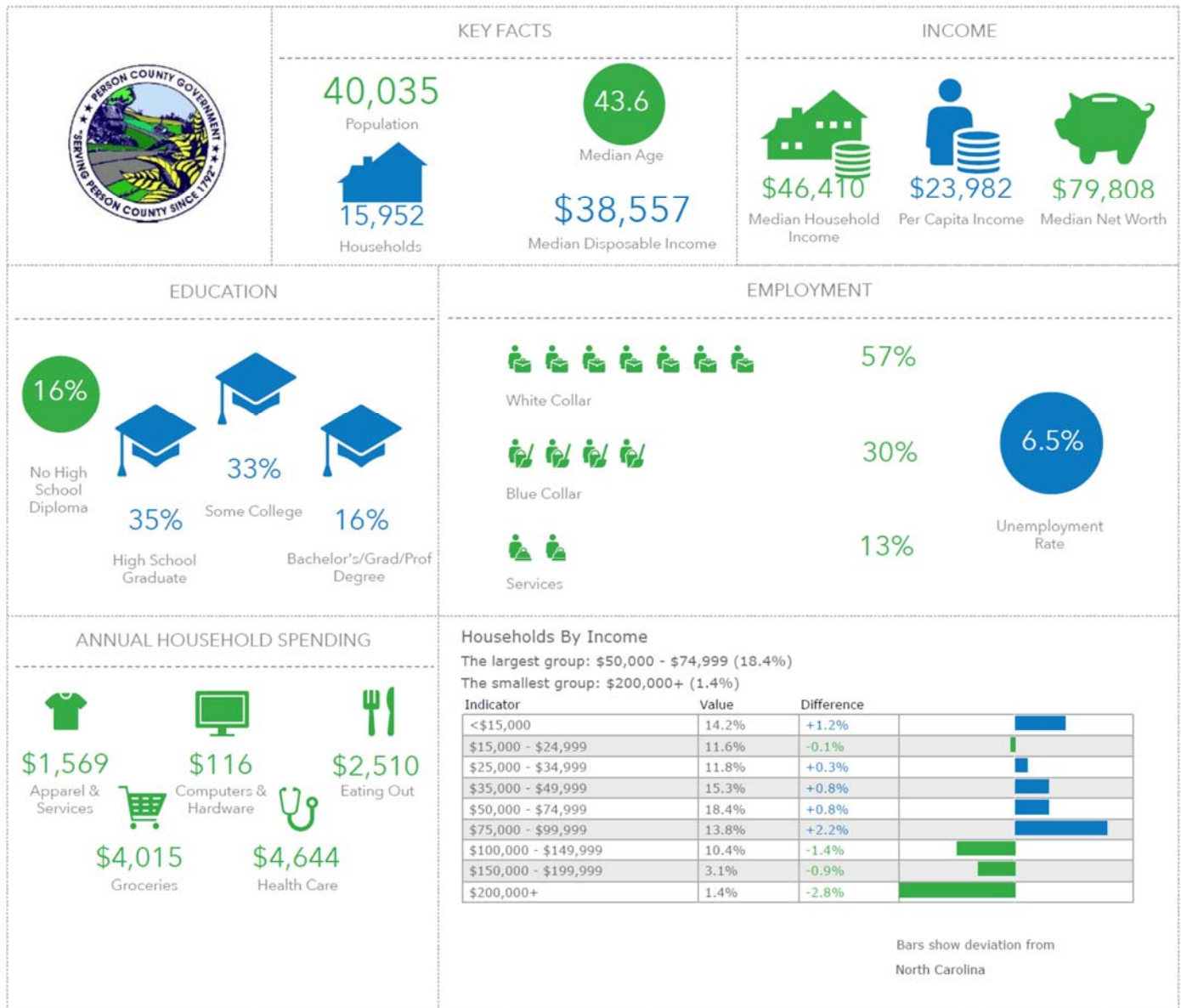


Source: Esri, Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top Employers in Granville County, North Carolina

Rank	Company Name	Industry/Sector	Employment Range
1	North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services	Public Administration (State Government)	1,000+
2	United States Department of Justice	Public Administration (Federal Government)	1,000+
3	Revlon Consumer Products Corp	Manufacturing	1,000+
4	Altec Industries, Inc.	Manufacturing	1,000+
5	Granville County Schools	Education & Health Services	1,000+

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages by Largest Employers through Q1 2017.

