

# **Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy**

---

**January 1, 2018 –  
December 31, 2022**

---



Albemarle Commission  
512 South Church Street  
Hertford, NC 27944  
252.426.5753

[www.albemarlecommission.org](http://www.albemarlecommission.org)

   
@AlbemarleCOG

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>ALBEMARLE COMMISSION MEMBER GOVERNMENTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>GEOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
POPULATION.....	7
MEDIAN AGE.....	8
<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>EMPLOYMENT.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>INDUSTRY MIX.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>SOCIOECONOMIC.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>TOURISM.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOUSING.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>EDUCATION RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>RESILIENCE.....</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>WATER INFRASTRUCTURE.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>BROADBAND.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>IDENTIFICATION OF PAST, PRESENT, AND PROJECTED FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS IN THE REGION.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN CREDS EFFORT.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SUGGESTED PROJECTS AND PROJECTED NUMBER OF JOBS TO BE CREATED AS A RESULT OF THOSE PROJECTS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
INFRASTRUCTURE (CREATE 100 JOBS).....	22
FACILITIES (CREATE 500 JOBS).....	22
MILITARY (SAVE JOBS).....	22
TRANSPORTATION (CREATE 50 JOBS).....	23
MISCELLANEOUS.....	23
<b>IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF VITAL PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES.....</b>	<b>24</b>
SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PAST AND POTENTIAL FUTURE INVESTMENTS INCLUDING FEDERAL FUNDING.....	24
SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PAST AND POTENTIAL FUTURE INVESTMENTS INCLUDING STATE FUNDING.....	24
IDENTIFICATION OF ECONOMIC CLUSTERS.....	25
<b>PLAN OF ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF OF THE CREDS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITY.....	28
FOSTERING EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION...	28
ENHANCING AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE REGION'S NATURAL RESOURCES.....	29

MAXIMIZING EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE WORKFORCE CONSISTENT WITH ANY APPLICABLE STATE OR LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT STRATEGY.....	29
PROMOTING USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ACCESS TO HIGH-SPEED TELECOMMUNICATIONS.....	30
BALANCING RESOURCES THROUGH SOUND MANAGEMENT OF PHYSICAL RESOURCES.....	30
OBTAINING AND UTILIZING ADEQUATE FUNDS AND OTHER RESOURCES.....	31
PERFORMANCE MEASURES USED TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CREDS.....	31
<b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>33</b>

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

<b>MARION GILBERT, CHAIR</b> CURRITUCK COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>JOHN MITCHENER</b> CHOWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONER
<b>LEROY SPIVEY, VICE CHAIR</b> TYRRELL COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>CLAYTON RIGGS</b> CAMDEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER
<b>LINDA HOFER, SECRETARY</b> GATES COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>ROB ROSS</b> DARE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
<b>LLOYD GRIFFIN</b> PASQUOTANK COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>JO ANN AUSTIN</b> PASQUOTANK AT LARGE DELEGATE
<b>TRACEY JOHNSON</b> WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>LYNN MATHIS</b> PERQUIMANS AT LARGE DELEGATE
<b>EARL PUGH JR.</b> HYDE COUNTY COMMISSIONER	<b>DEBBIE DAVENPORT</b> TYRRELL AT LARGE DELEGATE
<b>FONDELLA LEIGH</b> PERQUIMANS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	<b>LYNNE WEST</b> WASHINGTON AT LARGE DELEGATE

## ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

<b>ZACH BRAY – BUSINESS</b> ALBEMARLE ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION
<b>LORETTA WILLIAMS – BUSINESS</b> SENTARA ALBEMARLE MEDICAL CENTER
<b>STEVE BRYAN – BUSINESS</b> BRYAN FUNERAL SERVICE
<b>MELANIE PERRY – BUSINESS</b> WASHINGTON COUNTY HOSPITAL
<b>REX ANDERSON – BUSINESS</b> REGULATOR MARINE
<b>TERRY GORE – BUSINESS</b> SUN REALTY OF NAGS HEAD
<b>DEBRA FALSTAD KEENAN – BUSINESS</b> MONEYSWORTH LINEN SERVICES/MONEYSWORTH RENTALS
<b>VERNON BRINKLEY – SMALL BUSINESS</b> A.W. BRINKLEY HARDWARE, INC.
<b>BENJAMIN BEASLEY – SMALL BUSINESS</b> BJ'S CAROLINA CAFÉ
<b>DAVE CARROLL – LABOR ORGANIZATION</b> AFL-CIO
<b>JEAN TAYLOR – LABOR ORGANIZATION</b> SEANC
<b>GLYNDA PARKER, JOINT LABOR</b> GATES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
<b>LEE SCRIPTURE, COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION</b> SOUTHERN ALBEMARLE ORGANIZATION
<b>ELIZABETH SPRUILL – COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION</b> BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF EDENTON/CHOWAN COUNTY

## Albemarle Commission Member Governments

(Counties are the Official Members under the 1997 Amended Charter.  
Towns receive economic development support services)

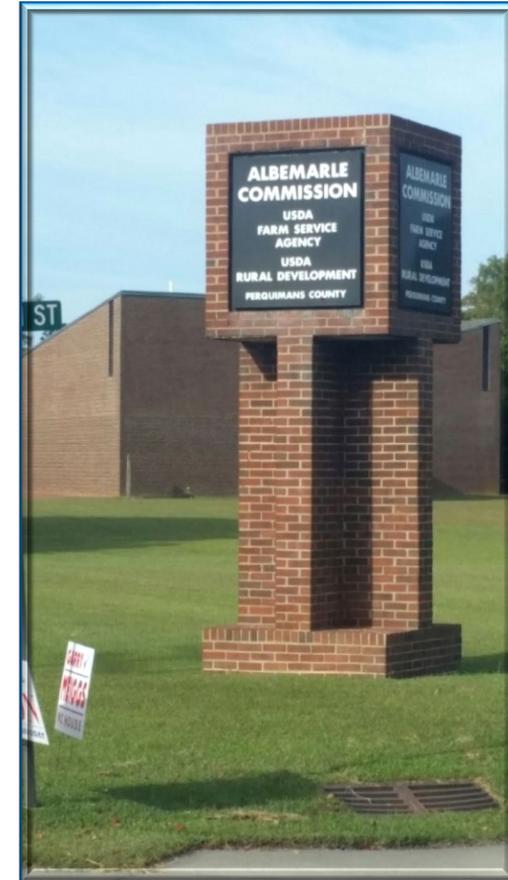


- **Camden County**
- **Chowan County**
  - Town of Edenton
- **Currituck County**
- **Dare County**
  - Town of Duck
  - Town of Southern Shores
  - Town of Kill Devil Hills
  - Town of Kitty Hawk
  - Town of Manteo
  - Town of Nags Head
- **Gates County**
  - Town of Gatesville
- **Hyde County**
- **Pasquotank County**
  - City of Elizabeth City
- **Perquimans County**
  - Town of Hertford
  - Town of Winfall
- **Tyrrell County**
  - Town of Columbia
- **Washington County**
  - Town of Creswell
  - Town of Roper
  - Town of Plymouth

## Introduction

Initially organized in 1968 as a Planning District Commission through North Carolina General Statute §153A-391, and then chartered in 1972 under the direction of the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Albemarle Commission is sanctioned as the lead regional organization for Region R by the federal government. Through legislation, the Commission became one of five regional planning and development commissions. The Commission has been addressed regional needs since its doors opened in 1968 and has been instrumental in the development and / or enhancement of regional infrastructure; industrial recruitment business development, labor force development, travel and tourism, community reinvestment / rehabilitation, and health and human services. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was developed by the Albemarle Commission Staff and Partners with the guidance of the CREDS Committee, input from local governments and industry in the region. The CREDS Committee represented leaders of the community and was composed of 60% private sector stake holders. Local government managers, planners, and economic developers provided input concerning the projects and

needs of the region. Other sources of information include economic development strategies, land use plans, and capital improvement plans of local governments in the region, as well as our local plans for aging and workforce development.



## Background

### Geography

Ten counties, and the towns within them, make up the Albemarle Region, located in the northeastern corner of North Carolina. The region is predominantly rural, with a great deal of wetlands and agricultural land. Most of the towns in the region are small, with populations less than 5,000. The largest population centers are located in the coastal communities of the Outer Banks in Dare County, and Elizabeth City in Pasquotank County. The Albemarle Region has a total land area of 6,222 square miles, making it the largest of the sixteen planning organizations in the State. Furthermore, the region is separated by 2,360 square miles of water. Major water bodies include the Albemarle Sound, Currituck Sound, Croatan Sound, the northern portion of the Pamlico Sound, and several large rivers and lakes.

