



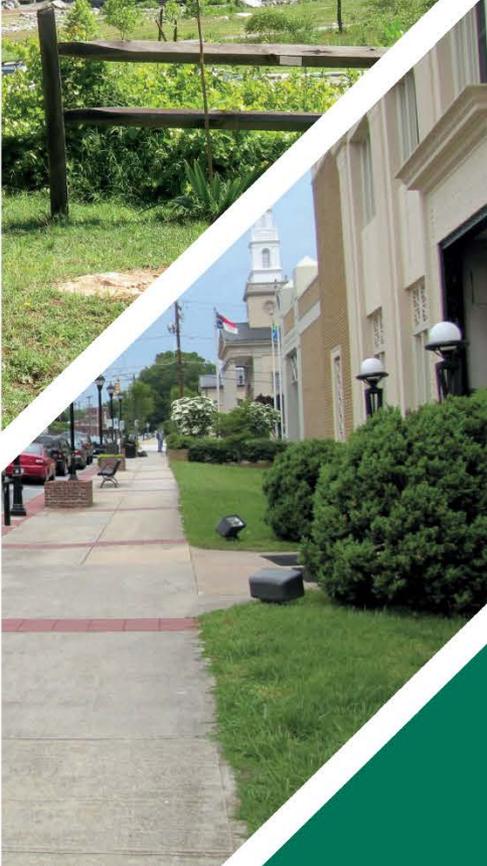
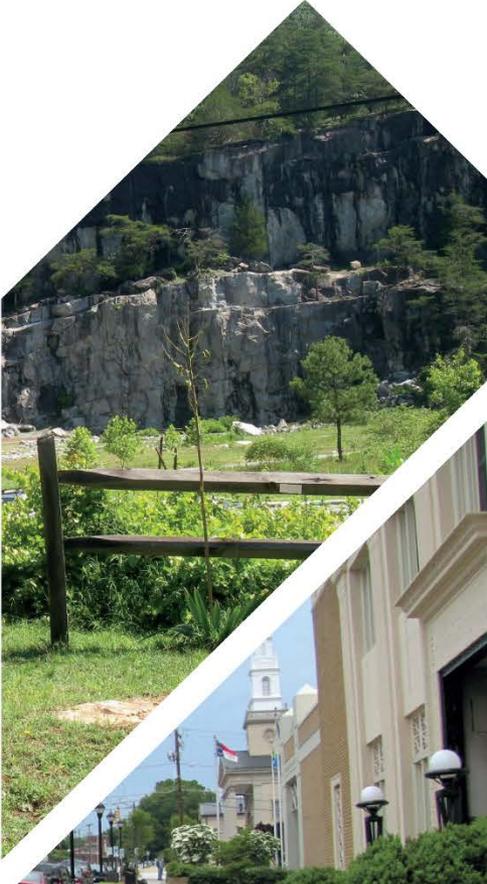
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

September 26th, 2017

Policy Board Meeting

WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

SEPTEMBER 2017



CEDS Update

- The WPCOG serves as the region's U.S. Economic Development Administration's designated Economic Development District (EDD)
- As the EDD, we are required to create and maintain a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) with updates every 5 years
- The CEDS provides a regional framework to identify economic opportunities, challenges and goals
- The current CEDS was approved in 2012 and an update must be completed in 2017

CEDS Update

- The WPCOG is but one of the organizations that implement the CEDS and many local governments, agencies and the business sector contribute to our region's success
- The Policy Board appointed the 15-member CEDS Committee in November
- The Policy Board appointed a diverse group of people to CEDS Committee (geography, age, employment background, race, ethnicity, gender)

CEDS Committee

- 75% of the committee was under age 50
- 50% of the committee was under age 40
- 53% female, 47% male
- All four counties represented

CEDS Committee

- **Chair Tommy Luckadoo**, Vice President, Adams Commercial Real Estate Services, LLC
- **Vice Chair Nancy Taylor**, Executive Director, The Community Foundation of Burke County
- **Christopher Todd**, Town of Sawmills Administrator
- **Crissy Thomas**, Branch Manager, Wells Fargo
- **Elle Fulenwider Engstrom**, Marketing Coordinator, Fulenwider Enterprises
- **Gary Herman**, Alexander EDC Small Business Coordinator
- **Jeremy Ku**, Senior Supply Chain Consultant, Transportation Insight
- **Lindsay Keisler**, President, Catawba County Chamber of Commerce
- **Lisa Miller**, Director of Grant Development & Administration, Western Piedmont Community College
- **Malla Vue**, District Manager, Goodwill Industries
- **Rocky Brooks**, Community Development, Caldwell-UNC Health Care
- **Sara Black**, Broker, RE/MAX Southern Lifestyles
- **Stacey Rash**, Tax Manager, Martin Starnes and Associates
- **Trish Johnson**, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Caldwell County Schools
- **Zack King**, Community Health Analyst, Catawba County Public Health

CEDS Importance

- Why is the CEDS important?
 - We live in an era of economic transition
 - Our economy functions on a regional basis
 - Most of the public and businesses aren't concerned with political boundaries
 - Improvements benefit the entire region
 - Some improvements require a regional approach