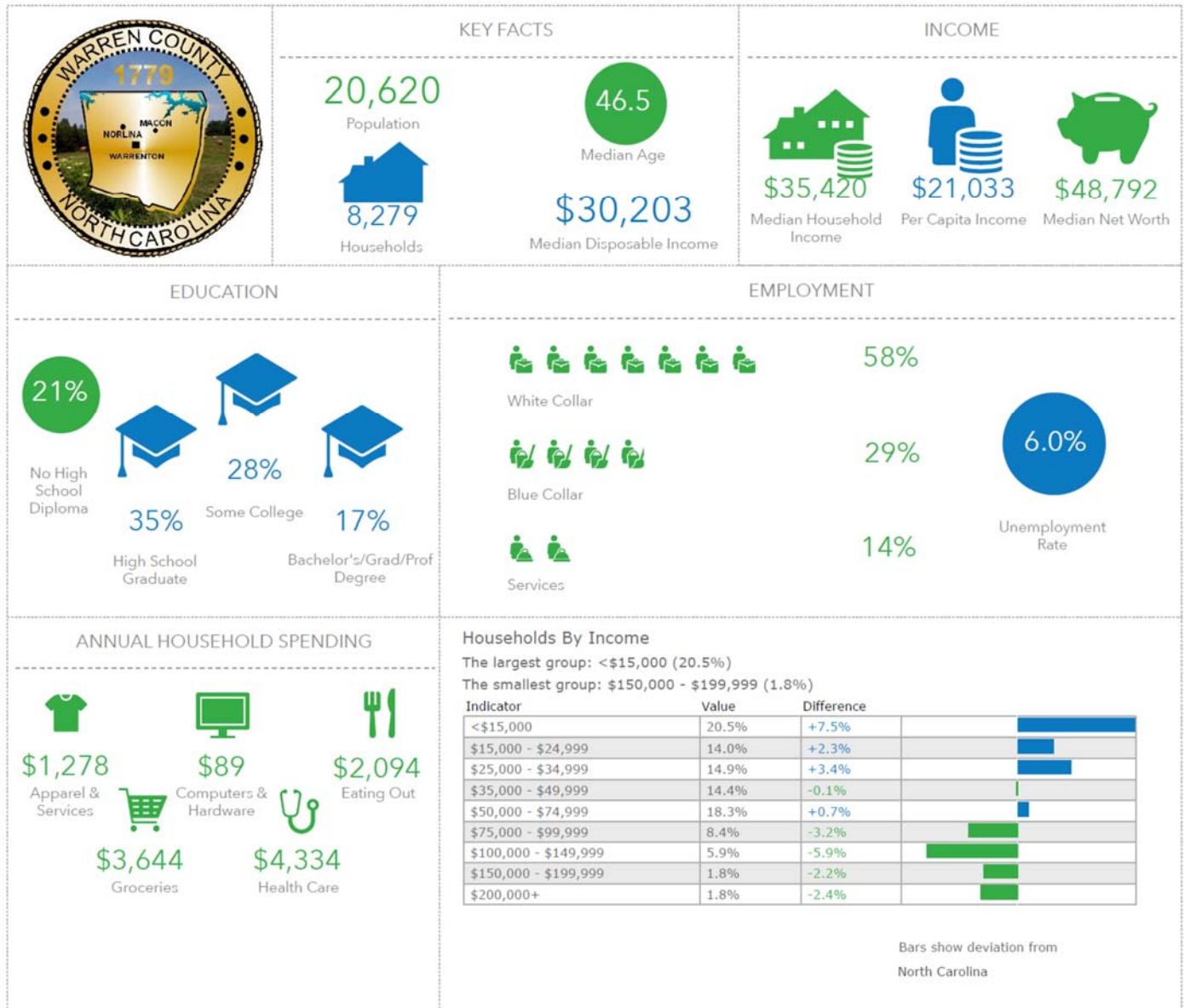


Source: Esri, Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top Employers in Person County, North Carolina

Rank	Company Name	Industry/Sector	Employment Range
1	Person County Board Of Education	Education & Health Services	500-999
2	G K N Automotive Components, Inc.	Manufacturing	500-999
3	Person County	Public Administration (Local Government)	500-999
4	Progress Energy Service Co.	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	250-499
5	Person Memorial Hospital (DLP)	Education & Health Services	250-499

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages by Largest Employers through Q1 2017.

