

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



**LAND<sub>of</sub>SKY**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# LETTERS

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates,  
Public Officials and Friends:

As Mayor of Hendersonville and Chair of the Board of Delegates for the past two years, I have enjoyed the opportunity to join with leaders across our region to make sure our best days are yet to come. We have learned from each other on how we can more effectively serve our communities. We have continued our work to recover from the pandemic. We have brought higher-paying jobs and investment to our communities through our collective regional efforts. We have made progress bridging the digital divide with unprecedented support from our federal and state partners. We have seen transportation projects move forward that will have an impact for generations, including the widening of I-26 between Asheville and Hendersonville and the expansion of the Asheville Regional Airport. We have worked to expand opportunity to individuals and communities who have often been left behind. And we have worked to improve air and water quality by adding to our public lands, promoting land conservation, and increasing our use of renewable energies and alternative fuel and electric vehicles.

Our region is known worldwide for its natural beauty, friendly people, historic downtowns and more. We are blessed to live in a region that is growing and changing, many of those changes are for the good. But we are experiencing growing pains throughout the region and the Council is helping local governments address these emerging challenges. Mountain people have always come together to make a better community and the work of the Council has been built on that tradition of neighbor helping neighbor.

I believe our investment in Land of Sky Regional Council has paid significant dividends for the people of the City of Hendersonville and throughout our region. We have been good stewards of the public and private dollars we have received. The Council has never been in a better financial condition than it is today and never before have we had the funding available like today to invest in our communities. The Council has a reputation statewide and across the nation as one of the leading regional planning and development organizations. That reputation is due to the work of the many leaders in our region who helped to build the strong foundation that we enjoy today. Our job is to build upon that legacy of success.



Honorable Barbara Volk  
Mayor, City of Hendersonville  
Chair, Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates



Local Government Leaders, Partners and Friends:

This past year has reminded me how we can accomplish so much more working together. Our member local governments have a long history of progress because we realize the challenges we face go far beyond local government jurisdictional boundaries. Although we are not the same, we have far more in common than our differences. We share in the same local economy, we drink water from the French Broad River basin, we breathe the same air, and our shared prosperity is more dependent on each other than ever before.

We have made significant progress on broadband, affordable and workforce housing, transportation, economic and community development, workforce development, health and much more. Our federal and state leaders have been there to support us when we needed their help. Unprecedented resources funding from them have created a once in a generation opportunity to address critical unmet needs. Our region has received over \$125 million in ARPA funds and the team at LOSRC has helped leverage over \$65 million in additional funding to support our communities in FY21-22

Our local government leaders helped navigate our region through turbulent waters. LOSRC is a regional government entity that works with Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties and their municipalities. We offer a forum for local government officials and community leaders to come together to address challenges we face in Western North Carolina. For the past fifty-six years, our organization has helped chart a course and we remain true to our mission – to foster desirable social, economic, cultural, and ecological conditions in our region.

The 2022 LOSRC Annual Report highlights programs that have impacted the lives of many citizens in Western North Carolina. We trust it will give better insight into our organization and the spirit of cooperation that exists between our local governments. We offer this report to our community as an opportunity to review this year's accomplishments and celebrate our successes. We want to be good stewards of the resources we have been entrusted to manage and we want to make the greatest possible impact for our region. For every dollar you invest in LOSRC, we have brought almost \$60 to the region.

I am blessed to serve as the fifth Executive Director in the history of LOSRC. Our success is due to the talented, committed, and dedicated staff and public servant leaders on our Board who want to leave this beautiful and amazing place in Western North Carolina better for future generations. The future is bright for the wonderful Land of Sky because of you. We can never say "thank you" enough.



Nathan Ramsey  
Executive Director, Land of Sky Regional Council



# BOARD

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Land of Sky Regional Council is governed by a board made up of local elected officials, economic development professionals, and key regional stakeholders. Each member government appoints two delegates – one primary delegate and one alternate delegate. Primary delegates are elected officials of the appointing member governments. Delegates serve at the pleasure of their appointing governing body.

Each county government appoints one delegate to represent economic development interests. The Chair of the Regional Aging Advisory Council also serve as delegates. Four at-large delegates are appointed by the Land of Sky Board to represent regional minority interests.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD FY22



Chair  
Barbara Volk, Mayor  
City of Hendersonville



Vice-Chair  
Patrick Fitzsimmons, Chair  
Town of Weaverville



Secretary  
Maureen Copelof, Mayor  
City of Brevard



Treasurer  
Norris Gentry, Commissioner  
Madison County



Past Chair  
Larry Harris, Mayor  
Town of Black Mountain



County Delegate  
Matt Wechtel, Commissioner  
Madison County



Minority Delegate  
Preston Blakely, Mayor  
Town of Fletcher



Aging Programs Delegate  
Bob Tomasulo  
Regional

## BUNCOMBE

Buncombe County - Terri Wells, Tim Love  
City of Asheville - Sandra Kilgore, Antanette Mosley  
Town of Biltmore Forest - George Gosmann III, Jonathan Kanipe  
Town of Black Mountain - Larry Harris, Ryan Stone  
Town of Montreat - Jane Alexander, Kitty Fouche  
Town of Weaverville - Patrick Fitzsimmons, Doug Jackson, Jeff McKenna  
Town of Woodfin - Elisabeth Ervin, Sheri Powers, Shannon Tuch

## HENDERSON

Henderson County - Bill Lapsley, Larry Rogers  
Village of Flat Rock - Barbara Jeter, Pat Christie, David Dethero  
Town of Fletcher - Preston Blakely, Mark Biberdorf, Bob Davy  
City of Hendersonville - Barbara Volk, Lyndsey Simpson, John Connet  
Town of Laurel Park - Carey O'Cain, Paul Henson, Deb Bridges  
Town of Mills River - Jeff Young, Daniel Cobb

## MADISON

Madison County - Matt Wechtel, Michael Garrison, Norris Gentry, Craig Goforth, Mark Snelson  
Town of Hot Springs - Abigail Norton  
Town of Marshall - Nancy Allen, Aileen Payne, Billie Jean Haynie, Forrest Gilliam  
Town of Mars Hill - John Chandler, Nathan Bennett

## TRANSYLVANIA

Transylvania County - Jason Chappell, Larry Chapman  
City of Brevard - Maureen Copelof, Mac Morrow  
Town of Rosman - Brian Shelton

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Buncombe - George Morosani  
Henderson - Brittany Brady  
Madison - Vacant  
Transylvania - Burt Hodges

## AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Buncombe - Vacant  
Henderson - John Mitchell  
Madison County - Terrance Dolan  
Transylvania County - Vacant

## AGING PROGRAMS DELEGATE

Bob Tomasulo



# MISSION

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Our mission is to provide creative regional solutions to relevant and emerging issues in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties while providing a standard of excellence in the delivery of federal, state, and regional services for our member communities.

# WHO WE ARE

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Land of Sky Regional Council is a multi-county, local government planning and development organization. We reach across county and municipal borders providing technical assistance to local governments and administer projects and programs which benefit our region's citizens.

**ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE:** This department is responsible for the overall administration and finances of Land of Sky Regional Council. This includes a growing, multi-million dollar budget, establishing and maintaining relationships with local, state and federal elected officials, departments and partners, human resources, marketing, public relations, as well as outreach and engagement, etc.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Land of Sky is the local economic development district for our region, providing access to a wide variety of expertise, partnerships, and funding streams. Current efforts are focused on greater regional cooperation in the areas of job creation, job retention, quality of place, entrepreneurship, and economic competitiveness. Professionally trained and experienced staff diligently strives to improve economic, environmental, and social conditions in every program area and project. Services available to local governments and communities include quality facilitation, grant writing and management, project administration, data management, policy research and development, education, and training.

**AREA AGENCY ON AGING:** The AAA is a leader and catalyst in helping older adults in our four county region lead more independent, vibrant lives. Part of a national network of aging agencies established by the Older Americans Act, staff work to strengthen home and community care for older adults.

**TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER:** Land of Sky's Transportation Resource Center manages the administrative functions of Land of Sky's Transportation Resource Center, which includes Mountain Mobility and Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation, Buncombe County's community public transportation systems. Mountain Mobility provides transportation services to clients of human service agencies, local governments, and qualified citizens. NEMT provides transportation services for qualified Medicaid clients. **Healthy Opportunities Pilot Program** is a new program that provides non-medical transportation services to qualifying Medicaid recipients different from those being served by NEMT.

**MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** Land of Sky's Mountain Area Workforce Development (MAWD) designs and implements a strategic plan to meet the needs of the region's businesses for a skilled, reliable and proficient workforce; and meets the skill development and job acquisition needs of the region's jobseekers. MAWD is engaged in public/private partnerships that respond to emerging workforce issues and economic development opportunities.

**WORKFORCE:** Land of Sky received funding for two new programs that focuses on workforce. The **Land of Sky P20 Council** fosters collaboration among employers, educators, and community members in the spirit of enduring economic prosperity, through the alignment of innovative cradle-to-career skills and resources that lead to life-sustaining job opportunities in our four-county region of western North Carolina. **INspire Recovery to Career** is a partnership between Land of Sky and Southwestern Commission to provide community-based peer support services to people reentering the workforce after being discharged from treatment or released from prison.

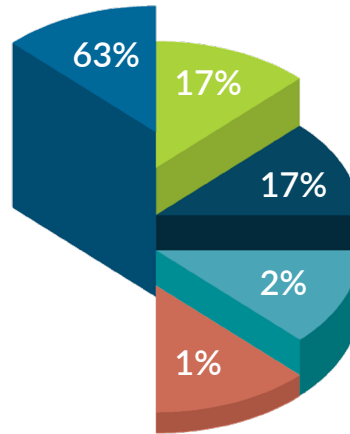


# BUDGET

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

A balanced budget is adopted each year, as required by state law. The budget is amended several times during the fiscal year, as many federal grants have different fiscal cycles.

- Federal Funds
- State Funds
- Local Government Contracts, Private Grants, Donations
- Local Government Dues
- In-Kind



### FY 2022 REVENUES \$13,116,837

Federal	\$8,541,686
State	\$1,490,560
Local Government Contracts, Private Grants, Donations	\$2,715,686
Local Government Dues	\$265,064
In-Kind	\$103,841

### FY 2022 EXPENDITURES \$12,516,870

Area Agency on Aging	\$5,933,282	(47%)
Workforce Development	\$1,949,086	(15.5%)
Economic & Community Development	\$2,473,242	(20%)
Buncombe County Transportation	\$1,955,896	(15.5%)
General Fund	\$205,364	(2%)

# FUNDING SOURCES

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

### FEDERAL

- US Department of Agriculture
- US Department of Commerce
- US Department of Energy
- US Department of Health & Human Services
- US Department of Labor
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Corporation for National & Community Service
- US Department of Transportation- Federal Highway Administration
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- US Department of the Treasury

### STATE

- NC Department of Environmental Quality
- NC Department of Health & Human Services
- NC Department of Commerce
- NC Department of Transportation
- NC Institute for Emerging Issues
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Vaya Health

### PRIVATE

- Pisgah Health Foundation
- WNC Bridge Foundation
- Z Smith Reynolds
- John M Belk Endowment
- Dogwood Health Trust
- NC State University Institute for Emerging Issues

### OTHER

- Local Grants and Contributions
- Local Charges for Services
- Rents
- Usage Allowance

### LOCAL DUES & IN-KIND

FOR EVERY DOLLAR OF LOCAL DUES, WE LEVERAGED  
\$58.64 IN RETURN INVESTMENT.

# COVID

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Area Agency on Aging received funding from the State of North Carolina to help combat the uneven distribution of Covid-19 resources, information, and support for older North Carolinians. The funding started in October 2021. This program's goal was to reach historically marginalized older adults including those individuals who are homebound, live in rural communities, and on limited income.

### MADISON

943 people were reached in Madison County; the highlight was holding a health and wellness fair in partnership with Kepro Community Health Workers.