CEDS: Public & Stakeholder Input

The Committee used extensive public input to shape the direction of the CEDS

CEDS by the Numbers



15
Committee Members



31
1-on-1 Stakeholder Interviews



7
Committee Meetings



3
Group Stakeholder Interviews



32
Survey Questions



6
CEDS Subject Categories



1,000
Survey Respondents

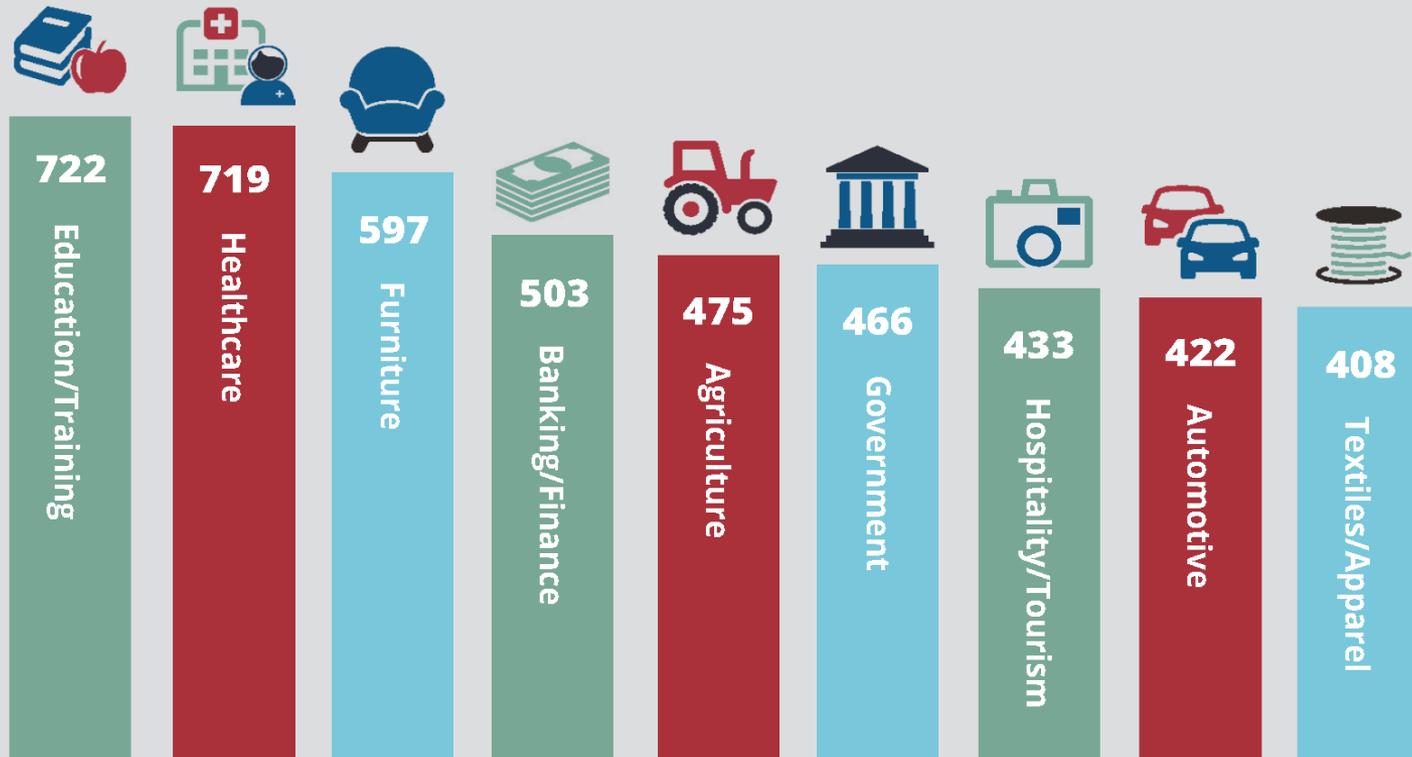


25
CEDS Strategies

CEDS: Public & Stakeholder Input

CEDS Public Survey Responses

What economic opportunities exist or are developing in your county?
(963 Responses)



CEDS: Public & Stakeholder Input

Does your local government encourage small businesses to locate and grow in your community?
(971 Responses)

533 (55.1%)
Yes

271 (28.0%)
I Don't Know

163 (16.9%)
No

CEDS: Regional Profile

- The CEDS Committee began its work with understanding the region and the economic trends
- Current projections show little population growth over the next 20 years
- However, projections assume current trends & don't adjust for positive change

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Population Growth (2010-2035)

County	Census 2010	2015 Estimate	Growth 2000-10	% Growth 2000-10	2025	2035	Growth 2015-35	% Growth 2015-35
Alexander	37,198	37,952	754	2.0%	38,745	39,189	1,237	3.3%
Burke	90,912	89,114	-1,798	-2.0%	90,002	90,179	1,065	1.2%
Caldwell	83,029	82,577	-452	-0.5%	83,411	83,666	1,089	1.3%
Catawba	154,358	155,828	1,470	1.0%	158,588	161,349	5,521	3.5%
Region Total	365,497	365,471	-26	< -0.1%	370,746	374,383	8,912	2.4%

Source: 2010 Census, US Census Bureau and NC Office of Management and Budget, 2016.

CEDS: Regional Profile

- Manufacturing decreases
- 40,213 jobs lost
- Increases in service employment

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Employment Distribution

		2000	2015
Services		43%	48%
Manufacturing		34%	28%
Trade		14%	16%
Administration		5%	5%
Construction		3%	2%
Other		1%	1%

Number of Employed Persons

2000
185,093

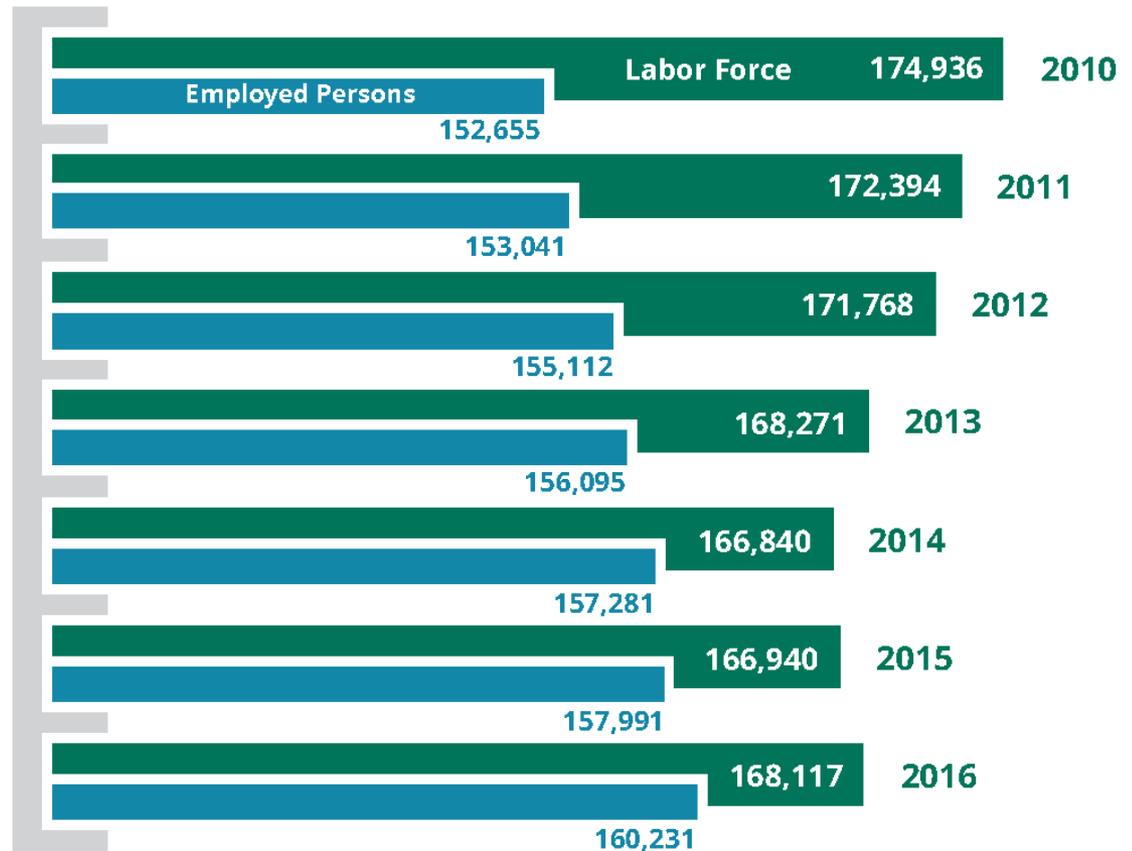
2015
144,880

Source: Labor and Economic Analysis Division, NC Dept. of Commerce.

