



**Executive Committee
August 24, 2022
Hybrid Meeting In-Person at LOSRC office and Remotely via Zoom**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (11:00am)

2. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items are considered routine and noncontroversial in nature, and are considered and approved by a single motion and vote. If any member of the Executive Committee requests an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration and action that item will be placed under the Business, Updates and Discussion section of the agenda.

- A. June 22, 2022 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- B. Budget Amendment #1
- C. Eligible Use Policy

3. New Business

- A. Finance Staff Position and Pay Changes
- B. Senior Companion Program NCDOT 5310 Grant Notice
- C. Strategic Plan Update
- D. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update
- E. Affordable and Workforce Housing
- F. NC11 Congressional Candidates - October 26 Board of Delegates meeting

4. Other Items

- A. Executive Director Report

6. Adjournment

**Land of Sky Regional Council
Executive Committee
Regular Meeting
June 22, 2022**

Minutes

Land of Sky Regional Council's Executive Committee held a meeting in the Multi-Purpose Chamber of the Transylvania County Administration Building, hosted by the City of Brevard, that included access through the Zoom platform on Wednesday, June 22, 2022. Executive Committee members participating in the meeting included Vice Chair Patrick Fitzsimmons, Preston Blakely, Norris Gentry, Maureen Copelof, and Bob Tomasulo constituting a quorum. Executive Committee member Matt Wechtel joined the meeting when the business portion of the meeting was completed.

Land of Sky staff participating in the meeting included Nathan Ramsey, Charlotte Sullivan, Christina Giles, Vicki Jennings, LeeAnne Tucker, and Erica Anderson, Tristan Winkler, Brandon Priester, and Zia Rifkin (Minutes). Land of Sky's Legal Counsel, Susan Russo-Klein was present, too.

Call to Order –Vice Chair Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 am.

Approval of Consent Agenda – The consent agenda composed of items A. May 2022, Executive Committee Minutes; and B. Budget Amendment #9, was presented for approval with no modification requested.

Norris Gentry moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Maureen Copelof seconded, and the motion carried unanimously upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Old Business

FY 22/23 Budget Ordinance

Charlotte Sullivan and Nathan Ramsey reviewed the process to approve the budget at the Board of Delegates meeting including the public hearing and that the FY 2022/23 Budget Ordinance would be handled under Old Business.

Nathan Ramsey shared that the current budget is about \$11 million, and the new FY 22/23 budget is over \$17 million which speaks to the increased workflow of the organization.

New Business

Uniform Guidance Procurement Policy Amendment

Charlotte Sullivan informed the Executive Committee that the Finance Department requests approval to amend the micro-purchase definition and threshold outlined in the Uniform Guidance Procurement Policy approved September 25, 2018; effective July 1, 2018. The amendment is a change in the definition and threshold of the micro-purchase under the policy in accordance with the revisions to the Uniform Guidance (2 C.F.R. § 200.320(a)(1)) dated December 15, 2021, effective for fiscal years starting after this date. The current definition and threshold of micro-purchase is purchase contracts less than \$10,000 per transaction. The revision to the Uniform Guidance changes this definition to purchase contracts that the aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold. The Uniform Guidance revisions authorize qualified low-risk auditees as outlined in § 200.520 for the most recent audit to increase the micro-purchase threshold to less than \$50,000. This change in threshold is only for the fiscal year-end June 30, 2023, and would require re-evaluation and approval annually. The re-evaluation is dependent on Land of Sky Regional Council remaining a low-risk auditee.

Charlotte Sullivan recommended that the Executive Committee approve the amendment to Land of Sky's Uniform Guidance Procurement Policy to change the definition and threshold of a micro-purchase to purchase contracts that the aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold of \$50,000 for the fiscal year-end June 30, 2023.

Maureen Copelof moved to approve the increase in the micro-purchase amount from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2023. Bob Tomasulo seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Procurement and Accounting Specialist

Nathan Ramsey shared that this is meant to improve capacity of the Council. He noted that the Procurement and Accounting Specialist would be a position in the Finance Department reporting to the Finance Director. The purpose of the position is to help departments with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 compliance as well as to increase capacity within the Finance Department. This position would be a paygrade 24 (\$46,707-\$70,060 salary range). He clarified that this is a new position that requires Executive Committee approval to create.

Norris Gentry moved to approve the Procurement and Accounting Specialist position consistent with the Land of Sky Regional Council Pay and Classification Study at Grade 24, as proposed. Maureen Copelof seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Proposed Staff Salary Adjustments

Nathan Ramsey shared that the Deputy Director position will not be replaced for the near-term and most likely, for the long-term. The roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Director position will be transitioned to other members of the Council's leadership team. The proposed title changes and salary adjustments will reflect the increased duties for each of the positions. The Council will realize savings of at least \$70,000 as a result of these personnel actions. Mountain Mobility staff salary adjustments are made possible by these transitions. Buncombe County funding for Mountain Mobility has remained stable with no increase for the past decade. Nathan Ramsey noted that LOSRC has two contracts with Buncombe County, the other one being the NEMT contract. It is hoped that the NEMT contract may be renegotiated to provide additional funding for current staff support, at some point in the future.

Proposed Land of Sky Regional Council Salary Adjustments

Name	Current Position	Pay Grade	Current Salary	Proposed Position	Proposed Pay Grade	Proposed Salary	Salary Increase
Christina Giles	Communications & Administrative Services Coordinator	27	\$70,000	Administration & Communications Director	32	\$85,000	\$15,000
Vicki Jennings	Healthy Opportunities/Mountain Mobility Manager	32	\$80,000	Strategic Initiatives Director	34	\$95,000	\$15,000
Charlie Lee	No change	18	\$35,105		18	\$40,000	\$4,895
Sarah Marcin	No change	18	\$32,683		18	\$35,000	\$2,317
Heather Roberts-Van Sickle	No change	18	\$35,105		18	\$40,000	\$4,895

Maureen Copelof moved to approve the proposed change in positions and salary adjustments for staff as presented beginning July 1, 2022, and to have the 7% COLA for these staff based on their adjusted salary. Bob Tomasulo seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Proposed Temporary Salary Adjustment for Aging Staff

LeeAnne Tucker shared that since January 2021, Land of Sky Regional Council has collaborated with NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to lead the Money Follows the Person (MFP) transitions work in Region B. This program assists long term care residents to move back home or back into the community.

In late 2021, DHHS asked Land of Sky Regional Council to temporarily cover six central counties (Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties) for six months, January through June of 2022, until a new agency could be found to perform the work. Ginger Hill, MFP Transitions Coordinator, agreed to the additional workload. Covering the six additional counties doubled Ginger's caseload.

In January 2022, the Executive Committee approved a six-month temporary salary increase and overtime option for Ginger. DHHS has been unable to find another agency to perform the work and requests we continue to provide MFP transition services another six months, July 1-December 31, 2022 in the expanded region.

LOSRC proposes a temporary increase of \$5000 in Ginger's salary for the next six months. Additionally, the proposal includes allowing her to work up to 10 hours extra per week as needed to perform the additional duties in the expanded service region. This proposal is supported by DHHS. Funding is available for this increase as well.

Norris Gentry moved to approve the temporary salary increase (July 1-December 31, 2022) for the MFP Coordinator (Ginger Hill) and to allow her to work up to 10 hours extra per week as needed to perform the additional duties. Maureen Copelof seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Other Items

Executive Director Report

Nathan Ramsey shared that his current report is included in the agenda packet, and he encouraged Executive Committee members to reach out with any questions or comments regarding the report.

Nathan Ramsey shared that staff and some of Council's Delegates attended the NCACOG Legislative event in early June. One take away from that event was that additional jurisdictions reached out to LOSRC for assistance with governmental relations and applying for state and federal funding opportunities. He noted that General Assembly members shared that they are not hearing from the local regions regarding needs. He also mentioned the difficulty in hiring staff.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Fitzsimmons adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business.

Respectfully submitted by Zia Rifkin

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BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION #1

BE IT ORDAINED by the governing board of the Land of Sky Regional Council that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

SECTION I. To amend the appropriations as follows:

Area Agency on Aging	\$ 4,529.00
Workforce Development	353,762.00
Economic & Community Development	108,200.00
General Operations	-
Total Appropriations	<u>\$ 466,491.00</u>

SECTION II. It is estimated that the following revenues will be available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023.

Area Agency on Aging -Federal	\$ 4,529.00
Area Agency on Aging- State	-
Area Agency on Aging – Local	-
Area Agency on Aging – Local Dues	-
Area Agency on Aging – Private	-
Area Agency on Aging – In Kind	-
Area Agency On Aging – Fees	-
Appropriated Fund Balance	-
Total Area Agency on Aging	<u>\$ 4,529.00</u>

Workforce Development - Federal	\$ -
Workforce Development - State	-
Workforce Development - Local	-
Workforce Development - Local Dues	-
Workforce Development - Private	353,762.00
Workforce Development - In Kind	
Workforce Development - Fees	
<i>Total Workforce Development</i>	<u><u>\$ 353,762.00</u></u>
Economic & Community Development - Federal	\$ 75,200.00
Economic & Community Development - State	-
Economic & Community Development - Local	33,000.00
Economic & Community Development - Local Dues	-
Economic & Community Development - Private	-
Economic & Community Development - In Kind	-
Economic & Community Development - Fees	-
Appropriated Fund Balance	
<i>Total Economic & Community Development</i>	<u><u>\$ 108,200.00</u></u>
General Operations -Local Dues	
General Operations - Appropriated Fund Balance	-
General Operations - Fees	
General Operations - Other	
Total General Operations	
<i>Total General Operations</i>	<u><u>-</u></u>
Total Estimated Revenues	<u><u>\$ 466,491.00</u></u>

SECTION III. The finance officer is authorized to allocate the amounts of projects, programs and functions to appropriate objects of expenditures in accordance with the requirements of the contract concerning each project, program or function. The Finance Officer is authorized to reallocate departmental appropriations among various line item objects of expenditures and revenues as necessary during the budget year. However, any changes to salary or compensation of any employee for any reason shall be approved by the Executive Director and the Executive Committee before such changes takes effect.

SECTION IV. The Chairman and/or appropriate officers are authorized to execute all contracts or grants necessary to implement this budget, including federal and state grants, contracts for assistance to local governments and agencies, and subcontracts to local entities necessary to implement Council programs and activities.

SECTION V. Copies of this resolution shall be furnished to the finance/budget officer as directions in carrying out her official duties.

Adopted this 24th day of August, 2022.

Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons, Chair

Nathan Ramsey, Attest

Land of Sky Region Council
Revenue and Expenditures



Fiscal Year → **FY23**
 Amendment → **One**

Amendment Date → **8/28/22**

Revenue and Expenditures

Program Area	Proposed Budget as of Current Amendment -- 'One'	Budget as of Previous Amendment -- 'Start'	Increase or (Decrease) between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current Amendment Proposed Budget and FY Begin
AAA - Area Agency on Aging	\$7,910,017	\$7,905,488	\$4,529	0.1%	0.1%
ECD - Economic and Community Development	\$6,659,645	\$6,551,445	\$108,200	1.7%	2.8%
MAWD - Workforce Development	\$2,945,742	\$2,591,980	\$353,762	13.6%	14.8%
MNG - General Operations	\$182,038	\$182,038	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Land of Sky Regional Council	\$17,697,442	\$17,230,951	\$466,491	2.7%	4.1%

Revenue by Source

Funding Source	Proposed Budget as of Current Amendment -- 'One'	Budget as of Previous Amendment -- 'Start'	Increase or (Decrease) between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current Amendment Proposed Budget and FY Begin
Federal	\$11,018,407	\$10,938,678	\$79,729	0.7%	0.0%
State	\$2,405,398	\$2,405,398	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Local	\$1,836,966	\$1,803,966	\$33,000	1.8%	0.0%
Dues	\$342,834	\$342,834	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Private	\$1,400,231	\$1,046,469	\$353,762	33.8%	0.0%
Other	\$131,838	\$131,838	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
In-Kind	\$325,226	\$325,226	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Fees	\$215,360	\$215,360	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$21,182	\$21,182	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Land of Sky Regional Council	\$17,697,442	\$17,230,951	\$466,491	2.7%	4.1%

**Land of Sky Region Council
Revenue and Expenditures**



FY23 Fiscal Year

Amendment Number
One
Amendment Date
8/28/22

FY23 Budget at Start; Total for AAA	Amendment One; Total for AAA	FY22 Budget at Amendment One; Total for AAA
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AAA	\$7,905,488	\$4,529	\$7,910,017
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Area Agency on Aging

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY Start	FY23 Budget at Start	Amendment One	FY22 Budget at Amendment One
AAA	549	CDSM-UNCA	\$0	\$0	\$4,529	\$4,529

**Land of Sky Region Council
Revenue and Expenditures**



FY23 Fiscal Year

One
8/28/22

Amendment Number
Amendment Date

FY23 Budget at Start; Total for ECD	Amendment One; Total for ECD	FY22 Budget at Amendment One; Total for ECD
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ECD Economic and Community Development

\$6,551,445	\$108,200	\$6,659,645
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Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY Start	FY23 Budget at Start	Amendment One	FY22 Budget at Amendment One
ECD	346	WRP - NCDEQ-State Energy Program	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$25,200	\$75,200
ECD	44A	Buncombe Co. CDBG-CV Grant Compliance	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000
ECD	42A	Southwestern Commission MOA -P&Z	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000
ECD	383	EPA Solid Waste Mgmt - Food Waste	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
ECD	42B	Town of Marshall T/A	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000

**Land of Sky Region Council
Revenue and Expenditures**



FY23 Fiscal Year

Amendment Number
One
Amendment Date
8/28/22

FY23 Budget at Start; Total for MAWD	Amendment One; Total for MAWD	FY22 Budget at Amendment One; Total for MAWD
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MAWD	\$2,591,980	\$353,762	\$2,945,742
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Workforce Development

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY Start	FY23 Budget at Start	Amendment One	FY22 Budget at Amendment One
MAWD	212	Education & Workforce Collaboration -Belk Foundation	\$105,000	\$105,000	\$246,762	\$351,762
MAWD	62A	DHT-VAYA INSPIRE FY23	\$0	\$0	\$107,000	\$107,000

**Land of Sky Region Council
Revenue and Expenditures**



FY23 Fiscal Year

One
8/28/22

Amendment Number
Amendment Date

FY23 Budget at Start; Total for MNG	Amendment One; Total for MNG	FY22 Budget at Amendment One; Total for MNG
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MNG

General Operations

\$182,038 **\$0** **\$182,038**

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY Start	FY23 Budget at Start	Amendment One	FY22 Budget at Amendment One

**ELIGIBLE USE POLICY FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021
CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS BY LAND OF SKY REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

WHEREAS the Land of Sky Regional Council, has received an allocation of funds from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP/CSLFRF); and

WHEREAS US Treasury is responsible for implementing ARP/CSLFRF and has enacted a Final Rule outlining eligible projects; and

WHEREAS the funds may be used for projects within these categories, to the extent authorized by state law.

1. Support COVID-19 public health expenditures, by funding COVID-19 mitigation and prevention efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, preventing and responding to violence, and certain public health and safety staff;
2. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to households, small businesses, non-profits, impacted industries, and the public sector;
3. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic;
4. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors; and,
5. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet; and

WHEREAS the ARP/CSLFRF are subject to the provisions of the federal Uniform Grant Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200 (UG), as provided in the [Assistance Listing](#); and

WHEREAS US Treasury has issued a [Compliance and Reporting Guidance v.3.0 \(February 28, 2022\)](#) dictating implementation of the ARP/CSLFRF award terms and compliance requirements; and

WHEREAS the Compliance and Reporting Guidance states on page 6 that

Per 2 CFR Part 200.303, your organization must develop and implement effective internal controls to ensure that funding decisions under the SLFRF award constitute eligible uses of funds, and document determinations.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Land of Sky Regional Council hereby adopts and enacts the following Eligibility Determination Policy for ARP/CSLFRF funds.

Eligibility Determination Policy for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

This policy defines the permissible and prohibited uses of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP/CSLFRF) funds. It also outlines the procedures for determining how [Local Government Name] will spend its ARP/CSLFRF funds.

I. PERMISSIBLE USES OF ARP/CSLFRF FUNDING

US Treasury issued its [Final Rule](#) regarding use of ARP funds on January 6, 2022. (The Final Rule is effective as of April 1, 2022. Until that date, a local government may proceed under the regulation promulgated by US Department of the Treasury in its [Interim Final Rule](#) or the Final Rule.) The Final Rule (and the Interim Final Rule) identify permissible uses of ARP/CSLFRF funds and certain limitations and process requirements. Local governments must allocate ARP/CSLFRF funds no later than December 31, 2024 and disburse all funding no later than December 31, 2026. Failure of an entity to expend all funds by December 31, 2026 will result in forfeiture of ARP funds.