Another great success was the ability to provide 100 free shoes to older adults in Madison County in May. Working with Samaritan's Senior Shoes Program and Kepro Community Health Workers, staff held a wellness event. The event included fitting and giving out the 100 shoes along with Covid vaccine information and testing kits. At this event staff invited 10 other community-based organizations to table and give out resources and information about their organizations. The event reached 150 people in Madison County for that one event!



### BUNCOMBE

3,580 people reached in Buncombe County; the highlight was holding a vaccine clinic with Disability Partners.

### REGIONAL

Reached over 1,500 individuals working with Meals on Wheels, nutrition meal sites, and senior centers in all 4 counties to provide informational placemats that went along with meals given to older adults. This happened 4 times over the course of the funding period.

An estimate of 1,500 were in overlapping county outreach efforts. An example of overlapping outreach would be providing an in-person presentation on Covid information during a monthly meeting with the Senior Companion Program through Land of Sky Area Agency on Aging.

Updates and information were also passed via email newsletters or via post on the Area Agency on Aging Facebook page 40 times throughout the 7 months, reaching an estimated 15,000.

### HENDERSON

1,060 people reached plus reaching an estimated 22,500 with 4 weeks of radio spots with WTZQ and 3 weeks of newspaper ads.

### TRANSYLVANIA

730 people reached along with reaching an estimated 20,000 with 4 ads with Transylvania Times newspaper.

TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED WAS AROUND **66,862** THROUGHOUT THE LAND OF SKY REGION.





Photo Credit: Rob Amberg

# PROJECT C.A.R.E

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Western Office of Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) received **\$69,763** from the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services to fund respite care services for dementia caregivers in fifteen WNC counties. Of this total amount, **\$40,963** went to 43 caregivers in the four counties served by Land of Sky. Here's the breakdown:



These dollars enabled family caregivers caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia to take a break from caregiving to tend to their own healthcare needs, spend time with other family members and friends, take mini vacations, get some exercise, and participate in other forms of self-care. In addition, Project C.A.R.E. provided care consultation services and referrals to other agencies such as the councils on aging, the county departments of health and human services, MemoryCare, VA Medical Center, MountainCare Adult Day Care, etc. and to other resources such as the North Carolina Caregiver Portal.

### MADISON

Ninety-one year-old Dorothy "Dot" Cody of Mars Hill is a lifelong resident of Madison County, as were her parents. She grew up with four brothers and sisters. Her husband, Ernest Cody, who passed away in 2004, was a builder and built the house that she lives in. He also created two trout ponds on their property so that others could learn to fish there. Dot and her husband raised a daughter and a son. She also volunteered in the school system to assist children with reading opportunities, and she was a licensed foster parent. Later in life she volunteered at the Madison County Active Living Senior Center Program at Ebbs Chapel for many years and with two AmeriCorps Seniors programs, the Foster Grandparent Program and the Senior Companion Program, offered by the Land of Sky Area Agency on Aging. According to her daughter, Tammy Cody, Mrs. Cody "collected" people all her life. She provided several older community members with a home in their later years, providing care as needed.

A couple of years ago, when it became apparent that Mrs. Cody needed some care herself, Tammy stepped up to the plate and did so while working a full-time job in Asheville. Tammy built a support network around her and her mother that included another program offered at Land of Sky Area Agency on Aging, Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty). This program provided Tammy with a Family Consultant to assist in resolving caregiving issues and vouchers that helped to pay for some well-deserved respite care so Tammy could take time off from caregiving on occasion. Currently Mrs. Cody is residing in a care home while Tammy continues to provide care for her mother in this alternate setting.



# LTC OMBUDSMAN

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsmen serves as an advocate for residents' rights and is responsible for investigating complaints made by, on behalf of, nursing and adult care home residents. They work with residents, family members, concerned citizens, facilities, and public or private agencies to enhance the quality of care and life for residents in long term care facilities.

Conducted a "How to Build a Resident Council" in-service for 13 Activity Directors (open to all counties).

Co-Chaired World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Walk with Buncombe County Department of Health and Human Services.



Organized and hosted Region B Community Advisory Committee Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

Purchased and distributed pocket talkers, outdoor games, art/crafts supplies, Bluetooth speakers, Alexa, CD players and Kindle tablets to 45 long term care facilities throughout the region.

Panelist for GAP Project with Buncombe County Council on Aging. Presented "What is an Ombudsman" to 20 participants.

Presented Aging Sensitivity Program to 5 classes at the Blue Ridge Community College including the Certified Nursing Assistant and Med Tech programs.



BUNCOMBE	HENDERSON	MADISON	TRANSYLVANIA
42 CLOSED COMPLAINTS 21 CLOSED CASES	53 CLOSED COMPLAINTS 23 CLOSED CASES	8 CLOSED COMPLAINTS 5 CLOSED CASES	10 CLOSED COMPLAINTS 5 CLOSED CASES
44 Long Term Care Selection Assistance	36 Long Term Care Selection Assistance		1 Long Term Care Selection Assistance
16 Participation in DHSR Surveys*	7 Participation in DHSR Surveys*	1 Participation in DHSR Surveys*	4 Participation in DHSR Surveys*
86 Facility Visits	67 Facility Visits	5 Facility Visits	11 Facility Visits
196 Benefits/Rights/Regulations	127 Benefits/Rights/Regulations	9 Benefits/Rights/Regulations	15 Benefits/Rights/Regulations
29 Training Sessions to CAC Volunteers**	76 Training Sessions to CAC Volunteers**	1 Training Sessions to CAC Volunteers**	8 Training Sessions to CAC Volunteers**

\* Division of Health Service Regulations Surveys  
\*\* Community Advisory Committee



# HEALTH PROMOTION & DISEASE PREVENTION

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Four out of five older adults have at least one chronic health condition and these ongoing health issues can negatively influence individuals' financial, social, emotional, and physical well-being when left unmanaged. One in four older adults will experience a fall in the next year, with the likely hood of a second fall increasing by 50%. The consequences of falling can be mild to extreme, with loss of independence and death being the most severe. Western North Carolina has become a hot spot for retirement, leading to the rapid growth of our older adult population. This growth challenges our current capacity for medical/ health resources. Prevention, exercise, and self-management evidence-based programming may help to offset some of the extra pressure this high healthcare-utilizing demographic has on local health systems, as well as lead to better health outcomes and quality of life for participants. The Area Agency on Aging provides leadership and coordination dedicated to regional evidence-based planning for Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management, A Matter of Balance, Walk with Ease, Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention, and Bingocize implementation. In addition, the AAA continues to train and manage leaders in all evidence-based offerings for program delivery in the region. Through a partnership with NC Center for Health and Wellness at UNC-Asheville, we work together to effectively disseminate evidence-based programs and build capacity through the enlistment of support from diverse stakeholders in the medical, educational, non-profit, and for-profit sectors. As we emerge from COVID-19 restrictions we plan to continue offering remote/virtual programming, specifically virtual workshops of EBHP through web conferencing platforms to help reduce barriers to access.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, 11 health programs program leaders were trained in 2022, 10 workshops were provided, and 46 participants completed programs in environments that included virtual delivery, phone delivery, and self-guided opportunities.

## BUNCOMBE

### COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHW)

The Asheville Terrace Community Health Workers (ATCHW) Program is a community-based model addressing the complex needs of high-risk elders in subsidized senior housing. Community Health Workers are trusted peer leaders trained to provide culturally conscious care to high-risk, low-income senior housing communities. There is an emphasis on social connectivity, safety, physical activity, nutrition, and reducing social isolation. Services provided include food distributions, health education and exercise, access to on-site screenings and services (e.g., vaccine and flu shots), and home visits. This program is instrumental in addressing social isolation with opportunities for engagement and community volunteerism.

Asheville Terrace Community Health workers provide home visits to frail and homebound residents through the Neighbor Knock program offering health management support, neighborly visits, reassurance visits, and transportation assistance. Community service events include food, health events/health groups, and social events or groups. The "Neighbor Knock" program is essential for identifying and addressing challenges, including food insecurity, safety, and increased social isolation that residents have experienced during COVID -19.

- 85 total events held
- 65 food distribution events in partnership with MANNA food bank which 1288 bags of groceries were provided to residents
- 4227 home visits through the "Neighbor Knock Program"
- 98% of participants received food through CHW-led food distributions, while 23% of the community received daily "Neighbor Knock" Services (in-person reassurance check).
- Approximately 23.8% of participants are considered high utilizers of the Community Health Worker organized events with 58 out of 243 unique participants registered for 10+ service events.



# SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

AREA AGENCY ON AGING



The Senior Companion Program was on “hold” for over 18 months during the COVID-19 pandemic. The volunteers received an average weekly temporary stipend until October 2021. It has taken almost a year for the volunteers to fully re-engage in the community. Staff kept the core guidance and thrust of the Senior Companion Program and provided flexibility in providing services to clients as the grant allowed.

For example, volunteers offered regular phone calls instead of in-person visits in some situations. They provided pick-up of food and other essentials rather than transporting the clients. The program had 64 active volunteers. In the last fiscal year, over 217 clients were served in the region. Volunteers provided over 2,000 trips to clients for medical appointments, grocery shopping, and pharmacy visits.

## HENDERSON

Council on Aging for Henderson County (COA-HC) provided quarterly meetings with Henderson County Senior Companions for cohesive group events in addition to the Land of Sky monthly in-service programs. Also, they supported a volunteer program for those who do not qualify for the Senior Companion Program. This expansion has met the needs of over 35 clients who were on a waiting list in Henderson County during the pandemic. There were 11 Senior Companion volunteers in Henderson County. They provided support to 58 clients during the fiscal year of 2022. They served 7000 hours with clients.

## MADISON

Madison County had four volunteers. They served 19 clients and logged 2,252 hours of active volunteer engagement.

## TRANSYLVANIA

In Transylvania County, staff placed the only Senior Companion volunteer at Silvermont Senior Center in Brevard. The volunteer provided art and music projects to the attendants weekly. This partnership continues and shows promise it will raise interest within the community to recruit new volunteers. The single volunteer provided support to two clients and logged 405 hours of service.

## BUNCOMBE

In Buncombe County, staff partnered with the VA Medical Center, CarePartners, and Council on Aging of Buncombe County. The Senior Companion Program had 48 active volunteers and served 125 clients. Combined, the volunteers served 20,060 direct hours with clients.

The Senior Companion Program celebrated Ceclia Miller’s 20th year as a Senior Companion. She turned 90 in October. The beauty of the program is that it can be tailored to the volunteer’s abilities. Up until her 89th birthday, Ms. Miller had five clients. She cleaned apartments, provided companionship, laughed, danced and gave such blessings to her clients. Her strong work ethic and amazing personality leaves everyone feeling loved.





# FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The main objective of the program is the children the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) volunteers works with. However, the benefit of FGP to the volunteer is too important to ignore. The program allows adults 55 and older, who live below 200 percent of the poverty level, an opportunity to give back to their community. Volunteers earn a small, tax-free stipend of approximately \$3 per hour as well as mileage reimbursement at \$0.545 per mile. Volunteers serve a minimum of five hours, up to a maximum of 40 hours per week. The stipend earned from volunteering means the volunteers can better afford medications and food. The volunteers also receive the added health benefits of living happier, healthier lives while making a difference in the community.

COVID-19 impacted the Foster Grandparent Program. This year has been challenging as many of the schools, childcare centers, and Head Start programs did not reopen to allow nonessential persons, including volunteers, to return to the classrooms. In spite of the challenges presented, the program continued to strengthen and build new, meaningful relationships that benefit volunteers and community. Each month, the program saw volunteers returning to service. As the school year came to a close, there were 29 Foster Grandparent volunteers serving in seven schools and childcare centers. Staff anticipates that by the fall, all Foster Grandparent volunteers will return to in-person service.



## BUNCOMBE - \$185,390

27 Foster Grandparent Program volunteers served 6190 hours at six schools and non-profit childcare centers in Buncombe County saving the county **\$185,390**.