CEDS: Regional Profile

- Unemployment rate has dropped
- Modest job growth
- Reductions in number of people in the labor force

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Labor Force and Number of Employed Persons (April 2010 - April 2016)

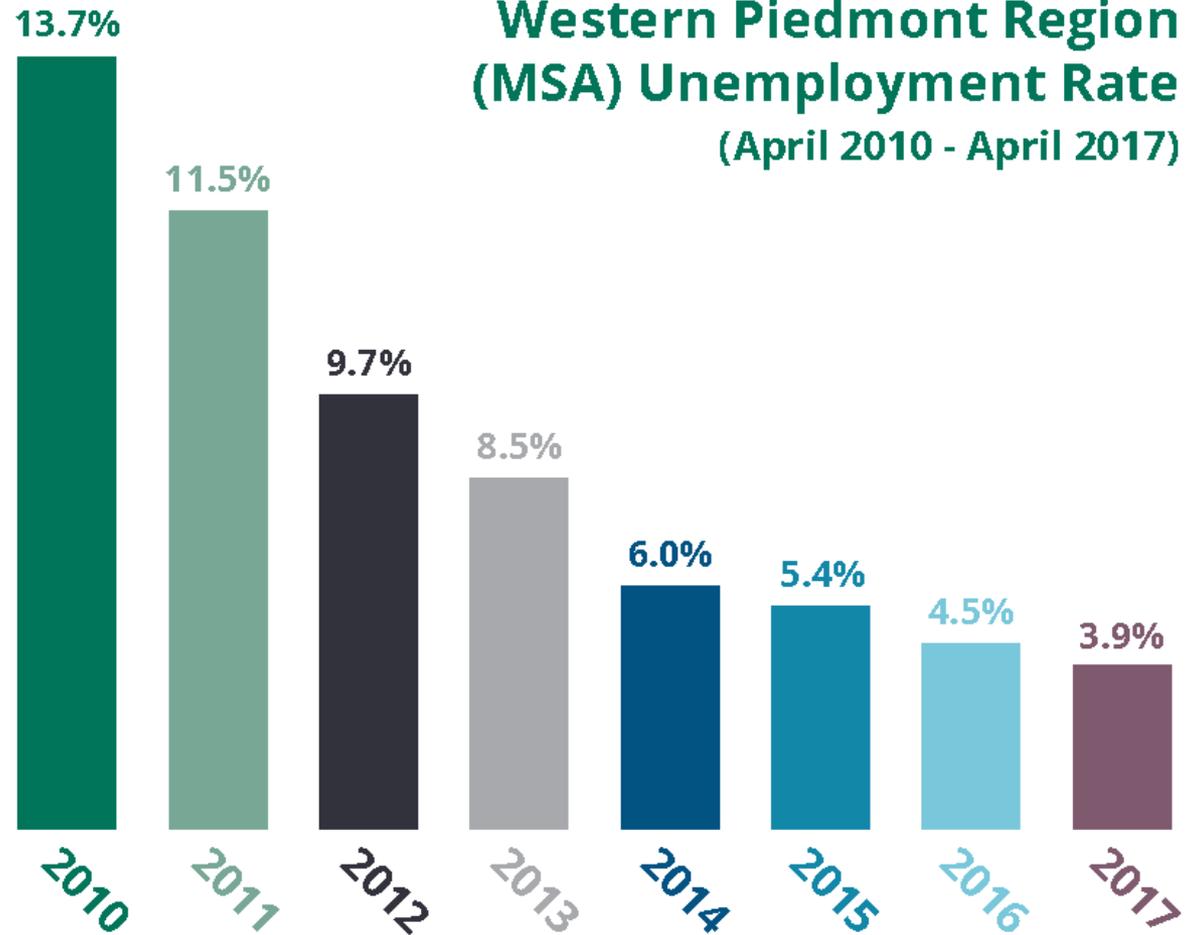


Source: Labor and Economic Analysis Division, NC Dept. of Commerce.

CEDS: Regional Profile

- Unemployment rate has dropped
- Modest job growth
- Reductions in number of people in the labor force

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Unemployment Rate (April 2010 - April 2017)



Source: Labor and Economic Analysis Division, NC Dept. of Commerce.

CEDS: Six Subject Areas

- Economic Development
- Workforce
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Marketing
- Community Life