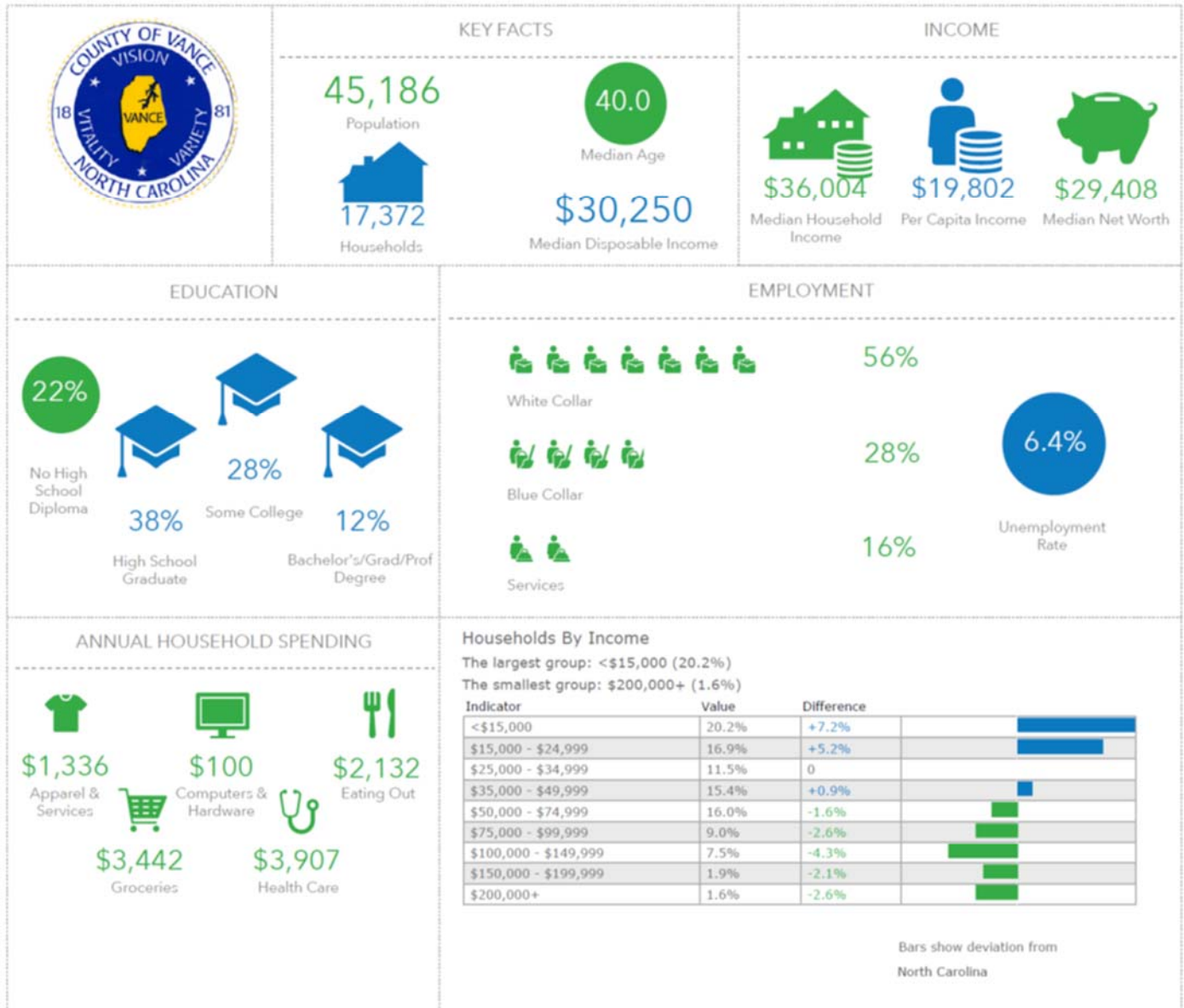


Source: Esri, Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top Employers in Warren County, North Carolina

Rank	Company Name	Industry/Sector	Employment Range
1	Warren County Schools	Education & Health Services	250-499
2	North Carolina Department of Public Safety	Public Administration (State Government)	250-499
3	Warren County	Public Administration (Local Government)	250-499
4	Glen Raven, Inc.	Manufacturing	100-249
5	Food Lion	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages by Largest Employers through Q1 2017.



Source: Esri, Esri and Bureau of Labor Statistics

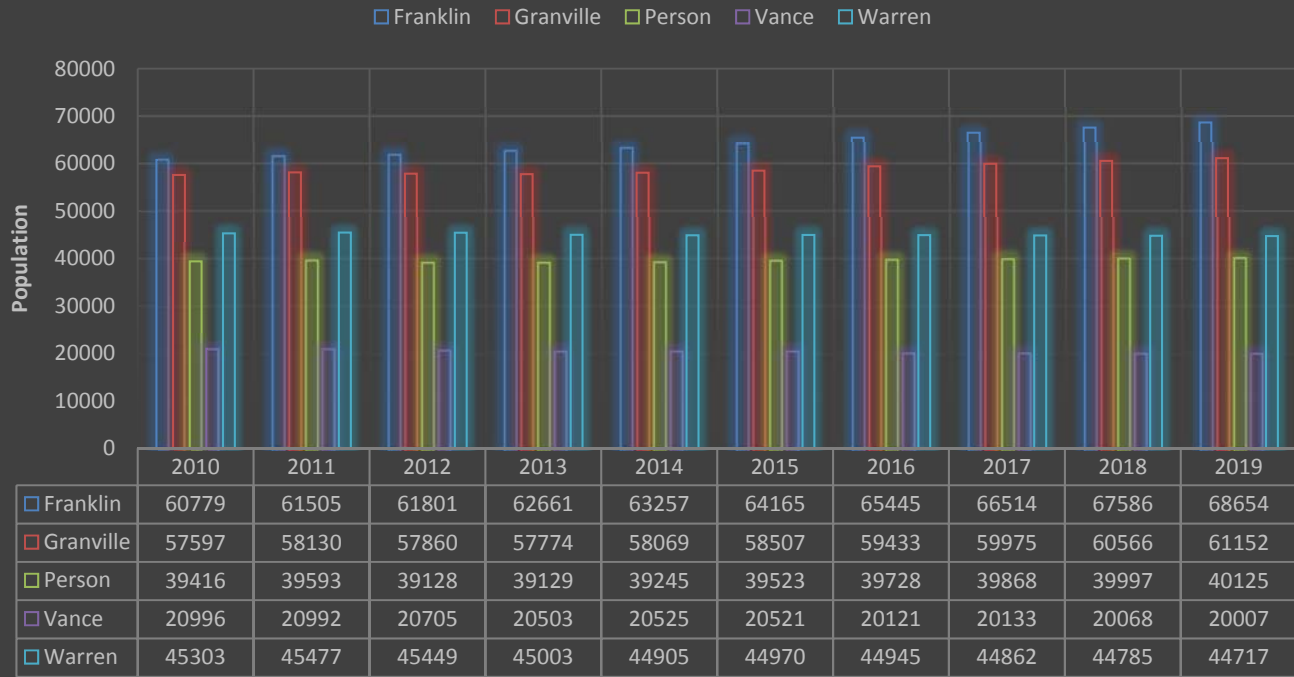
Top Employers in Vance County, North Carolina

Rank	Company Name	Industry/Sector	Employment Range
1	Vance County Schools	Education & Health Services	1,000+
2	Variety Wholesalers, Inc.	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	500-999
3	Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	500-999
4	Maria Parham Hospital	Education & Health Services	500-999
5	Vance County	Public Administration (Local Government)	250-499

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages by Largest Employers through Q1 2017.