## TRANSYLVANIA - \$2,590

Two Foster Grandparent Program volunteers served 86.5 hours at one afterschool program in Transylvania County saving the county over **\$2590**.

During the grant year, FGP volunteers participated in a facilitated book study of the book, *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* by Resmaa Menakem. With the events that has occurred in our country in the last few years, staff felt it was time to begin to have open conversations about racism, equity, and diversity. *My Grandmother's Hands* examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of trauma and body-centered psychology. *My Grandmother's Hands* is a call to action for people to recognize that racism is not only about the head, but about the body, and introduces an alternative view of what we can do to grow beyond entrenched racialized divide.

The book study was facilitated by Alice Dixon, a respected member of the African American community whose work is based on the premise that everyone wants and deserves to be heard. Her passion for equity and healing shows up with compassion in all aspects of her work and for all people. The book study was held in four small groups of 15 volunteers in an effort for everyone in the group to have space to share and be heard. The book study met every two weeks for eight sessions. The group discussed the chapters read, embodiment practices (recognizing how it felt in their bodies), their thought/reactions, and in conclusion of each session, Alice led through breathing exercises to release the stress and trauma that the discussion brought up. The third group concluded the study at the end of June. Volunteers commented that the book was extremely impactful. Some volunteers struggled to read the book, as many struggle with vision issues, low education levels, and low literacy. Staff purchased the book in audio format to help make it easier for volunteers to participate. Many volunteers requested to participate again as space allowed as they want to continue to learn more. Volunteers earned in-service credit for the time reading and participating in the study. The final group will participate in the next grant year. This has been a good effort to reach AmeriCorps Seniors' (FGP funder) focus on racism, equity, and diversity.



# MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Land of Sky Regional Council houses two roles with the Money Follows the Person Demonstration Project: The Community Inclusion Specialist and the Transitions Coordinator. The Community Inclusion Specialist provides education, outreach, and support to increase awareness and utilization of the program. The Transitions Coordinator performs complex, professional work to assist people with chronic conditions and disabilities as they move from institutions back into the community using community-based services and support.

The Community Inclusion Specialist for the western region role began in February 2022.

- Staff covers 37 counties including 172 skilled nursing facilities.
- Staff have contacted all facilities via phone, email, and/or in person to provide education and support.
- Staff provided outreach at community events including all counties for Region B and provided education to counties' department of Social Services Medicaid.
- 82/172 skilled nursing facilities had different social workers since 4th quarter 2021 providing opportunities for education of program.
- Staff provided webinars for skilled nursing and social services staff for all counties.

IN FY22, LOSRC  
 COMPLETED 13  
 TRANSITIONS  
 WHICH IS A SAVINGS  
 TO MEDICAID OF  
 \$403,000.

Money Follows the Person transitions clients from skilled nursing facilities to the community. Land of Sky is currently serving the following 15 counties: Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania, Polk, Madison, McDowell, Rutherford, Mitchell, Yancey, Forsyth, Davidson, Surry, Davie, Stokes, Yadkin.

Land of Sky initiated Money Follows the Person in January 2021. There have been more transitions from January 2021 to June 2022 than in any other time that the program has been implemented in the western part of the state. In 2020, the western region had 2 transitions for the entire year. This accounted for 2.67% of the 75 aging & physical disability transitions for the year. As of June 30, 2022, the Western Region has had 8 transitions for the Western Region and 5 transitions for the Central regions. On average, a Money Follows the Person transition saves Medicaid about \$31,000 per year.

# FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Family Caregiver Program assists family and kinship (grandparents raising grandchildren) caregivers with providing care to their loved ones. The program offers a variety of services including assisting with respite, providing information about resources in the region, assistance with supplemental services, and facilitating support groups. This year, the Family Caregiver Program contracted out the services to providers in the four counties of our region. The following is how caregivers were served in the region through contracts with providers.

### HENDERSON - \$53,454

The Council on Aging for Henderson County was awarded a total of \$52,504 to help family and kinship caregivers. These funds were used to help 38 caregivers with care management.

36 of these caregivers received assistance with respite.

9 of these caregivers received assistance with supplemental services.

MountainCare was awarded a total of \$950 to host and facilitate support groups for caregivers and care receivers.

9 caregivers and care receivers participated in the support groups.

### MADISON - \$21,066

The Council on Aging of Buncombe County was awarded a total of \$21,066 to help family and kinship caregivers. These funds were used to help 20 caregivers with care management.

6 of these caregivers received assistance with respite.

2 of these caregivers received assistance with supplemental services.

### BUNCOMBE - \$93,052

The Council on Aging of Buncombe County was awarded a total of \$93,052 to help family and kinship caregivers. These funds were used to help 55 caregivers with care management.

43 of these caregivers received assistance with respite.

3 of these caregivers received assistance with assistive technology.

2 of these caregivers received assistance with supplemental services.

### TRANSYLVANIA - \$9,561

MountainCare was awarded a total of \$1,491 to help family caregivers. These funds were used to help 1 caregiver with respite. Unfortunately, MountainCare had to close their Transylvania Adult Day location and more caregivers were not able to be helped.

The Council on Aging for Henderson County was awarded a total of \$8,070 to help kinship caregivers in Transylvania County.



Photo Credit: Rob Amberg



# SENIOR TAR HEEL LEGISLATURE

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature (NCSTHL) was created as a nonpartisan, unicameral body by the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) with the passage of Senate Bill 479 in July of 1993. The chief sponsor of the bill was then-Senator Beverly Perdue. The first meeting of the Senior Tar Heel Legislature was held on October 26, 1993.

The statute describes the goals of the NCSTHL:

- To assess the legislative needs of older citizens by convening a forum modeled after the NCGA.
- To promote citizen involvement and advocacy concerning aging issues before the NCGA.
- To develop a nonpartisan forum for older North Carolinians to discuss senior citizens' issues.
- To provide information and education to senior citizens on the legislative process and matters being considered by the NCGA.
- To provide older North Carolinians an opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the legislative process.

Members of the NCSTHL are volunteers from all walks of life. Some are retired, some still work.

Each of North Carolina's 100 counties may select one delegate and one alternate to the NCSTHL for a two-year term. Appointees must be age 60+ and a resident of the county, but they do not have to be born in North Carolina.

The NCSTHL is unicameral and nonpartisan.

Candidates for appointment are credentialed through the state's 16 Area Agencies on Aging. The NC Division of Aging & Adult Services provides staff support for the NCSTHL.

The selection process is facilitated by the state's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). There are 16 AAA offices attached to the state's local councils of government. Each Area Agency on Aging has a staff person assigned to facilitate and support the work of their counties' NCSTHL Delegates and Alternates.

### LAND OF SKY AND THE SENIOR TAR HEEL LEGISLATURE:

The Senior Tar Heel Legislature has had a lull during the pandemic. In March 2022 the legislative group met in Clemmons, NC to work toward a new way of engaging with the legislature. New ideas, new branding, and information have been approved. The Senior Tar Heel Legislature will meet again for general session in October 2022. The delegates will vote on proposals for submission to the general session. Priorities, since the awakening of the pandemic, are around the need for more care facility staff: wages, education, tracking employment, benefits and fair employment.

2022 Senior Tar Heel Legislative Representatives:

Ruthie Rosier -Henderson County

Sherrye Perry - Madison County

Shelton O'Neil - Madison County, Alternate

Susan Schiemer - Buncombe County



# HOME & COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT

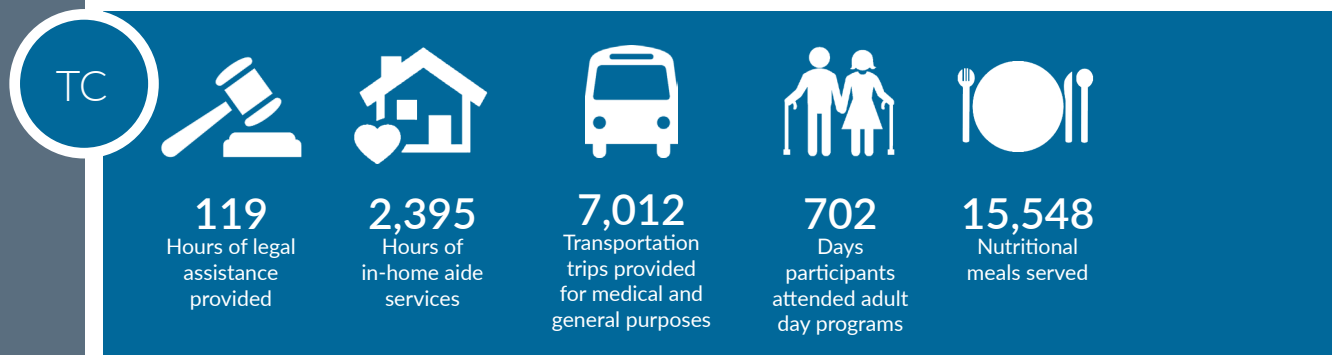
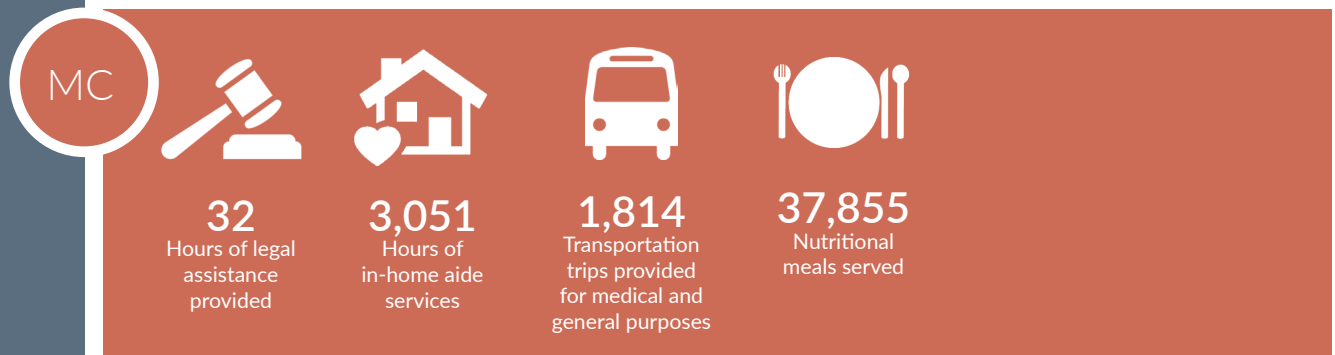
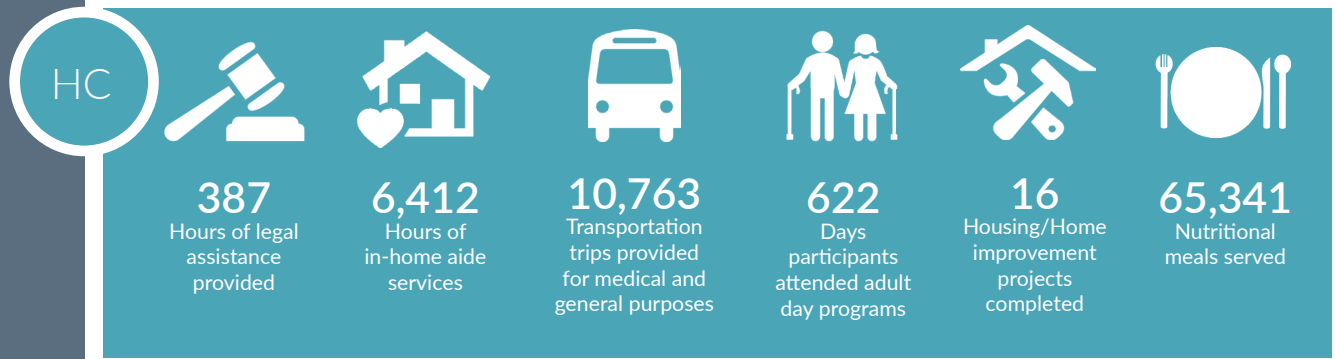
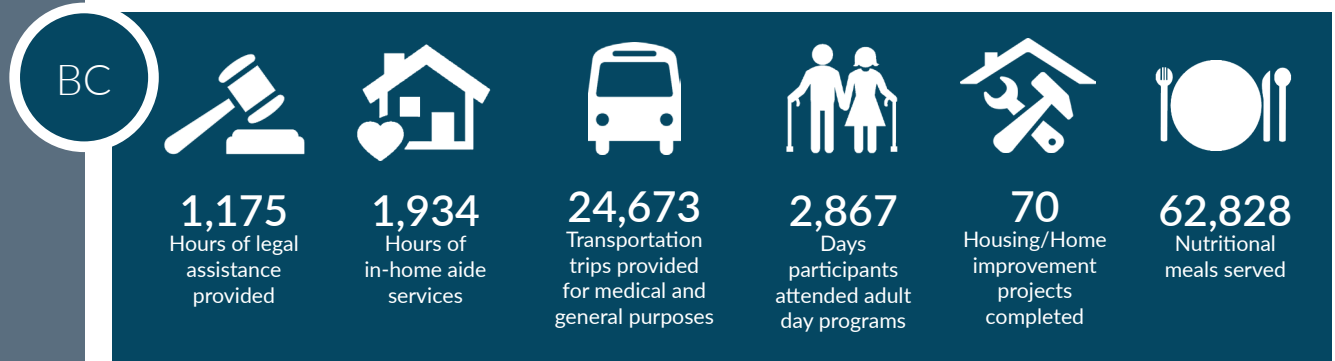
AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Established in 1992 under NCGS 143B-181.1(a)(11), the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) was devised to provide a “common funding stream” for a comprehensive and coordinated system of home and community-based services and opportunities for older adults. HCCBG services are provided by local agencies within the community and are available to people ages 60 and older.