Due to the geography of the region, transportation, soil quality, and flooding are the primary obstacles to economic development. The large water bodies that separate the region make vehicular transportation time consuming and expensive. There is a great deal of congestion on major highway corridors. This is especially

true where the transportation system transverses large water bodies with bridges and ferries. Much of the land in the region cannot be developed due to wetlands. Furthermore, poor soil makes much of the region incompatible for septic systems, resulting in a greater dependence on local governments for water and sewer services. Overall, the Albemarle Region is a vast region where population centers are separated not only by distance, but also by natural geographic barriers.



*Source: Hyde County Assistant County Manager Kris Noble*

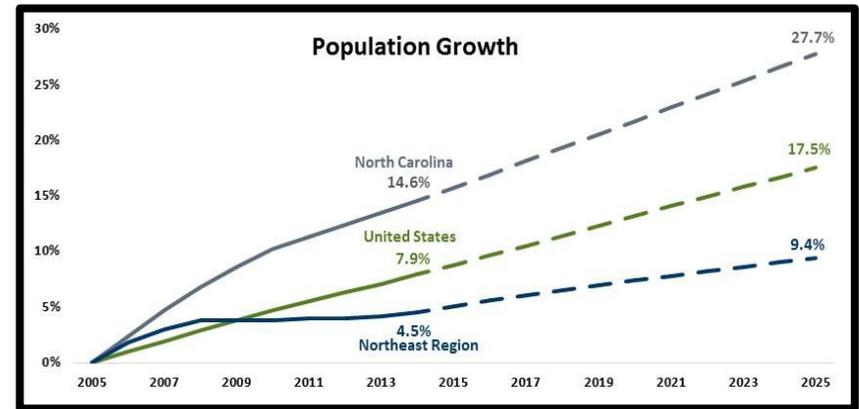
## Population

The statewide population in North Carolina grew almost twice as fast as the national pace between 2005 and 2016. Representing only 1.7% of the statewide total, the Northeastern Region had an estimated population of 173,175 in 2016 as provided by the NC Office of State Budget Management. This is enough people to fill the Panther's football stadium about 2.5 times. While the state had a 14.6% increase in its population from 2005 to 2014, the Northeastern Region experienced a slower increase of 4.5% (approximately 7,469 individuals). Seven out of the ten counties within the region gained population over this time period.

County	Population		
	2005	2016	% Change
Camden	9,061	10,251	13.1%
Chowan	14,533	14,636	0.7%
Currituck	22,636	25,072	10.8%
Dare	34,322	35,415	3.2%
Gates	11,305	11,912	5.4%
Hyde	5,792	5,738	-0.9%
Pasquotank	38,137	39,691	4.1%
Perquimans	12,190	13,638	11.9%
Tyrrell	4,262	4,143	-2.8%
Washington	13,468	12,679	-5.9%
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>165,706</b>	<b>173,175</b>	<b>4.5%</b>

Source: NC Office of State Budget Management

However, none of the individual counties outpaced the statewide growth rate. The Northeastern regional growth rate was stronger than the national rate from 2005 until 2009, but it has been lagging behind ever since. This trend is projected to continue through 2025 with North Carolina growing 11.5%, the United States growing 8.9%, and the Northeastern Region growing 4.7% (2015 to 2025).

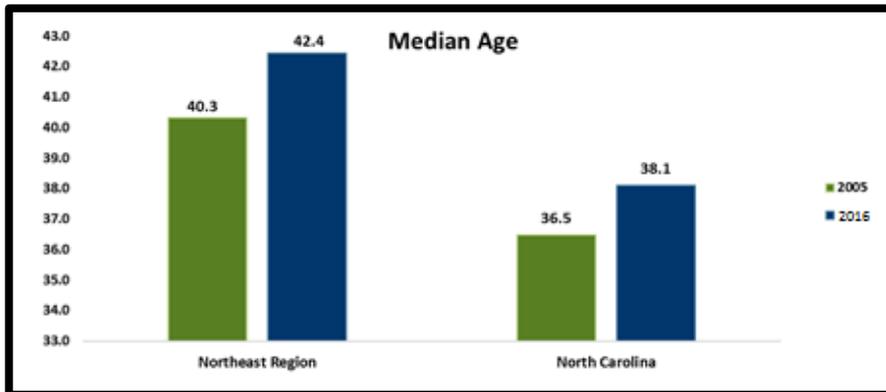


Source: NC Office of State Budget Management



## Median Age

The Northeastern Region has a median age of 42.4 years old, 4.30 years older than the state of North Carolina. The regional increase in age is growing faster than the state. Between 2005 and 2016, the region's median age grew by nearly 2.1 years compared to 1.6 years across the state. The age difference is largely due to an increase in retirees in some counties, as well as growth in the region's middle-age workforce. These demographic conditions have the potential to create labor market and economic challenges and opportunities for the region. The supply of younger workers may not be adequate to replace experienced employees in all fields. Also, the potential exists to expand and grow new businesses to meet the needs of an aging population.



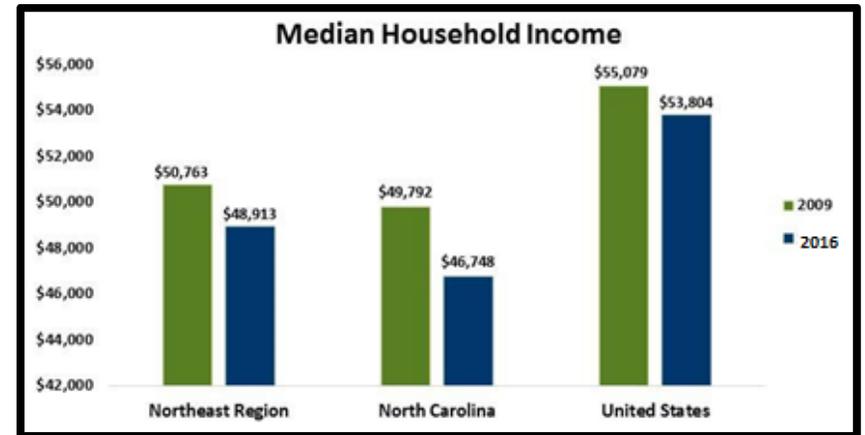
Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management



Source AAA World Elder Abuse Awareness Walk

## Median Household Income

North Carolina's 2016 estimated median household income was \$46,748, about 9.5% (or \$5,201) lower than the United States' level of \$53,721. As of 2016, North Carolina ranks 41<sup>st</sup> out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. However, North Carolina is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of 12 states within the Southeast Region of the United States. Camden, Currituck, and Dare are the only counties within the region with household incomes above the national median. These counties, along with Gates are the only four within the region above the statewide median. Between 2009 and 2016, national median household incomes fell 2.3% as the impact of the Great Recession stretched across the United States. During this time period, the gap between North Carolina and the United States has grown wider. Although median household incomes in the Northeastern Region have declined 3.6% during this time period, the regional decline was less than the statewide drop of 6.1%.



Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management



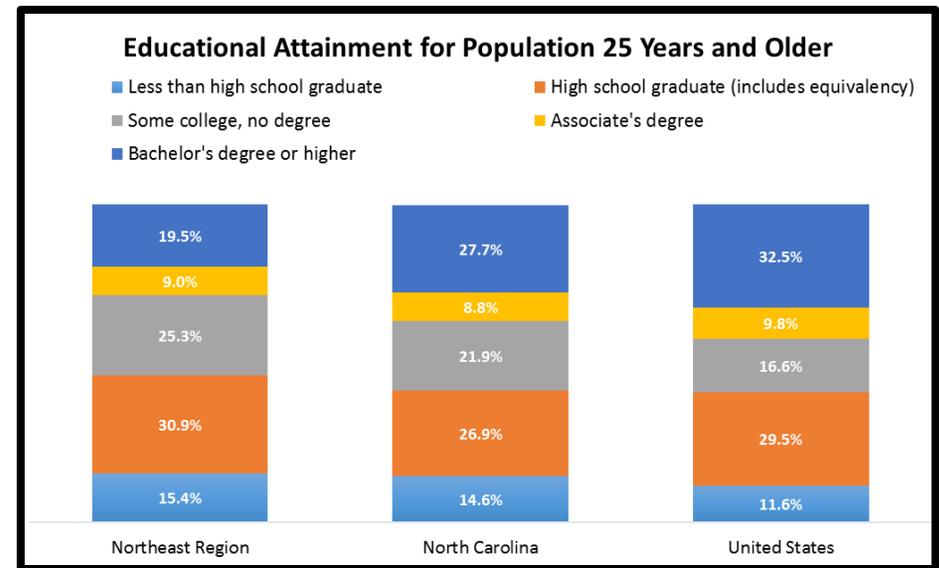
## Educational Attainment

From 2007-2008 to the 2014-2015 academic year, the Northeastern Region's four-year cohort graduation rate was up 14.6 percentage points and remains above the statewide graduation rate. The regional graduation rate has improved in 6 out of the last 7 years. All ten counties have shown improvement in their graduation rate between the 2007-2008 and 2014-2015 academic years. Pasquotank, Perquimans, and Tyrrell were the only three counties in the region that did not experience an increase from the most recent school year.