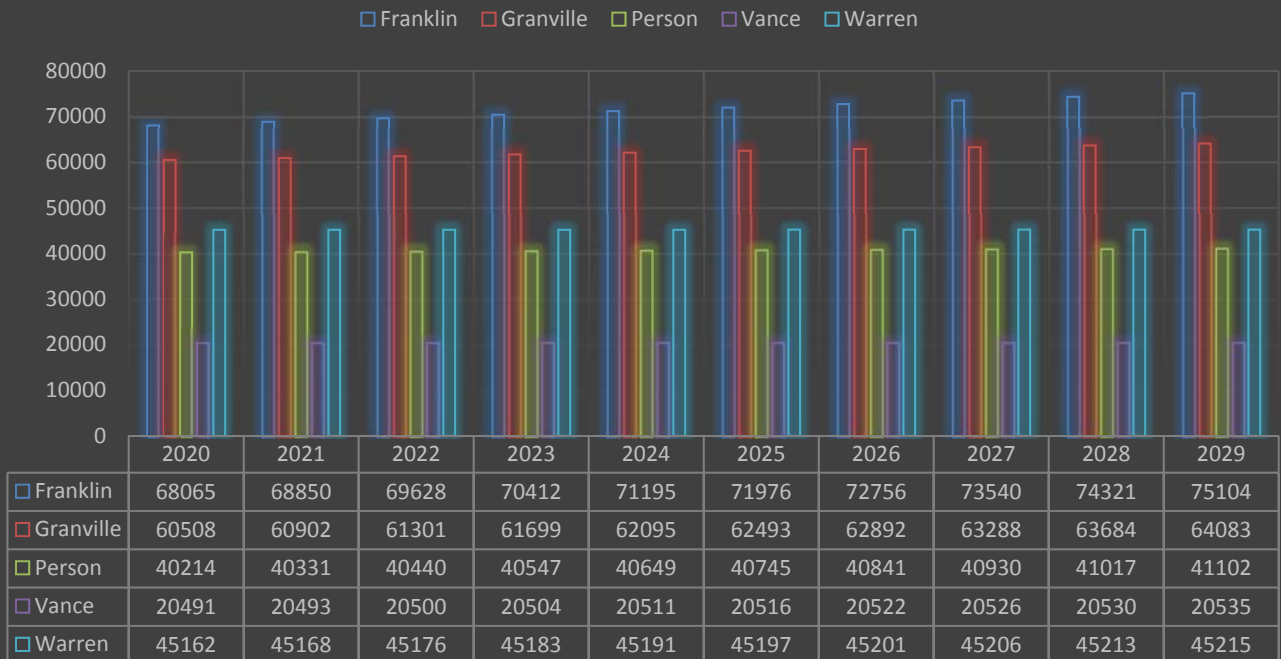
Region K Population

Annual County Population Totals and Projections 2010-2019



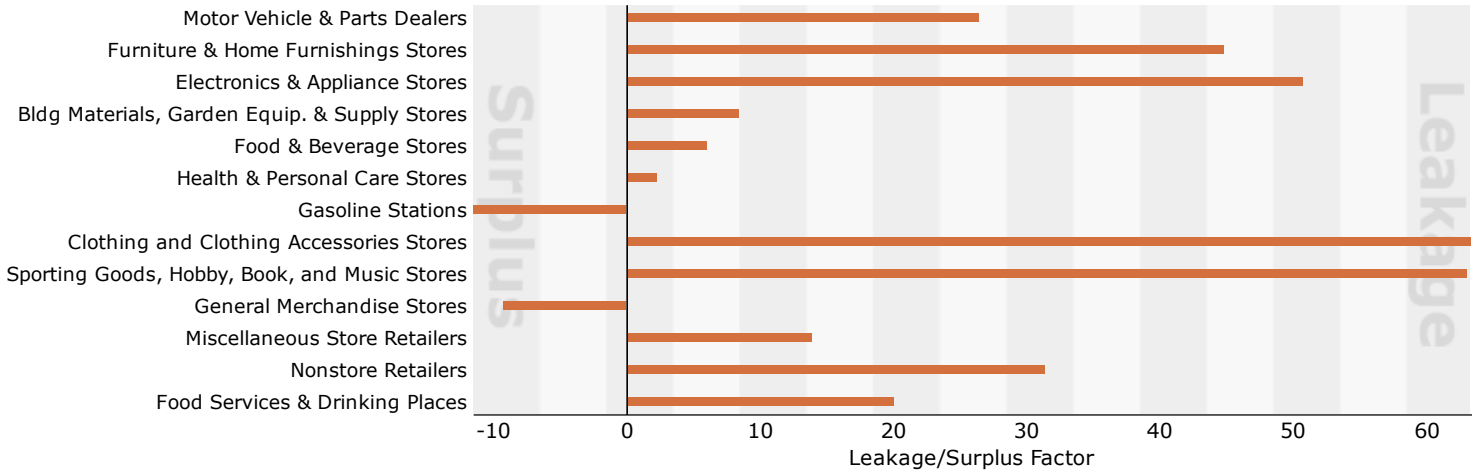
Source: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management: Annual County Population Totals & Projections, 2010-2019.