ARP/CSLFRF funds may be used for projects within the following categories of expenditures:

1. Support COVID-19 public health expenditures, by funding COVID-19 mitigation and prevention efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, preventing and responding to violence, and certain public health and safety staff;
2. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, non-profits, impacted industries, and the public sector;
3. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic;
4. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors; and
5. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet; and

II. PROHIBITED USES OF ARPA FUNDING

The ARP/CSLFRF and US Treasury's Final Rule prohibit certain uses of ARP/CSLFRF funds. Specifically, ARP/CSLFRF funds may not be used for projects within the following categories of expenditures:

1. To make a deposit into a pension fund that constitutes an extraordinary payment of an accrued, unfunded liability (Note that routine contributions as part of a payroll obligation for an eligible project are allowed.);
2. To borrow money or make debt service payments;
3. To replenish rainy day funds or fund other financial reserves;
4. To satisfy an obligation arising from a settlement agreement, judgment, consent decree, or judicially confirmed debt restricting in a judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceeding (There is an exception to this prohibition if the settlement or judgment requires the [Local Government Name] to provide services to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts or to provide government services, then the costs of those otherwise ARP/CSLFRF-eligible projects are allowed.);
5. For a project that includes a term or condition that undermines efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 or discourages compliance with recommendations and guidelines in CDC guidance for stopping the spread of COVID-19;
6. In violation of the conflict-of-interest requirements imposed by the award terms and 2 CFR 200.318(c).
7. For any expenditure that would violate other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

The Land of Sky Regional Council, and any of its contractors or subrecipients, may not expend any ARP/CSLFRF funds for these purposes.

III. PROCEDURES FOR PROJECT APPROVAL

The following are procedures for ARP/CSLFRF project approvals. All Land of Sky Regional Council employees and officials must comply with these requirements.

1. Requests for ARP/CSLFRF funding, must be made in writing and include all the following:
 - a. Brief description of the project
 - b. Identification of ARP/CSLFRF Expenditure Category (EC) (A list of ECs in in the Appendix to the [US Treasury Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#).)
 - c. Required justifications for applicable projects, according to the requirements in the Final Rule. Employees or any applicant seeking ARP funding should review the [Final Rule](#) and [Final Rule Overview](#) prior to submitting a proposal.
 - d. Proposed budget, broken down by cost item, in accordance with the Land of Sky Regional Council's Allowable Cost Policy.
 - e. A project implementation plan and estimated implementation timeline (All ARP/CSLFRF funds must be fully obligated by December 31, 2024, and fully expended by December 31, 2026.)
2. Requests for funding must be submitted to Finance Director for approval. All requests will be reviewed by the Economic & Community Development Director for ARP/CSLFRF compliance and by the Finance Director for allowable costs and other financial review.
3. No ARP/CSLFRF may be obligated or expended before final written approval by the Executive Director.

4. If a proposal does not meet the required criteria, it will be returned to the requesting party for revision and resubmittal.
5. Following approval, employees responsible for implementing the project must conform actual obligations and expenditures to the pre-approved project budget. Changes in project budgets must be approved by the Economic & Community Development Director and Finance Director and may require a budget amendment before proceeding. Any delay in the projected project completion date shall be communicated to the Economic & Community Development Director immediately.
6. The Economic & Community Development Director must collect and document required information for each EC, for purposes of completing the required Project and Expenditure reports.
7. The Economic & Community Development Director must maintain written project requests and approvals, all supporting documentation, and financial information at least until December 31, 2031.

NCARCOG ARPA Funding

Overview, Processes, and Requirements for Regional Councils

Overview and Setup

- The American Rescue Plan subaward for the NC Association of Regional Councils of Government will be managed by Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG). For all day-to-day and operational questions, please direct questions to Tara Nattress, tnattress@tjco.org or Alana Keegan, akeegan@tjco.org
- Concerns about compliance and oversight should be directed to Robert Hiatt, rhiatt@upcog.org and Geraldine Gardner, ggardner@centralina.org.
- Each Council of Government must make sure they have provided all required information and completed all set-up activities, listed below. At any time, you can view the status of your materials and what TJCOG has received [here](#).
- Reimbursements for expenditures are being managed by Piedmont Triad Regional Council. These payments will be made after TJCOG has received and reviewed your quarterly report, which includes your expenditure request. *Please see the July 31st Report section for further details.*

1. Required Documentation to Send to TJCOG by July 31st

Please send an email to TJCOG's team with the following attachments and information

- A signed contract – *this only applies for organizations that have not yet sent their signed contract for ARPA funds*
- Most recent adopted budget
- Most recent audit – *this only applies for organizations that did not have a single audit for the last fiscal year*
- Approved administrative policies for Uniform Guidance compliance.
 - Nondiscrimination policy
 - Eligible use policy
 - Conflict of interest policy
 - Records retention policy

NCARCOG ARPA FUNDING

Overview, Processes, and Requirements for Regional Councils

- Answers to the following questions. Please note that any “yes” will require adopted an additional policy, highlighted in yellow.

Will you be using funds to pay for a contractor or sub-awardee? **Subaward policy**

Will you be using funds to purchase property? **Property management policy**

Will you be generating program income using your funds? **Program income policy**

Will you be using funds to purchase equipment or materials? *Must comply with UG procurement and eligible use policies.*

- After reviewing the booklet, include a signed copy of the [subrecipient monitoring handbook](#) (sign on pg. 24). You will be notified of your risk level and monitoring requirements by August 31st. Details on the process can be found in the **Risk Assessment and Monitoring** section below.

Note: Regional Councils are defined as “subrecipients” in the handbook

July 31st Report

NCARCOG must submit a report to the State by July 31st for the first quarter of activities. For this initial reporting round, there will be an interim report and process.

The following documentation on activities and expenditures must be sent to tnattress@tjicog.org by end of day, Monday, July 25th.

Subsequent quarterly reports are due 30 days following the close of the quarter as per the subaward agreement.

- Download a copy of [this report template](#) and fill in with the quarterly expenditure total, required metrics for all regional councils, and quarterly numbers for metrics from your organization’s scope of work (Attachment A) in your contract.

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Commented [A1]: I would recommend that we have them report against their budget and not just a lump sum total

Risk Assessment and Monitoring

By August 31st, everyone will receive official notice of their risk level and their specific monitoring requirements based on this designation. Risk level **does not impact receipt of the funds**, only the amount of assistance and oversight that NCARCOG and NCPRO will provide to the agency.

Concerns about compliance and oversight can be directed to Robert Hiatt, rhiatt@upcog.org and Geraldine Gardner, ggardner@centralina.org.

NCARCOG ARPA FUNDING

Overview, Processes, and Requirements for Regional Councils

Risk Levels and Required Monitoring

- Low - Grant Accountability Calls
- Medium - Grant Accountability Calls and Desk/Virtual Reviews
- High - Accountability Calls and On-site Reviews

Responsibilities of Each COG

- 1. Attend quarterly reporting work sessions to review metrics and discuss any issues with reporting. TJCOG will send calendar invites to reporting points of contact.
 - 1. Respond in a timely manner to all requests for documentation.
 - 2. Participate in monitoring activities, which will be scheduled based on each COG's risk level.
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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

- Item:** 3A – Finance Staff Position and Pay Changes
- Nature of Item:** Action
- Attachment(s):** LOSRC Pay Schedule and Proposed Salary Adjustments
- Background:** The following proposed changes will reclassify the Payroll and Accounting Specialist position to Payroll and Finance Coordinator at Grade 26 with a \$5,000 salary increase from the current salary of Sherry Christenson. The purpose for this change is Ms. Christenson is leading the Finance Department's digital transition which will add modules to the current finance software. Wanda Clark is the longest serving employee of the Council with 43 years of service. She is currently a part-time employee in the role of an Accounting Manager earning \$34.00 per hour. We are proposing to increase her pay to \$36.28 per hour to respond to market conditions. Part-time employees did not receive a cost-of-living adjustment.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director, and Patricia Rosenberg, Finance Director
- Suggested Motion:** Motion to reclassify the position to a Payroll and Finance Coordinator at Grade 26 with a salary of \$70,965.39 and increase the pay of part-time Accounting Manager employee to \$36.28 per hour effective for the pay period beginning August 27, 2022.



Land of Sky Regional Council Salary Adjustments

Name	Current Position	Pay Grade	Current Salary	Proposed Position	Proposed Pay Grade	Proposed	Salary Increase
Finance Department							
Sherry Christenson	Payroll & Finance Specialist	24	\$65,965.39	Finance Coordinator	26	\$70,965.39	\$5,000
Wanda Clark	Accounting Manager (part-time)		\$34.00 per hour	Accounting Manager (part-time)		\$36.28 per hour	\$2.28 per hour

VII. Proposed Pay Plan

		07.01.2021	07.01.2021	07.01.2021	FLSA
		<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Midpoint</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	
10	Not assigned	23,590	29,487	35,384	N
11	Not assigned	24,769	30,961	37,153	N
12	Not assigned	26,007	32,509	39,011	N
13	Not assigned	27,308	34,136	40,963	N
14	Transit Program Assistant	28,673	35,842	43,010	N
15	Not assigned	30,107	37,634	45,161	N
16	Senior Transit Program Assistant	31,612	39,516	47,418	N
17	Not Assigned	33,193	41,491	49,789	N
18	Mobility Specialist	34,853	43,566	52,278	N
19	Administrative Support Specialist	36,595	45,745	54,894	N
20	NEMT Specialist	38,425	48,032	57,639	N
20	Payroll Specialist	38,425	48,032	57,639	N
21	MIS Specialist	40,346	50,433	60,519	N
21	Transportation Accounting Specialist	40,346	50,433	60,519	N
22	Not Assigned	42,363	52,955	63,546	N
23	Aging Specialist/Contracts	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
23	Business Services Coordinator	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
23	Foster Grandparent Program Manager	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
23	Long-Term Care Ombudsman I	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
23	NEMT Lead Specialist	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
23	Senior Community Svcs Employ Prog Mgr 41,€	44,482	55,603	66,724	N
24	Aging Specialist/HPDP	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
24	Family Caregiver Specialist	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
24	Long-Term Care Ombudsman II	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
24	Planner I	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
24	Project C.A.R.E. Manager	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
24	Senior Companion Program Manager	46,707	58,384	70,060	N
25	Accounting Manager	49,042	61,303	73,564	N
25	Long-Term Care Ombudsman III	49,042	61,303	73,564	N
26	GIS Manager	51,494	64,369	77,242	N
26	Planner II	51,494	64,369	77,242	N
27	Communications and Admin Svcs Coord	54,069	67,587	81,104	N
28	Planner III	56,773	70,966	85,160	N
29	Not assigned	59,612	74,515	89,418	N
30	Not assigned	62,592	78,240	93,889	N
31	MPO Director	65,722	82,153	98,584	E
32	Mountain Mobility Manager	69,008	86,261	103,513	E
32	NEMT Manager	69,008	86,261	103,513	E
33	Not assigned	72,459	90,573	108,687	E
34	Aging and Volunteer Services Director	76,081	95,102	114,122	E
34	Economic and Community Dev. Director	76,081	95,102	114,122	E
34	Finance Director	76,081	95,102	114,122	E
34	Workforce Development Director	76,081	95,102	114,122	E
35	Not assigned	79,886	99,858	119,829	E
36	Deputy Director	83,880	104,851	125,820	E
37	Not assigned	88,075	110,094	132,112	E
38	Not assigned	92,479	115,599	138,718	E
39	Not assigned	97,103	121,379	145,655	E
40	Not assigned	101,958	127,448	152,937	E



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Items: 3B – Senior Companion Program NCDOT grant application – 5310 Rural Grant

Nature of Items: Information

Attachment(s): None

Background: There will be a public hearing at the September 21, 2022 meeting as part of this grant application to the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for the 5310 Rural Grant. Dee will provide an update to the Executive Committee at this meeting.

Responsible Staff: Dee Heinmuller MSW, Senior Companion Program Manager

Suggested Motion: N/A



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

- Items:** 3C – Land of Sky Regional Council Strategic Plan
- Nature of Items:** No Action
- Attachment(s):** Land of Sky Regional Council Strategic Plan 2019-2021, Strategic Plan Status Report
- Background:** Land of Sky Regional Council adopted a Strategic Plan 2019-2021 in 2019. The preparations are being made to update the Strategic Plan. LOSRC staff will hold an all-staff strategic planning meeting on September 23, 2022. An anonymous survey will be sent to LOSRC staff, LOSRC Board of Delegates members, local government managers, elected officials, board members of other boards at LOSRC along with other stakeholders. The purpose of this update is to request direction from the Executive Committee for this Strategic Planning process.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director
- Suggested Motion:** N/A.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2021

OUR VISION

To be a catalyst for increasing the **economic competitiveness** and quality of life for our region, while being recognized as a **leading regional development organization** in the nation.

OUR MISSION

To partner with our local governments to identify and address relevant and emerging issues in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties, while providing creative solutions and excellence service in the delivery of programs for our region.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Service** – We exist to serve our local governments.
- Collaboration** – We work as a team to assist our local governments and key partners in meeting their challenges, and strive to bring the region together to face challenges in a unified way.
- Accountability** – We take responsibility for our actions as a team and as individuals.
- Resiliency** – We face challenges head-on with determination and optimism.
- Trust** – We build trust through transparency.
- Innovation** – We always seek out new ways to address challenges, old or new, internal or external.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



1 SERVICES

Evaluate, improve, and expand services based on input from local governments and key partners.



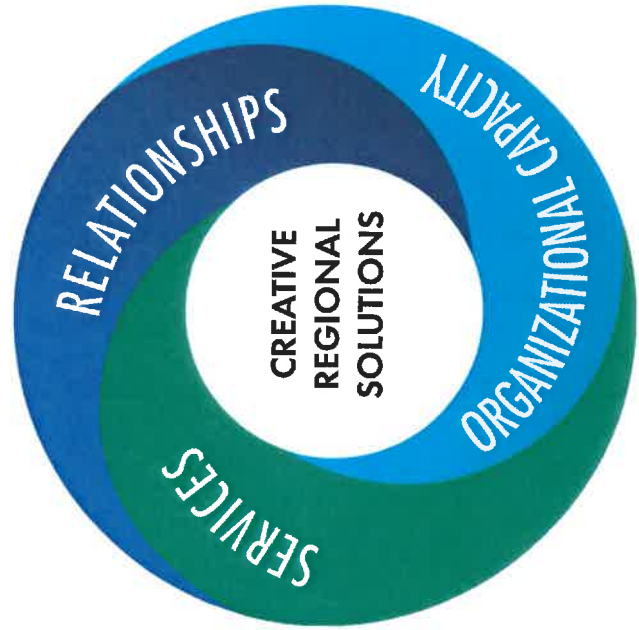
2 RELATIONSHIPS

Foster existing partnerships and build new relationships with local government leaders, regional allies, state officials, and federal partners.



3 CAPACITY

Evaluate, expand and build organizational capacity as needed to address the regions needs.



1 SERVICES



Evaluate, improve, and expand services based on input from local governments and key partners.

GOAL 1.1

Develop and implement a comprehensive process for informing and obtaining input from all of the region's local governments concerning Land of Sky's value, relevance, services, and partnership opportunities.

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct face-to-face interviews with elected and senior appointed officials from the 20 local government jurisdictions in the region.
2. Design and distribute a survey instrument to all local elected and senior appointed officials in the region.
3. Design and implement a method for receiving continuous feedback from all local elected and senior appointed officials in the region.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
1.1 Identify officials to be interviewed.	1st Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.2 Develop interview questions.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.3 Conduct interviews.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.4 Develop survey instrument.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.5 Distribute survey instrument.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.6 Design feedback tool.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.7 Launch feedback tool.	4th Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.8 Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

GOAL 1.2

Develop and implement a comprehensive process for obtaining input from regional partners concerning Land of Sky's value, relevance, services, and partnership opportunities.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify key regional partners.
2. Conduct face-to-face interviews with identified regional partners.
3. Design and distribute a survey instrument to all regional partners.
4. Design and implement a method for receiving continuous feedback from all regional partners.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
1.9 Identify key regional partners.	1st Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.10 Develop interview questions.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.11 Conduct interviews.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.12 Develop survey instrument.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.13 Distribute survey instrument.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.14 Design feedback tool.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director
1.15 Launch feedback tool.	4th Quarter, 2019	Executive Director
1.16 Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

1

SERVICES



Evaluate, improve, and expand services based on input from local governments and key partners.

GOAL 1.3

Based on input from local governments and regional partners, conduct a comprehensive assessment of Land of Sky's services and programs.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify programs and services that should be expanded.
2. Identify needed program and service improvements.
3. Identify programs and services that should be scaled back or eliminated.
4. Identify new programs and services that should be offered.

	ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
1.17	Identify programs and services that should be expanded.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
1.18	Identify needed program and service improvements.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
1.19	Identify programs and services that should be scaled back or eliminated.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
1.20	Identify new programs and services that should be offered.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
1.21	Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

1st Quarter: January 1 – March 31
 2nd Quarter: April 1 – June 30
 3rd Quarter: July 1 – September 30
 4th Quarter: October 1 – December 31

2

RELATIONSHIPS



Foster existing partnerships and build new relationships with local government leaders, regional allies, state officials, and federal partners.

GOAL 2.1

Enhance communications with local governments and regional organizations.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for outreach, marketing, and engagement.
2. Design and implement a process for informing local governments and regional partners about possible or anticipated emerging issues and, in turn, for obtaining feedback concerning such issues.
3. Increase the number of and involvement with affiliate Council members.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
2.1 Develop an outreach, marketing, and engagement strategy.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, ED
2.2 Implement outreach, marketing, and engagement strategy.	4th Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, ED
2.3 Design a process for informing local governments and partners about emerging regional and local issues and obtaining feedback for such issues.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, Executive Director
2.4 Implement a process for informing local governments and partners about emerging regional and local issues and obtaining feedback for such issues.	4th Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, Executive Director
2.5 Implement a program to inform organizations about the affiliate member program and grow the number of affiliate Council members.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, Executive Director
2.6 Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, ED

GOAL 2.2

Improve experiences for those attending Board of Delegates meetings and work to increase attendance numbers for the meetings.

STRATEGIES

1. Create a Program and Communications Committee made up of Board of Delegates members to assist staff with meeting agendas, publications, and activities.
2. Develop and implement a system for continuously soliciting input from local governments for ways to improve Board of Delegates meetings.
3. Create and implement a new Council orientation program.
4. Implement technology that allows for remote participation in meetings.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
2.7 Form a Program and Communications Committee.	1st Quarter, 2019	Executive Committee
2.8 Develop and implement a system for obtaining feedback concerning ways to improve Board of Delegates meetings.	2nd Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, Executive Director
2.9 Create a new Council orientation program.	4th Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, ED
2.10 Implement a new Council orientation program.	1st Quarter, 2020	Program and Communications Committee, ED
2.11 Implement remote meeting technology.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Program and Communications Committee, ED
2.12 Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, ED

2

RELATIONSHIPS



Foster existing partnerships and build new relationships with local government leaders, regional allies, state officials, and federal partners.

GOAL 2.3

Take a more active role in relationship building and advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels.

STRATEGIES

1. Create a Legislative Relations Committee.
2. Take steps to ensure state and federal officials are invited and encouraged to attend the annual member government social and award presentation event.
3. Collaboratively develop a regional legislative priority list.

	ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
2.13	Form a Legislative Relations Committee.	1st Quarter, 2019	Executive Committee
2.14	Ensure state and federal officials are invited and encouraged to attend the annual member government social and award presentation event.	3rd Quarter, 2019	Legislative Relations Committee, ED
2.15	Develop a regional legislative priority list.	4th Quarter, 2019	Legislative Relations Committee, ED
2.16	Update to Board of Delegates	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, ED

1st Quarter: January 1 – March 31
 2nd Quarter: April 1 – June 30
 3rd Quarter: July 1 – September 30
 4th Quarter: October 1 – December 31

3 CAPACITY



Evaluate, expand and build organizational capacity as needed to address the regions needs.

GOAL

3.1 Evaluate Council operations to ensure internal capacity is adequate for current and future program requirements.

STRATEGIES

1. Work to identify efficiencies through examining work processes to capitalize on individual strengths, technology, and creativity.
2. Ensure administrative and finance capacity are at adequate levels to ensure organizational programmatic compliance.
3. Evaluate future space needs to ensure program expansion needs can be met.
4. Evaluate the current organizational structure and make necessary changes to enhance effectiveness and efficiency.
5. Identify other regional councils to serve as a benchmark for Land of Sky.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
3.1 Evaluate internal capacity.	2nd Quarter, 2020	Executive Director
3.2 Fill finance and administrative capacity gaps.	4th Quarter, 2020	Executive Director
3.3 Evaluate space needs.	2nd Quarter, 2020	Executive Director
3.4 Identify and implement changes, if needed, to organizational structure.	1st Quarter, 2021	Executive Director
3.5 Identify benchmark organizations.	4th Quarter, 2019	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.6 Update to Board of Delegates.	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

GOAL

3.2 Design and implement a formal staff development system.

STRATEGIES

1. Implement a comprehensive performance evaluation process for all staff.
2. Implement a system to develop custom professional improvement plans for each staff member.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
3.7 Design a performance evaluation system.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.8 Implement a performance evaluation system.	3rd Quarter, 2020	Executive Director
3.9 Design a professional development plan.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.10 Implement a professional development program.	3rd Quarter, 2020	Executive Director
3.11 Update to Board of Delegates.	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

3 CAPACITY



Evaluate, expand and build organizational capacity as needed to address the regions needs.

GOAL 3.3

Explore options for diversifying revenue streams.

STRATEGIES

1. Examine the formation of a non-profit or partnering with an existing non-profit to allow for private fund raising and diverse grant funding.
2. Examine forging relationships with private foundations.
3. Examine the expansion of existing and creation of new fee-for-service activities.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
3.12 Evaluate the value and feasibility of forming a non-profit or partnering with an existing non-profit.	3rd Quarter, 2021	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.13 Explore partnerships with private foundations.	3rd Quarter, 2021	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.14 Evaluate, adjust, and implement expansions for fee-for-service activities.	3rd Quarter, 2021	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.15 Update to Board of Delegates.	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

GOAL 3.4

Implement and continuously update processes and procedures to ensure accountability and transparency for Land of Sky operations and transactions.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify and monitor specific operations and transactions that should receive oversight beyond local, state and/or federal compliance regulations.
2. Develop and implement a system of checks and balances for specific operations and transactions that should receive additional oversight.
3. Create a process to periodically review operations and transactions to determine if additional operations and transactions should be added to the oversight list.

ACTION ITEM	COMPLETION TARGET	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
3.16 Identify operations and transactions that need oversight above and beyond state and federal review requirements.	1st Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.17 Develop and implement adequate monitoring systems.	3rd Quarter, 2020	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.18 Periodically review, update, and adjust monitoring systems.	Ongoing/Annually	Executive Committee, Executive Director
3.19 Update to Board of Delegates.	Ongoing/Quarterly	Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Director

1st Quarter: January 1 – March 31
 2nd Quarter: April 1 – June 30
 3rd Quarter: July 1 – September 30
 4th Quarter: October 1 – December 31

Land of Sky Regional Council Strategic Plan 2019-2021 Status Report – September 2020

Red – Completed

Yellow – In Process but not yet complete

Green – Started in early stages of process

Goal 1 – Services

Goal 2 – Relationships

Goal 3 - Capacity

Goal 1.1 Local Governments

- 1.1 Identify officials to be interviewed
- 1.2 Develop interview questions
- 1.3 Conduct interviews
- 1.4 Develop survey instrument
- 1.5 Distribute survey instrument
- 1.6 Design feedback tool Q3 2019
- 1.7 Launch feedback tool Q4 2019
- 1.8 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 1.2 Regional Partners

- 1.9 Identify key regional partners
- 1.10 Develop interview questions
- 1.11 Conduct interviews
- 1.12 Develop survey instrument
- 1.13 Distribute survey instrument Q2 2019
- 1.14 Design feedback tool Q3 2019
- 1.15 Launch feedback tool Q4 2019
- 1.16 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 1.3 Comprehensive assessment of LOSRC services and programs

- 1.17 Identify programs and services that should be expanded
- 1.18 Identify needed program and service improvements
- 1.19 Identify programs and services that should be scaled back or eliminated
- 1.20 Identify new programs and services that should be offered
- 1.21 Programs/services that will be eliminated, expanded and new programs/services that will be offered

Goal 2.1 Enhance communications with local governments and regional organizations

- 2.1 Develop an outreach, marketing and engagement strategy
- 2.2 Implement outreach, marketing and engagement strategy
- 2.3 Design a process for informing local governments and partners about emerging regional and local issues and obtaining feedback for such issues
- 2.4 Implement a process for informing local governments and partners about emerging regional and local issues and obtaining feedback for such issues

2.5 Implement a program to inform organizations about the affiliate member program and grow the number of affiliate members. Q2 2019

2.6 Update to the Board of Delegates

Goal 2.2 Improve experiences for those attending Board of Delegates meeting and work to increase attendance numbers for the meetings

2.7 Form a Program and Communication Committee

2.8 Develop and implement a system for obtaining feedback concerning ways to improve Board of Delegates meetings Q2 2019

2.9 Create a new Council orientation program Q4 2019

2.10 Implement a new Council orientation program Q1 2020

2.11 Implement remote meeting technology Q3 2019

2.12 Update to the Board of Delegates

Goal 2.3 Take a more active role in relationship building and advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels.

2.13 Form a Legislative Relations Committee Q1 2019

2.14 Ensure state and federal officials are encouraged to attend annual member government social and award presentation Q3 2019

2.15 Develop a regional legislative priority list Q4 2019

2.16 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 3.1 Evaluate internal capacity

3.1 Evaluate internal capacity Q2 2020

3.2 Fill finance and administrative gaps Q4 2020

3.3 Evaluate space needs Q2 2020

3.4 Identify and implement needed changes to organizational structure Q1 2021

3.5 Identify benchmark organizations Q4 2019

3.6 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 3.2 Design and implement a formal staff development system

3.7 Design a performance evaluation system Q1 2020

3.8 Implement a performance evaluation system Q3 2020

3.9 Design a professional development plan Q1 2020

3.10 Implement a professional development plan Q3 2020

3.11 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 3.3 Explore options for diversifying revenue streams

3.12 Evaluate the value and feasibility of forming a non-profit or partnering with an existing non-profit Q3 2021

3.13 Explore partnerships with private foundations Q3 2021

3.14 Evaluate, adjust and implement expansions for fee for service activities Q3 2021

3.15 Update to Board of Delegates

Goal 3.4 Ensure accountability and transparency for operations and transactions

- 3.16 Identify operations that need oversight Q1 2020
- 3.17 Develop and implement monitoring systems Q3 2020
- 3.18 Periodically review, update, and adjust monitoring systems
- 3.19 Update to Board of Delegates

Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Umbrella organization	I can't think of any private entities but a family member did small statement there are events associated.	1	5	2	2	4	6	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe			
Somewhat Familiar	Positive			3	4	3	2	1	6	Private Employee	Henderson	Henderson	Thank you for all you do to support the strategic growth and workforce talent development in our Other Job Sector!		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Innovative	At WCU we have a strong relationship with local of the and look forward to even more collaboration.	5	6	4	3	2	1	Other (please specify) Other (please specify)	Educational/Administrative	Other (please specify)	Other Job Sector!		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Development	Perhaps look for ways to grow partnerships with other organizations in western.	6	5	2	1	3	6	Highly skilled technical information development and expansion.	Other (please specify)	State/Non-Profit/Local	Burcombe	Burcombe	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Great organization	Other major programs for graduate population in Triad/Asheville	1	3	4	5	2	1	Show an Award Winner	Appointed Official	Troy/Honda	Other Job Sector!		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Information	More publicity about land of the state for the entire community.	1	6	3	1	1	1		Other (please specify)	Senior Advisor	Burcombe	Other Job Sector!	
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Responsive and helpful	Attention to other parts of the service area. How people into this area to work for local employees who cannot find suitable labor.	1	6	3	1	1	1		Appointed Official	Henderson	Henderson		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Community	Very value very much our relationship with local of the. They are creative, supportive and overall excellent partnership. They help us support students who may be in their last class to attend an IT education program.	6	4	2	3	5	1		Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	WUCA	Very value very much our relationship with local of the. They are creative, supportive and overall excellent partnership. They help us support students who may be in their last class to attend an IT education program.	5	4	2	3	6	1	No	Other (please specify)	Central Office/In-House	Henderson	Henderson	We have working with WUCA on the new office location.
Extremely Familiar	Neutral	Nathan Authority	Better communication between WUCA and its destination.	5	3	1	4	3	1	2 Available	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Christianity		6	4	2	2	1	4	2 Available	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Warning [sorry...and I don't]		1	1	2	3	3	1	Transportation. It is essential for the other than. It should be listed twice. We see on the stage of this area being brought to the ground but in one of the local government staff.	Local Government Staff	Henderson	Henderson	See #...again.	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Mountain	Not sure	3	4	6	2	3	1	5 Available	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Commitment	I would like to see more emphasis on innovation.	8	3	3	1	4	3	3	Other (please specify)	State Employee	Other (please specify)	Other Job Sector!	
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Regional	Nathan and his team do a tremendous job of helping understand reasons in the community and if they don't have something they will find it.	8	4	3	2	1	1	2	Local Government Staff	Haywood	Burcombe	All the above except Haywood	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Reserves		6	1	3	1	5	3	Staffing and housing are major in our area.	Private Employee	Burcombe	Henderson		
Extremely Familiar	Positive	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	More collaboration and support for assistance	6	3	5	1	2	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe			
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Support	Send a copy of your annual plan and/or upcoming year operational plan to those who you hope to accomplish this year and in the future for the good of our region.	4	3	4	2	5	1	across all affordable childcare both in school and day care with a focus on the private	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Wendell	Commitment	5	6	4	2	3	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Walden Development	Just to continue to support WCU.	6	5	4	1	2	1	3	Other (please specify)	State Government	Burcombe	Henderson	Thanks for the work you do!
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Advisory	They could have some information about more business and revenue opportunities.	3	5	1	2	4	2	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Neutral	Skilled		6	2	4	3	5	1	1	Private Employee	Henderson	Henderson	There do a great job.	
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Partnership	If possible have an image going on on a monthly the same issue	6	5	3	3	2	1	1	Private Employee	Henderson	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Collaboration		6	4	3	3	5	1	Attending investment in infrastructure like high-speed internet, water, sewer and natural gas investment in agriculture, then early childhood to post-secondary education and skills	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Greater Asheville Area		5	7	4	3	1	6	1	Other (please specify)	Educator	Burcombe	Henderson	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Reserves	Extension of services and presence in the counties surrounding Henderson County - in many services are available to Burcombe County residents and may not be available in other counties.	4	6	3	1	2	1	Healthcare to include mental health care and food and nutritional services, particularly addressing legal and health services.	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Cooperation	Comer to each county once a year for a monthly meeting.	6	3	4	5	1	1	1	Selected Official	Haywood	Burcombe	Other Job Sector! Both Burcombe and Haywood. Both are heavily in work.	
Extremely Familiar	Positive	Confidence, hard to define.	Confidence, hard to define.	1	6	2	3	4	1	5	Other (please specify)	Volunteer	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda	
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Business incentives	Business incentives	4	5	1	2	1	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Business incentives	Business incentives	4	5	1	2	1	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Regional planning for connectivity	Regional planning for connectivity	4	5	1	2	1	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Recovery	Recovery	1	1	4	5	2	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Artist	Waters, Camp, and for most event parking	6	4	2	1	2	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe	When, when will these projects be started?	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Key	Treatment of creek around DPH	3	2	4	5	6	1	1	Other (please specify)	State government staff	Wade	Burcombe	Other Job Sector!
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Mountain	Would like to see the Regional Council begin to take a strong leadership position in environmental issues. To many Mountain Area businesses and jobs depend on our quality of life, which is directly tied to our local environment.	5	2	9	4	6	1	1	Private Employee	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Highly opinionated	Not as pleased with the direction our agency are in.	5	5	1	4	3	1	2	Local Government Staff	Madison	Burcombe	Burcombe	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Regional connectivity	Regional connectivity	2	1	4	1	3	1	4	Local Government Staff	Haywood	Burcombe	Burcombe	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Community impact	Community impact	6	4	3	1	2	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Community impact	Community impact	3	5	3	2	4	1	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Leadership	Leadership	4	4	3	1	3	2	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Leadership	Leadership	4	1	5	1	3	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Leadership	Leadership	6	5	2	1	3	1	1	Private Employee	Henderson	Burcombe	Burcombe	
Extremely Familiar	Positive	collaboration	Increased networking power throughout the region	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe	LOM has incredible potential to influence our region for good	
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Regional	More outreach on the programs funded through local of the.	3	6	5	1	1	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Community	How accessible or hard to be inaccessible. Responding to growing and needs the services you offer.	5	1	2	2	3	1	1	Other (please specify)	Volunteer	Henderson	Henderson	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Senior	No successors at this time	4	6	1	1	1	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Madison	Henderson	
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Funding equity	Funding equity	4	3	2	1	3	1	1	Private Employee	Henderson	Henderson		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Realization	Realization	5	4	2	1	1	4	1	Private Employee	Henderson	Henderson		
Extremely Familiar	Neutral	on the	on the	5	6	2	1	1	1	1	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Extremely Familiar	Neutral	Troy, NC	Troy, NC	6	3	2	1	1	4	1	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Somewhat Familiar	Neutral	Planning	How will the health department	5	3	1	1	4	1	1	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Comprehensive	As a solid waste district I am interested in many initiatives regarding solid waste and recycling. As a member of WUCA, I would welcome more outreach on other regional initiatives that would be of interest.	5	3	5	1	4	2	2	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda	Governments and EPA. Federal are great funding!	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Agile	More regionalized technical assistance	1	6	4	2	3	1	1	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Reserves	Reserves	6	1	3	2	1	1	4	Appointed Official	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Substance	Substance	8	5	6	4	3	3	2	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Initiatives	Initiatives	6	4	3	4	1	1	1	Local Government Staff	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Service	Extend the call center to cover other counties in the region.	2	6	3	4	5	1	1	Selected Official	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	right	collective voice	3	3	5	6	4	1	2	Selected Official	Troy/Honda	Troy/Honda	That agency is important. Thank you for being there and for all you do!	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Agile	Public-private partnerships	6	2	3	1	4	5	1	Other (please specify)	refined private citizens	Burcombe	Other Job Sector!	
Extremely Familiar	Positive	Initiatives	Initiatives	1	6	3	4	3	1	6	Other (please specify)	Madison	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Home	Local government staff, public funding for emergency services.	6	1	5	3	3	4	1	Selected Official	Henderson	Henderson		
Extremely Familiar	Very positive	Helpful	Helpful	6	5	3	3	1	1	1	Selected Official	Burcombe	Henderson		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Resource Information	Resource Information	4	5	2	1	3	6	1	Private Employee	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Guidance	Guidance	5	3	3	1	3	2	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Very positive	Initiatives	Initiatives	3	1	3	4	5	1	1	Other (please specify)	Fraser instructor for 35	Henderson	Henderson	Curriculum is needed.
Extremely Familiar	Positive	collaboration	collaboration	6	1	3	4	2	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Extremely Familiar	Positive	Agile	Agile	1	6	3	2	3	1	1	Selected Official	Volunteer	Burcombe	Burcombe	
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Agile	Agile	1	6	3	2	3	1	1	Local Government Staff	Burcombe	Burcombe		
Somewhat Familiar	Positive	Agile	Agile	2	4	3	2	3	6	1	Other (please specify)	Madison	Burcombe	Other Job Sector!	