### Total (ALL Students) 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2007-2015

School District	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Camden	81.8	81.4	79.5	90.7	85.5	84.7	80.3	89.2
Chowan	64.4	70.6	74.7	78.0	78.3	81.5	78.9	82.2
Currituck	77.7	82.1	79.8	80.3	87.4	87.7	86.2	90.1
Dare	89.0	90.2	90.5	90.1	88.9	91.4	93.3	93.8
Gates	71.0	73.0	80.3	82.0	85.7	91.4	82.9	86.2
Hyde	78.6	81.2	67.8	83.0	56.2	86.8	81.8	94.7
Pasquotank	64.9	69.3	70.7	77.2	84.1	83.0	84.9	83.9
Perquimans	63.9	64.4	83.2	85.3	83.7	89.0	92.1	90.6
Tyrrell	51.1	57.9	58.6	80.8	78.3	87.3	88.2	83.9
Washington	76.2	68.4	80.8	82.6	79.9	84.8	83.0	88.4
<b>Northeast Region</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>82.7</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>86.3</b>	<b>88.3</b>
<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>70.3</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>74.2</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>83.9</b>	<b>85.6</b>

Source: NC Dept. of Public Instruction's North Carolina 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Report; County Public School Districts. Dates reflect year of graduation.

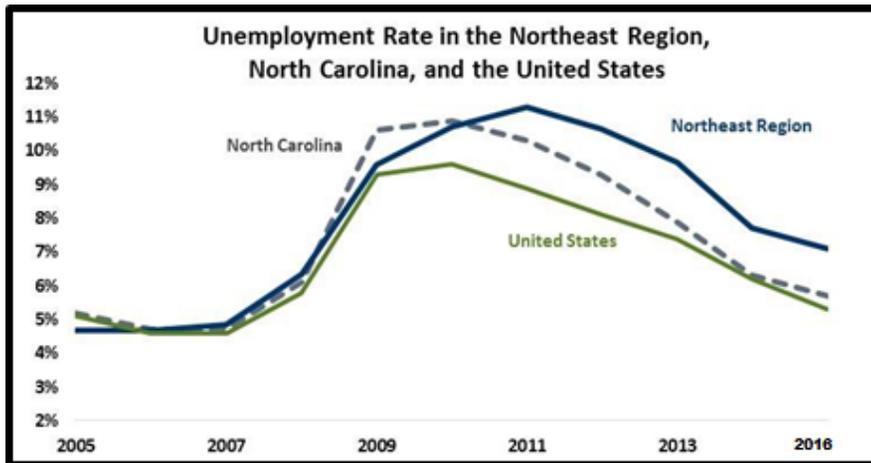


Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010-2016

Just over 42% of people over the age of 25 in the United States have some type of college degree. That percentage is about 36.5% in North Carolina and 28.5% in the Northeastern Region of North Carolina. This is partially driven by a larger portion of the population having completed some college, but no degree in the region and state. The Northeastern Region has almost 10% more of their population within this category (25.3%) compared to the United States overall (16.6%).

## Employment

The region's unemployment rate dropped to 6.8% in 2016, its lowest level since peaking at 11.3% in 2011. The rate has not returned to its pre-recession levels and remains higher than North Carolina and the United States. The chart below presents the Northeastern Region, state of North Carolina, and national annual average unemployment rate for the ten-year period ending in 2016.

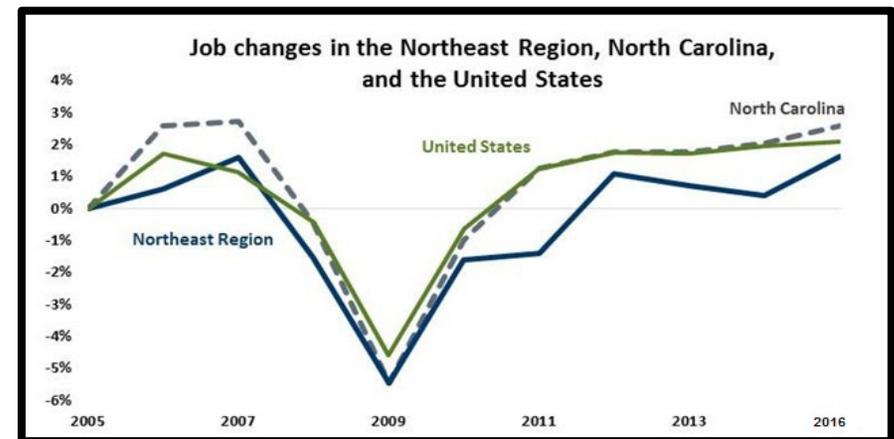


Source: BLS's Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), 2005-2015 annual average.

## Industry Mix

Since 2005, the State of North Carolina and the United States have experienced similar trends in job growth. However, the decline in jobs in North Carolina during the recession was slightly stronger. The state surpassed its 2005

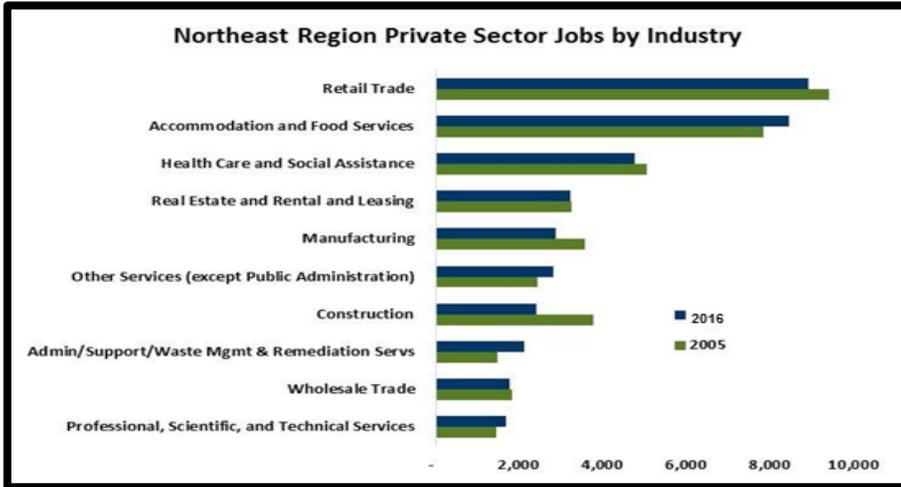
employment in 2011 and has outpaced national growth in employment each year since 2013. While the region has experienced steady employment growth since 2011, it has consistently remained below the state and national pace. Although surpassing its 2005 level of employment in 2012, the region's growth remains about 1% below the state pace and about 0.5% behind the national pace. The chart below shows estimates reported on workers employed in the county regardless of their county of residence.



Source: Quarterly Census Employment and Wages (QCEW); Total; All Industries

Between 2005 and 2016, the Northeastern Region of North Carolina experienced a net decline in employment of 1,098 (-2.3%). Six out of ten of the major industry sectors in the Northeastern Region experienced job declines. Job losses were led by Construction (-1,390), Manufacturing (-

674), Retail Trade (-513), and Healthcare and Social Assistance (-312). Regional net job growth was led by Educational Services (788), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (630), and Accommodation and Food Services (607).



Source: EMSI (Includes QCEW & Non-QCEW data); does not include Government Sector. EMSI does not use the NAICS categories in sector 92 – Public Administration. Instead, EMSI puts all government employment (excluding Postal Service) into the following categories: Federal Government; Federal Government, Civilian, excluding Postal Service; Federal Government, Military; State Government, including education and hospitals; Local Government, including Education and Hospitals

### Socioeconomic

The rate for all persons in poverty in the region is 17.46% with a poverty rate of 27.39% for children. Poverty rates are highest total poverty rate is in Tyrrell County, and with the poverty rate for children highest in Washington County. The region's average median household income is \$45,967.90

with the highest in Currituck County and the lowest in Tyrrell County. Dare County's economy is supported by a vibrant tourism industry on the Outer Banks. Camden County is very close to the Virginia State Line. It should be noted that Currituck and Gates Counties are a part of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area. Although, there is small growth region-wide, there is an economic void in the center of the region with the counties of Tyrrell and Washington. These central counties lack the tourism industries of coastal communities, as well as close proximity to employment generators in southeastern Virginia.

