
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES IN NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina has numerous resources that communities and businesses can access to facilitate firm creation, business expansion, job creation, and economic development in communities across the state. This document highlights some of the key partners that businesses and communities can tap to support these goals.

RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES, INTERNATIONAL TRADE OFFICE

NC Department of Agriculture's International Trade Office provides analysis, direct linkages, and support to facilitate agriculture based firms in their exporting goals. The International Trade Office has particular emphasis in assisting firms with international marketing, and partners closely with the U.S. Commercial Service and the U.S. Small Business Administration. To learn more, please go to <http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/international/index.htm>.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH CAROLINA (EDPNC)

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) provides resources to support existing NC companies in expanding and recruiting new businesses to the state through three primary forums:

- Through a network of eight [Regional Industry Managers](#) located in Prosperity Zones across the state, the EDPNC identifies industry needs and facilitates connections between the firm and the applicable entity with the resources available to meet their growth and expansion plans.
- Through the [Business Link North Carolina \(BLNC\) division](#), the EDPNC provides consulting services to small businesses around the state to reduce the burden to formation and expansion of a company by clarifying North Carolina business requirements related to permitting, licensing, and taxes.
- Additionally, the [EDPNC's International Trade Division](#), through their network of offices in North Carolina, Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, and Europe, offers firms assistance in identifying new distributors or agents and market research on international markets to meet their exporting goals.

To learn more, please go to <http://www.thrivenc.com/businessservices/overview>.

U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE

The U.S. Commercial Service provides customized trade counseling to help firms make their initial export sale or expand into further international markets. To do this, the U.S. Commercial Service provides assistance with the entire lifecycle of the exporting process, from offering detailed market intelligence and support in identifying export licensing needs and the best markets for a firm's products, to documentation and product requirements once a firm starts exporting, to support from the Advocacy Center if a company is adversely affected by a trade barrier or market access issue. The U.S. Commercial Service has three offices in North Carolina, located in Raleigh, Charlotte, and Greensboro. To learn more, please go to: <http://www.export.gov/northcarolina/>.

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

SBA provides a critical role in providing the 3C's to businesses – capital, counseling, and contracts. SBA offers 7(a), 504 and specialized loan programs that are made through partnering lenders. The SBA partners with the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), SCORE, and two SBA Women's Business Centers to provide technical assistance to businesses in how to start, expand, and strengthen their companies. The SBA is responsible for managing the Federal government contracting certification process, which enables small businesses to compete and win contracts from the U.S. Government. SBA staff are available to meet and provide assistance to firms through one of four offices across the state, including Charlotte, Asheville, Raleigh, and Wilmington. For more information, please go to: www.sba.gov/nc.

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBTDC)

The SBTDC supports small businesses in North Carolina by providing technical assistance and business development resources. While many firms know that SBTDC can support with business plan development, the SBTDC also has an

experienced International Business Development (IBD) team that supports small businesses with export planning and exporting. SBTDc works collaboratively with SBA and the U.S. Commercial Service to provide tailored assistance to help small businesses across the state grow and expand. To learn more, please go to www.sbtcd.org or www.sbtcd.org.org/export.

RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION

The Golden Leaf Foundation provides resources to help local government entities and 501(c)(3) non-profit entities to implement projects that will bring significant economic improvement to the tobacco-dependent, economically distressed and/or rural communities of North Carolina. The Golden Leaf Foundation has two primary grant programs: the Open Grants Program and the Economic Catalyst Grant Program.

- Through the Open Grants Program, the Golden Leaf Foundation accepts letters of inquiries on a rolling basis throughout the year. Through this program, the Golden Leaf Foundation aims to support projects that advance initiatives in at least one of the defined priority areas, which currently are: agriculture, job creation and retention, and workforce preparedness. Projects that will support other priorities that will help and develop the economic strength in tobacco-dependent, economically distressed and/or rural communities may also be submitted.
- Through the Economic Catalyst Grants Program, the Golden Leaf Foundation provides grant resources for projects that are directly tied to full-time job creation to support range of activities, including assistance with delivery of training programs, assistance to governmental units to help cover needed public infrastructure improvements (such as water and sewer), renovation or improvement of an industrial facility, and purchase of equipment.