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Items: 3D – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Nature of Items: No Action

Attachment(s): EY Report

Background: Land of Sky Regional Council is required to adopt a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as part of the funding we receive from the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). Council is in the process of updating the CEDS. For this update we retained EY and are working with the Chambers of Commerce in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties. Dogwood Health Trust provided part of the funding required to retain EY. The preliminary top priorities are the following: Housing expansion & diversification, Transportation & infrastructure improvement and Workforce development.

The 2020 CEDS can be accessed at the following link: [. \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

Responsible Staff: Erica Anderson, Economic and Community Development Director

Suggested Motion: N/A.

Land of Sky Regional Council

Regional Resiliency and Strategic Alignment Report

Prepared by

Ernst & Young LLP

EY Economic Development Advisory Services

August 4, 2022

DRAFT




Building a better
working world

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Disclaimer:

Our report may be relied upon by the Land of Sky Regional Council for the purpose set out in the Scope section only pursuant to the terms of our engagement letter. We disclaim all responsibility to any other party for any loss or liability that the other party may suffer or incur arising from or relating to or in any way connected with the contents of our report, the provision of our report to the other party or the reliance upon our report by the other party.



Introduction



In December 2021, the Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) Economic Development Advisory Services (EDAS) team began to assist the Land of Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) with a labor shed and target industry analysis and the development of this resiliency and strategic alignment plan report. This strategic alignment plan intends to build upon community development priorities that are shared across multiple counties in the region. As set forth by LOSRC and other project collaborators, the ultimate objective of the planning process is to identify a handful of potential high-impact initiatives that regional leaders, especially business leaders, drive forward together.

The planning process focused on the five counties that comprise the Asheville-Brevard metropolitan statistical area (MSA): Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. It included a comparative review of more than 20 existing strategic plans and studies to identify themes (e.g., strengths, challenges, priorities and goals, initiatives and target industries) shared by multiple counties in the metro area. In addition, the process involved an in-depth analysis of regional data, particularly focused on workforce and industry dynamics. Regional stakeholders provided input through interviews, focus groups, and advisory committee workshops.

Combined, the research points to several regional priorities to be the focus of more unified, cross-county initiatives. Those priorities include housing expansion and diversification; transportation and infrastructure improvement; workforce development, attraction and retention; and business growth. This report shares research highlights that guided these four priorities as well as sample project ideas related to each.

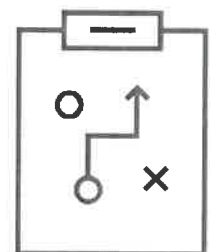
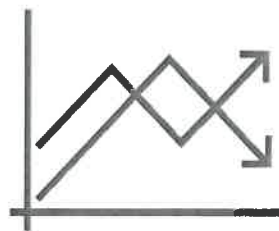
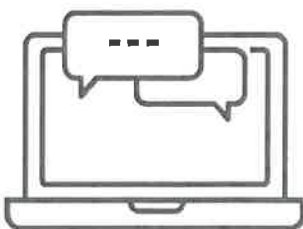
Many of the stakeholders participating in the planning process emphasized their desire for this report not to be just another plan, but one that results in measurable improvements. They acknowledged that achieving this will require private, public and nonprofit leaders from across the metro area to organize and proactively lead initiatives, staying determined from concept to fruition.

About this report

This report summarizes the findings of a four-phased process:

1. At the beginning of the project, the consulting team reviewed 22 existing plans and studies from the five metro area counties (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania). The review focused on identifying similarities among the reports such as strengths, challenges, goals, themes, target industries, project ideas and other topics.
2. Client and stakeholder engagement was another part of the process. An Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from LOSRC and area chambers of commerce met with the consulting team seven times over the course of seven months. Six additional workshops were held with other stakeholders: three with business and higher education leaders (employers) and three with economic and workforce development leaders.
3. Original research and analysis was conducted, and findings were provided to LOSRC in a Labor Shed and Target Industry Analysis report. That report includes insights on the region's workforce in terms of demographics, education attainment, migration patterns, and other variables. It also contains an evaluation of existing industry clusters and potential target industries that could be the focus of future, regional economic and community development activities.
4. With input and insights gleaned from the steps described above, this Land of Sky Regional Resiliency and Strategic Alignment plan has been developed to help clarify and refine the region's collective economic and community development priorities and potential initiatives for the next five to 10 years.

CLIENT COLLABORATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



Plan Alignment & Leadership Facilitation

Research & Analysis

Regional Strategic Plan & Report

About this report (continued)

This report provides a summary of the findings from the stakeholder conversations, organized by themes and topics. It also includes insights from the review of existing plans and studies, as well as highlights from an analysis of the region's labor shed, target industries and possible impacts from automation. The quantitative research shows the recent performance of the region's industries and sectors and workforce trends that affect economic competitiveness.

Findings also include target industries and niche sectors for regional alignment and cooperation around business recruitment and expansion. Certain industry clusters and sectors are more mature and concentrated, while others are still nascent and have the potential for higher levels of job creation and capital investment.

Considerations for regional resiliency and strategic alignment include an overview of priorities and guiding principles, descriptions of actionable goals, and existing and new initiatives related to each goal. Suggested implementation steps to move the initiatives forward are also provided.

Finally, national leading practices that can inform and inspire collaborative efforts are included. The report concludes with a sample implementation template that LOSRC and its regional partners may refer to when organizing efforts.





Summary of stakeholder engagement and document review

Stakeholder views on the region's strengths, challenges and opportunities

Conversations with Advisory Committee members, business leaders, and economic and workforce development leaders revealed significant insights. The following themes and takeaways emerged through the project's stakeholder engagement sessions and were largely reinforced through the review of existing strategic plans, studies and reports. Common regional strengths and assets, challenges and vulnerabilities, and potential opportunities cited by stakeholders included:

Strengths

- ▶ The region is a desirable place for people to live and will continue to attract talent.
- ▶ There is strong and collaborative public and private sector leadership.
- ▶ Residents are highly engaged in civic matters.
- ▶ Quality-of-life amenities abound.

Challenges

- ▶ Housing availability at all incomes and life stages is limited.
- ▶ Regional workforce development efforts lack coordination, leading to workforce shortages and skill misalignment.
- ▶ Poor mobility infrastructure (public transit, roads and bridges) impacts access to jobs and training.
- ▶ There is a NIMBY ("not in my backyard" mindset) when it comes to certain housing, transportation and other community building projects.

Opportunities

- ▶ Expand housing supply and variety.
- ▶ Preserve and enhance outdoor assets through thoughtful planning and development.
- ▶ Foster connectivity through access to training and workforce development as well as transportation and mobility.
- ▶ Enhance community engagement in economic development.

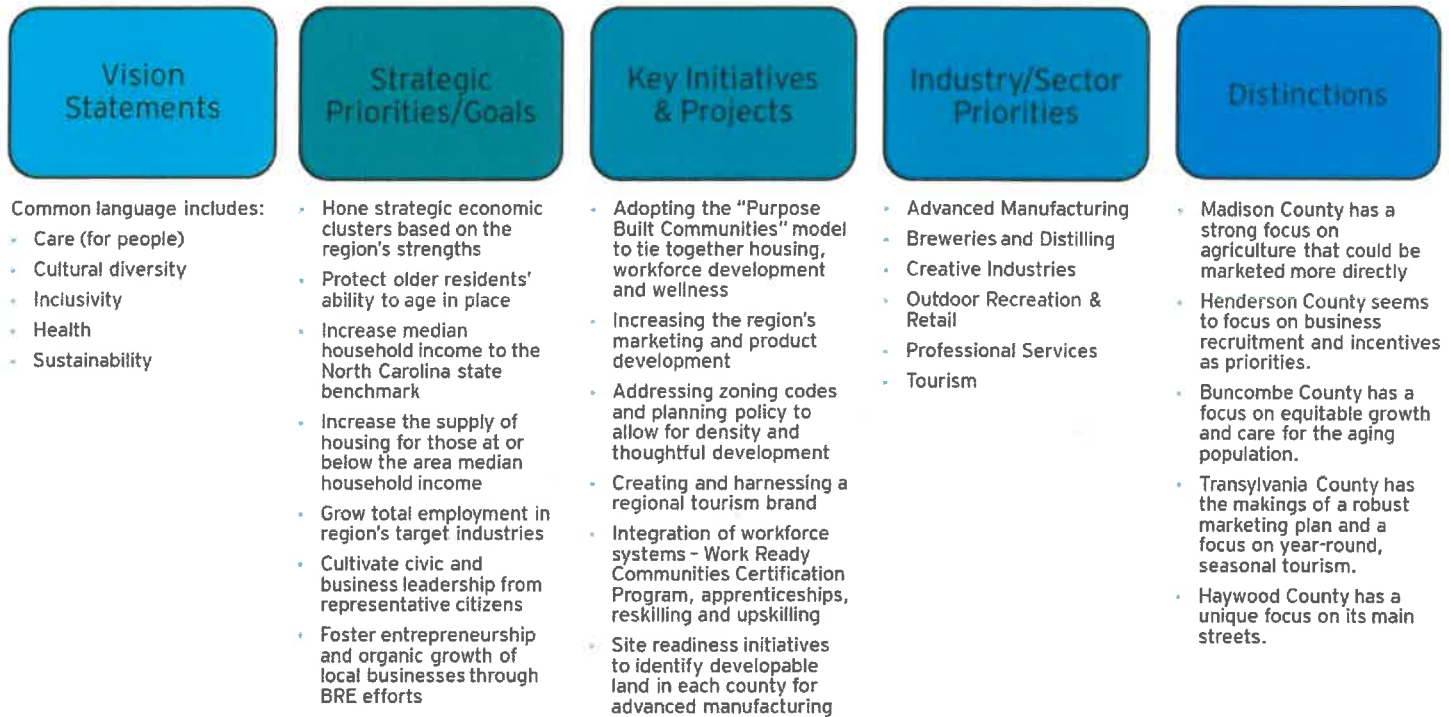
Review of regional plans and studies

The LOSRC provided 22 existing plans and reports for review, representing each county in the five-county metro area and covering a variety of economic and community development topics. The types of plans and studies included:

	Buncombe	Haywood	Henderson	Madison	Transylvania	Regional
Comprehensive (CEDs)						X
Aging						X
Hazard Mitigation	X		X	X	X	
Housing						X
Local ED Plans	X		X	X	X	X
Tourism		X			X	
Transportation/Transit	X					X
Workforce						X



The review focused on similarities among the studies and plans. In many cases, those studies and plans reflect important insights on a particular county or issue, and it is helpful to establish this regional resiliency and alignment plan on a foundation of good work that has already been conducted. By documenting shared visions, strategic priorities, project ideas, target industries, and distinctions across each county, the strategic framework for the region began to form. Examples of those shared themes are summarized below:



The document review, coupled with additional stakeholder conversations, brought several topics of regional importance to the surface: place-based growth, economic mobility and workforce development, housing availability, transportation and infrastructure, and regional marketing and branding. While these topics were refined through further conversations and research, they were the starting point of a regional strategic framework.

Topics of regional importance and concern



Place-based growth



Economic mobility and workforce development



Housing availability



Transportation and infrastructure



Regional marketing and branding

Place-based growth

A distinctive quality of the region is a consistent interest throughout the region in maintaining quality of place, stewarding the environment and natural amenities, and caring for fellow residents. There is a general concern for balancing economic growth with the preservation of what has attracted people to the region, such as being an alternative to more congested metro areas, having safe and cost-effective living options, and keeping its scenic, outdoors appeal.

Place-based growth also factors in the value of existing businesses (from small to midsize and large) and the importance of supporting local entrepreneurs and business owners. It takes into consideration the supply of commercial sites and infrastructure needed to support businesses, and the kind of talent that employers need to compete and thrive.



Economic mobility and workforce development

Issues around economic mobility for residents and workers were a recurring theme that came across through stakeholder discussions. Similar to other growing regions, the Asheville-Brevard MSA seemed to be experiencing degrees of economic growth in tandem with increasing economic inequity. There was a clear desire to see more residents, especially young people, connected to career pathways in dominant industries that provide economic mobility and opportunity.

There was consensus around the notion that economic mobility is intertwined with access to transportation and housing availability. Business leaders have experienced attrition due to their employees being priced out of housing options near their places of work and the lack of reliable transportation options in residential areas located farther from job centers. Economic and workforce development leaders also face challenges because talent shortages and transportation disconnects can make it more difficult to attract businesses and serve residents in need of education and training.

Housing availability

Housing availability, or the lack thereof, was one of the most commonly discussed topics among stakeholders. While there is a need for more affordable multifamily homes, all types of housing are needed, including rental units, single-family starter homes, and senior living housing and other options. Business leaders in particular recognize the need for density and multifamily housing but are cognizant of the land use concerns associated with building large structures in certain parts of the region. A NIMBY (“not in my backyard”) mindset among many residents was cited as a barrier to new housing development, as well as infrastructure expansion. Some longtime residents are resistant to increasing the housing supply, especially affordable housing, which has implications for fostering more economic mobility and shared prosperity.





Transportation and infrastructure

The region's population and business growth has put stress on existing transportation and other infrastructure. Stakeholders' primary transportation concerns were related to deteriorating roads, highways and bridges. Other critical infrastructure in need of improvement that stakeholders discussed were related to water and sewer capacity and broadband internet connectivity. Expanding commercial space for different types of businesses was also referenced, especially coworking space for the region's entrepreneurs and micro-businesses.

The overall theme among business leaders and practitioners is a desire for proactive planning and development for transportation and infrastructure holistically, and in tandem with regional economic development and land use priorities. Barriers to improved infrastructure include a lack of adequate and equitable funding. Transportation and infrastructure improvements are needed in all areas of the region, but stakeholders in more rural counties expressed that their communities have some of the most severe challenges.

Regional marketing and branding

The quality of life and geographic appeal of the metro area make it a natural choice for residents and tourists who know about the area because they live in a neighboring region or state, have family or friends there, and/or have heard about it through word-of-mouth. However, based on input from stakeholders, there seems to be an opportunity for more coordination around marketing the region to potential businesses and people who could join the region's workforce.