County Population Projections 2020-2029

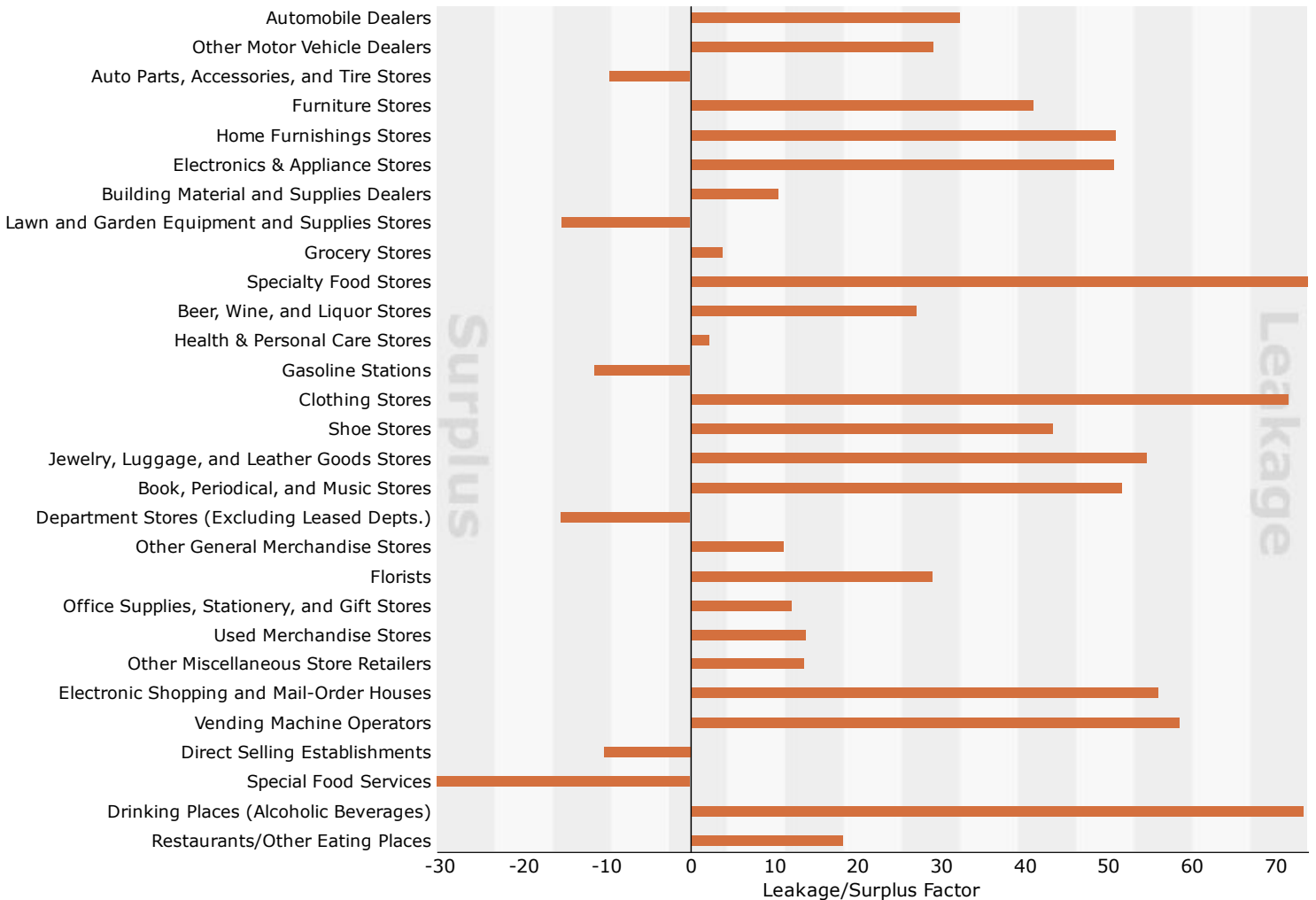


Source: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management: Projected Annual County Population Totals, 2020-2029.

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector



Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group



Source: Esri and Infogroup. Retail MarketPlace 2017. Copyright 2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

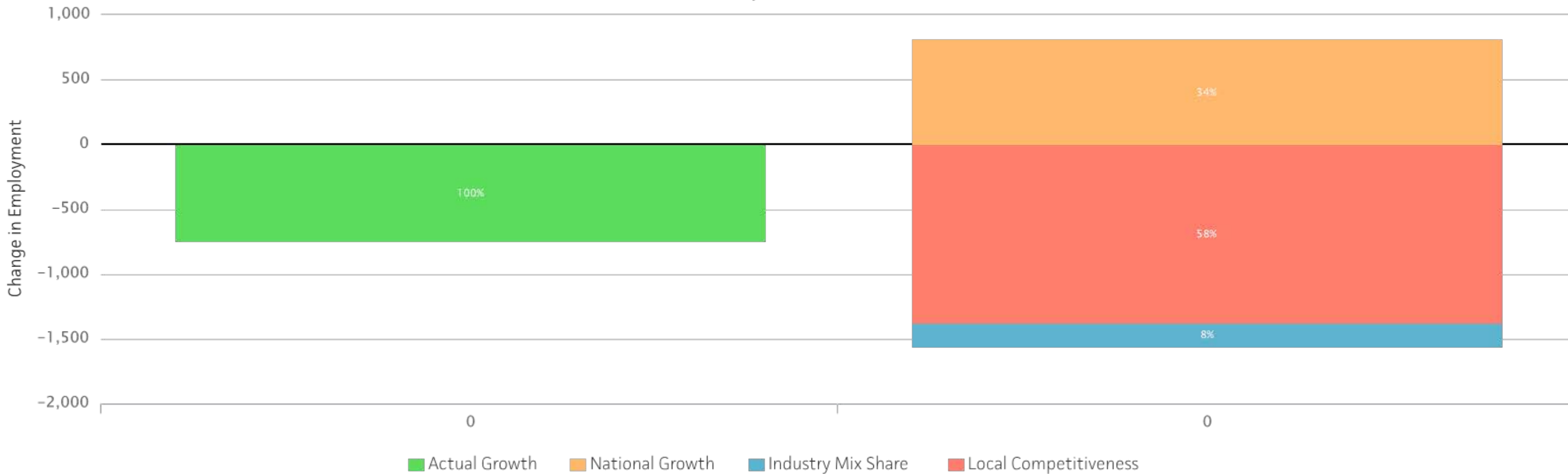
Shift Share Analysis for Kerr-Tar Region – Total Industry

	NAICS	Industry Title	Actual Growth	National Growth	Industry Share Mix	Local Competitiveness
Detail	22	Utilities	-35	5	-26	-14
Detail	23	Construction	-387	46	-253	-181
Detail	31	Manufacturing	-375	93	-490	22
Detail	42	Wholesale Trade	98	34	-36	100
Detail	44	Retail Trade	-188	120	15	-324
Detail	48	Transportation and Warehousing	778	36	170	572
Detail	51	Information	-22	9	-51	20
Detail	52	Finance and Insurance	-46	13	-1	-57
Detail	53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-52	14	-34	-32
Detail	54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	342	14	10	318
Detail	55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	-5	4	17	-26
Detail	56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	-301	37	48	-385
Detail	61	Educational Services	-285	102	-46	-341
Detail	62	Health Care and Social Assistance	-293	124	411	-828
Detail	71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	62	9	18	35
Detail	72	Accommodation and Food Services	19	68	222	-271
Detail	81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	55	28	-49	76
Detail	92	Public Administration	-2	47	-73	24
Detail	99	Unclassified	-31	2	2	-35
		Total	-752	817	-184	-1,385

Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2018Q4

Drivers of Employment Growth for Vance County, North Carolina

All Industry from 2006 to 2016



Vision Statement

The Kerr-Tar Region will be an effective, strategic economic engine by being locally, regionally, and globally competitive to maximize the region's natural, human and infrastructure resources.