County	Median household income	Per Capita Income	Total Poverty Rate	Poverty rate under 18	Poverty rate - Children 5 to 17 (living in families)
Camden	\$62,000	\$41,351	9.7	13.7	11.6
Chowan	\$40,794	\$34,956	19.4	33	31.4
Currituck	\$66,426	\$41,035	10.4	17	15.2
Dare	\$53,585	\$48,602	10.3	17.8	17.6
Gates	\$46,387	\$33,458	16.7	23.5	21
Hyde	\$37,074	\$33,724	23	30.7	29.7
Pasquotank	\$42,171	\$35,550	19.1	29.5	28.4
Perquimans	\$42,337	\$37,279	17.6	31.6	29.9
Tyrrell	\$33,759	\$30,514	25	36.2	36.8
Washington	\$35,146	\$32,755	23.4	40.9	40
<b>Region</b>	<b>\$ 45,967.90</b>	<b>\$ 36,922.40</b>	<b>17.46</b>	<b>27.39</b>	<b>26.16</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis

## Tourism

Tourism is the life-blood of the counties that border the Atlantic Ocean and the area sounds. In partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service, as well as the Tourism Development Authorities of the Albemarle Commission's 10 Counties and 4 neighboring Counties, the Commission is coordinating the balancing nature and commerce efforts to further enhance the development of tourism opportunities within the Region. Within the Commission's 10 County Region, in 2015 tourism has a \$1,349 million impact for expenditures, a Regional payroll of \$274 million, and employs more than 15,490 employees. Tourism from the Albemarle Commission's Region generates more than \$65 million in state tax receipts, and \$61 million in local tax receipts saving local residents more than \$4,522 per resident each year.



Albemarle Commission Regional Tourism Economic Impact						
County	Expenditures \$(millions)	Payroll \$(millions)	Employment (thousands)	State Tax Receipts \$(millions)	Local Tax Receipts \$(millions)	Tax Savings Per Resident
Camden	\$1.97	\$0.22	0.01	\$0.11	\$0.16	\$26.52
Chowan	\$20.02	\$3.04	0.15	\$0.98	\$1.26	\$154.03
Currituck	\$146.93	\$28.18	1.58	\$6.31	\$6.79	\$511.21
Dare	\$1,052.69	\$223.03	12.71	\$50.48	\$47.03	\$2,708.63
Gates	\$6.21	\$0.55	0.02	\$0.39	\$0.23	\$52.58
Hyde	\$33.54	\$6.61	0.38	\$1.59	\$1.82	\$605.86
Pasquotank	\$59.47	\$9.25	0.49	\$3.30	\$1.34	\$116.85
Perquimans	\$9.80	\$1.21	0.04	\$0.41	\$1.11	\$111.48
Tyrrell	\$3.57	\$0.35	0.02	\$0.17	\$0.34	\$119.95
Washington	\$14.69	\$1.97	0.09	\$0.83	\$0.62	\$115.04
<b>Regional</b>	<b>\$1,349</b>	<b>\$274</b>	<b>15.49</b>	<b>\$65</b>	<b>\$61</b>	<b>\$4,522</b>

Source: NC Division of Tourism Travel Economic Impact Model 2015



John Henry kayaking on the Perquimans River in Hertford, NC

## Housing

In 2010 there were 100,271 housing units in the region. By 2015 that had increased by 820 housing units (0.81%) to 101,091. The construction of new housing units has slowed but over the last year an increase in construction has been seen in Dare, Currituck and Camden Counties. There continues to be a concern regarding the lack of affordable workforce housing in the region, especially in the tourist areas where it is needed the most. Housing costs are extremely prohibitive to economic development in the region. Possible employers are unable to locate to the region because workforce housing is not available to support their workforce needs. Lack of workforce housing is especially damaging to the economies of the coastal towns. Tourism on the coast generates jobs for the entire region. However, housing cost in close proximity to these jobs forces workers to commute from the inland. These long commutes detract from the value of wages. Some occupations require workers to reside near the communities they serve, such as health and safety workers that must be on call. The overall quality of life, and safety on the Outer Banks, is diminished by a lack of workforce housing.

Albemarle Commission Regional Housing Units, 2015				
County	2010	2015	Change 2010-2015	% Change 2010-2015
Camden	4,104	4,129	25	0.61%
Chowan	7,289	7,266	-23	-0.32%
Currituck	14,453	14,849	396	2.67%
Dare	33,492	33,863	371	1.10%
Gates	5,208	5,225	17	0.33%
Hyde	3,347	3,406	59	1.73%
Pasquotank	16,833	16,865	32	0.19%
Perquimans	6,986	7,030	44	0.63%
Tyrrell	2,068	2,003	-65	-3.25%
Washington	6,491	6,455	-36	-0.56%
<b>Regional</b>	<b>100,271</b>	<b>101,091</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>0.81%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Pelican Point Village, Elizabeth City, NC**



## Transportation

The inter-regional highway system is inadequate for many businesses that may otherwise relocate to the area. Widening, bridge replacement, ferry upgrades, and new construction are necessary to allow business to efficiently import resources and export goods. Furthermore, the current system creates long commute times, placing additional burdens on working families. On December 14, 2015, the US 17 corridor was officially designated as a future interstate with the passage of the [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act](#) (FAST Act) and in May of 2016, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) approved the designation of Interstate 87 (I-87) for the corridor.



Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System



Riverlight Transit

Dare County Transportation System



Tyrrell County Senior & Disabled Transportation System



Albemarle Commission Public Transit Systems		
Provider	Counties	Restrictions
Inter County Public Transportation Authority (ICPTA)	Camden Chowan Currituck Pasquotank Perquimans	No Restrictions
Gates County Inter-Regional Transit System (GITS)	Gates, Hertford, Pasquotank, Chowan, and Suffolk, Smithfield Norfolk, Virginia	Available to all, but limited availability
Dare County Transportation System (DCTS)	Dare	Available to all
Tyrrell County Senior & Disabled Transportation System	Tyrrell	Available to all, but limited availability
Riverlight Transit	Washington	Limited
Hyde County Transit	Hyde	Limited

Source: Northeast Regional Locally Coordinated Public Transportation Human Service Transportation Plan

## Education Resources

Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) is a public, historically black college located in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. ECSU enrolls nearly 2,500 students in 37 baccalaureate programs and three masters' degree programs, a member-school of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, as well as a member-institution of the University of North Carolina system.



The Region is also home to Mid-Atlantic Christian University. MACU is a private Christian university located in Elizabeth City. They serve more than 500 students in the Region and online supporting 15 undergraduate degree programs and 5 academic completion programs.



The College of the Albemarle is one of the North Carolina Community Colleges. The main campus is located in Elizabeth City with satellite campuses located in Barco, Edenton and Manteo (three locations). They serve 4,500 students in the region. The College of the Albemarle has a Small Business Center.



Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties are served by Beaufort County Community College. The main campus is located in Washington with satellite campuses located in Engelhard, Roper, and Columbia (three locations). They serve 2,000 students in the Region. Beaufort County Community College has a Small Business Center.



## Environment

Eastern North Carolina is blessed with four mild seasons. It is located about half way between New York and Florida. There are a number of rivers that flow through the region. There are several sounds in the coastal environment, of which Pamlico Sound is the largest. Coastal estuaries, rivers and creeks, along with the Atlantic Ocean, are sought after by tourists, developers and retirees.

Working with both local and state regulatory bodies allows there to be constructive dialogue on a controversial subject that pits coastal developers and land owners against regulations that would limit growth and development in areas predicted to be affected.

Much of the Albemarle Commission's region remains rural, providing ample space for farming, recreation and other forms of development.



Chowan County Farmer - Peanuts



Picture courtesy of the Raleigh News & Observer

Northeastern North Carolina is also home to the first wind farm in the Southeastern United States powered by Avangrid Renewables at Desert Wind. The project contains 104 wind turbines and produces 208 megawatts (MW) of power for Amazon Web Services, Inc. (AWS)



Picture courtesy of Amazon Web Services, Inc.