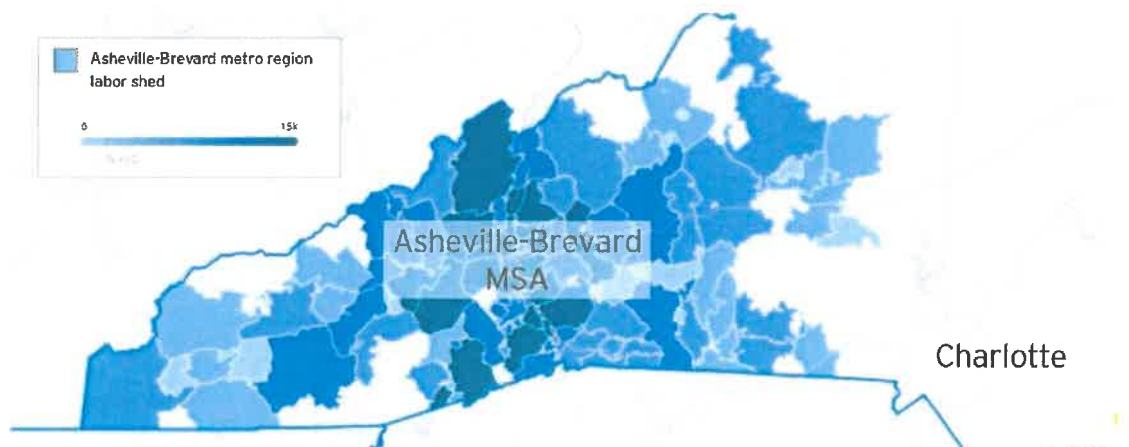
Economic development leaders in particular identified a few potential areas for enhanced collaboration, including the promotion of industry clusters and related career opportunities to out-of-market talent; marketing existing resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs in the region; and presenting a shared regional identity through marketing and messaging.

3 Summary of research and analysis

Regional labor shed analysis

Workforce availability is a top determinant of where businesses locate, start up and expand. With more than 76% of the region's jobs being filled by residents, labor demand is largely satisfied by those who live and work in the region. However, there are many resident workers who commute across county lines within the metro area to work in a county that is not their jurisdiction of residence. Intra-regional talent flow is a workforce benefit for the region because it expands the region's labor draw.

However, the region relies on its broader labor shed when it comes to filling jobs and meeting growing employer demand. As of 2019, 24% of workers in the region commute into the metro area for work from a county outside of the region. The counties that provide the highest levels of commuters tend to have rather seamless access to major transportation corridors, such as Interstate 26 and Interstate 40. Overall, the inflow and outflow of workers in the region can be deemed positive. The region has a growing population and sizable labor draw.



A region's ability to attract and retain talent is closely linked to its competitiveness for business recruitment, expansion and entrepreneurship. A workforce that has diversity in terms of age distribution, education and skills, gender, race and ethnicity, and other differentiators can be an important factor for sustained economic growth. Currently, the resident worker population within the region can be characterized as being older and above state and national percentages in terms of bachelor's degree attainment. This analysis indicates that younger workers who tend to work in lower-wage roles are more likely to migrate into the metro area for employment. On the other hand, the region is a net exporter of workers age 30 and above, among which the largest group is age 55 and older.

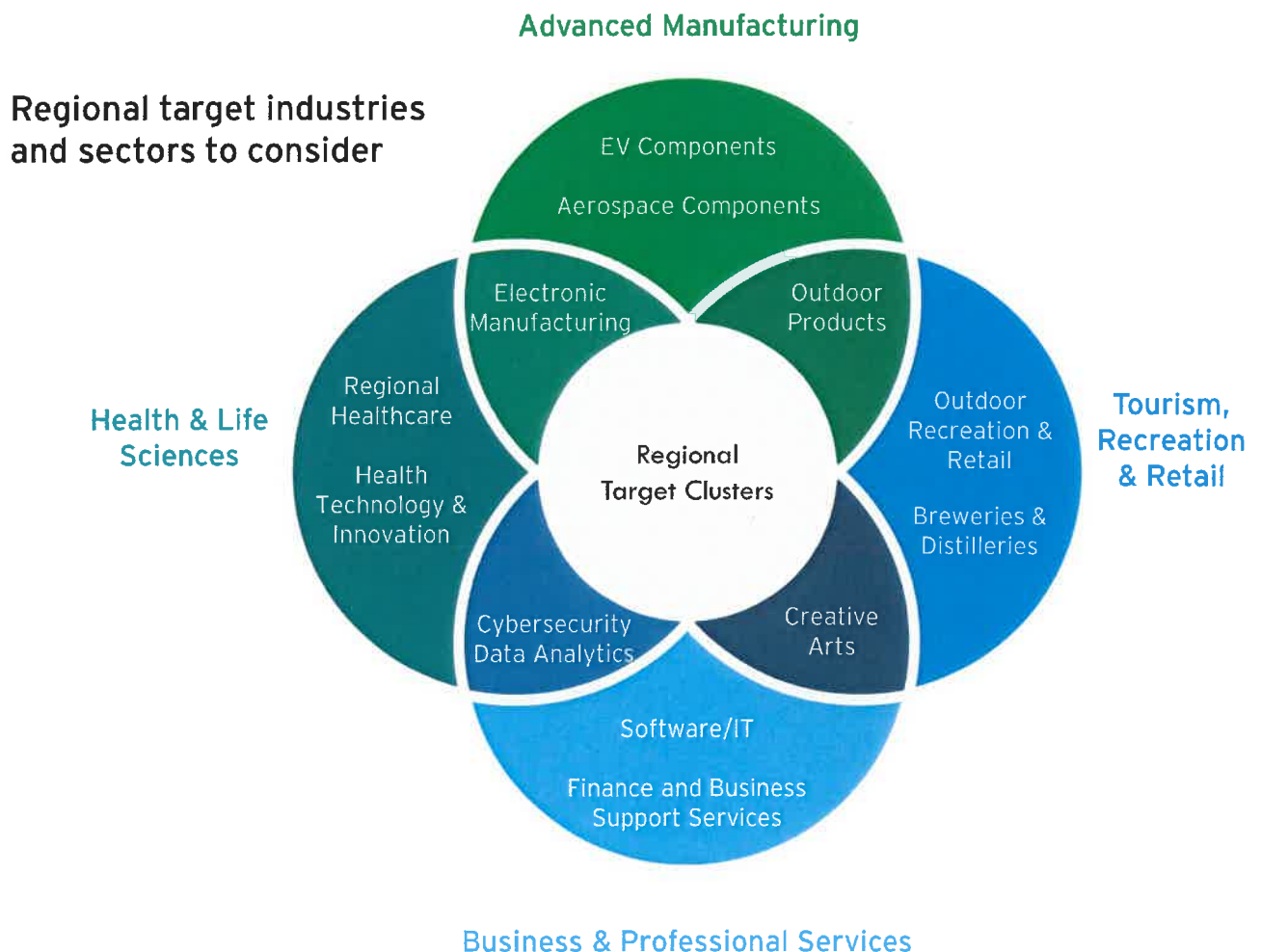
The dynamism of the region's labor shed and workforce, along with assets such as a nationally connected airport, numerous institutions of higher learning, natural beauty and a desirable quality of life have contributed to the region's resilience in the face of recent economic, technological, demographic changes and viral disruptions.



Target industry analysis

The region experienced employment growth above the US average, with Henderson, Buncombe and Transylvania counties leading the way. In the five years leading up to 2020, virtually every industry cluster in the region experienced employment gains. Economically, the strong employment growth experienced by the region reflects several notable trends. Perhaps most importantly, prior to the pandemic, employment growth in the region was distributed across a variety of industries and sectors.

The target industry assessment revealed four clusters for the region that could galvanize collective business recruitment, entrepreneurship and expansion efforts in the region. The target clusters for consideration include Advanced Manufacturing; Tourism, Recreation & Retail; Health & Life Sciences; and Business & Professional Services. As shown in the accompanying graphic, each target contains several niche industries and sectors.



While each cluster has its own unique attributes, the clusters also share traits. Recent employment gains in all four target clusters have not only outperformed the region as a whole but have outpaced national growth. Despite the pandemic and its lingering economic impact, all recommended target clusters are also projected to generate continued employment gains in the region. In addition to strong employment performance, the target clusters also create high-wage opportunities for local workers. Growth in areas such as Outdoor Products, Component Manufacturing and Business Support Services can create new career paths for homegrown talent that might otherwise commute out of the region for employment.

Automation impact assessment

Automation is an ongoing trend that communities and industries will increasingly need to address. Understanding existing and potential industry impacts can help inform economic and workforce development strategies and initiatives in the region.

An estimated 59% of all jobs (FTE) in the metro area are subject to automation, which is the application of technologies that can perform routine tasks currently or traditionally performed by humans. Occupations with higher levels of automation include Hospitality, Manufacturing, and Agriculture. Industries least susceptible to automation include Medical & Health Care and Business & Professional Services. These industries require significant customer interaction, as well as specialized expertise.

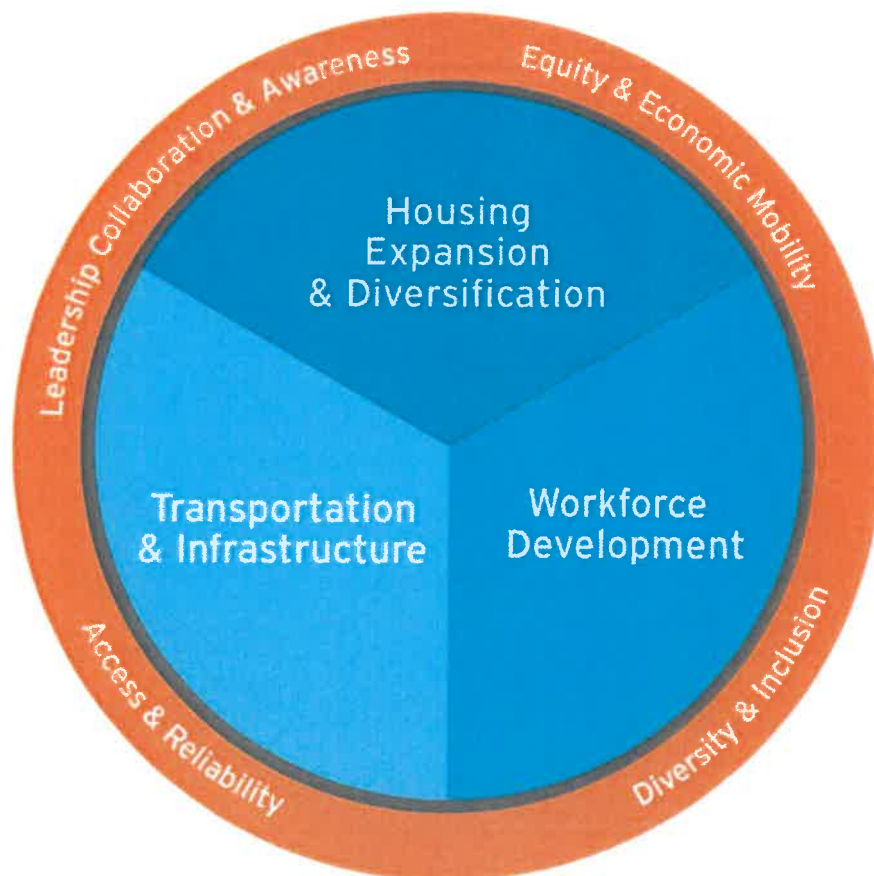
As technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning continue to evolve, higher-skilled roles may be impacted as well. Lower-skilled jobs with repetitive functions are at the highest risk of automation. Within the region, the jobs most likely to be automated are those that do not require a formal post-secondary education and/or only require a high school diploma or equivalent credential.

While the rise of automation will help maintain US economic competitiveness, it will also spark significant disruptions for industry and talent. Awareness of the jobs that may be impacted, as well as the new career paths that could result from technological advancements, are important considerations for current and future workforce development efforts.

Considerations for regional resiliency and strategic alignment

Strategic framework: Priorities and guiding principles

The strategic framework synthesizes insights from the review of regional plans and studies, stakeholder engagement, and research and analysis gathered through the strategic planning process with an exploration of relevant, national leading practices. Key priorities and guiding principles have been identified to foster greater alignment and impact around economic growth throughout the region.



Priorities and goals

During the planning process, stakeholders deemed the following strategic priorities as urgent. They view them both as challenges and vulnerabilities to resolve as well as tremendous opportunities to increase economic competitiveness and community revitalization. Actionable goals and implementation considerations for each of the priorities have been drafted below to clarify the areas of focus within the priorities and the outcomes to be achieved.

Housing Expansion and Diversification

- ▶ **Goal:** The region has ample quality housing options for residents at every income level.

Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement

- ▶ **Goal:** The region efficiently connects people to jobs and provides the infrastructure businesses need to grow.

Workforce Development

- ▶ **Goal:** The region has a skilled, diverse workforce that meets employer needs and contributes to vibrant communities.



Guiding principles

The guiding principles can be considered community values that emerged during the planning process. These principles can inform the implementation of the strategic plan and the collaborative work of the partners involved. LOSRC research on "Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region" can provide insight on key areas of focus when applying the principles to the strategic priorities and goals.

Leadership Collaboration and Awareness

- ▶ Providing research, project ideas, and collaboration opportunities to private, public and nonprofit leaders in the region to raise awareness and compel action.

Access and Reliability

- ▶ Maintaining the importance of connectivity and dependability in terms of the assets and resources needed for a desirable quality of life and healthy business environment.

Diversity and Inclusion

- ▶ Valuing the full spectrum of identities, backgrounds and differences of people and businesses and cultivating a welcoming community for all.

Equity and Economic Mobility*

- ▶ Willingness to identify and address systemic barriers to upward mobility so that historically underserved residents and businesses can participate in, and benefit from, the economic growth of the region.



Creating a Regional Business Council

As noted in the guiding principles, stakeholders emphasized that collaboration between, and involvement of, private sector, government and nonprofit leaders is essential for the advancement of the priorities identified in this report. Based on input from stakeholders, the participation of business leaders needs greater focus. Whereas Land of Sky Regional Council's leadership primarily consists of public sector leaders from the metro area's cities and counties, a private sector group that is also representative of the region could expedite progress on critical economic and community challenges.

A **Regional Business Council***, led by area chambers of commerce and consisting of voluntary executive leaders from major employers, small businesses and entrepreneurial companies, can work collaboratively to advance the priorities and initiatives that are put forth for consideration. Housing Expansion and Diversification, along with Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement, could be primary workstreams for the group, while also giving increasing attention to Workforce Development over time.

Implementation considerations:

- ▶ The region's chambers of commerce would serve as organizing entities, with support from LOSRC as needed. Each chamber could identify three to four executive leaders from their county to serve on the Council.
- ▶ Determine the co-chairs who will serve as the primary leaders and spokespersons for the Council (e.g., co-chairs could be representative of two of the region's target industries).
- ▶ Council members could delegate some of their participation responsibilities to direct reports interested in leadership development and regional civic engagement.
- ▶ The priorities and goals can be leveraged to focus the Council's meetings and activities, and the guiding principles can serve as reference points for deliberations around process, programs and policies.
- ▶ Consideration could be given to forming a committee for one or more of the priority areas if needed.
- ▶ Elected officials and other public sector leaders (including representatives from LOSRC's Board of Delegates), as well as education and nonprofit leaders, could be invited to join meetings as needed to provide updates and information, and to exchange ideas on how private and public sector leaders can collaborate to address and advance regional challenges and opportunities.
- ▶ Meetings could be monthly in the first year to create momentum and transition to quarterly in the second or third year.
- ▶ The Regional Business Council could convene a symposium on all three priority topics (housing, transportation and infrastructure, and workforce) or host separate events addressing each topic. Either option could be useful for engaging and educating the business community on the significance of these issues and how they can get involved to advance solutions that their companies and employees would benefit from.

**The Council is highlighted in blue throughout the report to emphasize the vital role it can play in moving the strategic priorities and goals forward.*

Drivers and disruptors*



Cost of living

- Slowing growth in housing supply has led to increased asset prices for those already owning homes and high prices for those looking to purchase or rent.



The rise of remote work

- For the last 20 years, the number of Americans moving each year has fallen. If workers can live anywhere, this trend may finally reverse. Workers will likely choose to live where amenities and culture abound.

**Drivers and disruptors are macro factors that are impacting local economies and communities.*

Goals and potential initiatives

Housing Expansion and Diversification

Goal 1: The region has ample quality housing options for residents at every income level.

Among the four strategic priorities, the need to expand and diversify housing stock was perceived by stakeholders to be among the most urgent needs in the region. It was also a consistent theme in the regional plans and studies reviewed. Lack of housing availability is considered to be a significant barrier to talent attraction and retention efforts, as well as business recruitment, expansion and job creation. While there are a select number of existing initiatives seeking to address this issue at the local (city and county level), a more regional approach could accelerate housing development for residents across income levels.

Initiatives and activities to consider

1.1 Champion an integrated approach to housing and infrastructure development.

Together, Housing Expansion and Diversification and Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement are critical priorities for the region. Stakeholders also viewed these needs as interdependent, but in practice they tend to be siloed when it comes to planning, funding and development. A more integrated approach could help create more sustainable and successful outcomes. The **Regional Business Council**, chambers of commerce and LOSRC are poised to help bridge these efforts and accelerate momentum and impact on both fronts.