As adopted by the CEDS Committee on July 25, 2017

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region's proximity to RTP. • Within the Region, there exists a dynamic workforce. • The Region is very diverse. • The Region has a close proximity to water. • The Region has several transportation corridors. • The Region is home to several schools districts, Community Colleges, and close to major Universities. • The Region has abundant land availability. • The Region has abundant energy availability. • The Region has many historical structures (ie: vibrant Main Streets). • The Region has many recreational amenities. • The Region has water, sewer, and gas infrastructure availability. • The Region's residents possess a strong sense of community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of water consistently throughout the Region. • Cell phone coverage an issue. • The availability of Internet access and Broadband. • Lack of skilled workforce to meet existing and future industry needs. • No clear marketing strategy to attract and communicate with industries. • The Region subcombs to "brain drain". • The availability of infrastructure. • Tax Rates v. Tax Base. • High poverty rates, the Region is home to three (3) Tier 1 Counties. • No regional/bi-state collaboration present. • Sub-standard Housing and Housing Affordability. There is a lack of rental options available (ie: Workforce Housing). • Lack of Public Transportation. • Lack of adequate healthcare in Warren and Franklin Counties. • Transportation Corridors, do not connect the entire Region. • In some of the Region, there exists Dead Downtowns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Education Forum/Outreach/Increase buy-in. • Counties/Towns have to invest in Economic Development. • Education of elected officials - What is the ROI? • Identify and Cultivate Leaders. • Leverage information on technical jobs to better educate students, teachers, parents on diverse opportunities (college is not the only desired career path). • Highlight/promote recreation/tourism/opportunities. • Work to change perceptions of how communities have change, what opportunities are, and what industry is available. • Leverage partnerships with industry working with early college. • Increase exposure across industry, K-12, and teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region's proximity to the Triangle and RTP. • There is a lack of identifiable 'product(s)' industries currently need. • There exists a changing in education framework (public v. charter schools and an associated cost-benefit). • The Region receiving unfunded mandates from the federal and state governments. • The apathy of citizens that exists, a perceived lack of hope among residents. • Several inconsistent expectations among residents: Residents desiring new schools and shopping, but not wanting change.



North Carolina Regional and Statewide Strategies for Comprehensive Community and Economic Development

NC Tomorrow is an initiative of the NC Association of Regional Councils, originally completed in 2014 and updated in 2016, that served as a foundation for a statewide strategy for Economic Development in NC. In order to facilitate the development of a Regional Strategy for Comprehensive Community and Economic Development, the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments CEDS Committee Association adopted the same four goals as the NC Tomorrow Plan and developed strategies around those broad goals:

- I. Build on the Region's Competitive Advantages and Leverage the Marketplace**
- II. Establish and Maintain a Robust Regional Infrastructure**
- III. Create Revitalized, Healthy, and Resilient Communities**
- IV. Develop Talented and Innovative People**



Stronger Economies Together (SET)

In 2015, the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments was one of two regions selected from North Carolina to participate in the SET program through the United States Department of Agriculture—Rural Development. The SET Plan is designed to produce strategies for identifying and leveraging the economic strength of the region. This strategy reflects a four module planning process with active participation from business, civic, and community leaders. The process kicked off with the SET Civic Forum on Wednesday, October 5th, 2015. The forum officially kicked off the strategic planning process for regional economic development at a grassroots level. With 50 participants from both public and private agencies, roundtable discussions were held around topics relevant to the Kerr-Tar region. Five Planning sessions were held between November and May 2016.

Highlighted below are the overall goals of the plan. The goals identified in the SET Plan were used as a blueprint for the CEDS.



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this goal is to focus on the unique character and quality of the region through programs designed to capitalize on the area's economic strengths. The region has many talented and dedicated individuals, committed to increasing the area's economic vitality. Not only do these individuals work within various sectors, agencies, and departments throughout the region, but they also live in the region. Therefore, they are committed to seeing the region grow and prosper.

GOAL 1: BUILD ON THE REGION'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES AND LEVERAGE THE MARKETPLACE

- Strategy— Develop and implement an outreach campaign to attract targeted manufacturing businesses to region with an emphasis on the Triangle North Industrial Parks and Person County Mega Site.
- Conduct business “roundtable” discussions with regional EDC Directors to present the concept for a regional outreach campaign and gather feedback.
- Assess and study existing industries, trends, and target businesses.
- Interview representatives from targeted industries already located in the region to understand strengths and weaknesses of the region.
- Interview site location consultants for best practices on attracting new businesses to the region.
- Develop marketing materials based on research and feedback
- Test the outreach campaign.
- Oversee and manage the regional outreach campaign.

Metrics:

- Number of participating organizations
- Marketing materials distributed
- Number of prospective client visits
- Number of new business/industries locating in the region



Strategy— Develop a Uniform Business Retention and Expansion Program Throughout the Region

- Establish a BRE programming committee that engages businesses in every county in regional conversations.
- Conduct research on effective BRE programming.
- Conduct a Business Services Amenities/Needs Assessment in the five counties served by the COG
- Implement and effectively monitor a regional BRE program.