Conover, NC



PEDS - Hildebran, NC

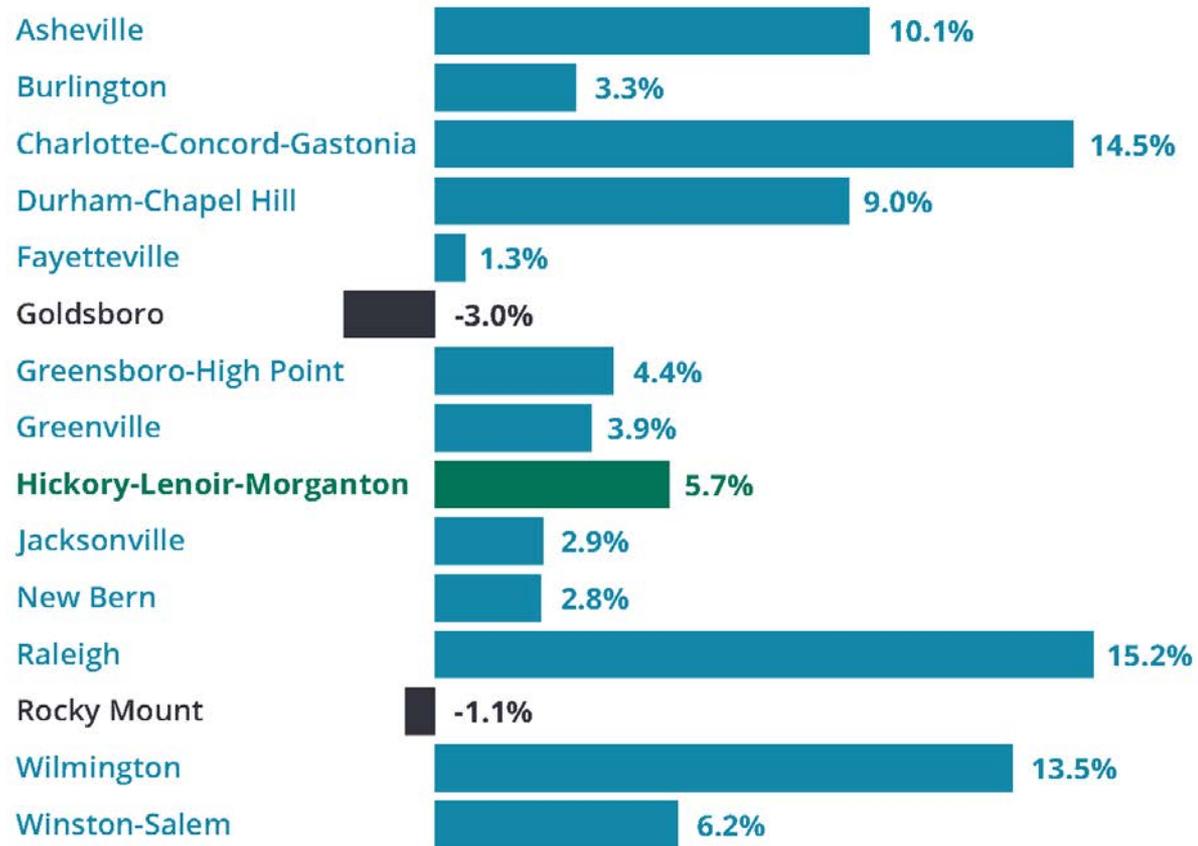


Hickory, NC

CEDS: Economic Development

- Modest improvement over 4 years
- Job creation & tax base growth are two of the core purposes for action

NCMSA Percentage Employment Change (2012-2016)

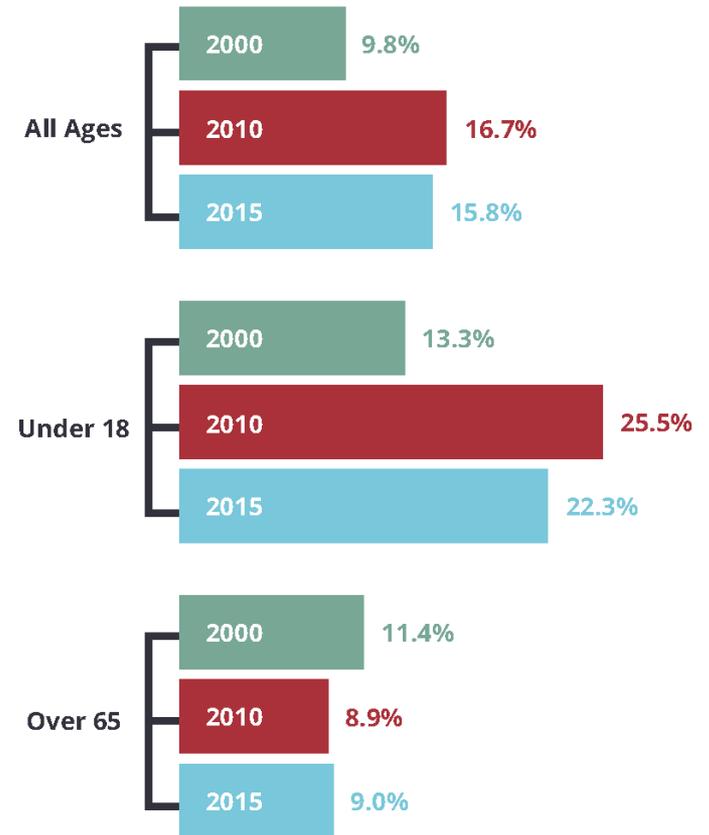


Source: Labor and Economic Analysis Division, NC Department of Commerce.

CEDS: Economic Development

- Modest improvement over 4 years
- Job creation & tax base growth are two of the core purposes for action
- Job growth reduces our poverty rates

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Poverty Rates
2000-2015



Source: 2000 Census and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, US Census Bureau.

CEDS: Economic Development

- Construct additional “shell buildings” and “pad-ready sites” throughout the region
 - Market conditions require local government action for success
 - 50-100,000 sqft buildings
 - Strive for 1 building ready, 1 under construction, 1 in planning stage at all times



CEDS: Economic Development



CEDS: Economic Development

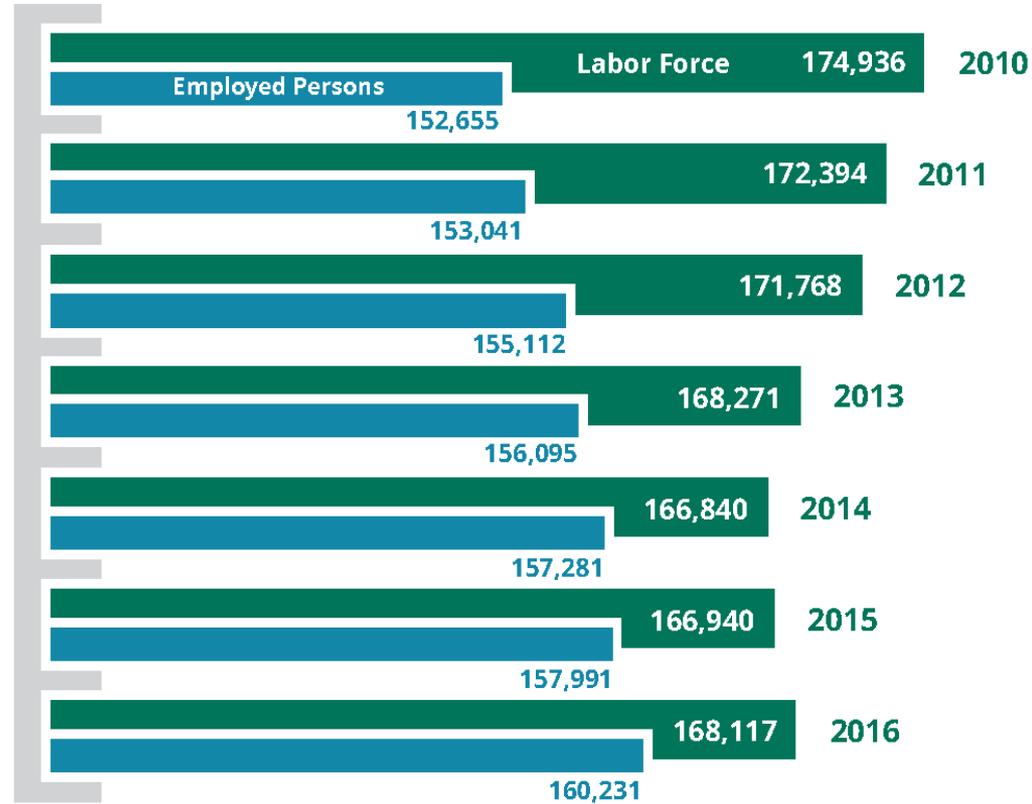
- Enhance capacity for project and grant development
- Maximize building reuse and site development opportunities
- Promote & support the Manufacturing Solutions Center, Morganton Campus of NC School of Science and Math, Center for Engineering Technologies, and other critical assets