The Golden Leaf Foundation strongly encourages applicants to contact them prior to submitting a letter of inquiry or a full application. To learn more, please go to: <http://www.goldenleaf.org/seekers.html>.

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The NC Department of Commerce's Rural Development Division offers several grant programs to support economic development in rural communities across the state, including:

- The Economic Infrastructure Program provides grants to local governments to assist with public infrastructure projects that will lead to the creation of new, full-time jobs. Grant awards under this program may be up to \$500,000 depending upon the location of project, alignment of company with state priority industries, and amount of wages and benefits being provided to workers in the new jobs. Applications are accepted and reviewed every other month in accordance with the schedule available online at: <http://www.nccommerce.com/ruraldevelopment/rural-grants-programs/economic-infrastructure>. For more information, please contact Melody Adams at 919-814-4661 or melody.adams@nccommerce.com
- The Building Reuse Program provides grants to local governments to support three priority areas: (1) renovation of vacant buildings; (2) renovation or expansion of buildings occupied by a company wishing to expand in their current location that has been operating in the state of North Carolina for at least twelve (12) months, and (3) renovation, expansion, or construction of health care entities that will lead to the creation of new, full-time jobs. Applicants must be from a Tier 1 or Tier 2 county, or a rural census tract in a Tier 3 county. The program requires a 50% cash match which may not be derived from other State or Federal grant funds. For more information, please contact Hazel Edmond at hazel.edmond@nccommerce.com or 919.814-4659.
- The Rural Building Demolition Program provides grants to local governments to support demolition of a vacant building to encourage site rehabilitation and site availability for economic development purposes. Applicants must be from a Tier 1 or Tier 2 county, or a rural census tract in a Tier 3 county. Applicants must contribute at least 25% of the total project cost as match, which may not be derived from other State or Federal grant funds. Applications are accepted and reviewed in accordance with the schedule available online at: <http://www.nccommerce.com/ruraldevelopment/rural-grants-programs/economic-infrastructure>. For more information, please contact Melody Adams at 919-814-4661 or melody.adams@nccommerce.com
- The Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development provides grants to local governments to support construction or improvements to public infrastructure and building renovation services where the local

government is partnering with a for-profit business who is committing to create jobs. For more information, please contact George Sherrill at gsherrill@nccommerce.com of 919-814-4657.

- The Industrial Development Fund/Utility Fund (IDF) provides grants to units of local governments for public infrastructure in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties to assist in job creation. For more information, please contact Mark Poole at mpoole@nccommerce.com or 919-814-4616.
- The Commerce Fellows Program provides resources to support high-quality professional development and training with goal of providing opportunities and expanding capacity of local governments to serve low and moderate income individuals. Applications are accepted in accordance with deadline and requirements outlined on the NC DOC Rural Development website, available at: <http://www.nccommerce.com/rd/>.
- The Appalachian Regional Commission is a Federal-State partnership to provide grant resources and technical expertise in the westernmost 29 counties in North Carolina counties. For more information, please contact Olivia Collier at ocollier@nccommerce.com.
- The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center serves as a clearinghouse of resources and best practices, and provides customized technical assistance to support economic development in communities across the state. The Center administers grant resources through the Main Street Solution Fund that can help small businesses in designated micropolitan areas in Tier 2 and Tier 3 counties. A CDBG Downtown Redevelopment Fund assists local governments renovate blighted buildings to bring them up to code. For more information about these resources, please go to: <http://www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street> or call Liz Parham at 919-814-4658 or email lparham@nccommerce.com

NORTH CAROLINA RURAL CENTER

The NC Rural Center provides a wealth of technical assistance to support capacity building and economic development in North Carolina's rural counties. The NC Rural Center maintains a database of key indicators of economic and social variables that have been linked with economic development. The NC Rural Center offers a number of trainings and rural policy meetings throughout the year, the most notable being the Rural Economic Development Institute that serves as an intensive course of study designed to help rural leaders have tools and information needed to better understand and respond to changes in their communities, and the NC Rural Annual Fall Conference which facilitates gathering of key policy experts and local leaders to develop and discuss strategies to promote vibrant rural communities across the state. To learn more, please go to: www.ncruralcenter.org.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