Metrics:

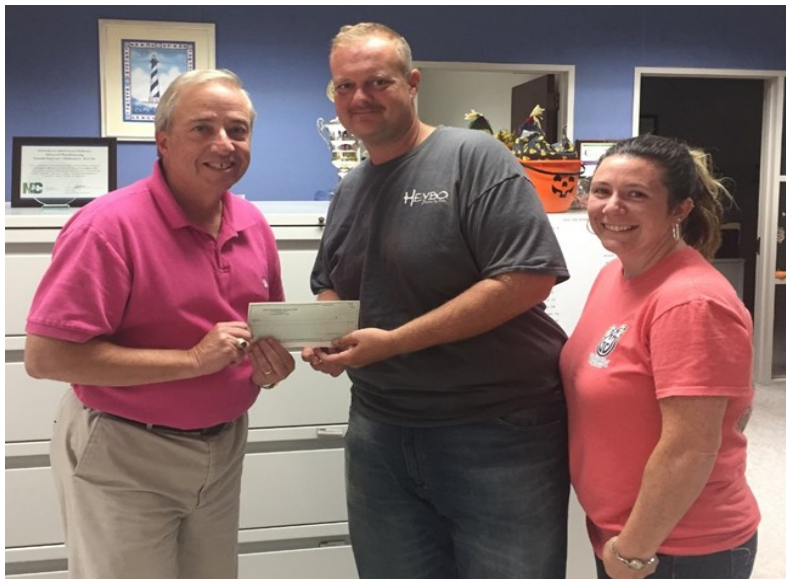
- Number of organizations participating in committee
- Number of business' completing the assessment
- Number of companies/jobs retained

Strategy— Cultivate Economic Entrepreneurship Through Entrepreneurial Activity

- Expand access to capital by increasing outreach for the COG's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and Micro-Enterprise Fund.
- Foster greater collaboration through Chambers of Commerce, Small businesses, EDCs, and Small Business Technology Centers.
- Connect entrepreneurship trainings in community colleges with county and regional resources to develop a one-stop shop/business incubator (brick and mortar or virtual) for entrepreneurs.
- Develop an entrepreneur mentorship program in the region.

Metrics:

- Volume of RLF and Micro-Loan Funds invested
- Number of new entrepreneurship programs
- Number of new entrepreneurs
- Number of participants in mentoring program.



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this goal is to recognize the region’s existing human-made and natural infrastructure such as: *roads, bridges, buildings, and reservoirs* and create ways to market them accordingly to others. This process involves identifying funding opportunities and working closely with Economic Developers to produce readily accessible material to prospective residents and industries.

GOAL 2: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A ROBUST REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategy— Improve, expand and promote transportation access for the region.

- Work with Franklin and Warren County to adopt a plan for fixed route transportation in the county-seat, completing the region’s need for fixed route transportation. (Granville, Person and Vance counties have already adopted and implemented fixed route transportation in the county seat.)
- Facilitate the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RPO) and Mobility Manager.
- Develop transportation projects in all modes that rank high in NCDOT’s SPOT 5.0 to maximize community and economic development.
- Implement bicycle projects identified in the NCDOT approved NC Lakes Regional Bike Plan.

Metrics:

- Additional fixed route service
- Additional transportation projects included in the STIP
- New bicycle projects in the region



Strategy— Enhance Broadband Infrastructure and Connectivity Options

- Develop and implement a demand aggregation study for residents, educational institutions and businesses throughout the region.
- Conduct and compile a Broadband Asset Inventory throughout the region.
- Educate local government officials and managers on relevant topics regarding broadband such as legal and regulatory matters, net neutrality, “broadband friendly” policies and administrative procedures for local governments, and types of public/private partnership models.
- Develop an RFP process to solicit broadband service providers for unserved and underserved areas of the region.
- Combine findings into a comprehensive regional Broadband Infrastructure Strategy allowing each county to decide what business models best fits local needs, challenges and culture.



Metrics:

- Completed Asset Inventory
- Areas identified that are unserved or underserved
- Number of new areas served
- Amount of local investment in infrastructure
- Number of new providers

GOAL 2: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A ROBUST REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategy— Establish a Regional Capital Improvement Plan (RCIP) by consolidating individual Capital Improvement Plans (CIP).

- Perform a Land and Building Inventory Database.
- Look at cross-jurisdictional infrastructure needs.
- Identify funding opportunities.

Metrics:

- Completed Inventory
- Number of regional (multiple county) projects developed
- Number of grants submitted

Strategy— Establish Water Resources Management and Regional Collaboration to Ensure Long-Term Water Supply and Quality .

- Facilitate in the development of Watershed Plans and Watershed Restoration Plans.
- Facilitate partnerships among regional stakeholders.
- Provide Technical Assistance for Water Resource Planning.



Metrics:

- Reduction in the number of systems with Special Order of Consent being issued
- Number of stakeholders
- Number of grants submitted/awarded

Strategy— Position our region's industrial sites for economic development opportunities

- Increase the number of EDPNC "Certified Sites" in the region.
- Promote the construction of in-demand shell buildings (70,000-100,000 square feet) and pad-ready sites
- Identify public/private partnerships for shell building construction .

Metrics:

- Number of Certified Sites
- Number of new shell buildings
- Number of pad-ready sites



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this goal is to strategically select partners able to properly promote the region's amenities and Southern charm. Communities within the region will be highlighted for their local food systems, aging plans for elderly residents, dementia-friendly communities, and revitalized Downtown areas. This goal will bring awareness to non-residents and prospective industries of the local municipalities that comprise the region.

GOAL 3: CREATE REVITALIZED, HEALTHY, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Strategy— Revitalize Downtowns throughout the Region.