## Resilience

Sea-level rise affects the Region and provides the Albemarle Commission to provide resilience efforts to not only the coastal areas with sensitive habitats that must be protected, but inland areas that flood due to lack of sufficient drainage. Wetland areas abound and there are restrictions on their use and development. All these factors combined make the Region a difficult place to locate industry of any size. Where the region's coastal environment is an attraction for development, it also presents several threats. Particularly with seasonal hurricanes, tropical storms and nor'easters making the area unattractive to some potential residents and businesses. Area beaches are also prone to erosion from storms, currents and natural shifts, which for many communities have been remedied by federal and State funds allocated for beach nourishment. As federal and State budgets get tighter, there is the threat of funding losses, shifting the cost to local governments. Beach erosion affects not only residents but the area's attractiveness for tourism and retirees. Continuous dredging of local inlets has also been deemed costly and in some cases prohibitive by the Army

Corps of Engineers, again affecting businesses, residents, tourists and retirees.

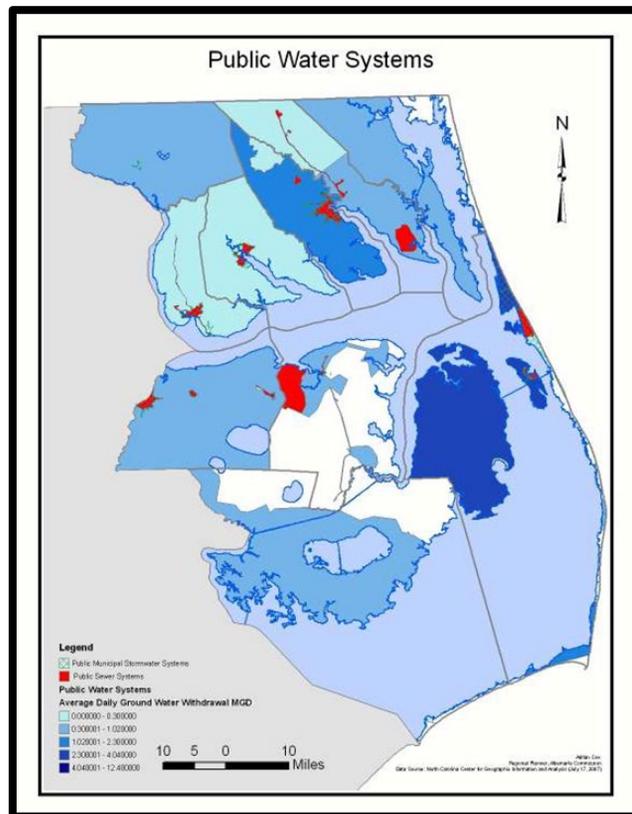
The Albemarle Commission continues to work with the local governments throughout the region to identify infrastructure components that will support resiliency within the Region, particularly shoreline erosion controls, business resilience planning with the Region's multiple chambers of commerce', emergency management and NC Emergency Management.



*Source: NCDOT Division 1*

## Water Infrastructure

Water capacity and water quality concerns are paramount in the region. There are nine county-wide, one regional, and several municipal water systems in the region. Due to a decrease in available ground water, several local governments in the region are engaging in prolonged and expensive reverse osmosis projects.

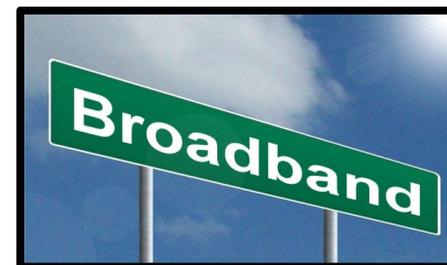


## Wastewater Infrastructure

The capacity for wastewater treatment plants and septic systems continue to hinder develop growth in the Region. Because of the high-water table as well as the distance between residences and businesses, the expense as well as the environmental factors within the Region impose difficulties in the expansion of existing wastewater and septic systems.

## Broadband

Infrastructure deficiencies include a lack of affordable highspeed internet access particularly with the termination of actual textbooks for school age children. The Albemarle Commission in partnership with the State of North Carolina's Broadband Infrastructure Office has undertaken a broadband demand aggregation project to attract public private partnerships throughout the Region to expand and provide this essential service to the residents, businesses and visitors throughout the Region.



## In-depth Analysis

### Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities & Threats

<p><b>S</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to Norfolk offers access to a major population and job center</li> <li>• Coastal tourism supports jobs, outside dollars, &amp; tax revenue</li> <li>• Regional poverty rate is lower than the state's HS Graduation rates are high across the region</li> <li>• Nation's largest and busiest Coast Guard air station</li> <li>• Low crime rates help make the region attractive</li> </ul>	<p><b>W</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow population and job growth, along with a declining labor force</li> <li>• Low educational attainment limiting skill development</li> <li>• Lack of major job centers</li> <li>• Low wage jobs are common</li> <li>• High opioid prescription rates in parts of the region</li> <li>• Few shell buildings and available sites</li> </ul>
<p><b>O</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing better connection to Norfolk through announced upgrades to future interstate I-87</li> <li>• Improving low educational attainment would improve the region's long-term prospects</li> <li>• Several high wage industries are particularly concentrated in the region</li> <li>• Aging population offers many opportunities for workers in the health care sector</li> <li>• Opportunities for Coast Guard partnerships and retiree attraction</li> </ul>	<p><b>T</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional job growth projected to be slow</li> <li>• Projected loss in working-age population (25-64) without more employment opportunities</li> <li>• Potential for continued state government job losses in prisons and colleges</li> <li>• High home values pose a challenge for workers</li> <li>• Extreme weather &amp; beach erosion could impact tourism revenue, jobs, &amp; development</li> </ul>

## Identification of past, present, and projected future economic development investments in the region

**Past** EDA has provided significant investment in the expansion of the runway at the airport in Elizabeth City that was connected to the Coast Guard Air Station allowing for the expansion of the Coast Guard Air Station, as well as additional business development within the Region.

**Present** EDA currently is participating with Gates County and Camden County for the expansion of a sewer system to provide for commercial development in each County. Also, along with the Partnership Grant, EDA has also provided funding as a result of Hurricane Matthew to enhance preparedness in the region for future disasters.

**Future** Due to the regions rural nature we anticipate there will be a continuing need for infrastructure including broadband. Additionally, since the region is located in coastal North Carolina, we are often affected by inclement weather that can devastate our coastal communities. Proper planning and support with assist in limiting these affects.

### ***Community and private sector participation in CREDS effort***

The 2017 Albemarle Commission Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy Update (CREDS) is the result of input from both the public and private sector. The CREDS Strategy Committee's membership includes persons from the following fields:

- Private sector representatives
- Public officials
- Community Leaders
- Representatives of workforce development boards
- Representatives of institutions of higher education
- Minority and labor groups
- Private individuals

Individuals from these groups were solicited for participation and input in the update of this CREDS. Additionally, the staff of the Albemarle Commission has met privately and publicly with the Economic Developers, regional developers, Planners, Municipal and county Managers, and elected county and municipal officials within the region to solicit their input for the plan. The CREDS was made available for public comment for thirty days before submission to the Economic Development Administration.

A semi-annual performance report will be generated and forwarded to the EDA as required. This report will document the progress of the CREDS implementation efforts as well as the goals and objectives set forth in the plan. Any performance report that results in a major change of the technical components of the EDA-approved CREDS will be made available for review and comment by the public for a period of at least 30 days prior to submitting the performance report to EDA.

A new CREDS will be developed at least every five years, unless EDA and the Albemarle Economic Development Board determines that a new CREDS is needed earlier due to changed circumstance within the region.