HCCBG is administered through the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services and the Area Agency on Aging. It combines federal and state funds with a local match, and it gives county commissioners discretion in budgeting and administering aging funds.

## HCCBG Services at a Glance

- Adult Day Care and Adult Day Health
- Respite
- Congregate Nutrition and Home-Delivered Meals
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Activities
- Housing and Home Repair
- Care Management
- In-Home Aide Services
- General and Medical Transportation
- Information & Assistance
- Senior Centers
- Volunteer Coordination
- Legal Services
- Family Caregiver Services
- Skilled Home Health
- Consumer Directed Care Services
- Health Screenings
- Project C.A.R.E. Services



# CARES / ARPA FUNDS

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) was a grant that was allocated to support the safety and independence of older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic through emergency funding for senior nutrition, supportive services, and caregiver support. In July 2020, Land of Sky Regional Council Area Agency on Aging was allocated **\$1.2 million** for Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties older adults. From July 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021, 100% of the CARES funding was spent.

### TRANSYLVANIA - \$106,893

Land of Sky Regional Council - \$2,876	
\$1,250	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
3	Family Caregivers Received Respite Assistance
85	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$1,626	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
6	Family Caregivers Received Supplemental Services
MountainCare Inc. - Adult Day Care - \$12,573	
\$500	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$948	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$5,551	CARES Adult Day Care (88 Days)
\$2,000	CARES Adult Day Care Non-Unit
\$3,574	CARES Adult Day Health (50 Days)
Pisgah Legal Services - \$3,758	
\$3,758	CARES Legal Services Transylvania County (36 Hours)
TC Parks and Recreation - Silvermont Senior Center - \$1,347	
\$1,347	CARES Senior Center Operations Non-Unit Emergency Response Costs
Western Carolina Community Action (Now WNCSource) - \$86,339	
\$60,287	CARES Home Delivered Meals (22,327 Meals)
\$26,052	CARES Non-Unit Home Delivered Meals

### MADISON - \$71,648

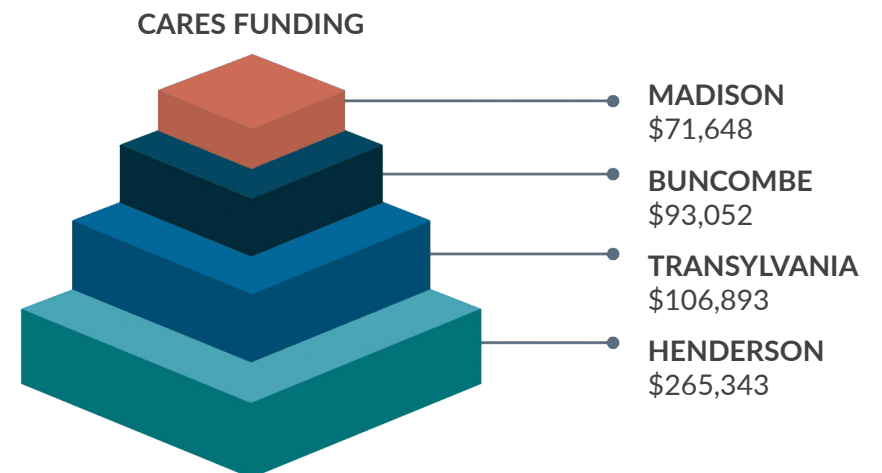
Council on Aging of Buncombe County - Madison County - \$14,078	
\$500	Family Caregiver Support Program - Information
\$1,000	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$800	Family Caregiver Support Program - Counseling/Training/Support
\$11,000	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
23	Family Caregivers Received Respite
754	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$778	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
2	Family Caregivers Received Supplemental Services
Land of Sky Regional Council - \$671	
\$671	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
5	Caregivers Received Supplemental Services
Madison County Department of Social Services - \$54,520	
\$24,532	CARES Non-Unit Home Delivered Meals
\$29,988	CARES Non-Unit Congregate Nutrition
Pisgah Legal Services- \$2,379	
\$2,379	CARES Legal Services Madison County (19 Hours)



# HENDERSON - \$265,343

Council on Aging for Henderson County - \$193,804	
\$171,269	CARES Home Delivered Meals(14,451 Meals)
\$6,879	CARES Non-Unit Home Delivered Meals
\$5,656	CARES Non-Unit Congregate Nutrition
\$135	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$720	Family Caregiver Support Program - Counseling/Training/Support
309	Family Caregivers Participated in Support Groups
\$8,145	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
23	Family Caregivers Received Respite Assistance
349	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$1,000	CARES Consumer Directed Services Care Advisor
GT Independence - Council on Aging for Henderson County - \$3,973	
\$975	CARES Consumer Directed Services Financial Management Services
\$2,998	CARES Consumer Directed Services Personal Assistant (135 Hours)
GT Independence - Henderson County Department of Social Services - \$15,000	
\$1,575	CARES Consumer Directed Services Financial Management Services
\$13,425	CARES Consumer Directed Services Personal Assistant (717 Hours)
Jewish Family Services of WNC - \$1,617	
\$30	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$332	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
9	Family Caregivers Received Respite Assistance
49	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$1,255	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
9	Family Caregivers Received Meals
51	Meals Family Caregivers Received

Land of Sky Regional Council - \$8,152	
\$2,711	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
5	Family Caregivers Received Respite Assistance
112	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$5,441	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
5	Family Caregivers Received Supplemental Services
MountainCare Inc - Henderson County Adult Day Services - \$30,271	
\$500	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$2,884	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$10,148	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
29	Family Caregivers Received Respite Assistance
154	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$300	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
\$1,017	CARES Adult Day Care (16 Days)
\$12,902	CARES Adult Day Care Non-Unit
\$2,520	CARES Adult Day Health (35 Days)
Pisgah Legal Services - \$12,526	
\$12,526	CARES Legal Services Henderson County (168 Hours)



BUNCOMBE - \$93,052

<b>Council on Aging of Buncombe County - \$226,064</b>	
\$142,917	CARES Congregate Meals (22,466 Meals)
\$18,039	CARES Non-Unit Congregate Nutrition
\$15,480	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$800	Family Caregiver Support Program - Information
\$1,720	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$1,700	Family Caregiver Support Program - Counseling/Training/Support
43	Family Caregivers Participated in Support Groups
\$19,882	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
38	Family Caregivers Given Respite Assistance
1,255.5	Hours of Respite Provided to Family Caregivers
\$1,393	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
\$24,133	CARES Volunteer Program Development Non-Unit Emergency Response Cost
<b>DayStay Adult Day Services - \$9,079</b>	
\$9,079	CARES Adult Day Care Non-Unit
<b>Jewish Family Services of WNC - \$8,037</b>	
\$176	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$1,625	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
29	Family Caregivers Given Respite Assistance
128	Hours of Respite Provided to Family Caregivers
\$6,236	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
37	Family Caregivers Served Meals
237	Meals Served to Family Caregivers
<b>Meals on Wheels of Asheville and Buncombe County - \$187,483</b>	
\$187,483	CARES Home Delivered Meals (21,981 Meals)
<b>Mountain Mobility - \$22,609</b>	
\$22,609	CARES Transportation Non-Unit Emergency Response Cost

<b>Land of Sky Regional Council - \$84,534</b>	
\$12,399	CARES Volunteer Program Development Non-Unit Emergency Response Cost
\$37,122	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$25,525	Family Caregiver Support Program - Information
\$3,150	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
6	Family Caregivers Provided Respite
120	Hours of Respite Provided Family Caregivers
\$6,338	Family Caregiver Support Program - Supplemental Services
8	Family Caregivers Received Supplemental Assistance
<b>MountainCare Inc - Buncombe County Adult Day Services - \$58,051</b>	
\$2,304	Family Caregiver Support Program - Program Planning & Administration Non-Unit
\$740	Family Caregiver Support Program - Information
\$4,500	Family Caregiver Support Program - Access
\$2,656	Family Caregiver Support Program - Counseling/Training/Support
219	Family Caregivers Participated in Support Groups
\$2,520	Family Caregiver Support Program - Respite
2	Family Caregivers Received Respite
31	Hours of Respite Family Caregivers Received
\$6,741	CARES Adult Day Care (107 Days)
\$33,751	CARES Adult Day Care Non-Unit
\$4,839	CARES Adult Day Health (67 Days)
<b>Pisgah Legal Services - \$41,211</b>	
\$41,211	CARES Legal Services Buncombe County (541 Hours)

# CARES / ARPA FUNDS CONT.

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Listed are some of the services that were provided with CARES funding.

- Meals for both congregate sites and home delivered clients.
- Expanded routes to provide home delivered meals.
- Personal protective equipment, food service equipment, and other unique items that allowed congregate nutrition programs and home delivered meal programs to continue services.
- Transportation providers were able to purchase personal protective equipment, cleaning products and other items that allowed them to continue to provide rides to clients.
- Volunteer development expenses associated with hiring of personnel for volunteer development and coordination.
- Adult day care and adult day health services and cost of items needed to continue services for clients.
- Legal services provided to older adults related to COVID-19 concerns.
- Family Caregiver Support Program costs associated with planning and administration, information and outreach, training and support, respite, and supplemental services.
- Family Caregiver Support Program also used CARES funding to expand services to kinship caregivers, including helping grandparents with the transition of their grandchildren to remote learning.
- Long term care facilities (family care homes, adult care homes and skilled nursing) received items they requested which increased opportunities for socialization. Items included arts and crafts, coloring books/crayons, outdoor seating, outdoor activities, televisions, books, CD players/music, books and Bluetooth speakers. Facilities also received kindle tablets to assist with telehealth appointments and speaking to family/friends. Facilities received activity books with both individual and group activities. Facilities (per request) received hearing assistance devices.

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

Nutrition funding was awarded to our region's providers on October 1, 2021 for FY22. In FY22, our region spent:

- Council on Aging for Henderson County spent **\$19,273** in Home Delivered Meal Funding (serving 2,587 meals to 45 clients) and WNCSource spent **\$5,351** in Non-Unit Home Delivered Meal Funding (liquid nutrition for 122 clients).
- Council on Aging of Buncombe County spent **\$38,000** in Congregate Meal Funding (serving 1,993 meals to 149 clients, Produce boxes to 175 clients, 110 meal site deliveries and 76 exercise classes).





# BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Staff have completed the 2022 update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Currently, updated COVID impacts, Resilience, and Census 2021 updates are included and are a prominent feature of the 2022 update. Land of Sky Regional Council's Board is anticipated to approve and adopt the CEDS in November 2022. Highlights of updates to the 2022 CEDS are:

- a. Opportunity Zone overview and maps for our region are updated.
- b. County profile datasheets have been updated with 2021 Census data and are included.
- c. Implementation schedule has been updated with current status.

The 2022 CEDS has been submitted to EDA and is a 'living' document on the [AGOL web platform](#).

Staff works with local governments and the EDA representative for NC to raise awareness of EDA programs and opportunities. Staff work closely with member governments to provide assistance on project and grant development, and also to connect and convene partners to develop a stronger project. The CEDS Committee includes representatives from both the Workforce Development Board and Area Agency on Aging in order to ensure specific needs of the growing aging population and skilled workforce sector are addressed.

LOS Staff have continued to work on specific project development and management with local government Staff and Partners in many ways, most notably in Broadband, Economic Development, Health and Human Services, Planning, Transportation, Infrastructure, Greenways, Stormwater, and Aging Services. LOS Staff support provides capacity and expertise that serves as an extension of local government staff and implements priorities. An example is grant support and administration of the bridge project to the new Pratt &

Whitney site, ongoing grant writing for I26 interchange/Access Road to P&W, and extensive Broadband support. While supporting the region is a priority for us, working closely with local government staff is also critical to advance regional priorities and initiatives. This graph highlights the Department's budgeted projects:



In order to further regional projects, staff focused additional implementation efforts on the broader categories such as WestNGN Broadband, Downtown Redevelopment, Access Roads and Water / Sewer Infrastructure. More details on these projects are detailed throughout this report.

COVID continues to challenge certain aspects of our work, however our CEDS goals are being achieved. In person meetings and outreach has not occurred at the level we would like for certain activities, although we continue to provide technical assistance to local governments, state agencies, and many partners on CEDS related priorities including job creation, workforce development and quality of life. During this project period, we have assisted in developing 16 grant applications for local governments in our region. In past reporting periods we have worked to assist develop 28 applications for grant assistance with our local governments and partner agencies. Specific activities toward our goals during this last quarter include planning, grant writing and technical assistance to develop the Economic Development & Regional Projects.



# ECD & REGIONAL PROJECTS

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

These projects cover a breadth of topics and sectors and multiple jurisdictions. Typically, they cover our entire region or beyond through partnerships with other sister-Councils in the western region. Notable examples include:

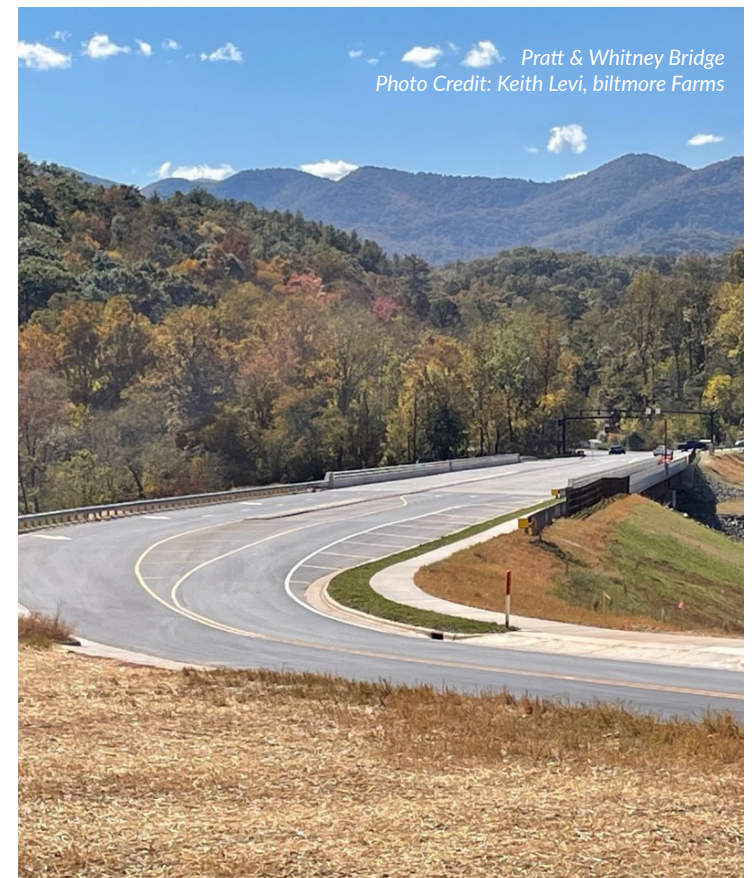
- **REGIONAL COLLABORATION ANALYSIS** – Future workforce analysis, including automation; and Strategic Priorities was paired with a Regional Economic Collaboration and Analysis led by the Region’s Chambers of Commerce and business sector. This project recommends regional-scale, public-private partnerships to address critical needs. Ernst and Young was selected as the Consultant for this effort and is being funded by the EDA and Dogwood Health Trust.
- **REGIONAL INNOVATION** – Promote economic and workforce opportunities within the region by developing a collaborative approach to research and development in the western region. This is focused on current and emerging technical sectors such as biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, IT, and climate data.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION & APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION** - Technical assistance for COVID relief and continued economic and community development. This includes project development, grant writing and assistance with state and federal programs and compliance.
- **SCALING CREATIVE MANUFACTURING IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA** - This project will help identify regional needs to grow the creative sector, lay groundwork to growing more job opportunities, identify scalable businesses, provide development strategies for scalable businesses, identify supply chain potential for industry clusters, and help these businesses collaborate to compete in global marketplaces.
- **PRATT & WHITNEY BRIDGE OVER THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER** - Staff partnered with Chamber and County staff to apply for and administer a **\$12,000,000** grant from the GoldenLeaf Foundation to the Asheville-Buncombe County Chamber of Commerce’s Community Betterment Foundation.
- **HOUSING & CHILDCARE INVENTORIES/ASSESSMENTS** – The region has reached a crisis for available and affordable housing and childcare. These are the top priority concerns for the business community as they struggle with filling open positions and supporting a workforce.
- **REGIONAL FREIGHT STAKEHOLDER GROUP** - Discussions continue to assist improve infrastructure connections between South Carolina, the LOS region, and Tennessee, and identifying the needs of the businesses in the larger region related to distribution, export and import will be important to the regional economy. This is in coordination with the Chambers of Commerce and WNC Transportation Alliance.

### Open Data Portal

Open Data Portal highlights commonly requested datasets as well as completed maps and datasets completed through projects. [Open Data Portal](#)

### PROJECT STORYMAP

ECD is launching a new Project Storymap to highlight projects throughout the region in a searchable format. The Storymap is a ‘live’ feature in that it is updated as initiatives progress and new projects are added. Please visit the site regularly for more information and updates! [Project Storymap](#)



Pratt & Whitney Bridge  
Photo Credit: Keith Levi, biltmore Farms



# GOALS

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### GOAL 1: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Assist local governments, agencies and partners access and facilitate ARP and CARES Act funds, COVID relief, and other disaster funds for their communities.
- Assist chambers of commerce, economic developers, and private interests pursue data analysis and regional visioning for place-based community and economic development opportunities within the region.
- Assist partners, economic developers, and private interests pursue research and development opportunities within the region.
- Assist CarolinaWest Economic Development Group for the seven-county area.
- Assist jurisdictions with grant development and administration of economic development funds to support expansion of local businesses.
- Assist jurisdictions with grant development for industrial sites.
- Facilitate Broadband expansion through Public-Private-Partnerships within the region.
- Assist jurisdictions with infrastructure expansion for workforce, community and economic development projects.
- Assist Communities with economic revitalization and resilience projects.
- Annual Performance Report for the 2021 Land of Sky Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
- Develop data and metrics dashboard to make the regional data more available for economic and community development opportunities.
- Develop grant applications to assist local jurisdictions fully prepare for economic and community development opportunities.
- Provide technical assistance on utility cost cutting strategies to area businesses and institutions through the Waste Reduction Partners program.
- Develop regional resilience analysis and toolkit for the region's emerging climate and social impacts.

### GOAL 2: READY WORKFORCE

- Continue the regional Transportation Demand Management Program to encourage shared transportation systems for the area workforce.
- Administer area programs through the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board to develop career pathways, programs, and build capacity for the region's citizens.
- Assisted in the development of Substance-use Disorder support programs and Back-to-Work initiatives within the region.

### GOAL 3: CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Assist partners investigate broadband investment opportunities within the region.
- Administer NC-DENR-CDBG-Infrastructure Grants for jurisdictions.
- Administer NC Commerce Infrastructure and housing grants for jurisdictions.
- Create geodatabases for regional and local government Stormwater assets.
- Develop databases and/or GIS websites for local government's internal/ external operations.
- Work with local transit agencies to obtain funding to provide transportation services.
- Develop grant applications to various agencies to fund broadband implementation.
- Assist local governments address infrastructure priorities within their communities.
- Implement the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- Work with local governments to identify new transportation projects for submittal to NCDOT.
- Assist area jurisdictions with Access Road applications for economic development projects.

### GOAL 4: NATURAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS

- Coordinate with adjacent COGs and local jurisdictions to develop a comprehensive dataset of trails, greenways, blueways, and bikeways in the region.
- Develop applications to the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for projects in local jurisdictions.
- Facilitate the WNC Stormwater Partnership to assist Local Government address water quality.
- Develop the regional Hellbender Trail network.

### GOAL 5: LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY CAPACITY

- Coordinate with and provide support for local government members in leveraging federal, state, and foundation funding to achieve their local and regional goals.
- Assist implement the Small Town Main Street Designations and other place-based economic development opportunities.
- Facilitate retreats, meetings and functions for local governments, nonprofits, and partner organizations within area communities.
- Facilitate training opportunities for Managers, Planners, elected officials, and other community leaders.





# WASTE REDUCTION PARTNERS

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Since 1992, Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) has provided Western North Carolina clients with waste reduction assessments, energy efficiency surveys, and assistance to enhance environmental sustainability programs. The program provides confidential, no-cost on-site assessments to industries, business, local governments, and institutions.

WRP can help identify innovations strategies to:

- Reduce utility costs
- Improve energy efficiency & management
- Improve productivity
- Minimize waste
- Enhance compliance
- Reduce liabilities
- Improve public image

In FY2022, Waste Reduction Partners engineers assisted 25 manufacturers and institutions across Region B with utility cost-saving and environmental sustainability assessments. These manufacturers, local governments, schools and churches are projected to save nearly **\$53,000** annually from energy efficiency, water conservation and waste reduction assistance efforts. Statewide, the Waste Reduction Partners program delivered on-site technical services to 124 business and institutions across 41 counties, with more than **\$4.9 million** in projected annual operational cost savings. The WRP Program showed a 20-to-1 return on grant dollars invested, while helping clients improve their environmental performance, reduce carbon footprints, and cut wastes.

**BC** **\$19,900** in savings by assisting 15 clients

**\$7,200** in savings by assisting 15 clients **HC**

**MC** **\$1,600** in savings by assisting 15 clients

**\$23,600** in savings by assisting 15 clients **TC**

HENDERSON

Waste Reduction Partners volunteer, Bruce Helwig, assisted Dana Elementary School in Henderson County to conduct a cafeteria food composting review. The school is participation in a food waste recycling program to divert compostable materials from the landfill. The two-day “waste sort” was led by Christina Wittmeier with NC Department of Environmental Quality.}

# RESILIENCE AND HAZARD MITIGATION

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The region has completed the third phase of the Land of Sky Regional Resilience Assessment (RRA) in conjunction with regional partners including emergency management, hazard mitigation, local government managers and planners, and nonprofits. We have begun the fourth phase of the RRA, funded through a FEMA BRIC Capability and Capacity Building Grant (**\$202,800**), and will complete the remaining vulnerability and risk assessments, including dimensions of social vulnerability and economic impacts, as well as future land use and climate change scenarios. We will use these analyses to make recommendations for integrating resilience measures in local comprehensive, hazard mitigation, transportation, stormwater and other plans, as well as for improving codes and ordinances. We will also identify and prioritize mitigation projects that will have the greatest impact in increasing community resilience. This is being done through a partnership with UNC Asheville's NEMAC and Fernleaf.