Housing Expansion and Diversification

Implementation considerations

- ▶ The **Regional Business Council**, in concert with area chambers, can be a key resource for exploring intersections and collaboration opportunities for housing and other priorities.
- ▶ If forming committees for the Council, consider a single committee for housing, transportation and infrastructure.
- ▶ When the Council is discussing housing- and infrastructure-related issues, it could be helpful to have those with essential subject-matter knowledge involved, including those from government and nonprofit housing agencies, real estate developers, and construction companies, civil engineering firms, and others.
- ▶ LOSRC may consider a realignment around its economic and community development offerings. On its website, housing is included under "Planning" and "Infrastructure and Community Development," and "Transportation" is in its own category. Reframing housing, transportation and infrastructure as an integrated planning effort could help with better coordination across these facets of economic and community development.
- ▶ Continue to collaborate with local organizations around research and analysis to provide up-to-date information to the Council and other key stakeholders.
- ▶ Consider publishing an annual state of the region report that would include a research summary, as well as updates on progress made, in housing and infrastructure, as well as other priority areas.
- ▶ Explore opportunities to educate the broader community on the importance of housing and infrastructure investments and keep a pulse on shifts in public opinion (i.e., NIMBYism) through periodic polls, focus groups and other stakeholder engagement methods.

1.2 Enhance collaboration with the Dogwood Health Trust housing initiative and other programs.

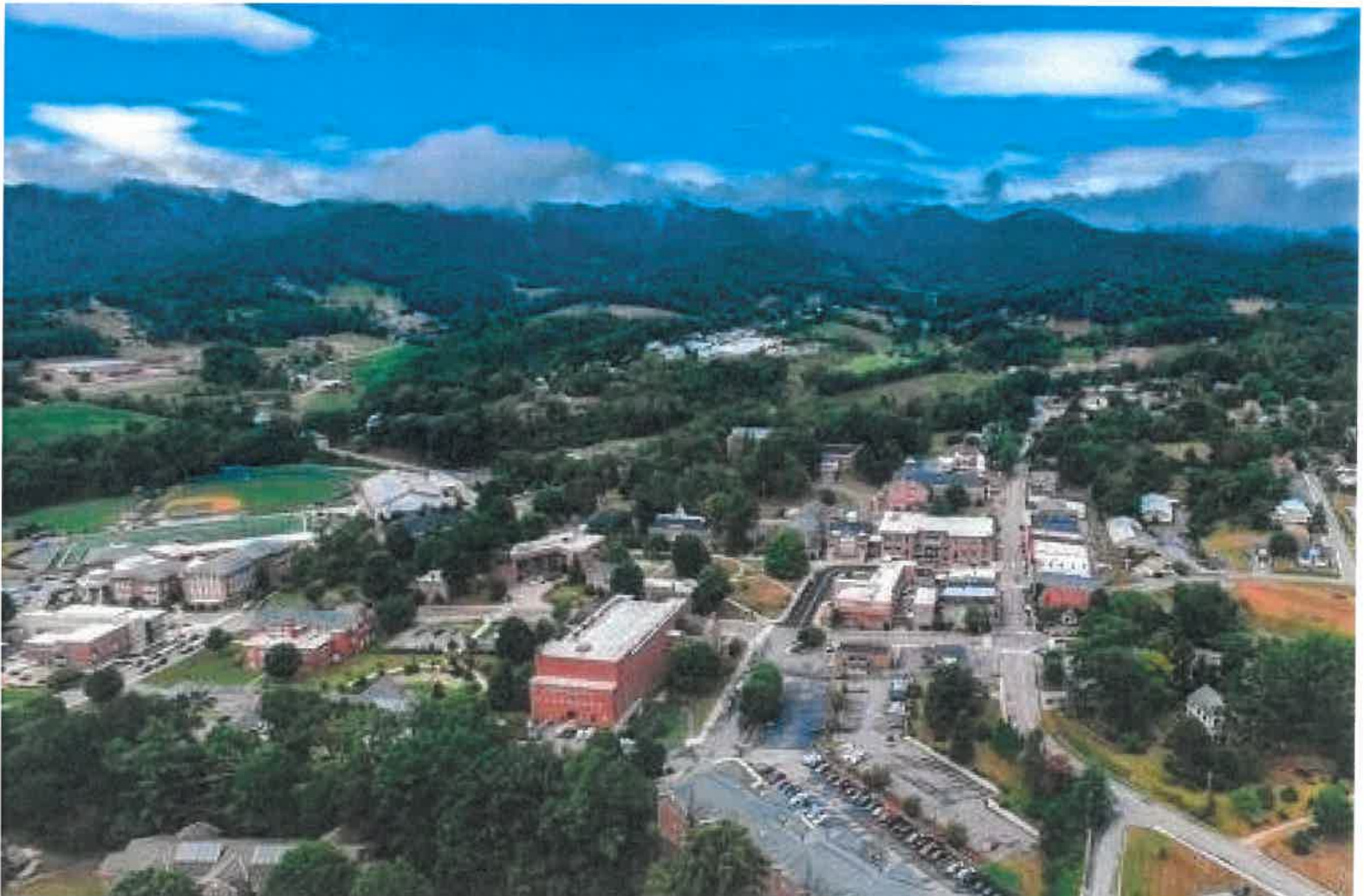
According to its website, Dogwood Health Trust is committed to expanding affordable home rental and ownership for residents throughout Western North Carolina, which includes the Asheville-Brevard metro. Enhanced collaboration with Dogwood and other local organizations can accelerate the development of housing for more residents in the region.



Housing Expansion and Diversification

Implementation considerations

- ▶ LOSRC could continue its collaboration with Dogwood to conduct research and analysis on housing needs in the region and western North Carolina.
- ▶ LOSRC, chambers, the [Regional Business Council](#), and others could coordinate with Dogwood on funding opportunities, including collaboration on grant writing, to drive investment for housing in Asheville-Brevard metro area counties.
- ▶ Dogwood could have representation on the Council to help align housing development activities and related programs and events.
- ▶ The Dogwood Council member could provide regular updates and share opportunities for coordination.
- ▶ Seek opportunities to support and coordination with other organizations as appropriate.



Housing Expansion and Diversification

Example metrics for success

- Increase in inventory of market-rate and affordable housing units
- Percentage of new housing (single family and rental) units
- Percentage of rehabilitated housing units
- Increase in housing by county

1.3 Explore forming a regional housing trust fund to strengthen investment in, and coordination of, housing development and rehabilitation.

LOSRC plays a key role in the promotion of affordable housing production and preservation by serving as an educational resource and liaison for public sector partners, private developers and residents. The organization is positioned to explore an expansion of operations that could include development of a regional housing trust fund to garner financial resources to support new construction, acquisitions and restorations, home rehabilitations, and other housing activities. The establishment of a trust fund, along with an expansion of LOSRC's existing services, can have a positive impact on housing availability in the region.

Implementation considerations

- ▶ LOSRC could work with the **Regional Business Council** and chambers on reviewing existing models for housing trust funds, including speaking with individuals who staff those programs (See examples of housing trust funds under "Leading practices").
- ▶ Identify current and potential funding sources, including public (federal, state, local), private and philanthropic.
- ▶ Based on findings and input from the Council, determine if a housing trust or other vehicle would be most conducive for generating enhanced funding for housing development and repair.
- ▶ Explore opportunities to broaden LOSRC's support of regional housing to include options for residents of varying income levels in alignment with the need for diversified housing, not just affordable housing.
- ▶ Create a formal process for addressing recommendations from the recently completed housing needs assessment.
- ▶ Help expand local support for housing expansion by educating business leaders on the importance of diversified housing for economic growth and inviting their involvement.
- ▶ Support ribbon-cutting ceremonies for new projects and coordinate communications efforts to share successes throughout the region, state and beyond.
- ▶ Explore the NC Department of Commerce's HOME Funds allocation and how it might be used to develop multifamily housing.



Drivers and disruptors



Federal spending surges

- The pandemic spurred a massive increase in federal spending. The Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA), for instance, envisions transformative spending on roadways, bridges, greenways and internet access.



Automobile electrification

- EV sales are predicted to rise precipitously, and with that comes increased demand for infrastructure to sustain them. Charging stations and connected infrastructure are needed community investments.

Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement

Goal 2: The region efficiently connects people to jobs and provides the infrastructure businesses need to grow.

Throughout the plan review and stakeholder engagement, the need to improve transportation and infrastructure was another continuous theme. If the region continues to grow at its projected pace, its roads, bridges, public transit, water and broadband will need ongoing development. These improvements are needed for sustained growth and to provide reliable access to the education, training and jobs that make economic equity and mobility possible.

Initiatives and activities to consider

2.1 Connect and expand the region's greenway and trail systems.

While the region has a robust network of existing greenways and trails, connecting these assets to create a seamless movement experience through walking and biking could contribute to the region's quality of life and place. Additionally, these resources provide an alternative to automotive transportation, which can reduce traffic and environmental impact. The Hellbender Regional Trail Plan that is currently underway could be a primary initiative to support.

Implementation considerations

- ▶ Work closely with RPOs and MPOs to understand barriers to greenway and train connectivity, as well as the requirements around state and federal funding for pedestrian and cycling related infrastructure.
- ▶ In addition to the public funding that would typically be invested through MPOs and RPOs, explore other funding sources, such as private enterprises and philanthropic foundations.
- ▶ Leverage the Regional Business Council, LOSRC board, planning organizations and others to develop connectivity plan and project timeline move the effort forward.
- ▶ Consider collaboration on an impact study to better understand the quantitative impact of greenways and trails on the region's economy, quality of life/place and environment.



Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement

Example metrics for success

- Increase in transportation and infrastructure funding
- Increase in access to water/sewer, broadband and other services
- Increase in number of households with reliable broadband
- Reduction in traffic congestion

2.2 Reinforce current transportation planning and development efforts to foster enhanced connectivity for living, learning and working.

There are a number of efforts currently being led by the region's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs). Similar to the housing priority, there is an opportunity to better engage business leaders in bolstering transportation and infrastructure efforts, and improving the metro area's capabilities around the movement of people and goods through an array of safe and accessible transportation modes. A more integrated regional transportation and mobility system can help foster better connectivity for residents between their homes (1.1), education and training programs, workplaces and recreational activities.

Implementation considerations

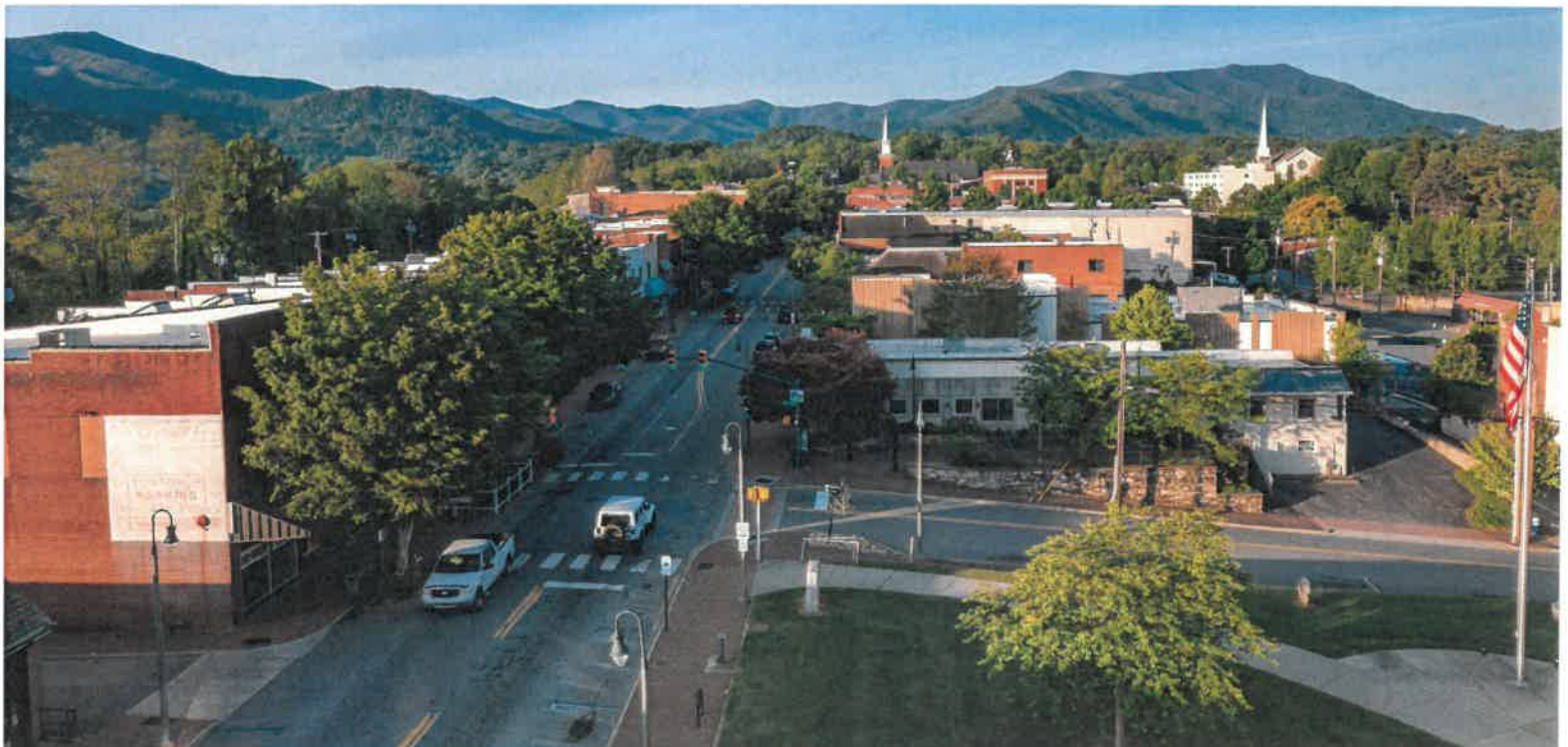
- ▶ The **Regional Business Council** could host special workshops with leaders from the MPOs and RPOs for brainstorming and/or design-thinking sessions to identify barriers to transportation and mobility improvements and how to overcome those challenges.
- ▶ Utilize the Council to explore leading transportation and mobility frameworks and initiatives from across the country. (See examples of transportation and mobility frameworks under "Leading Practices").
- ▶ Key considerations could be intercounty bus routes; last-mile rideshare services; greater pedestrian and bicycle access between residential areas, job centers and greenways (2.1); and increasing the number of electric vehicle charging stations, as well as essential road, highway and bridge improvements.
- ▶ Continue to collaborate on the pursuit of government funding opportunities through federal programs, such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), as well as state funding through the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and other sources.
- ▶ As of the writing of this report, LOSRC is exploring the adoption of the Transportation Management Association (TMA) model to bolster its role in this priority area and to help facilitate more coordination across regional jurisdictions. A new TMA operation could play a significant role in the advancement of regional transportation and mobility.

2.3 Expand the region's WestNGN Broadband Initiative.

In 2019, the Land of Sky Regional Council conducted a public survey to ascertain the region's digital connectivity. Of the 8,500 responses from residents, 13% of households reported no access to broadband internet, and 50% reported having insufficient broadband access. While initial steps have been taken, including the development of a "Digital Inclusion plan," renewing the commitment to this initiative with enhanced resources could help improve digital infrastructure and inclusion in the region.

Implementation considerations

- ▶ Work with local governments and providers on identification of areas in need of broadband development.
- ▶ Partner with providers, workforce and education partners on providing digital literacy learning opportunities virtually and in-person for those who need it.
- ▶ Explore the removal of barriers to doing business for providers, such as simplifying the permitting process for burying cable and building towers.
- ▶ Increase LOSRC WestNGN staff capacity in broadband and digital inclusion.
- ▶ Identify funding sources, such as those from the Appalachian Regional Commission, Connect America Funds, U.S. Economic Development Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, BEAD, GREAT and others.



Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement

Example metrics for success

- Increase in transportation and infrastructure funding
- Increase in access to water/sewer, broadband and other services
- Increase in number of households with reliable broadband
- Reduction in traffic congestion

2.4 Strengthen the region's water and sewer infrastructure with proactive planning and enhanced funding.

The region's suboptimal water and sewer infrastructure was cited by stakeholders and certain studies as a hindrance to site development for housing and industrial projects. There are myriad public funding opportunities to improve these systems including IIJA and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) among others.

Implementation considerations

- ▶ Create a regional needs assessment for water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure needs.
- ▶ Leverage the [Regional Business Council](#) and LOSRC board to convene stakeholders with knowledge and involvement in this area to prioritize and determine feasibility for projects, and determine entities that need to be involved.
- ▶ Continue to explore federal and state funding required for projects.



Drivers and disruptors



Help wanted

- In March 2022, job openings exceeded the number of unemployed persons by 5.6 million. Despite school resuming, daycares opening, and unemployment benefits ending, labor availability is a continued challenge.



Labor shortages

- Ongoing labor shortages are driven by wage competition from other sectors and by lack of technical worker training in middle skills.

Workforce Development

Goal 3: The region has a skilled, diverse workforce that meets employer needs and contributes to vibrant communities.