CEDS: Workforce

- Labor force has decreased like much of the U.S.
- Good improvement for our region
- Real and perceived issues remain

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Labor Force and Number of Employed Persons (April 2010 - April 2016)



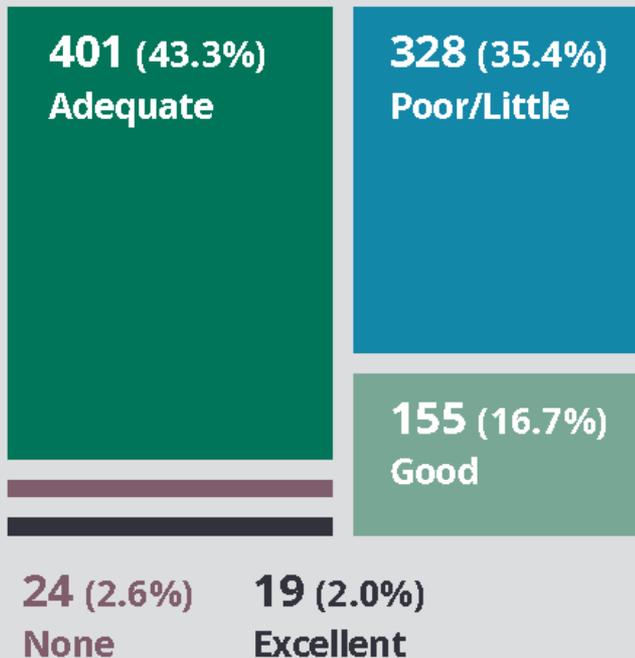
Source: Labor and Economic Analysis Division, NC Dept. of Commerce.

CEDS: Workforce

CEDS Public Survey Responses

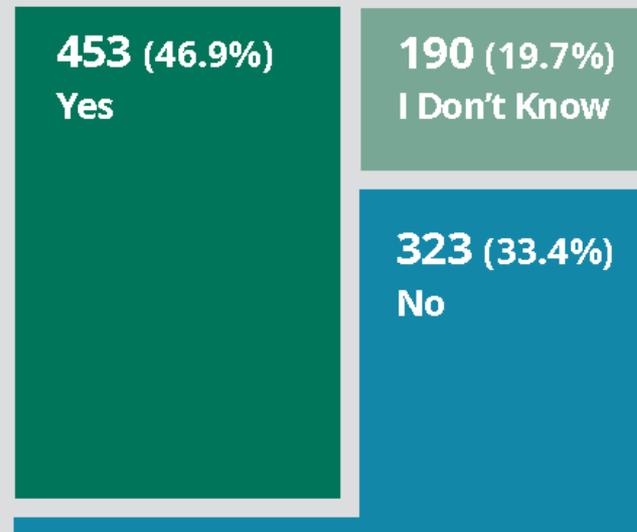
How well does your community work to maintain a skilled workforce?

(927 Responses)



Do you believe there are gaps in educational resources?

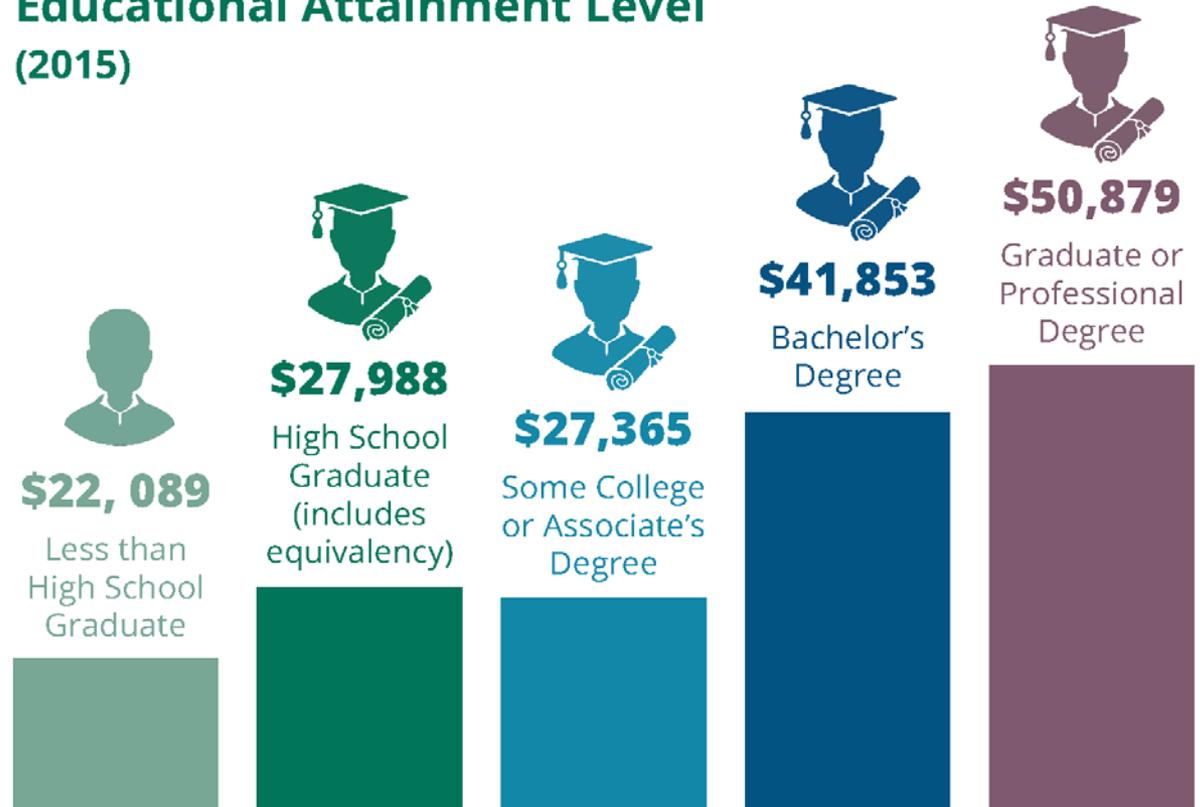
(966 Responses)