The AccelAdapt User Group was launched in March 2022, and a training was held to familiarize local government staff (planning, stormwater, public works, emergency management and public safety) with the online, interactive resilience decision-support platform and use cases. Staff also continued to organize and support Regional Resilience Advisory Board meetings.

### FEMA BRIC

Staff applied for a FEMA BRIC grant for Hot Springs' Spring Creek sewerline replacement and stream restoration **\$1.4M**, although not awarded through FEMA, the project will move forward with funding from an appropriation in the state budget. The project addresses several sewer system vulnerabilities due to flooding that result in degradation and loss of service. It will 1) upgrade and floodproof the Red Bridge pump station, 2) replace and floodproof the Spring Creek sewer main, and 3) stabilize and restore a portion of streambank along Spring Creek to reduce erosion, protect infrastructure, and improve ecosystem function.

### COG DISASTER RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

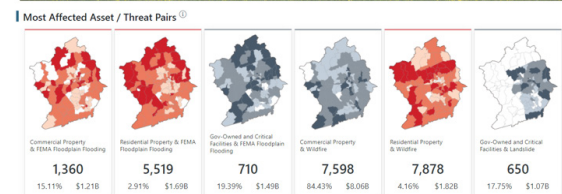
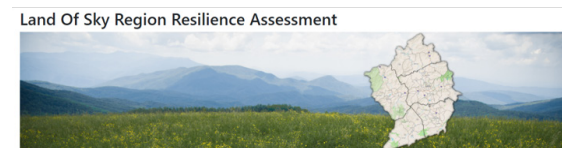
The NC State Legislature allocated **\$6M** to COGs to provide assistance to LGUs to support local disaster recovery and resilience. This assistance includes grant writing and management and financial management assistance. It also supports activities related to the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

### GREENING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES (GAC) PROGRAM

As a follow-on from the EPA's Building Block to Regional Resilience Program, LOSRC was selected to participate in the GAC program and received **\$60,000** in design assistance for green infrastructure planning and conceptual design. The assistance was directed toward the Central Asheville Watershed Restoration Plan, led by Riverlink. Staff organized a 3-day virtual workshop to develop green infrastructure designs for the A-B Tech campus which included stormwater management and stream restoration, along with campus amenities like a walking trail and an outdoor amphitheater and lawn.

### SWANNANOA RIVER RD HYDROLOGY AND HYDRAULIC STUDY - \$150,000 Golden LEAF (applied FY22)

The proposed project is a part of a larger planning effort to improve floodplain management along Asheville's Swannanoa River. It will provide estimates of the flood mitigation potential and flood damage reduction benefits, as well as project costs, derived from removing structures from the north bank of the river, realigning Swannanoa River Road, river/bank restoration and stabilization projects, and other floodplain management measures. It will also consider potential restoration of the lower reaches of Ross Creek. Project outcomes will be an evaluation of alternative floodplain management options, an evaluation of the technical and financial feasibility of those options, and evaluation of barriers and limitations to implementing a preferred plan.



<p><b>Virtual Meetings – 3 Days</b></p> <p>Friday 12/3 – Kickoff Key Decision Makers General Public</p> <p><i>Revisions</i></p> <p>Monday 12/6 – Themes Campus Visioning Green Infrastructure &amp; Ecological Restoration Recreation &amp; Mobility</p> <p><i>Revisions</i></p> <p>Tuesday 12/7 – Final Design Stakeholders &amp; Public</p>	<p><b>A-B Tech</b></p> <p>President, CFO, Communication, Grounds &amp; Maintenance, Stormwater Engineer Board of Directors Faculty, Students</p>
<p><b>Buncombe County</b></p> <p>MSD, Facilities, General Services, Stormwater, Erosion &amp; Sediment Control</p>	<p><b>City of Asheville</b></p> <p>Planning, Greenways, Parks &amp; Rec, Sustainability, Public Works, Stormwater, Floodplain</p>
<p><b>FBRMPO</b></p>	<p><b>UNC-A</b></p>
<p><b>Community Partners</b></p>	





# BROADBAND

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Staff continues to work to close the digital divide in our region through facilitating infrastructure and digital inclusion projects. We have been working to implement the digital inclusion plan that was released in 2021 and helping support digital inclusion planning across Western North Carolina by partnering with neighboring COGS. New funding opportunities continue to emerge and we are consistently working with providers and local governments in the region to facilitate projects. This year we released the digital inclusion plan that was recently awarded a NADO award, and are working with NEMAC on a broadband planning tool.

- Staff supported successful GREAT grant proposals in Buncombe and Transylvania counties (**Buncombe \$1.8M, Transylvania \$7M**)
- Staff supported a USDA infrastructure grant in Madison County (4,000 people, \$3M)
- Awarded Buncombe ARPA funding to deploy affordable broadband to housing coalition
- Partnered with NCDIT and NCDHHS to help implement an innovative telehealth pilot across Macon, Mitchell, and Madison counties.
- Partnered with IEI to support digital inclusion planning across Western North Carolina through partner COGS.
- Supported device lending programs with Blue Ridge, Haywood, and AB Tech community college.
- Supported public computer lab at Madison County Extension office
- Supported Madison County Schools with 11 smart boards to help support remote learning
- Worked to help support Connect Recovery/Reconnect programs with devices for reentering citizens and citizens in recovery taking classes (200 people)
- Supported laptops for low-income parents taking classes in Transylvania County

## TRANSYLVANIA

### Implemented public Wi-Fi:

- Balsam Grove Community Center
- Issac Holmes homeless teen shelter

Community center projects come with laptops to help provide rural business

## MADISON

### Implemented public Wi-Fi:

- Downtown Mars Hill
- Beech Glenn Community Center
- Laurel Community Center
- Spring Creek Community Center
- Revere/Rice Cove Community Center

## BUNCOMBE

### Implemented public Wi-Fi:

- Downtown Wi-Fi in Weaverville
- Broad River Community Center
- Leicester Community Center
- Ox Creek Community Center
- Spring Mountain Community Centers

## WESTNGN BROADBAND

WestNGN targeted fiber infrastructure within the region for both urban and rural areas. In its fifth year, this regional effort includes broadly successful partnerships with schools, businesses, and economic developers, as well as cornerstone institutions, local governments, and providers.

This project has focused investigation for improving rural broadband access and affordability. A regional roundtable is held annually, with the latest held in April, to highlight federal, state, and regional policy and priorities for implementation. The roundtable brought experts together with local elected officials, staff, and private sector to discuss barriers and concerns with the digital divide and economic opportunities in our communities. The next stage includes coordinating efforts and the need for the ARPA funds and other Federal and state dollars as they become available.

Staff provided data and information for 13 GREAT grant applications and assisted develop 2 GREAT grants for unserved areas within Buncombe and Transylvania Counties and both of these were successful. Staff completed a regional Broadband Digital Inclusion Plan in collaboration with BAND NC and the Institute for Emerging Issues.

Applications for rural WiFi connectivity, broadband deployment, and telehealth were submitted to and approved by granting agencies on behalf of our communities for continued economic development advancement.

Seven small town main streets, many unincorporated areas within counties, and 300 school families have received Wi-Fi connections or hot spots, directly benefiting from our broadband coordination work.

Projects underway include:

- Project Connect – laptop and hotspot lending for community college students at AB
- Student Connect – hotspot lending with service paid for children unserved by broadband to address the digital divide in the 11 western counties
- Digital Inclusion Planning & Implementation – a regional plan has been developed and staff are working with the NC DIT office, Rural Health and Dogwood Health Trust on several projects within this partnership. Staff will be the regional broadband technical assistance providers for the western region.
- Building out affordable wifi access in Buncombe County HACA properties with ARPA funding.
- WNC Telehealth- Partnership with NCDIT and DHHS to supply hot spots to individuals participating in certain healthcare programs and provide digital skills training to help monitor certain healthcare metrics.

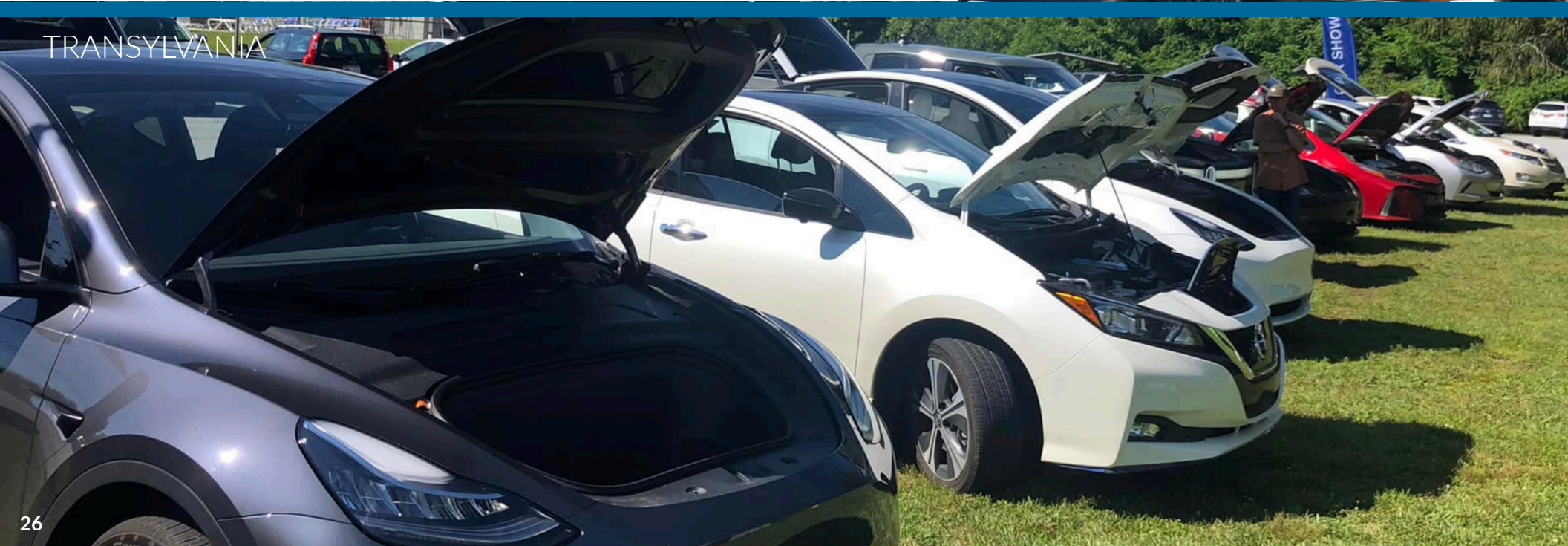


# CLEAN VEHICLES COALITION

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Land of Sky Clean Vehicle staff continued education and outreach activities to help support alternative fuel transitions. We helped welcome the first electric school bus in North Carolina to the Cherokee Boys Club and worked with numerous fleets to help reduce carbon emissions. Work from the fleets across our region helped to reduce over 800,000 gas gallon equivalents and over 5,000 tons of CO2. Staff were accepted into a national equity program leading to deeper dives in how we can strengthen transportation opportunities for all. Over 90 electric charging stations were added in the last year to help prepare WNC for growing electric vehicle industry.