- Assist local jurisdictions with local initiatives (i.e. Designation as a Main Street Program)
- Create an inventory of resources for programs and projects related to downtown development.
- Convene downtown managers, advocates, etc. on an ongoing basis to promote information sharing and best practices in downtown revitalization within the region.
- Assist civic organizations and other community groups in development of downtown events and festivals.

Metrics:

- New businesses located in downtowns
- Number of grants submitted
- Number of grants awarded
- Participation of interested parties
- New downtown events



Strategy— Raise Awareness of Aging in Place for Communities

- Create County Aging Plans and Regional Aging Plans to identify current activities and programs supporting “aging in place.”
- Provide Technical Assistance for the establishment of Dementia-friendly Towns.
- Implement and promote training for evidence-based health promotion programs for seniors and retirees.



Metrics:

- Number of Aging In Place Plans completed
- Number of health promotion programs implemented
- Number of attendees
- Number of Dementia Friendly Towns

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this goal is to highlight the talented and diverse residents found in the region. This goal will highlight the formal educational programs such as: partnerships among the state's leading research institutions, widely recognized Community College System institutions located in the region, and job readiness programs routinely offered to residents. The region is fortunate to have life-long residents and multiple generations of families still residing in the area. This goal will highlight the strong sense of community pride among residents.

GOAL 4: DEVELOP TALENTED AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE

Strategy— Align workforce initiatives with training and education opportunities to meet business and industry needs.

- Promote our region's existing certified career pathways in Advanced Manufacturing, Health and Life Sciences, and Information Technology.
- Identify new pathways as needed to increase future opportunities for in-demand careers.
- Increase collaboration with K-12, community colleges, economic development organizations, businesses and industries to better prepare youth, unemployed and underemployed for in demand jobs.
- Organize local teams consisting of: educators, workforce development, economic development, and industry partners to properly match worker training to existing employers in the region.
- Continue to endorse and expand high school courses that offer college credits and lead to industry certifications.
- Increase awareness of Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities and the careers they support.
- Promote Career Readiness Certificate usage by employers, students and incumbent workers.
- Incorporate soft skills, financial literacy and work ethics with Career Readiness Certifications in middle and high school classrooms.

Metrics:

- Number of students in career and technical education programs that are linked to in-demand jobs
- Number of certificate issued for specific training programs
- Number of new pathways certified
- Number of workers receiving Career Readiness Certificates



Strategy— Address the workforce needs of targeted adult populations

- Assist Veterans in obtaining employment in the region, specifically focusing on technical careers.
- Advocate for and address hiring policies regarding employment for ex offenders.
- Support employment opportunities for Senior Citizens.

Metrics:

- Unemployment rate among veterans
- Unemployment rate among ex-offenders
- Unemployment rate among seniors



Strategy— Conduct a coordinated marketing campaign that identifies and supports middle-career opportunities that can be promoted to youth.

- Increase the promotion of education and training in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) disciplines—target students, parents, educators, and businesses.
- Promote our region’s existing certified career pathways in Advanced Manufacturing, Health and Life Sciences, and Information Technology at the middle and high schools in the region.
- Increase and improve career pathway counseling and training for teachers/counselors.
- Increase awareness of Career and Technical Education (CTE) curriculum in schools.
- Expand work-based learning programs that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop employability skills.

Metrics:

- Graduation with STEAM degrees and completion of industry-demanded STEAM certifications
- Employment in STEAM occupations of workers with degrees or certifications
- Enrollment in CTE classes
- Increase in work-based learning opportunities for students



Economic Resiliency

The term “resiliency” has been defined by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) as: the ability of a region or community to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from shocks and disruptions, including natural disasters, hazards, climate change, the closure of large employer[s], the decline of an important industry, and changes in the workforce. Major points emphasized during the CEDS process was in identifying the region’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats as well as increasing the region’s economic vitality.

The Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments strives for resilient communities and vital economies. As such we are engaged in the following activities to better plan for and react to shocks and disruptions:

- Conducting comprehensive regional integrated planning including hazard mitigation and transportation planning;
- Building a trained and talented workforce with transferable skill sets;
- Developing and maintaining key infrastructure assets like high speed broadband, water/sewer improvements, rail/roads/transit/pedestrian access, etc.
- Strengthening coordination between the Kerr-Tar Workforce Development Board, economic development entities, and support services to address short, intermediate, and long- term recovery needs of business and industry;

The region is no stranger to economic disasters. The disasters that have occurred in the region were the closure of major employers. For instance, Sonoco Protective Solutions located in Granville County, Philips Optimum Lighting located in Vance County, and most recently, ETC of Henderson, Incorporated all experienced economic disasters as a result of closures, relocating operations, and in one case, a fire.

Sonoco Protective Solutions, is North America’s leading provider of protective packaging, components, and material handling solutions. Prior to the company closing in July 2017, they employed 24 hourly employees and 5 salaried employees. The average hourly rate of these employees was \$19.61.

Philips Optimum, a leading producer of Philips Florescent and energy-efficient LED bulbs relocated its operations out-of-state in January 2016. At the time of the relocation, the company had 50 employees.

ETC of Henderson, Inc. was a top manufacturer of janitorial supplies. The facility experienced a fire in May 2017. This incidence marked the second fire at the facility. Citing the increased costs to rebuild and the severity of the fire, the owners decided not to continue operations. ETC had 65 employees at the time.

In each instance, the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments’ Workforce Development team responded quickly to the needs of displaced workers through mobilizing *Rapid Response* (a collaborative effort between Workforce Development, existing employers in the region, and the NC Department of Commerce).

Staff was sensitive to the needs of displaced workers, offering assistance in the form of: resume writing; skill training and enhancement; scheduling interviews among available employers offering similar-type jobs; and assisting employees apply for and receive unemployment benefits. With the region already responding to such economic disasters, the region is poised to confront these types of disasters affecting employment in the future with confidence.