Source: Northeastern Workforce Development Board

## ***Suggested projects and projected number of jobs to be created as a result of those projects***

Suggested projects and projected number of jobs to be created as a result of those projects:

### **Infrastructure (create 100 jobs)**

- Expansion of the current broadband network within the Region
- Water systems to increase capacities/pressures/service area/ storage/ regionalization
- Sewer systems to increase capacities and service areas, regionalization
- Systems to dispose of treated effluent or residuals from water treatment systems
- Expansion of electric distribution system and capacity, regionalization
- Miscellaneous infrastructure improvements to service business/industry
- Development of industry and/or technology parks (infrastructure)
- Disaster-proofing local infrastructure

### **Facilities (Create 500 jobs)**

- Rehabilitation / Retrofitting of facilities for job training/retraining
- Construction of municipality-owned facility to be occupied by a company
- Construction of a municipality-owned road
- Business/Industrial incubators
- Downtown revitalization projects
- Development of tourism venues
- Development of meeting venues
- Development of building reuse projects
- Private sector investment

### **Military (save jobs)**

- Continue to partner with the military for the retention of retiring military personnel within the Region
- Prevent encroachment on military facilities and low-level flight paths
- Develop projects that protect military assets from Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions



Source: U.S. Coast Guard Elizabeth City, NC

## Transportation (create 50 jobs)

- Continue to work with NCDOT and FHWA on the expansion of future interstate I-87
- Improve existing and develop new options for public transportation
- Improve existing road, air, water, and rail systems to accommodate additional usage and freight movement



Source: U.S. Coast Guard

## Miscellaneous

- Create projects and programs that help develop and encourage entrepreneurs.
- Create projects and programs that attract retirees to the area
- Ensure that all local areas have “senior friendly” environments, policies, and practices
- Create plans that assist in the development of economic development projects and clusters

According to the NC Department of Commerce’s LEED the average annual number of jobs in the region for 2016 was 79,798. We anticipate that over the five-year period of this CREDS (by December 2022) there will be an additional 1,596 jobs (2%) created.



Source: NC Department of Commerce



Source: Chowan County TDA

***Identification and prioritization of vital projects, programs and activities that address the region's greatest needs or that will best enhance the region's competitiveness, including sources of funding for past and potential future investments***

The vital projects, programs and activities are identified and prioritized as follows:

- Recruit and secure new employers that will diversify region's economy, that will enhance clusters, that will promote new enterprise development, that provide employee benefits including health care and preferably ones that pay higher wages.
- Retain existing jobs in the Region and encourage expansion wherever possible.
- Upgrade the skills of those presently in the workforce and those entering the workforce through continual training and advanced education.
- Develop and support entrepreneurs.
- Continue the resourceful and intelligent use of the region's natural resources.
- Expand high-speed communications networks.
- Address infrastructure needs within the region.
- Improve access to transportation.
- Prepare the region for the predicted increase in the number of senior citizens residing in and moving to the region.

**Sources of funding for past and potential future investments include Federal funding:**

- Economic Development Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Department of Education
- Environmental Protection Agency
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Department of Homeland Security
- Federal Highway Administration
- Department of Labor

**Sources of funding for past and potential future investments include State funding:**

- Division of Water Quality
- Division of Water Resources
- Department of Commerce
- Division of Coastal Resources
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- Department of Transportation
- Parks and Recreation Trust Fund

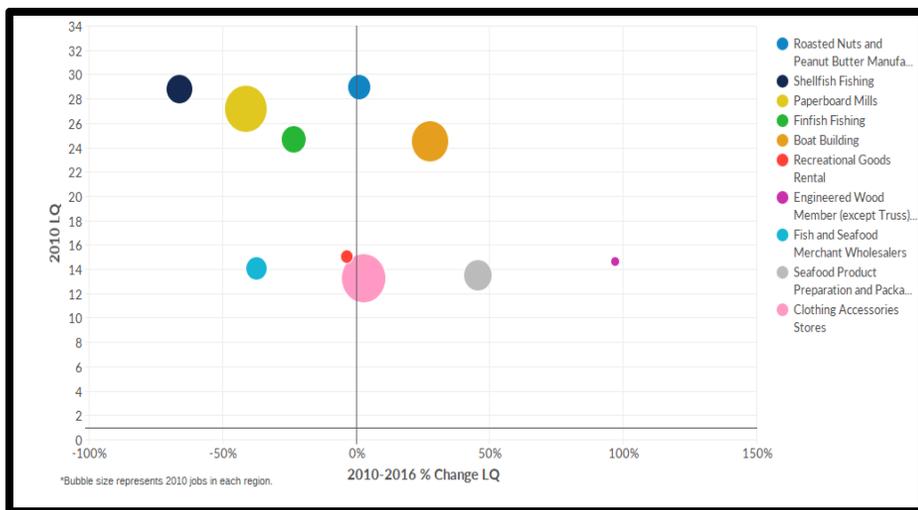
Sources of funding for past and potential future investments including local funding through fund balance, tax revenues, and occupancy tax.

EDA funding is primarily used for the following types of projects that have a job creation component:

- Water systems to increase capacities/pressures/service area/storage
- Sewer systems to increase capacities and service areas
- Systems to dispose of treated effluent or residuals from water treatment systems
- Expansion of electric distribution system and capacity
- Construction of a facility for job training/retraining
- Construction of facility to be occupied by a company
- Construction of a municipality-owned road
- Miscellaneous infrastructure improvements to service business/industry

***Identification of economic clusters (especially ones growing or declining)***

The unique geography of the Region allows for the region as a whole to have three sub regions that while they share some similarities in economic clusters, there are vast differences as well. The healthcare and advanced manufacturing industries are likely to experience the greatest growth over the next six years. These industries have low average earnings/worker in relation to other industries in the region, and the industries with the highest earnings/worker, government and manufacturing, are likely to only grow by about 8%-12%. However, examining forecasts of key occupations reveals that management, a high earning occupational sector, is likely to grow. Growth in management indicates the emergence of new businesses, and greater commitment to the region by corporations with existing business interests.



Source: EMSI, 2017

Comparing the job change of economic clusters within the region, to the changes that would be expected given the national trends, provides a measure of competitive effect. Competitive effect represents the amount of job change that can only be explained by factors that are unique to the region. Cluster Analysis reveals that the Albemarle Region has a significant competitive advantage in the health and manufacturing industries. Economic clusters are industries, or sub-industries that are interconnected through shared inputs and outputs. Regional clusters have a synergistic effect in which success in one industry produces success throughout the cluster. Examining the industries that currently compose key clusters in the Albemarle Region

reveals that developing the following business sectors are most likely to improve economic stability throughout the region:

**Region as a Whole**

- Eco-Tourism
- Tourism
- Aviation
- Marine-Boat Building & Fishing
- Agricultural Business / Biotechnology
- Public Health
- Small Business/Entrepreneur
- Warehouse Distribution/Logistics
- Technology
- Retiree / Relocation
- Alternative Energy
- Military

**Sub Regions**

**Hyde, Tyrrell, Washington**

- Eco-Tourism
- Agricultural Business
- Marine
- Forestry
- Aviation

**Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Gates, Pasquotank, Perquimans**

- Warehouse Distribution/Logistics
- Eco-Tourism
- Retiree/Relocation
- Aviation
- Higher Education
- Agricultural
- Military

**Currituck, Dare**

- Tourism
- Eco-Tourism
- Aviation
- Higher Education
- Marine – Boat Building & Fishing

The entire economy of the region is hindered by a lack of communication and information industries. Telecommunication includes the development and maintenance of computer and telephone networks. Communication networks allow businesses to function more efficiently and reach larger markets. The technologies supporting these networks changes rapidly and systems must be updated and maintained continuously. The development of this sector within the region, will significantly improve recruitment and entrepreneurial capabilities while enhancing the productivity of existing businesses.

Wholesale trade benefits all other clusters. Developing this industry within the region will allow service providers easy access and collaboration to their input resources. Furthermore, increased wholesale trade will improve the access to markets for the producers of raw materials, agricultural products.

The regional economy would benefit greatly from the recruitment and development of additional advanced manufacturing industries. Biotechnology such as the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals/vitamins might be supported by the region's diverse agricultural industry.

Advanced manufacturing of Aeronautical and Marine components could realize advantages from the region's government customer base and geography.



Source: NC Department of Commerce

## ***Plan of Action to implement the goals and objectives of the CREDS***

### ***Promoting economic development and opportunity***

The Albemarle Commission will continue to coordinate and work with the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, county economic developers, Elizabeth City Area Committees of 100, Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Development Authorities, and other interested groups to attract new industries to the region. These organizations will assist in implementing the goals and objectives of the CREDS as warranted.

### **Washington County Solar Farm Ribbon Cutting**



Source: Northeastern Workforce Development Board

## **Fostering effective access to transportation**

The Albemarle Rural Transportation Planning Organization (ARPO) is housed in the Albemarle Commission. The ARPO is responsible for prioritizing transportation projects for the Strategic Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The ARPO is also concerned with public transportation, bike planning, pedestrian planning, and other modes of transporting people and goods. This organization will assist in implementing the goals and objectives of the CREDS as warranted.



## Enhancing and protecting the environment and the Region's natural resources

Projects proposed in the region should be constructed in such a way that they enhance and protect the environment. The Albemarle Commission will assist local governments as requested to plan project and program which help enhance and protect the environment. The Albemarle Commission will participate on committees, councils and commissions that address the environment and the protection of our natural resources.