- Car Shows in Brevard, Asheville, Rosman, AB Tech, UNCA
- Hosted the Southeast Regional Clean Cities meeting with Clean Cities Coordinators from across 6 states
- Welcomed North Carolina's first electric bus to the Eastern Band of Cherokee
- Town of Mars Hill awarded **\$160,000** for a new waste collection vehicle
- Transylvania County Schools awarded a VW grant for an electric school bus (**\$378,970**)
- Town of Mills River awarded **\$20,000** VW funds for L2 charger
- Henderson County awarded **\$111,990** for DC fast charger
- NC Arboretum awarded **\$64,100** for a new refuse hauler
- Town of Black Mountain awarded **\$10,000** for a L2 charger
- Buncombe County awarded **\$20,000** for L2 charger







# HOUSING

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### WNC WORKFORCE HOUSING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Availability and affordability of housing in western North Carolina has become a top priority for businesses, local government, and nonprofits in WNC as our region has become one of the highest costs of living in the state and with less than 2% available housing units within the region, according to the Bowen Report. Land of Sky is leading a project team of Councils of Government to identify affordable and workforce housing opportunities using Opportunity Zones, New Market Tax Credit sites, and other product development mechanisms through an asset inventory and needs assessment.

The Councils of Government are working with the WNC Housing Partnership through grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Dogwood Health Trust to provide analysis and recommended policy, as well as an asset inventory. The project team will connect with workforce development boards and economic development entities to determine priority areas for workforce housing near job centers as workers are traveling farther to jobs, increasing their transportation costs, childcare needs, and impacting fundamental quality of life. This project is supporting our critical workforce to ensure continued economic resilience and growth at a regional scale.

REGIONAL

### GREY MILL APARTMENTS

The project transformed a dilapidated and vacant hosiery mill, located adjacent to Hendersonville’s Main Street Historic District and Seventh Avenue Municipal Service District, into downtown apartments. The 38,000 square foot historic mill building (built in 1915, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000) was restored and converted into 35 apartments, including 7 affordable units. The two-acre site also included public space and sidewalk improvements.

HENDERSON

# OUTDOORS

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### WNC OUTDOOR ECONOMY ASSET MAP AND GAP ANALYSIS

Land of Sky Regional Council led a collaboration with the Southwestern Commission, the High County Council of Governments, and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce’s Riverbird Research to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the region’s outdoor economy, with a focus on outdoor gear manufacturing and nexus with medical manufacturing. The project created and shared an online storymap tool and a detailed economic analysis of the sector to support regional economic development efforts. [Outdoor Storymap](#)

### BUILDING OUTDOOR COMMUNITIES

Land of Sky Regional Council helps coordinate engagement between local governments, businesses, and organizations to support outdoor infrastructure projects. Building Outdoor Communities offers expert analysis and planning grants to support outdoor projects prioritized by local governments.

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### HOT SPRINGS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planners coordinated the Town of Hot Springs’ Comprehensive Planning process and completed updates to the Town’s Plan, which was last revised in 2012. The updated Comprehensive Plan, approved by the Hot Springs Town Council in July 2022, ensures Hot Springs remains in compliance with new regulations passed by the General Assembly and will support future efforts to fund infrastructure projects and other Town priorities.

MADISON



# WATER / SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Targeted investments for improvement, expansion, and repair to better serve existing and future businesses. Projects are currently located in Mars Hill, Marshall, Brevard, Rosman, and Black Mountain. There are projects in development in Brevard, Hendersonville, Rosman, Enka, Marshall, Mars Hill, Hot Springs, Transylvania County, and Mills River.

- Black Mountain water/sewer project has been completed and all has been successfully completed onsite. The town has received the project closure letter from EDA. The access road project to the site has also been completed.
- Mars Hill sewer extension project has been completed and project closure letter has been received by the town.
- Mars Hill water and sewer extension project was submitted to ARC and has been approved for a future economic development site. This project will be completed in conjunction with funds from Dogwood Health Trust's Economic Opportunity.
- Mars Hill has released an RFP to replace a sewer pump station that will be administered by LOS staff and funded with SLFRF funding.
- Black Mountain has released an RFP for a water line replacement. The project will be administered by LOS staff and funded with SLFRF funding.
- Staff is working with Buncombe County to seek funding for a mixed use development with affordable housing.

# WATERSHED PLANNING

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### FRENCH BROAD RIVER PARTNERSHIP

Mission: To maintain and improve stream health within the French Broad River Watershed for environmental and economic benefits.

Vision: That broad-based interests work collaboratively to ensure the French Broad River Watershed serves as a source of drinking water and recreation while supporting biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, forestry, and economic growth.



Staff continued to participate in the Steering Committee (Communications Chair) & Water Quality Committee.

The Partnership commissioned an economic impact study that found that the river draws in \$2.7B in annual visitor spending from 6.9M people, and has an overall economic impact of \$3.8B. It also provides more than 38,000 jobs, and has an existence value of \$2.4B and an environmental value of \$2.9B.

The Water Quality committee is supporting the development of a watershed plan for Cane Creek which originates in Buncombe County and flows through Henderson County and Fletcher before joining the French Broad River. Cane Creek is a 303d listed, impaired water, which can qualify for 319 grant funding with a watershed plan in place.

# ACCESS ROAD APPLICATIONS

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- An access road application was submitted and approved for a new Industry in Enka/Candler. This will result in 150 jobs at this new industry.
- Staff are working with NCDOT, County and Chamber partners to apply for ARC and EDA funding to develop the new I-26 Interchange and access road for Pratt & Whitney facility. \$2,000,000 in ARC funding has been approved in FY22 and staff are finalizing the application for EDA in Fall 2022.
- An access Road application was made for Henderson County to support 160 jobs. The project has been fully funded and construction is underway.
- An access Road application was made for Transylvania County to support 70 jobs and it has been fully funded. Right of Way has begun with construction anticipated for fall of 2022.
- The Crossroads Parkway in Madison County was completed in January 2022. This access road provides connection to the ASI manufacturing site and future industrial uses. This project is supporting 40 jobs in a rural area.



# DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Town center reuse or redevelopment of blighted properties for economic development. Several projects are currently underway in Mars Hill, Hendersonville, Black Mountain, and Swannanoa. We are assisting these communities develop and administer project applications for new uses on brownfields, blighted, and/or underused properties.

- An application was successfully submitted for a downtown Hendersonville brownfields redevelopment project for workforce housing. This project was closed out in March 2021 and has received several awards for creative reuse for workforce housing.
- Hendersonville renovation of dilapidated affordable homes as well as street improvements in a historically under-resourced community. Staff are administering this project for the city.
- CDBG Scattered Sites housing rehab project has been completed and we are in the final phase of completing documentation with NC Commerce.
- Several applications have been submitted to NC Commerce and NC Department of Environmental Quality for downtown revitalization projects in our smallest jurisdictions.

# ZONING—LAND USE

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE, BUNCOMBE COUNTY

Staff completed an Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice report for both the City of Hendersonville and for Buncombe County. This important document is recommended by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for communities receiving Federal housing and community development funds such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The AI report includes findings on issues ranging from discrimination patterns to housing needs to local zoning/development regulations. The report included 3D models of possible zoning reforms (i.e. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) maximum sizes, minimum lot sizes, allowed uses) that would better support housing availability and affordability via Missing Middle Housing types (i.e. duplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments).

### REGION

Staff provides planning and zoning technical assistance to several jurisdictions in the region and also to several outside the region in partnership with Southwestern Commission. Services include Planning Board support, site plan review, zoning updates, and serving as the jurisdiction's Zoning Administrator.

Staff supported a future land use modeling effort through 2045, covering five counties, using UrbanSim. The platform projects land use change, at the Census block level, based on the number of households, residential units, jobs, as well as real estate costs, zoning and travel demand models. Seven scenarios were developed for future land use that included changes to travel costs, to zoning regulations, and to the population and employment control totals:

- Baseline scenario with State Demographer projections
- Restricted growth in steep slope areas
- Higher demographic growth rates
- Restricted growth in steep slope areas + higher demographic growth rates
- Upzoning & downzoning downtowns
- Lowering capacities throughout the region

The project was funded by the EPA's Office of Research and Development.

# SOLID WASTE

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Land of Sky Regional Council hosts a consortium of Solid Waste Managers in the region. The group meets quarterly to discuss best practices related to landfill management and recycling activities. LOSRC administers a contract on behalf of the cities and counties for Asheville Green Works (AGW) to conduct waste reduction and recycling education for our communities. AGW conducts over 40 recycling education activities each year. Locations and events include community festivals, school lunchroom composting, tailgate markets, and homeowner associations.





# STORMWATER

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### REGIONAL STORMWATER SERVICES PROGRAM

Regional program to assist with MS4 compliance, to implement the six minimum control measures, and reduce costs for each jurisdiction. Communities served: Fletcher, Woodfin, Weaverville, Montreat

### 205J GRANT STORMWATER SYSTEM INVENTORIES AND MS4 INSPECTION MOBILE APP \$32,773

To continue to modernize and optimize stormwater management in our region and the French Broad River (FBR) Basin, the LOSRC created online, interactive, stormwater system inventories for the communities of Woodfin and Fletcher. We also developed an integrated mobile app for tracking MS4 system inspection and maintenance, and IDDE tracking. The documentation is linked to the inventory and location-aware so that local government staff can quickly record information about the system with their smart phone while in the field.

- Two SW inventories (Fletcher & Woodfin), now eight completed (Black Mountain, Montreat, Hot Springs, Marshall, Laurel Park, Rosman)
- MS4 Inspection and IDDE App dev & deployment (Fletcher, Woodfin, Montreat)

### 205J GRANT WNC STORMWATER PARTNERSHIP OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT \$26,625

The project addresses the need for coordinated, localized and regional stormwater management and pollution prevention outreach, education and engagement, especially for local governments without dedicated stormwater administrators (only 4 jurisdictions in the region have these).

Partnership education & outreach (rain barrel workshops, CBSM campaigns, GH/PP workshops)

- 3 rain barrel workshops (Fletcher, Woodfin, Weaverville)
- 1 rain garden workshop (Black Mountain)
- 2 GH/PP trainings serving Fletcher, Laurel Park, Weaverville, Woodfin
- 2 CBSM (Community-based social marketing campaigns) - regionwide campaigns focused on behaviors that affect water quality: rain barrel adoption and usage, riparian area management

### 319 BLACK MOUNTAIN PUBLIC WORKS BIORETENTION AND UPPER SWANNANOVA RIVER WATERSHED RESTORATION PLAN UPDATE - \$76, 797

The bioretention system will treat one acre of urban stormwater runoff at the Town of Black Mountain's Public Works Engineering and Maintenance Facility and public parking area. The site is directly adjacent to an impaired section of the Swannanoa River, which will benefit from the pollutant reduction provided by bioretention cells in the public parking area along Terry Estate Drive and behind the public works building. The green stormwater infrastructure will also improve the overall environmental quality of the highly impervious area and is part of an on-going strategy to increase the use of innovative stormwater control measures throughout the town.

### WOODFIN STORMWATER INVENTORY

LOSRC completed a Stormwater Inventory for the Town of Woodfin, NC in December 2021. LOSRC worked with the town's Public Works staff to locate and map stormwater features such as inlets, outfalls, and pipes. The inventory was funded through the US Environmental Protection Agency Section 205(j) Grant program. The EPA provides states with funding to do water quality planning.

The Town is required to regulate stormwater runoff for compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, issued by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) with oversight from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The runoff is monitored by a stormwater management plan implemented by the Town to prevent pollution, detect illicit discharge, and promote public education and outreach.



# FBRMPO & LOSRPO

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) is responsible for carrying out continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multi-modal transportation planning in the Asheville Urbanized Area which includes portions of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties. The Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (LOSRPO) is a voluntary organization of local governments working cooperatively with the NCDOT and local officials to enhance transportation planning opportunities for rural areas in Buncombe, Haywood, Madison, and Transylvania counties.