Employers and other stakeholders referenced the need for a qualified workforce as one of their most critical needs. The region has numerous education and training and assets that provide a foundation for the continued development of skilled workers that reflect the demographics of the metro area. Current efforts that are connecting career-seekers with education and career paths to economic mobility can be bolstered with elevated coordination and support. The target industries that have been shared for consideration include an array of upwardly mobile careers.

The WNC Innovation Park is a noteworthy concept developed through a public-private partnership that seeks to build upon high-growth sectors in 18 western North Carolina counties, including those in the Asheville-Brevard metro area. The innovation park is intended to help grow industries and careers that provide economic opportunity, such as data analytics and information technology. There is an opportunity to integrate the initiatives and activities described below into ongoing efforts to make the innovation park a reality.

Initiative and activities to consider

3.1 Collaborate with workforce development and education institutions to enhance the alignment of regional programs with target industries, and foster more connectivity with employers.

The region is home to a variety of workforce development, higher education institutions and other organizations that cultivate a skilled workforce for the region. Stakeholders shared that there is a need and opportunity to foster greater alignment between employer workforce demand and available programs. Enhanced communication and relationship building between businesses and workforce partners can increase employer awareness of current programs, while also providing opportunities for them to give feedback and contribute to the development of programs.



Implementation considerations

Example metrics for success

- Increase in workers with target industry related credentials
- Percentage of workers employed in target industries
- Increase in average household income

- ▶ Collaborate with Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB), Southwestern Commission Council of Governments, higher education institutions, K-12 school systems and other partners to inventory programs and curriculum that align with target industries, and collect and share data on student enrollment and matriculation through programs.
- ▶ LOSRC's P-20 Council, which is affiliated with the myFutureNC initiative, can serve a key role in strengthening the coordination of education attainment and employment programs in the region.
- ▶ Support MAWDB's efforts to inventory local education and training programs to assess their alignment with target industries.
- ▶ Share findings in a user-friendly format as a resource for employers, and seek their feedback on any perceived gaps in regional education and training in terms of the talent and skills they need.
- ▶ Based on projected economic growth in target industries and input from employers, explore and share forecasts of future workforce demand.
- ▶ Promote MAWDB's Guided Compass online platform that helps connect career-seekers with employers, mentors and educational resources. IT career pathways are being integrated into Guided Compass and could serve as a model for connecting individuals to other pathways that are aligned with the region's target industries.
- ▶ Service workers could be a priority group for connectivity to career paths with enhanced economic mobility potential.
- ▶ While MAWDB, colleges and universities may continue to lead many employer and workforce development efforts, LOSRC and the chambers, along with the [Regional Business Council](#), could help align these activities at the regional level.
- ▶ Continue sharing updates on employer workforce needs at LOSRC partner meetings and communicate that input to education and training providers.
- ▶ LOSRC could collaborate with local partners in a monthly e-newsletter that highlights area programs and via social media.
- ▶ Successful employer-education/training partnerships and leading practices could be shared during a council- and chamber-led workforce development conference, or as part of a topically integrated symposium as referenced previously (p. 19).





Leading practices

The following leading practices can help inform and inspire the initiatives that have been put forth for consideration.

Regional councils and task forces

Central Indiana Corporate Partnership - Indianapolis, IN

Comprised of CEOs from the region's most prominent corporations, the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership is influential in setting the region's economic development agenda through strategic initiatives in workforce, entrepreneurship and innovation, and ensuring a favorable business climate.

Website: <https://www.cicpindiana.com/>

Regional Business Council - St. Louis, MO

The independent group engages members to take action on high-impact business, civic and philanthropic priorities, including quality of life, public policy and regional infrastructure and workforce development, for the betterment of the St. Louis region.

Website: <https://stlrbc.org/>

Charlotte MOVES Task Force - Charlotte, NC

The Charlotte City Council-appointed task force consists of community leaders across the Charlotte metro area representing business, government, education, nonprofits and other sectors that worked together to create a transformative mobility plan and funding strategy for transportation expansion.

Website:

[https://charlottenc.gov/Mayor/Charlotte Moves Task Force/Pages/default.aspx](https://charlottenc.gov/Mayor/Charlotte_Moves_Task_Force/Pages/default.aspx)

Councils & Task Forces - Dallas, TX

The Dallas Regional Chamber has numerous business councils and task forces that advance initiatives related to economic development and marketing; innovation and entrepreneurship; education and talent attraction; public policy; diversity, equity and inclusion; and others.

Website: <https://www.dallaschamber.org/member-resources/councils-taskforces/>

Housing Expansion and Diversification

Iowa Housing Trust Funds - State of Iowa

Iowa has several regional housing trust funds that support affordable housing needs across the state, including new construction, acquisition and renovation of existing properties, home rehabilitation, down payment assistance and other services.

Websites:

Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund, <https://www.uerpc.org/housing-trust-fund.html>

Central Iowa Housing Trust Fund, <https://cihtf.org/>

Greenville Housing Fund - Greenville, SC

The Greenville Housing Fund was established to address the shortage of affordable housing options in Greenville, SC. It works with developers, elected officials, residents and other stakeholders and partners to increase and preserve the supply of safe, accessible and cost-effective housing that supports economic growth.

Website: <https://greenvillehousingfund.com/>

Smart Growth and Equitable Development - US Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA has presented the "Smart Growth" model as a resource for communities and regions seeking to address multiple needs through an integrated approach. The model includes four primary tenets: (1) cleaning up and reinvesting in neighborhoods; (2) providing housing choices for people of all income levels; (3) offering affordable, environmentally sustainable transportation options; and (4) improving access to jobs and services with development that is accessible for pedestrians and public transit users.

Website:

<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-and-equitable-development>



Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement

Connect Beyond - Charlotte region, NC

Connect Beyond is a regional mobility initiative for the cities and towns in 12 counties in the Charlotte metro area. The initiative includes a plan that can serve as a blueprint for a comprehensive, integrated public transit network, enhanced bus services and other accessible mobility options, and the application of innovative transportation technologies.

Website: <https://www.connect-beyond.com/plan/>

South Shore Transportation Management Association - Lake Tahoe area, NV

The South Shore TMA is a not-for-profit entity that acts as the community forum for solving transportation and mobility challenges for the South Lake Tahoe region. The organization and its members advocate for improved mobility by fostering collaboration, providing education about current and ideal future transportation mechanisms, and opening doors to sustainable funding.

Website: <https://ss-tma.org/>

New Frontier regional broadband plan - Nebraska

The Nebraska Broadband, an affiliate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, developed by the state of Nebraska, developed several regional plans (2014-2018) to address the expansion of broadband connectivity, digital literacy and/or other economic development priorities. The New Frontier region, which consists of 10 counties, has a plan for educating people on the value of broadband, increasing availability to all communities and rural areas, and expanding access and bandwidth for health care providers, businesses, nonprofits and local governments.

Website:

<https://broadband.nebraska.gov/documents/new-frontier-regional-plan.pdf>



Workforce Development, Attraction and Retention

Northern Virginia talent website - Fairfax County, VA

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority has created a talent-focused website to act as a resource hub for those exploring moving to and working in Northern Virginia in the Washington, DC metro area. The site has a job aggregator that organizes postings by industry cluster and provides easy access to information on education and training opportunities, places to live and other information.

Website: <https://workinnorthernvirginia.com/>

Upskill Houston - Houston region, TX

Upskill Houston is an employer-led initiative managed by the Greater Houston Partnership focused on strengthening the pipeline of skilled workers to meet employer needs and foster economic opportunity for all workers. The initiative has a particular focus on supporting career pathways that require post-secondary education or training but not a four-year college degree.

Website: <https://www.houston.org/upskillhouston>



6 Conclusion

The Regional Resiliency and Strategic Alignment plan positions the Asheville-Brevard metro area for sustainable economic and community development. It also helps regional leaders work toward alleviating vulnerabilities that can be barriers to growth, and plan for disruptive forces (such as automation) in a proactive, concerted manner. Through enhanced collaboration between LOSRC and its partners, and alignment around impactful initiatives and activities, the region has potential to continue its trajectory as a high-quality community that provides an ideal environment for people of all backgrounds and businesses in a variety of growing industries.



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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

- Items:** 3E – Affordable and Workforce Housing
- Nature of Items:** No Action
- Attachment(s):** DHT Bowen Report [Western-North-Carolina-Hsg-Needs-Assmt.pdf \(dogwoodhealthtrust.org\)](#)
- Background:** City of Brevard Mayor and Executive Committee Member Maureen Copelof requested that Land of Sky Regional Council serve as a regional convener to address the affordable and workforce housing need in the region. The CEDS update will identify housing as the top priority for the region. LOSRC currently supports housing in many ways from providing writing and technical support for the Regional Housing Consortium, supporting non-profit housing agencies including the WNC Housing Partnership and helping address the infrastructure needs required to support affordable housing. A regional forum would likely include Dogwood Health Trust, NC Housing Finance Agency, WNC Housing Partnership and many others.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director
- Suggested Motion:** N/A.



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

- Items:** 3F – NC11 Congressional Candidates
- Nature of Items:** No Action
- Attachment(s):** None
- Background:** At the request of Chairman Fitzsimmons I have invited the three NC11 Congressional candidates (Democrat Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Republican Chuck Edwards, Libertarian David Coatney) to speak for 10 minutes to the LOSRC Board of Delegates. This will not be a debate. Attorney Susan Russo-Klein has indicated that we can host a nonpartisan forum and not jeopardize our funding sources or federal and state assurances. The three candidates will join us at the October 26 Board of Delegates meeting.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director
- Suggested Motion:** N/A.

1. Finance

- Patricia Rosenberg joined us as our Interim Finance Director on August 8. Patricia is highly qualified and we are excited she has joined our team. Charlotte will continue to help us with this transition by working 1-day each week at LOSRC. We anticipate interviews for the Finance Director position in September and naming the permanent Finance Director in October.
- LOSRC is adding more modules to our finance system to support payroll and encumbrances. Finance staff and all staff have participated in training.

2. Economic & Community Development & Transportation Planning

Kudos!

- Congratulations to Mars Hill for their recent Rural Transformation Fund Grant – to acquire a vacant Main Street building.
- Congratulations to Brevard for receiving a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant for engineering and design for Ecusta Trail in Transylvania County.
- Congratulations to Madison County for Building Reuse for Highland Metalworks.
- Congratulations to French Broad Electric Co-Operative for their GREAT grant in Madison County
- Congratulations to Zitel Broadband for their GREAT grant in Transylvania County
- Congratulations to City of Asheville for their \$4.2M Low-No grant to support clean transportation fleet technologies.
- Congratulations to VW Grant Awardees in the region:
 - Transylvania Economic Alliance
 - Transylvania Habitat for Humanity
 - Town of Waynesville
 - Town of Hayesville

1. Transportation

- a. MPO & RPO staff continue to work with local partners and NCDOT on project design and development.
- b. Staff is assisting in TAB, STIP and CTP development and Board meetings.
- c. RPO staff serving as NCARPO Association President, the NCARPO is the statewide organization representing Rural Transportation Planning Organizations in NC.
- d. RPO staff is also serving on the new NCDOT EV/Clean Energy Committee.
- e. RPO, MPO and ECD staff are assisting several communities write grants for transportation projects, including RAISE, FLAP, and the IJA Discretionary Funds.
- f. MPO and RPO staff are serving on the state's Prioritization Workgroup with other representatives from MPOs, RPOs, and NCDOT.
- g. The MPO is providing funding to several special studies in the region getting ready to being in FY 2023: Fonta Flora Trail Feasibility Study, Reed Creek Greenway Extension Feasibility Study (City of Asheville), Patton Avenue Corridor Study, and the Buncombe County Multimodal Master Plan.
- h. The MPO is managing the Haywood County Greenway Master Plan with public meetings planned for June 6th-June 8th

- i. The MPO has completed corridor studies on Hendersonville Road and Tunnel Road, in cooperation with the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and NCDOT. The Studies can be found here: <http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/local-plans/>
- j. The MPO is providing funding for on-going studies at the City of Asheville, including the Close the GAP Plan, the purchase of bicycle and pedestrian counters, and the Biltmore/McDowell study.
- k. MPO staff is serving on a Locally Administered Projects Program committee with NCDOT to provide policy recommendations to achieve better success rates and more on-time delivery of LAPP projects.
- l. The MPO is considering providing an additional \$23 million in funding for projects across the region, including:
 - i. Ecusta Trail (US 64 to the Transylvania County Line)
 - ii. Woodfin Greenways
 - iii. Swannanoa Greenway
 - iv. Riceville Road Sidewalks
 - v. Texas Road Pedestrian Bridge

2. Broadband

- a. LOS partnered with NC DIT and the Division of Rural Health to distribute hotspots with 12 months service and digital literacy training for telehealth programs in WNC. To date 146 hotspots have been distributed to programs in three counties.
- b. LOS is partnering with the Institute of Emerging Issues and Dogwood Health Trust to assist development and implement Digital Inclusion Plans in WNC with COGS across the region.
- c. LOS received funding from Buncombe County to provide Wi-Fi in several Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (HACA) residential buildings. Staff received an update from the sub-consultant, Elawuit, that installation has begun in the first residential building.
- d. LOS is working with NEMAC to develop a broadband planning tool. The tool is aimed to consolidate many of the various data sources into a project planning catalyst for future broadband projects in the region.
- e. LOS staff worked to set up public WIFI in the Broad River area of Buncombe County. Staff partnered with fire department and Skyrunner to implement this project.
- f. LOS staff supported providers in the region with GREAT grant assistance leading to 21 applications across the region.
- g. LOS is supporting hot spot access to 325 individuals across WNC through Student Connect program thanks to the support of

3. Community Development/Water, Sewer, Stormwater Infrastructure

- a. Staff is attending the RC2 training with Mars Hill and Rosman sponsored by NC Commerce's Rural Transformation Fund. The training is being held in Boone and remotely by Appalachian State. The towns will be identifying a vision and priorities for economic and community development.
- b. 2nd Round of DEQ grants for water/sewer infrastructure will be due in September. Please let us know if you have any projects you'd like to discuss.
<https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding>
- c. DEQ has a round of ARPA stormwater funding due in September. Please connect with us if you'd like to discuss project ideas.
- d. LOSRC deployed a new instance of the new MS4 mobile app for Montreat and assisted with their MS4 audit. Staff continues to support several communities with their stormwater permit compliance needs.
- e. LOSRC submitted a letter of interest to the NCLWF (Land and Water Fund) Flood Risk Reduction Grant Program on behalf of COH, and is continuing to support project development.

4. Housing
 - a. LOSRC was awarded a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, matched with a grant to Southwestern Commission from the Dogwood Health Trust, to create a WNC Housing Asset Inventory for the western 18 counties. This project will be completed through a multi-COG effort.
 - b. LOSRC was awarded a grant from Cares at the UNC-CH School of Social Work in partnership with North Carolina Money Follows the Person (MFP), for the initiative titled Building Capacity for Home and Community Based Services through Collective Impact. The project is called Remain at Home - Accessibility Assessment Program, in partnership with the Institute for Preventative Care and Advocacy, Mountain Area Health Education Center, RL Mace Universal Design Institute.
 - c. LOSRC has completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice for COH and is working on one for Buncombe County in the context of their CDBG grants.
5. Economic Development/Workforce
 - a. Draft planning documents for the Creative Manufacturing Sector Development plan are currently being reviewed by the core steering committee.
 - b. The Draft report for the Regional Economic Collaboration and Analysis led by the Region's Chambers of Commerce and business sector is under review by the Advisory Committee. Ernst and Young was selected as the Consultant for this effort and is being funded by the EDA and Dogwood Health Trust. Full results will be shared broadly.
 - c. Staff and partners have completed the analysis and final products with Outdoor/Recreation Sector manufacturers to determine opportunities in supply chains, workforce and economic diversity in cooperation with High Country Council, Southwestern Commission and Riverbird Research.
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/291e98f0291643c49a6462395ec3e6e5>
 - d. We continue to partner with the Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Support Agencies, nonprofits, and economic developers to assist small businesses through COVID-19 impacts.
 - e. The TDM Coordinator is working with Workforce, Inspire, and employers to develop a vanpool for under-resourced individuals to access job sites.
 - f. LOSRC's Waste Reduction Partners program is providing free water-use management assessments for large customers of the City of Asheville's Water Resources Department. These on-site assessments help identify utility costs savings for the City.
6. Resilience/Hazard Mitigation
 - a. Staff is serving as a Steering Committee member for the statewide RISE project and for the NC Resilience Clearing House, both for for NC Department of Public Safety, NC Office of Recovery and Resilience
 - b. Staff attended the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Workshop at NCDPS in Raleigh.
 - c. NCDPS is seeking letters of interest for the FEMA BRIC and Flood Mitigation Assistance 2022 funding round, these are due on 10/3/2022. Please contact Mary Roderick to discuss project ideas.
 - d. LOSRC has developed a work plan for the COG Disaster Recovery Grant, and will be reaching out to communities to provide a range of hazard recovery and resilience services over the next two years.
7. Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles
 - a. Clean Cities Program is assisting local governments prepare for VW Settlement projects. During the first round of settlement funding released in 2020, the Land of Sky Clean Vehicles Coalition helped the region bring in more than \$4.1 million in grant funding to support purchases of new clean vehicles and EV infrastructure. During the second round of funding, all of the applications that LOS staff assisted with under the Level 2 Public Access Program were funded. Staff also assisted with applications for the DC Fast Chargers and Level 2 Multi-Unit Dwelling programs. Please contact Sara Nichols with questions on how to