### ***Algal Blooms in Edenton Bay***



Source: Chowan Edenton Environmental Group

## Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy

The Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) is a program of the Albemarle Commission. The local and State workforce investments strategies are implemented by the NWDB. The NWDB participated in the development of this CREDS and will assist in implementing it as well.



## **Promoting use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications**

The Albemarle Commission will continue to champion the need for high-speed internet coverage for the entire region. There are still vast pockets where it is not available. Through the implementation of the results of the demand aggregation survey, the Albemarle Commission will work with small and legacy providers to bridge the pockets in order to attract employers to the area.

## **Balancing resources through sound management of physical resources**

Local governments are monitored by the Local Government Commission to ensure that they are fiscally responsible and financially sound. Most are wrestling with the problem of crumbling infrastructure in a time of economic recession when tax collection is down. Grants for infrastructure projects are also getting more difficult to secure. The public is unwilling to pay additional for bonds to make the needed repairs. Public safety will become an issue at some point and the local government may be forced to make needed investments. This situation will be coming to a head in the coming years. This is a difficult balancing act for elected and appointed officials. The Albemarle Commission will continue to look for opportunities for EDA to fund needed infrastructure to support new jobs and retain existing jobs.

### **Albemarle Commission's Regional Broadband Summit**



Source: Albemarle Commission



- **Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CREDS**

By December 2022, it is estimated that the private sector will invest greater than \$15,500,000 in the region after the implementation of this CREDS.

- **Changes in the economic environment of the region**

With the implementation of this CREDS it is anticipated that:

- The region's tourism and ecotourism economy will continue to grow.
- The number of alternative energy facilities will increase.
- The area will continue to attract retirees resulting in an increased need for health care and related services.
- Manufacturing will remain stable or grow slightly.
- Entrepreneurs will be attracted to the area due to its natural beauty.
- The number of small business start-ups will increase dramatically.
- The existing clusters will grow and new clusters will be added.

**Methodology for cooperating and integrating the CREDS with the State's economic development priorities**

The sixteen North Carolina Councils of Government continue to collaborate to support the statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: NC Tomorrow Plan which was updated in 2016.



## Goals and Objectives



## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 1: Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

Objective #1: Identify the region's clusters of economic development that offer competitive advantages.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Continue to monitor the region for evidence of new/additional cluster development.
2. Partner with Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, and Committee of 100 in the region to identify emerging clusters

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
NWDB Executive Director Planner AAA Director	1. Attend regional and state meetings, workshops and conferences with an economic development focus to foster relationships and identify emerging clusters.	Ongoing
NWDB Executive Director Planner	2. Albemarle Commission will subscribe to listservs, publications, and memberships as appropriate.	Ongoing
Program Coordinator Business Services Rep Executive Director Planner	3. Scan regional publications and statistics for evidence of emerging regional clusters.	Ongoing
NWDB Executive Director Planner	4. Maintain close contact with Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, the Committee of 100, and other groups involved in economic development within the Region.	Ongoing

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 1:** Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

**Objective #2:** Develop a regional plan to leverage the region's competitive advantage.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Through a SWOT analysis identify the region's competitive advantage.
2. Gather and analyze copies of economic development plans from within the region.
3. Identify promising strategies that leverage the region's competitive advantage.
4. Incorporate those strategies into the CREDS if they are not already included.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District County Managers Balancing Nature & Commerce	1. Identify strengths to build on in the region.	<b>Jan 2019</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce	2. Develop strategies that leverage those advantages.	<b>March 2018</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce	3. Incorporate those strategies into the CEDS.	<b>July 2018</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce	4. Modify the CEDS as needed.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce	5. Write a Regional Plan to leverage resources.	<b>Dec 2018</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 1: Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

Objective #3: Conduct an analysis that identifies the existing and potential improved place brand for the region.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Research existing brands within the region.
2. Work with consultant to identify one or more brands that have potential to characterize the region.
3. Create a distinctive brand.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce	1. Research brands within the region.	<b>Jan 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	2. With the assistance of a consultant, identify one or more possible brands.	<b>April 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	3. Work with the Balancing Nature & Commerce Committee to select a brand.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	4. Work with a marketing or branding firm to create a visual representation of the brand in various formats.	<b>Jan 2019</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 1: Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

Objective #4: Develop a Regional Marketing Plan.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Utilize information gleaned from the objectives 1 and 2 above to develop a plan to market the region.
2. Research how other regions are marketing themselves.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	1. Research how other regions market themselves.	<b>Jan 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	2. Make a list of marketing ideas and estimated costs.	<b>Apr 2018</b>
Executive Director Economic Development District	3. Write a Regional Marketing Plan.	<b>Oct 2018</b>
Economic Development District	4. Work with the Albemarle Commission Board to determine the most cost-effective ideas	<b>Jan 2019</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 1:** Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

**Objective #5:** Foster tourism in the region.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Convene periodic meeting of region's tourism boards.
2. Assist counties with small tourism revenues to identify new opportunities.
3. Create a tourism development plan for counties which do not have one.
4. Develop a plan to market tourism in the region.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	1. Survey counties for existence of Tourism Plans, Tourism Marketing Plans, TDA's.	<b>Jan 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	2. Develop list of attendees for regional tourism meetings and conduct one or more meetings per year.	<b>March 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	3. Identify tourism assets in region.	<b>June 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	4. Contact counties that do not have a tourism development plan regarding the development of one.	<b>August 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	5. Develop plan to market tourism in the region.	<b>Dec 2018</b>
Balancing Nature & Commerce Economic Development District	6. Create one, two and three-day tours of the region	<b>March 2019</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 1: Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

Objective #6: Develop a plan to increase the number of businesses and entrepreneurs who create and market value-added agricultural products.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Host educational meetings for those interested.
2. Identify existing value-added agriculture producers in the region and tap their expertise.
3. Identify resources to support those interested.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
4-H Cooperative Extension	1. Identify existing value-added agricultural producers in the region.	<b>Feb 2018</b>
4-H Cooperative Extension	2. Create a manual of resources for value-added agricultural products.	<b>Sept 2018</b>
4-H Cooperative Extension	3. Host one or more meetings for those interested.	<b>Feb 2019</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 1:** Build on the region's competitive advantage and leverage the marketplace.

**Objective #7:** Develop ways to create an environment that fosters entrepreneurial development and growth.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Encourage high schools to offer hands on entrepreneurial education through a real-life experience and service learning opportunities.
2. Create a website of resources for entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs.
3. Encourage the growth of the NC REAL entrepreneurship program.
4. Sponsor a business plan competition.
5. Start a support listserv for entrepreneurs and would-be entrepreneurs in the region.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	1. Identify resources for entrepreneurs.	<b>Jun 2018</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	2. Hire a website developer to ensure proper positioning on the web.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	3. Populate the website.	<b>Dec 2018</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	4. Maintain website.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	5. Sponsor a business plan competition.	<b>March 2019</b>
Economic Development District Economic Developers NWDB	6. Run an entrepreneurial listserv.	<b>June 2019</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 2:** Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

**Objective #1:** Identify the region's infrastructure assets (transportation, workforce, water/sewer/gas, broadband, housing, education, healthcare, green space, access to capital and energy assets)

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Identify area's existing infrastructure assets by county.
2. Identify infrastructure needs to meet future demands.
3. Identify potential for regionalization of systems.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner	1. Research existing infrastructure assets.	<b>March 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner	2. Create a single document that contains known infrastructure assets by county.	<b>Oct 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner	3. Identify known gaps in infrastructure.	<b>Dec 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner	4. Identify potential for regionalization of assets.	<b>Jan 2019</b>
Economic Development District Planner	5. If project meets EDA parameters, assist entity in applying for EDA funding.	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 2: Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

Objective #2: Develop multi-modal transportation plans that address existing and future year capacity deficiencies.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Identify present and future needs to move people into, out of and within the region.
2. Identify present and future needs to move freight into, out of and within the region.
3. Identify existing resources.
4. Complete a gap analysis.
5. Draft a plan to meet future needs.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner NWDB Local Education Organizations	1. Conduct a survey that identifies the present and future needs within the Region.	<b>April 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner NWDB Local Education Organizations	2. Identify gaps.	<b>July 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner NWDB Local Education Organizations	3. Identify possible solutions to address the gaps along with needed resources.	<b>Nov 2018</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 2: Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

