
1 Vigorously Advocate for Innovation in Education and Workforce Development

Support expansion of rural educational and training innovation.

Reclaim rural work resiliency.

Support rural schools and teachers.

Enhance choice through career pathways.

Advocate for increased effectiveness of rural education and workforce institutions.

Encourage exploration of new models to make community college accessible and affordable.

Encourage institutional collaboration.

2 Stabilize and Transform Rural Health

Facilitate the rural transition to accountable care communities.

Strengthen local, state and federal efforts to reduce opioid and methamphetamine drug addiction.

Stabilize rural health care revenue.

Support the establishment of the N.C. Rural Health Leadership Alliance as the new state chapter of the National Rural Health Association.

3 Expand Accessible, Affordable High-Speed Fiber Broadband

Raise the speed standard for federal investments in rural broadband.

Leverage federal investments to expand rural high-speed broadband.

Continue to prioritize the connection of anchor institutions to high-speed broadband, particularly our public libraries.

4 Accelerate Modernization of Essential Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Clearly define the state's role in funding rural water infrastructure.

Make the water infrastructure allocation from the Connect NC Bond count.

Create regional economies of scale that will benefit everyone.

Plan for the future.

Promote and expand best practices.

Leverage federal and state resources to create greater impacts.

5 Expand and Upgrade Transportation and Natural Gas Infrastructure

Build a world-class highway system.

Strengthen freight-rail infrastructure and multi-modal hubs.

Expand natural gas infrastructure to maximize competitive advantage.

6 Invest in Stronger Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Systems

Better integrate entrepreneurship training as a core element of workforce training.

Advocate for increased state and federal small business and entrepreneurship development assistance.

Adopt a statewide small business development framework based on economic clusters, supply and value chains.

Assess and inventory best practices to support and grow small business through local and regional economic and community development organizations.

Examine strategic opportunities for focusing rural entrepreneurship efforts.

Improve the regulatory/business environment.

Fill gaps with capital access markets to meet the needs of rural business owners and entrepreneurs.

7 Strengthen Homegrown Manufacturing

Highlight the importance of homegrown manufacturing.

Advance innovation in rural manufacturing.

Building a stronger rural manufacturing workforce.

8 Develop Opportunities for Agriculture and Natural Resources, including Biotechnology and Value-Added Food Processing

Help farmers get more income for what they grow and raise.

Support food manufacturing business opportunities.

Increase biotechnology opportunities for rural businesses.

Increase the entry of youth and young adults into farming and other natural-resource businesses.

9 Enhance Regional Collaboration and Partnerships

Advocate for federal and state program support of collaborative regional development efforts.

Support research on rural/urban economic connections.

Convene regional rural/urban roundtables.

Provide region-focused leadership development.

Advocate for focused collaboration and partnership strategies in North Carolina's chronically distressed rural regions.

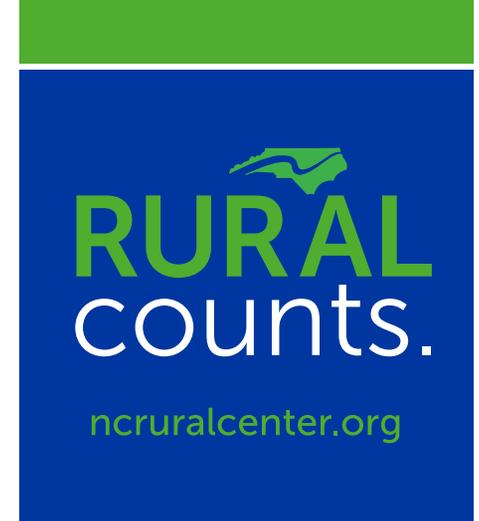
10 Stabilize and Leverage Rural Development Funding, Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Target solutions for rural North Carolina's most economically distressed regions.

Accelerate rural community philanthropy to supplement rural development priorities.

Assure adequate, reliable and transparent funding of rural development programs.

Increase region-based technical assistance to build capacity.



10 Strategies for Rural North Carolina's Future

Rural North Carolina has a bright future. To secure it, the N.C. Rural Center puts forward 10 strategies that must guide our action today and be the measure of our success going forward. We must make measurable and sustainable advancement in all 10 strategic areas to fully realize economic potential for our rural communities and citizens.

We seek a collaborative and leveraged effort that focuses the resources of federal, state and local government; that seeks the engagement of the philanthropic, private business, nonprofit and faith-based sectors; and that engages rural citizens in the realization of rural prosperity for the 21st century.

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