CEDS: Workforce

- Educational attainment levels still matter
- Lots of unfilled jobs
- Stagnant wage rates

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Median Earnings for Population Over 25 by Educational Attainment Level (2015)



Source: 2015 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

CEDS: Workforce

- Align career pathways with education and training opportunities to meet industry needs
- Ensure sharing of competitive wage information and its impact on job recruitment and retention in the region
- Maintain consistent, coordinated, long-term marketing of workforce activities across the region
- Update the Industry Growth Analysis and shape it as a tool for business recruitment efforts

CEDS: Infrastructure

- Econ. Dev. is greatly influenced by infrastructure
- Good availability and condition of our infrastructure is a critical component to job & business recruitment and retention

Widening of US 321 through Caldwell County to improve traffic flow



CEDS: Infrastructure

Regional Projects Completed, Jobs & Investments (2016)



\$10 Million
Grant
Amount



30
Projects
Completed



\$74.4 Million
Private
Investment



296
Jobs
Created

Source: WPCOG 2016 Annual Report.

CEDS: Infrastructure

- Encourage, plan, and construct transit-oriented development
 - Potential businesses now ask for this when evaluating sites and communities for location
- Develop and expand the bicycle and pedestrian network in the region
- Expand fixed route public transportation to the municipalities in all four counties
 - Many of the national companies don't think about the historical stigma of public transportation



CEDS: Infrastructure

- Develop transportation projects that rank well in NCDOT's prioritization system to promote/maximize economic development
- Improve broadband access to rural areas and improve broadband speed
- Encourage and assist local governments to develop and maintain asset management and capital improvement plans
- Explore opportunities for coordination and consolidation of utility systems



CEDS: Housing

- A healthy housing market is necessary to attract new residents and businesses
- Important for retaining residents and businesses



The number of vacant housing units in the Western Piedmont has more than doubled since 2000.

Source: American Community Survey (ACS), US Census Bureau.

CEDS: Housing

22,188
Total Vacant Housing Units
(2015 ACS)

-  For Rent
-  Rented, Not Occupied
-  For Sale Only
-  Sold, Not Occupied
-  For Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use
-  Other Vacant



Western Piedmont Age of Housing Stock (2015) ACS



Age Group	Percentage	NC MSA RANK
Built before 1980	49.4%	1
Built between 1980 & 1999	35.5%	6
Built 2000 or later	15.1%	15

The Western Piedmont/Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA consists of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties. Among the 15 North Carolina MSA's, the Hickory MSA/Western Piedmont has the highest percentage of homes built before 1980 and the lowest percentage built after 2000. Rankings above out of 15 MSA's.

Year	Units	% of Units
2010 - 2015	2,391	1.4%
2000 - 2009	22,158	13.7%
1990 - 1999	31,553	19.4%
1980 - 1989	26,192	16.1%
1970 - 1979	29,187	18.0%
1960 - 1969	20,549	12.7%
1950 - 1959	13,515	8.3%
1940 - 1949	7,395	4.6%
1939 - Earlier	9,345	5.8%

CEDS: Housing

- Reduce the number of vacant and substandard homes throughout the region
- Increase the amount of new-market rate housing especially within and near downtowns
- Increase the availability of affordable homes within the region

CEDS Public Survey Responses

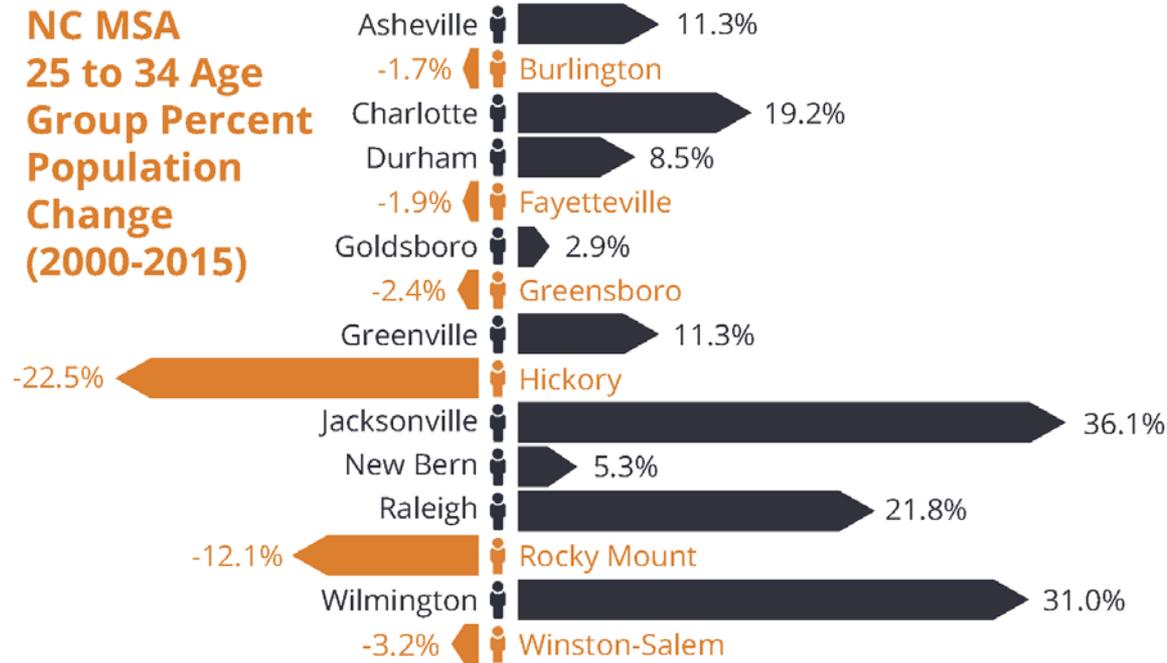
How well does your community support affordable housing choices?