Objective #3: Identify whether water, sewer, broadband and natural gas infrastructure can support future growth.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Area's water, sewer and natural gas infrastructure assets and needs will be identified.
2. A gap analysis will be conducted.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner	1. Identify existing water, sewer, broadband, and natural gas infrastructure needs.	<b>Sept 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner	2. Create a single document that contains known water, sewer, broadband and natural gas infrastructure needs.	<b>May 2019</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 2:** Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

**Objective #4:** Develop plans for equitable and workforce housing choices.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Identify current and future needs for the equitable and workforce housing including housing for the low/moderate income workers, elderly and disabled (a growing segment of the population).
2. Identify preferred locations for transit-oriented development to occur throughout the region.
3. Identify land use, zoning and other barriers to the development of equitable and workforce housing including "mother-in-law suites."
4. Ensure that equitable and workforce housing includes addressing maintenance and energy costs.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner Community Development NC Housing Finance Agency AAA NWDB	1. Research population change trends over the next twenty years by counties in the region.	<b>June 2018</b>
Planner Community Development	2. Identify area where the largest increases will occur.	<b>Sept 2018</b>
Planner Community Development	3. For those areas, examine the age projections to determine the population mix as that may affect the type and placement of affordable housing.	<b>Dec 2018</b>
Economic Development District Community Development	4. Project the needs for the next twenty years.	<b>March 2019</b>
Economic Development District Planner	5. Communicate those needs to the concerned governments with a communication plan for housing needs.	<b>July 2019</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 2:** Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

**Objective #5:** Ensure adequate supply and mix of health care providers.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Understand existing health care supply.
2. Identify desired health care supply.
3. Identify the gaps in services and coverages.
4. Research creative ideas used by others to attract health care providers to region.
5. Identify alternative methods of supplying services needed.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Aging NWDB	1. Review existing data on health care providers.	<b>Jan 2019</b>
Aging County Health Departments NCDHS	2. Establish minimum service levels.	<b>June 2019</b>
Economic Development District Aging NWDB	3. Conduct a gap analysis.	<b>Sept 2019</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce	4. Conduct research on how to attract health care providers.	<b>Jan 2020</b>
Economic Development District Aging County Health Departments	5. Conduct research on alternatives to physician driven health care.	<b>July 2020</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 2: Establish and maintain a robust regional infrastructure.

Objective #6: Develop a plan for accelerating investments in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Educate local elected officials on value of healthy, safe, walkable neighborhoods.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner NCDOT Health Departments	1. Educate local elected officials regarding the need for healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods.	<b>Oct 2019</b>
Economic Development District Planner NCDOT Health Departments	2. Provide examples, ordinances and regulations that address healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods.	<b>March 2020</b>
Economic Development District Planner NCDOT Health Departments	3. Educate elected officials, developers and realtors as to the benefits of healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods.	<b>June 2020</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 3: Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities.

Objective #1: Promote environmentally sustainable development patterns.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Encourage local governments to adopt and promote smart growth principles.
2. Encourage local governments to enact ordinances that protect environmentally sensitive habitats.
3. Encourage local governments to enact ordinances that prevent contamination of water bodies and watersheds.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Balancing Nature & Commerce Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development District	1. Educate local elected officials regarding environmentally sustainable development.	<b>Jan 2018</b>
Economic Development District Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development District	2. Provide examples of environmentally sustainable developments.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development District	3. Facilitate meetings where environmentally sustainable development is the topic.	<b>Feb 2019</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 3: Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities

Objective #2: Identify resilience opportunities to strengthen the region

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Research examples of regional resilience.
2. Identify examples of resilience within the region.
3. Create list of resilience efforts in the region.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner Executive Director	1. Create a list of resilience examples of the region.	<b>March 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner Executive Director	2. Determine how best to use that information. (Create a resilience guide)	<b>October 2018</b>
Economic Development District Planner Executive Director	3. Identify special opportunities and trainings based on the resilience guide.	<b>March 2019</b>
Economic Development District Planner Executive Director	4. Publish Resilience Guide in partnership with stakeholders and partners	<b>March 2019</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 3: Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities

Objective #3: Ensure that underserved and distressed communities are engaged in the planning process.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Encourage local governments to plan for a resilient future.
2. Plan on a Regional Basis
3. Encourage local governments to find ways to engage the low-income and disenfranchised citizens in the planning process.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner	1. Educate local elected officials regarding the need to plan.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Planner	2. Provide examples of various types of plans.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Planner Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development District	3. Facilitate meetings where planning is the topic.	<b>Aug 2019</b>

Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 3: Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities

Objective #4: Develop a plan to promote the restoration and preservation of urban and town centers.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Identify municipalities with distinct town centers in Albemarle Commission’s region that have not yet been restored.
2. Encourage those towns to apply to the STEP Program if they have not yet been a program participant.
3. Encourage those towns to apply to be participants in the Main Street Program or Small Main Street Program if they are not currently participants.
4. Encourage those towns to be members of the NC Downtown Development Association.
5. Encourage the development of a municipal service tax district to help pay for improvements.
6. Every municipality with a town center that has not been revitalized should have a revitalization plan.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/Progress</b>
Economic Development District Planner	1. Assist towns to apply to the NC STEP Program.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Planner	2. Assist towns to apply for the NC Main Street Program and the Small-Town Main Street Program.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District	3. Albemarle Commission to be a member of the NCDDA and NCEDA.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District Planner	4. Assist towns to develop plans and strategies to redevelop their downtowns.	<b>Ongoing</b>

Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 3: Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities

Objective #5: Develop and promote a "buy local" campaign including the development of a local food network.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Establish an ad-hoc committee for the region to work on campaign.
2. Pick a theme.
3. Identify most powerful benefits.
4. Create promotional material.
5. Hold kick-off event with media coverage.
6. Measure success.
7. Multi-play the shop local campaign.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/Progress</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	1. Identify committee members.	<b>March 2018</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	2. Identify potential themes and then hold a contest to pick.	<b>Nov 2018</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	3. Poll retailers to determine how best to position the campaign building on assets.	<b>Nov 2018</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	4. Select company to design promotional material.	<b>March 2019</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	5. Hold kick-off event with media coverage.	<b>August 2019</b>
Economic Development District 4-H Cooperative Extension Balancing Nature & Commerce	6. Determine how best to measure success.	<b>October 2019</b>
Economic Development District Chambers of Commerce Balancing Nature & Commerce	7. Promote business-to-business buying, shared purchasing programs, etc.	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Action Plan

**Mission Statement:** To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

**Goal # 3:** Create revitalized, healthy, secure and resilient communities.

**Objective #6:** Identify resources and issues in the region related to the aging of the population.

**Strategies to Meet Objective:**

1. Create a GIS layer using Census data to determine where there are pockets of those 65+.
2. Determine existing resources.
3. Determine existing issues.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District AAA Economic Developers Planner	1. Get GIS information to identify where there are pockets of elderly.	<b>July 2018</b>
Economic Development District AAA	2. Identify existing resources.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District AAA	3. Determine existing issues.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District AAA	4. Determine what is needed.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District AAA	5. Identify gaps.	<b>Aug 2018</b>
Economic Development District AAA	6. Develop an action plan to address the gaps.	<b>Jan 2019</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 4: Develop a talented, healthy and innovative people.

Objective #1: Foster development, recruitment and retention of a skilled workforce.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Support efforts of the Northeastern Workforce Development Board.
2. Support the two community colleges located in Albemarle Commission's region.
3. Support the effort to retain service personnel exiting the military from the Coast Guard Stations.
4. Encourage the continued growth of the Work Ready Certification and Work Keys programs.
5. Encourage training in occupations in demand.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District NWDB Chambers of Commerce Employers Economic Developers	1. Participate in meetings, workshops and conferences where a skilled workforce is the topic.	<b>Ongoing</b>
Economic Development District NWDB	2. Participate on committees whose mission is to address creating a skilled workforce.	<b>Ongoing</b>

## Action Plan

Mission Statement: To improve member governments ability to enhance the quality of lives of their citizens

Goal # 4: Develop a talented, healthy and innovative people.

Objective #2: Identify and analyze all educational resources and conduct a gap analysis if needed.

Strategies to Meet Objective:

1. Identify all educational resources in the region.
2. Analyze these resources to determine if there are any gaps.
3. Produce a report.

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Deadline/ Progress</b>
Economic Development District NWDB	1. Research the region's educational resources.	<b>Jan 2018</b>
Economic Development District NWDB	2. Analyze these resources to determine if there are any gaps.	<b>May 2018</b>
Economic Development District NWDB	3. Create a report.	<b>Dec 2018</b>