EDA provides competitive grant resources to help spur economic development in distressed communities. EDA's programs are open to States, local governments, institutions of higher education, regional development organizations, Indian Tribes, and non-profits working in collaboration with a political subdivision of a State. EDA provides communities resources as detailed below:

- EDA's Public Works (PW) and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) programs provide grants to support the construction or renovation of public assets to support job creation and private investment.
- EDA's Technical Assistance (TA) program provides grant resources to help inform development decision-making, such as through feasibility studies and regional cluster analysis.
- EDA provides free data tools to assist communities in accessing and understanding local and regional data as they consider economic development initiatives. To access these data tools, please go to: <http://statsamerica.org/>.
- EDA provides strategic inter-agency grant opportunities in collaboration with other Federal partners to meet key national priorities, such as the recent Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic revitalization Initiative (POWER) which addresses negative impacts resulting from changes in coal industry.

EDA grants require matching share, generally at 50% grant rate. EDA also partners with a network of Economic Development Districts (EDDs) across NC to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs) that form the foundation for how projects are considered. Proposals and Applications for EDA's Pw, EAA, and TA grants program can be submitted throughout the year, while inter-agency grant opportunities frequently have defined grant deadlines as outlined in the applicable funding notification. EDA strongly encourages all potential applicants to contact the applicable state representative prior to submitting a Proposal or Application. To learn more, please contact the North Carolina Economic Development Representative at hsherman@eda.gov or 404.730.3013.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT

USDA Rural Development provides financial programs through loans and a small amount of grants to support the development and improvement of essential public facilities and services such as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA Rural Development has a number of programs, of which some of the most notable are highlighted below:

- Housing Programs – USDA Rural Development offers a number of programs to help low to moderate income applicants secure and maintain safe, well-built housing. Depending on the specific program the financial assistance is offered either as a direct loan, a loan guarantee, or a grant. These programs are available for rural areas with populations of up to 35,000 and are made directly to families or individuals.
- Community Facilities Program – Through this program, USDA Rural Development offers public bodies, non-profits, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes resources to improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities. The financial assistance is offered either as a direct loan, a loan guarantee, or a grant. These programs are available for cities, towns or unincorporated areas of not more than 20,000 in population and where the community facility being improved will primarily benefit and serve rural residents.
- Rural Business Development Grant – This grant program provides resources to help public bodies, government entities, non-profit organizations, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes in assisting with the startup or expansion of a small and emerging private business and/or non-profit in rural communities. This grant program is available to rural areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.
- Intermediary Relending Program Loan – This loan program provides resources for public bodies, non-profits, Native American Tribes, and cooperatives to establish revolving funds for business facilities and community development projects. This program is available to rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 50,000.
- Rural Economic Development Program – This direct loan or grant program provides resources to finance economic development and job creation in rural areas. Rural utility service entities are eligible to receive assistance through this program, where priority is given to areas of populations less than 2,500.
- Value-Added Producer Grants – This program provides grant resources to help independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures to enter into activities that add value to their crops.
- Water and Wastewater Programs – USDA Rural Development administers several programs that provide loans and grants to support the construction, repair, or improvement of water systems and waste collection and treatment systems. These programs are available for rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 in population.
- Community Connect Grants – USDA Rural Development provides resources to public bodies, Tribes, cooperatives, non-profits, limited dividend or mutual associations, corporations and other legally organized entities to provide public access to broadband in otherwise unserved communities. This program is administered through grants and is available to communities outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with a population over 20,000 which does not have broadband.

USDA Rural Development administers these programs through six area offices and fourteen field offices across North Carolina. To learn more about USDA's Rural Development Programs and to access contact information for the applicable office for your community, please go to <http://www.rd.usda.gov/nc>.