apply for more than \$68 million in state funding available for clean fleets:

sara@landofsky.org

- b. LOS received CMAQ funding to continue support of air quality outreach initiatives in WNC.
 - c. Staff are working with French Broad Electric on a CFAT grant application.
 - d. Staff supported applications for the EPA school bus rebate for Buncombe and Madison County Schools.
 - e. Clean Vehicles has been participating in outreach events across the region including City of Asheville Parks and Recreation Truck City, Evergreen Charter School Better World Day, Careers on Wheels, Cherokee Electric Bus Ribbon Cutting.
 - f. Cherokee Clean Vehicles participated in the first electric school bus in North Carolina ribbon cutting, including a visit from Governor Cooper and Administrator Reagan.
 - g. Staff are partnering with the Cherokee Tribe on an electric bus drag race to showcase the functionality of the electric bus.
 - h. Staff participated in electric vehicle car shows in Hendersonville, Waynesville, and Rosman.
 - i. Staff are partnering with the Blue Ridge Electric Vehicle Club to host an electric vehicle car show for National Drive Electric Week.
 - j. CVC staff, Paul Moon, applied for and was accepted into the DOE national equity program to deep dive into equity in alternative fuel conversations with leading experts.
8. Planning Services
- a. Staff are working with several communities for planning and zoning assistance including Hot Springs, Mars Hill, Marshall, Montreat, Woodfin, Flat Rock, Maggie Valley, Montreat, Clyde, Canton and Andrews. We are partnering with Region A staff to assist with communities in their region, and recently signed a contract with the Town of Clyde.
9. Grants & Project Development
- a. Staff are working with several jurisdictions to support ARPA projects and administration. Please connect with Erica if you would like to learn more: erica@landofsky.org ARPA information can be found here: <https://www.nc.gov/agencies/pandemic-recovery-office/american-rescue-plan-act-information-and-resources>
 - b. Staff have been working with Sister Councils of Government on ARPA, Resilience and Multi-regional projects. Partnerships include sharing ARP policies, ordinances, and guidance; grant development; developing scopes of work and project delivery for ARPA State funds; budgeting and project development for housing, transportation and broadband tech assistance.
 - c. Staff continues working with several local governments and partners on applications for economic development, community development, transportation, and infrastructure implementation with BRIC/FEMA, EDA, and foundations. These projects will support transportation connections, resilience, job growth, industry expansion, and place-based development.
 - d. The NCGS 160D requires all Comprehensive Plans be updated to meet the new guidelines by July 1, 2022. (i.e. Municipalities and Counties must have a “reasonably-maintained” [updated within last 5-10 years] Comprehensive Plan in effect in order to legally continue having local zoning/development regulations. At minimum, a reasonably updated Land Use Plan must be in place by July 1, 2022 as a rational nexus to zoning/development regulations. (see Town of Canton’s phased-approach, Phase 1: Land Use Plan by July 1, 2022; Phase 2: Other Comprehensive Plan elements to be included after July 1, 2022) Please contact erica@landofsky.org if you have questions or would like assistance updating your plans.

3. Aging

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - The Area Agency on Aging staff received the final Administrative Letter from NC Division of Aging and Adult Services. The goal is to increase access to services to older adults in our region. There is approximately \$300,000 in Supportive Services monies. Current providers received a Request for Funding application to apply for these funds. Applications are due August 31, 2022. Staff will review proposals in September and award funds to begin October 1, 2022.

COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach

- Staff organized Executive Director Nathan Ramsey to help record a radio ad about Covid-19 which is now playing on three different radio stations through Buncombe County (105.9 The Mountain, 97.3 Pure Oldies, and 105.5 The Outlaw) which has reached over 100,000 in both July and August, about half of the 100,000 are people 55+.
 - Staff is working with Madison County to get two radio stations to play the ad along with Transylvania WSQL Radio Station.
- Staff continues to think of new ways to connect with homebound older adults and get the message out about Covid-19 vaccines and boosters.
- Staff is scheduling times to present Covid information to different groups (Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program, and Senior Centers).
- Staff is working on getting more swag bags and free covid testing kits out to older adults in all four counties. Staff has created and given out over 800 bags and 1,600 Covid-19 at-home testing kits.
- Staff is connecting with Disability Partners again for another vaccine clinic in September to include flu and covid vaccines.
- Staff has connected with YMCA nutrition outreach to give covid rack cards to clients.
- Staff has worked with the state to make Land of Sky Regional Council a *Community Access Point*, giving out free Covid-19 at-home testing kits. Thus far, LOSRC has given out 350 tests to the community through this program.
- Staff has worked with other organizations within our region to get them registered as a *Community Access Point* for free Covid-19 at-home testing kits.

Family Caregiver Support Program

- Staff co-sponsored with AARP, "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" online. This is a 6-week session to assist caregivers. There were 15 participants registered for this summer session which began on the first week of June.
- Staff provided training for a provider's new staff on the Family Caregiver Program.
- Staff did a presentation on the Area Agency on Aging and its programs with an Ombudsman at the Transylvania County Roundtable.
- Staff helped facilitate in-person caregiver and care receiver support groups for the first time since the pandemic began. There were three caregivers and two care receivers who participated.

Foster Grandparent Program

- Number of active volunteers: We have 27 volunteers are serving in-person with children ages infant to 13 years old.
- Number of volunteers waiting on paperwork, placement, etc.: 26 volunteers wait for their schools to reopen to volunteers so that they can return to service. Three potential volunteers are in the process of enrolling in the program.
- Number of active stations (schools, day cares, etc.): 7

- Number of stations waiting to sign MOU, volunteer placement, etc.: 11 of the schools, Head Start Centers, and child care centers have not yet allowed volunteers to return to service, three of which we are working to renew MOUs with.
- Recruitment efforts (press releases, presentations, etc.): Volunteer recruitment efforts are currently on pause until we have schools open to be able to place them. We are currently looking for new stations in Henderson County.
- Exciting news came July 2022 when our AmeriCorps Seniors grant increased the hourly stipend pay for our volunteers to \$3.15 an hour.
- In-service/training update: On July 19, Foster Grandparent volunteers attended in-person in-service training at Land of Sky Regional Council. The in-service topic for July was Juneteenth. Volunteers learned more about the history of Holiday and shared about what the Holiday meant for them personally.
 - The Sept in-service will be a back-to-school recognition event. We will also have a presentation from Diane Trainer on Medicare Fraud.

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

- Lakeview Active Aging Center has been recertified as a “*Center of Excellence*” after completing their Senior Center Operations and Program Evaluation.
- Staff completed “Belonging and Empathy (BE)” and “Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)”.
- Staff has partnered with Western Carolina University Physical Therapy Doctoral Program to deliver Walk with Ease classes in the region. Data from this partnership will be used to detail program effectiveness.
- Evidenced-Based Health Programs are returning in the area with multiple delivery options for participants including virtual (zoom), phone, and in-person opportunities. Current and upcoming classes include Tai Chi, Living Healthy with Diabetes, Living Healthy with Chronic Conditions, and Walk with Ease.
- Staff is working with senior centers and program leaders to provide educational monthly “hands-on” demonstrations of Tai Chi for senior center guests.
- Leadership training and post-COVID recertifications continue with additional leaders in the Living Healthy and A Matter of Balance being added as trained volunteers.
- Staff will be participating in the WNC Fall Prevention Conference on September 9th in partnership with WNC Fall Prevention Coalition and MAHEC.
- Staff, working with Blue Ridge Pride Generations Plus, is featuring a Tai Chi Lunch and Learn in August at LOS, promoting evidence-based health programs.
- Staff is working with Generations plus assisting with planning the “Senior Prom” and PRIDE festivities. As well as offering continued support with AARP for monthly YouTube *Rainbow Inspiration* segments.
- Staff and Asheville Terrace Community Health Workers continue to partner with MANNA and OLLI volunteers to bring nutrition to residents. In June and July combined, 140 bags of groceries were distributed to residents, and 285 “Neighbor Knock” visits were conducted.

Home and Community Care Block Grant: July 2022 Report of Services Provided

- Adult Day Care/Health Days = 235
- Meals – delivered/congregate = 17,448
- In-home Aide hours = 1,056
- Legal Services hours = 165
- Transportation trips = 3,848
- Home Improvement Projects = 0

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Community Inclusion

- Provided webinar training on Money Follows the Person for the Buncombe Aging Services Alliance (BASA) including members from surrounding WNC counties.
- Completed In-person visits to all Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) in Jackson, Haywood, Polk, Rutherford and McDowell, Henderson, Burke, Caldwell Counties. Partial Completion of Buncombe County.
- Provided MFP training to Burke County DSS Long Term Care Medicaid team including Director.
- Educational email campaign to inform SNF social workers on Local Contact Agencies and how to make referrals.
- Haywood County SNF visits. Provided one on one training with 2 new SWs and provided application packets. Expecting two applications from Haywood Rehabilitation (SW - Sydney)
- Attended professional social workers networking meeting for WNC participating in education on Palliative and Hospice care.
- Attended multiple training sessions on different aging topics including the Olmstead Institute (Guardianship Topic) Webinar

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Transition Program

Western counties: Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania, Polk, Madison, McDowell, Rutherford, Mitchell, Madison

- The current caseload for the Western counties is 10.
- All but one of the participants are currently waiting for housing before they can transition.

Central counties: Forsyth, Davidson, Surry, Davie, Stokes, Yadkin

- The current caseload for the Central counties is seven.
- Five clients are trying to locate housing before they can transition.
- Three clients are scheduled to transition September 1, 2022.

Ombudsman Program

- The Community Advisory Committees are in the process of re-entering facilities. The Henderson County Advisory Committee has visited five facilities since the beginning of August.
- Staff presented "What is an Ombudsman?" at the July Regional Aging Advisory Council Meeting.
- Staff presented two Resident Rights In-services to facility staff.
- The Ombudsman Program provided outdoor activity kits, cleaning supplies, and personal care items to Family Care Homes.

Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty)

- Staff has distributed \$14,500 in State respite funding among 27 dementia caregivers since beginning of new fiscal year.
- Since beginning of new fiscal year staff has completed 15 intake forms for dementia caregivers who are now on waiting list for respite funding and care consultation services. There are currently 57 caregivers awaiting these two services while having received information/assistance/referral services. There will not be enough State funds this year to provide relief to all who are on the waiting list.
- Staff has applied for ARPA funds to use for caregiver respite.
- Staff provided information/assistance/referral services to 72 callers in July.
- Staff arranged for professional photographer to photograph caregiver/care receiver in Madison County. Photos will be provided to the family and used by Land of Sky for marketing purposes.

The Senior Companion Program

- Number of active volunteers: 53
- Number of volunteers waiting on paperwork, placement, etc.: 4 volunteers were welcomed on 8/15/2022. There are 3 who are interested and completing the application process.
- Number of active stations: 12
- In-service/training update: September- Housekeeping & games. It has been awhile since our volunteers have just had a fun day.
- As of July 1, 2022, the hourly stipend rate was increased to \$3.15 per hour. AmeriCorps-Senior is excited about this increase.
- The Senior Companion Program is in process of applying for funding through Dogwood Health Trust for the continuation of our Support Specialist for FY24-FY26.
- The Senior Companion Program recently worked with ARPA funding within Land of Sky to consider award funding from October 2022 to September 23 for the purpose of reimbursing mileage to our volunteers who transport their clients.

4. Administration

- Staff transition for the former Deputy Director's position is going well with staff assuming these roles with new enthusiasm and professionalism.
- Nathan made a presentation to Buncombe County Board of Commissioners on July 19 with an update about LOSRC. Nathan also met with the Buncombe County Manager and Intergovernmental Relations Director to discuss possible changes to local Council dues.
- Nathan attended several forums in Transylvania County hosted by SCORE regarding workforce development and affordable housing.
- We hosted the WNC Rebounding Stronger Summit on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 in partnership with Southwestern Commission and Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. Around 150 people attended the summit at the Cherokee Convention Center in Cherokee, NC. Governor Cooper attended and spoke at the event.
- Almost 250 people attended the Land of Sky Summer BBQ at the Town of Mills River Community Park on Friday, July 29. The lunch was catered by Daddy D's Soulfood in Hendersonville.
- Hosted monthly LOSRC DEI and staff meetings.
- Attended the Blue Ridge Community College Patton Building ribbon cutting.
- Met with East Tennessee Development District in Alcoa, TN about a two-state USDOL grant.
- Made a presentation to the Council of Independent Business Owners about the local economy and workforce.
- Attended the COG Directors and NCARCOG Forum meetings in Charlotte.
- Joined other COG Directors in WNC at a meeting with leadership at Dogwood Health Trust.
- Mountain Xpress is planning an article about LOSRC and Regional Councils of Government, we have shared much data with them and Nathan was interviewed by the reporter.
- Met with WNC Health Network about possible partnerships.

5. Workforce

- Region's unemployment rate of 3.4% for June 2022, metro is tied for the #1 lowest unemployment rate in NC. Our region now has more people working, more jobs and more people in our labor force than at any time pre-pandemic.
- Region's NCWorks Career Centers were certified by the NCWorks Commission.
- \$19 and Beyond Job Fair on June 29 attracted around 350 job seekers with just over 70 employers.
- Work/Life Balance Job Fair on August 11 attracted just over 200 job seekers with almost 90 employers.
- WNC Talent Survey covering 10-counties in Western North Carolina will be released at the Asheville Chamber's Economic Development Coalition of Asheville – Buncombe on August 26.

- Workforce team participated at the United Way of Buncombe County's Back to School event at Pack Square Park in downtown Asheville.
- We did not receive the EDA Good Jobs Challenge grant submitted in partnership with Dogwood Health Trust, AB Tech and Blue Ridge Community College. The focus was on the advanced manufacturing and healthcare sectors, the request is for \$10 million. This was an incredibly competitive grant with over 500 applications submitted and only 32 awarded.
- We are awaiting news on the ARC WORC grant.
- We are partnering with East Tennessee Development District (ETDD) for the USDOL GROW grant to serve youth in 11-counties in NC and 10-counties in TN.
- We are hosting a NCWorks business roundtable on August 22.
- Our application for the NC State Workforce Development Leadership Academy was approved. Six individuals from the region will be participating including representatives of Land of Sky P-20 Council, Western Carolina University, Blue Ridge Community College, Asheville Chamber, Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development and Transylvania Alliance.
- We are hosting the September meeting of the NC Workforce Development Directors in Asheville.
- We will continue our partnership with the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce to host the WNC Career Expo in the fall of 2022 and spring of 2023.
- Regional workforce survey results will be released at the board meeting of the Economic Development Coalition of Asheville-Buncombe on Friday, August 26.
- Brandon Priester joined the board staff full-time on July 1 as a Business Services Representative focused on youth ages 16 – 24.
- Finish Line Grant (FLG) program will be transitioning to the NC Community College System with the state allocating federal ARPA funds. Previously FLGs were supported with WIOA funding. FLGs helped students with supportive services who were 50% or more complete in their academic program.
- Board staff are working closely with county economic developers on several expansion or new business recruitment with the NC Job Ready grant.
- WNC Rebounding Stronger Summit was held on August 9 in partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Southwestern Commission and Land of Sky Regional Council. Our workforce team was engaged as talent development was one of the topics on the summit agenda.

6. Strategic Initiatives

- Mountain Mobility saw a 15% increase in overall passengers in FY22, adding a total of 880 clients to our database. The service also provided 103,678 trips, up more than 12% over FY21.
- NEMT (Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation) currently has 1,318 active clients in Buncombe County and recorded 7,728 scheduled trips in July 2022. Scheduled trips were up 8.5% over the same period in 2021.
- Healthy Opportunities Pilot Program – our newest program at Land of Sky – is a ground-breaking program that provides non-medical transportation services to qualifying Medicaid recipients (different from those served by NEMT). Since the program began in May 2022, Land of Sky has provided transportation services to 10 Buncombe County residents.
- INspire Program – WNC Recovery to Career serves the needs of individuals who are leaving treatment centers and ready for career/life skills. Overall, INspire has served 190 clients with educational training, employment services and purchases of other wrap-around durable supports (shoes, cell phones, vital records, etc.) that are necessary for long-range employment success.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work - Land of Sky is planning a series of Lunch 'N Learns to introduce community programs and services to LOS staff. Our first event is planned for Wednesday, October 5th, with a presentation by Inclusive Hiring Partners, a program sponsored by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce seeking to close the opportunity gap between employers and job seekers with barriers.