(933 Responses)



CEDS: Marketing

- A healthy economy relies on the growth of working age segments of the population
- Focus on appeal to the 18-45 year old people

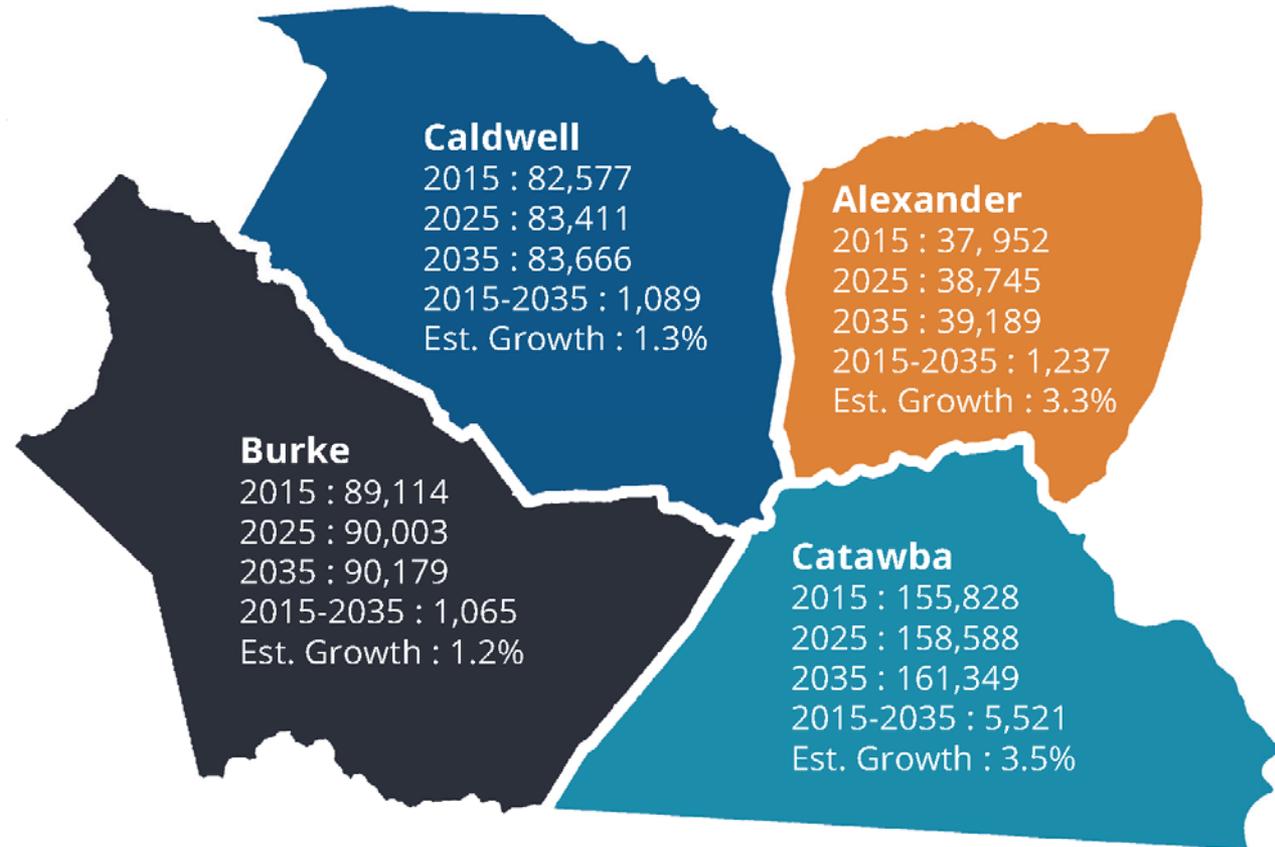


Source: NC Office of Budget and Management.

CEDS: Marketing

- Population projections extend **CURRENT** trends

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Population Projections (2015-2035)



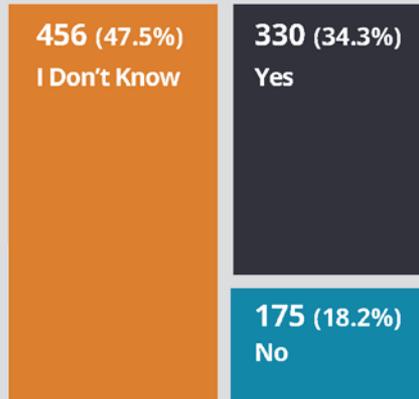
CEDS: Marketing

- Convene a regional marketing task force
- Develop a regional approach to marketing
- Identify and promote regional attractions, events and natural resources

CEDS Public Survey Responses

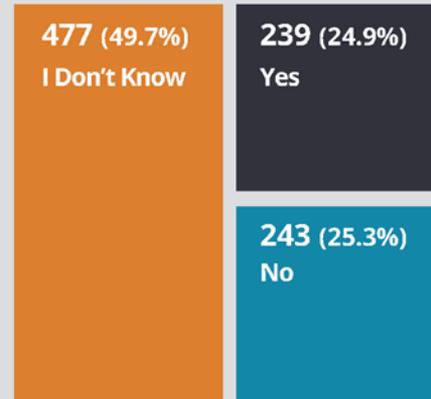
Does your county currently market its assets?

(961 Responses)



Does the community you live in have a specific brand it uses for promotion of the area?

(959 Responses)



CEDS: Community Life

- A growing, healthy economic should encompass opportunities for public participation in the decision-making process
- Maximizing those pathways for economic success for all members of our workforce
- Downtown revitalization is now as important than ever before
- Accommodating our younger and senior residents is a key element

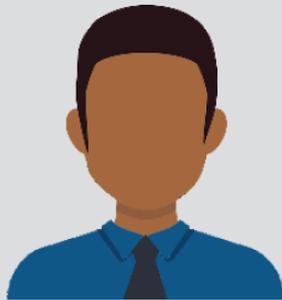
CEDS: Community Life

We are a more diverse region now than ever in our history

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Population by Race/Ethnic Group, 2015



White
316,863
87.4%



African-American
25,728
7.1%



Hispanic
25,393
7.0%



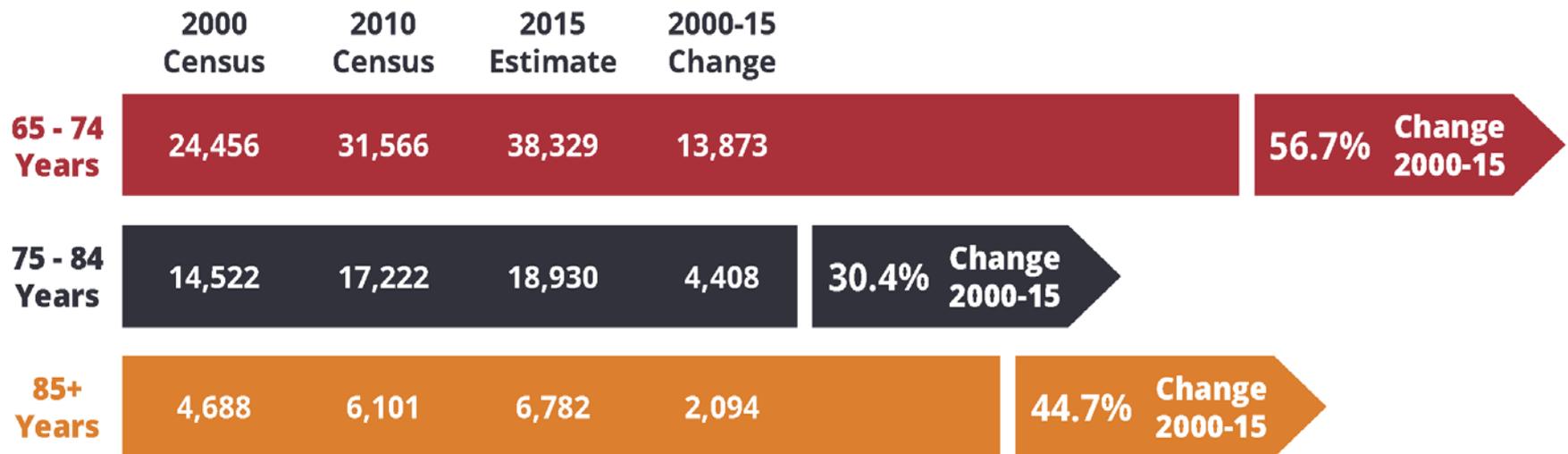
Asian
11,732
3.2%

Source: 2015 Census Population Estimates, US Census Bureau.

CEDS: Community Life

- Without change, we are becoming a much older region
- That impacts our economy & local govt. services

Western Piedmont Region (MSA) Population by Age Group, 2000 - 2015



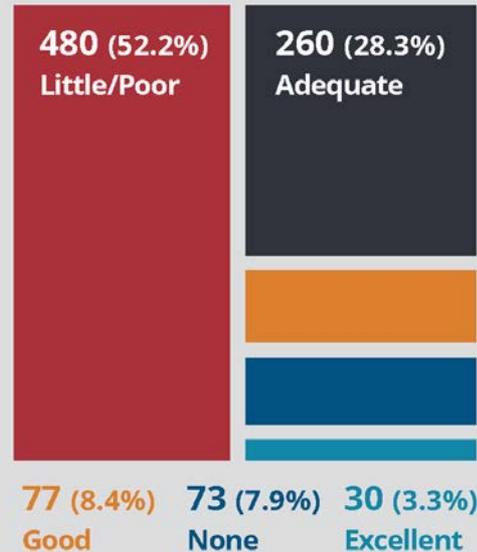
Source: 2000 and 2010 Census, US Census Bureau and NC Office of State Planning.

CEDS: Community Life

CEDS Public Survey Responses

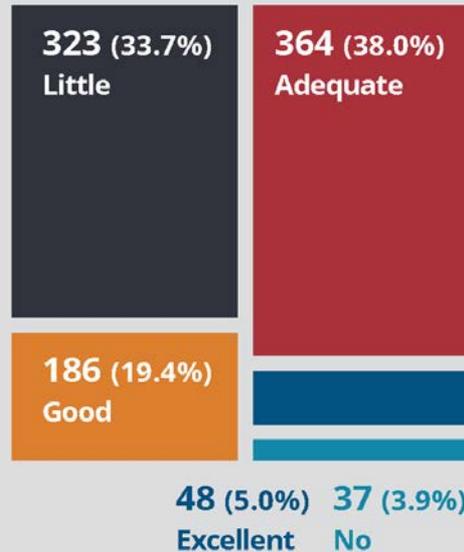
Are there opportunities for minorities and low wealth individuals to engage in community planning?

(920 Responses)



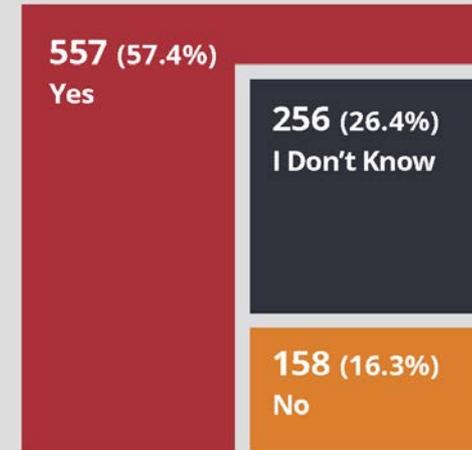
How well does your Community invest in healthy, safe and walkable communities?

(958 Responses)



Do the municipalities within your county promote the restoration of their downtown areas?

(971 Responses)



CEDS: Community Life

- Cultivate the next generation of community leaders
 - Diversity in the decision-making process
 - Think about succession planning for local govt. boards
- Create robust downtowns throughout the region
 - Housing, streetscapes, sidewalks, business occupancy, etc.

Alexander County



Morganton, NC



CEDS: Community Life

- Promote regional healthy-living initiatives
 - Improve recreation opportunities
 - Address opioid and illicit drug epidemic

Lowes Foods City Park - Hickory, NC



CEDS: Questions?

- Additional comments from CEDS Committee?
- Questions from Policy Board Delegates?
- Adoption of the CEDS is the next step prior to submitting the document to the EDA



CEDS: Presentations

- Presentations to local government boards, key partners, stakeholder groups, civic clubs and the public are planned

WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
SEPTEMBER 2017



The collage features several images: a paved road leading into a wooded area, a large stone building with a sign that reads 'MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS CENTER', a scenic view of a rocky cliffside with greenery, and a modern building with a glass facade. The collage is framed by geometric shapes in shades of brown, green, and blue.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee

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Vice Chair
Nancy Taylor, Executive Director, The Community Foundation of Burke County

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John Marshall, AICP, Director of Planning
Taylor Dollinger, GIS, Data Analyst
Jason Tenney, Communications Specialist
Duncan Cavanagh, AICP, Data Technician
Amanda Wallace, Administrative Assistant

Project Consultant
Dee Blackwell, AICP

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CEDS: Adoption

Suggested Motion:

I move that the Policy approve and adopt the 2017 CEDS and resolution as presented



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