### BUNCOMBE

AWARDED \$ TO:	
\$7,636,457	Additional federal funds to the Woodfin Greenways project, managed by Buncombe County
\$2,500,000	Swannanoa Greenway, managed by the City of Asheville
\$830,000	NCDOT to add sidewalks to Riceville Road
\$152,800	Town of Montreat to improve pedestrian accommodations on the Texas Road Bridge
\$90,000	Buncombe County - Multimodal Master Plan
\$28,000	Town of Black Mountain - Fonta Flora Feasibility Study
\$40,000	City of Asheville - Reed Creek Greenway Extension Study
\$177,600	City of Asheville - Patton Avenue Corridor Study
\$128,544	Buncombe County for SEDTAP
\$190,306	City of Asheville for Paratransit
\$30,432	Buncombe Council on Aging for the Call-a-Ride Program
\$231,558	City of Asheville for Route 170 to Black Mountain
\$3,200,000	Participated in the ribbon-cutting for the French Broad River West Greenway, a project that received MPO federal funds

- Coordinated with local government staff and officials on changes to project status due to NCDOT cost increases
- Coordinated funding and design decisions for HE-0001, the new I-26 interchange at the Pratt & Whitney facility
- Continued coordination with NCDOT on I-2513, I-4700, Merrimon Avenue, Swannanoa River Road, Riceville Road, and others.
- Managed Tunnel Road Corridor Study and Hendersonville Road Corridor Study
- Participated in and funded the Biltmore/McDowell Corridor Study
- Participated in the Weaverville Bike/Ped Master Plan

- MPO staff managed the procurement and planning study for the Haywood County Greenway Master Plan
- Strive! Week held a bike rodeo event at Chestnut Mountain Nature Park
- MPO staff provided assistance to Haywood County staff on 5307 coordination issues
- Continued coordination on L the Champion Drive Multi-Use Path and the US 19 Pedestrian Improvements in Maggie Valley

### HAYWOOD

#### AWARDED \$ TO:

\$10,467,000	Henderson County for construction of a section of the Ecusta Trail from US 64 to the County line
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- Continued participation in the Ecusta Trail planning and design process
- Provided technical assistance to the City of Hendersonville for a RAISE/Reconnecting Communities grant application to USDOT
- Provided technical assistance to the City of Hendersonville's grant application for a Pedestrian Planning Grant through NCDOT
- Continued coordination on the Clear Creek Greenway and the Mills River Valley Trail
- Participated in the Mills River Bike/Ped Master Plan
- Provided assistance on Ecusta Trail grant applications
- Participated in Henderson TAC meetings

### HENDERSON

#### AWARDED \$ TO:

\$23,000	To Madison County transit for trips to nutrition sites
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- Participated in Community Transportation Advisory Board meetings
- Continued coordination on changes to project A-0010AA (the widening of Future I-26)

### MADISON

- Participated in Transportation advisory Board meetings and providing transit planning support as needed
- Participated in NCDOT Division 14 Cost Containment meetings on Transylvania County projects
- Participating in Express Design for potential SPOT project
- Continue to participate in Ecusta Trail planning, design, and funding efforts
- Assisted City of Brevard in securing additional funding for Railroad Avenue Bridge

### TRANSYLVANIA

- Submitted an application to USDOT for an Action Plan for the Safe Streets for All program
- Continued coordination with local partners on changes to the TIP/STIP due to cost increases and provided updates on USDOT grant opportunities
- Participated in SPOT Workgroup - a statewide workgroup that helps make technical funding decisions to the Board of Transportation
- Continued coordination on all LAPP projects funded through the MPO
- RPO staff serving as statewide NCARPO Chair, NCARPO Transit Liaison, and various other statewide committees.

### REGIONAL



# FOREIGN TRADE ZONE

## ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The US Foreign Trade Zones program was established by the Federal government in the 1930s with the purpose of growing jobs in America and leveling the playing field with international competition. A Foreign Trade Zone is an area where special Customs procedures can be used by approved businesses to lower/eliminate/defer duties and provide benefits to companies operating in the US. The program is overseen by the US FTZ Board and local US Customs and Border Protection.

Twenty counties in Western North Carolina do not have access to this crucial economic development tool. Land of Sky Regional Council has applied for the Grant of Authority to establish an FTZ program and serve five WNC counties, with plans to expand the service area as additional CBP Port of Entry resources become available. As Grantee of this FTZ program, LOSRC will work with local Economic Development staff, Chambers of Commerce and others to educate the business community about the program and its many benefits, as well as the application process.

**THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH CAROLINA (EDPNC) ESTIMATES THAT ADDING FTZ IN JUST THE LOSRC COUNTIES COULD RESULT IN AN ANNUAL INCREASE OF 300 - 400 JOBS AND \$100,000,000 IN INVESTMENT.**



### LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL SEEKS FTZ GRANT OF AUTHORITY

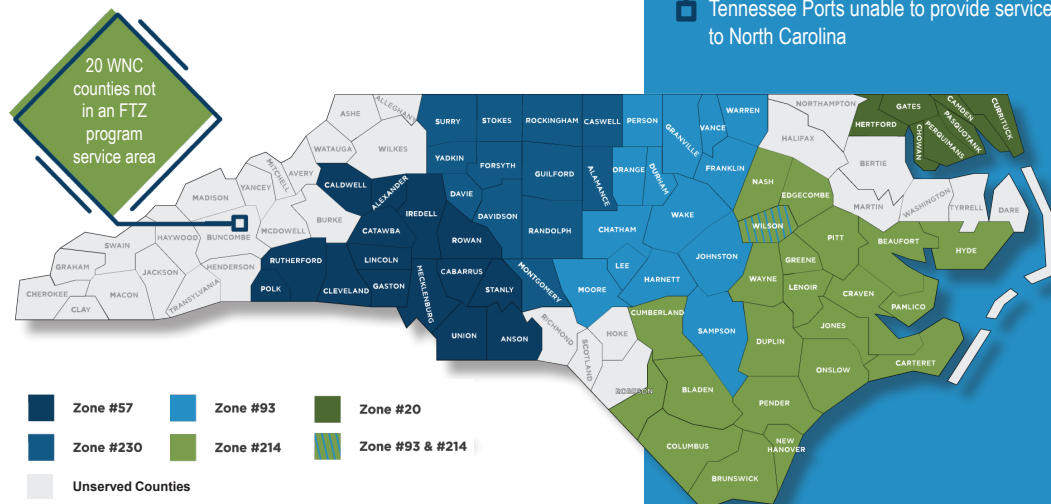
- 20 WNC counties not in an FTZ program service area
- Businesses in WNC seek FTZ benefits
- Zone program helps grow and keep jobs in America
- Almost 20% of region lives in poverty
- Valuable addition to the economic development toolbox
- Promotes US exports
- FTZ adds investment dollars to the local economy

### A FOREIGN TRADE ZONE IS

An area inside the US that is designated as being outside US Customs' territory for duty purposes. Items may be imported into the Zone duty free, and the Customs duty is determined when the merchandise leaves the Zone.

### CHALLENGES

- WNC has no Customs Port of Entry
- Closest Ports of Entry – Greenville-Spartanburg (SC), Knoxville (TN), and Tri-Cities (TN)
- Need concurrence from these 3 Ports to include all 20 unserved WNC counties
- Tennessee Ports unable to provide service to North Carolina



For more information contact Renee Boyette, FTZ Administrator, at [renee@landofsky.org](mailto:renee@landofsky.org), 828.273.8826 or 919.417.2597

# NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION

## TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER

Land of Sky provides Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) services for Buncombe County residents with Medicaid. Transportation to and from providers is a critical component for Medicaid beneficiaries to obtain necessary health care. NEMT services consist of arranging and/or paying for transportation. When the beneficiary has access to a suitable mode of transportation, but lacks the means to use it, the county must assist with the means through gas vouchers, mileage reimbursement, etc. When the beneficiary lacks both means and mode, the county is responsible for arranging transportation at a cost within allowable Medicaid regulations. However, the obligation to provide transportation is not without qualifications.



**83,024**

Number of trips scheduled by the call center



**52,570**

Number of trips provided by vendors in



**9,356**

Number of Private Vehicle trips reimbursed



**302**

Number of New Assessments completed



**10,130**

Number of information and referral calls received



**1,266**

Average number of active cases monthly

### Your **health** may be **impacted** by more than you realize.

- Do you have a secure place to live?
- Do you have access to healthy food?
- Do you have reliable transportation?
- Is your home life or parenting stressful?



Being - and staying - healthy is about more than a visit to the doctor.

Thanks to a new pilot program in North Carolina, if you are a Medicaid Managed Care recipient, you may qualify for free services like a healthy food box, transportation or housing assistance, or support for a stressful family situation.

Contact your care manager or health plan to see if you are eligible for the Healthy Opportunities Pilot.

AmeriHealth Caritas  
855-375-8811  
Healthy Blue (Blue Cross Blue Shield)  
844-594-5070  
UnitedHealthcare  
800-349-1855  
WellCare of North Carolina  
866-799-5318



impacthealth.org

### Su **salud** puede verse **afectada** por más de lo que usted cree.

- ¿Tienes un lugar seguro para vivir?
- ¿Tienes acceso a alimentos saludables?
- ¿Tiene transporte confiable?
- ¿Es estresante su vida hogareña o su crianza?



Estar y mantenerse saludable es más que una visita al médico.

Gracias a un nuevo programa piloto en Carolina del Norte, si usted es un recipiente de Medicaid Managed Care, puede calificar para servicios gratuitos como una caja de alimentos saludables, transporte o asistencia para la vivienda, o apoyo para una situación estresante.

Comuníquese con su administrador de atención o plan de salud para ver si es elegible para Healthy Opportunities Pilot.

AmeriHealth Caritas  
855-375-8811  
Healthy Blue (Blue Cross Blue Shield)  
844-594-5070  
UnitedHealthcare  
800-349-1855  
WellCare of North Carolina  
866-799-5318



impacthealth.org

## HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM

### TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER

Healthy Opportunities Pilot Program – our newest program at Land of Sky – provides non-medical transportation services to qualifying Medicaid recipients (different from those served by NEMT). Healthy Opportunities is a groundbreaking, comprehensive program that seeks to evaluate the link between the social determinants of health – transportation, housing, food security and toxic stress – and better health overall. In this program, the federal government has authorized up to **\$650 million** in Medicaid dollars to ensure clients can receive access to these social services and, in turn, improve the overall health of thousands of North Carolinians. Since the program began in May 2022, Land of Sky has provided transportation services to 10 Buncombe County residents.

# MOUNTAIN MOBILITY

## TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER

As residents were more comfortable riding public transit after the arrival of COVID-19, trip volume increased as well. In FY22, Mountain Mobility provided 103,678 trips, up more than 12% over FY21. Of these trips, more than 30% were medical in nature. Other trip purposes include grocery/retail shopping and employment. Also of note, more than 32% of trips were accessed through our ADA Paratransit program, serving disabled adults for their medical, employment and other needs.

While overall numbers are a good measure of whether or not transportation service is effective, it's knowing we have helped people stay connected with the community that makes the difference.

### RIDE (RIDERSHIP INDEPENDENCE FOR THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY)

RIDE is our taxi voucher program that allows Buncombe County residents who are either aged 60+ and/or disabled to purchase discounted vouchers that can be used to access locations within Buncombe County. This service is effective for same-day trips or for those whose condition/disability make riding public transit a hardship. For example, we have several clients who are on dialysis 3X per week and use Mountain Mobility to the dialysis center. But, after receiving treatment, many are often physically weak or otherwise unable to wait for public transit to return home. RIDE is a great alternative in these types of situations. We currently have 108 active clients in the RIDE program, and in FY22, we sold 3,850 taxi vouchers – each worth \$10 in cab fare – which translates to **\$38,500** in fares paid to Buncombe County taxi providers.

While most people think of the elderly when referencing community transportation programs, we also assist the families of disabled adults. Shams is an 18-year-old young woman with cerebral palsy whose family takes advantage of the RIDE program.



*Brandy Brake is visually impaired and uses Mountain Mobility for transportation to work at Industries for the Blind.*

“

I am very happy with the Mountain Mobility ADA service. I depend on it for everything. It is a challenge for me having to use a walker, but the drivers have been great helping me when needed. If there is a star system it would be 5 \*\*\*\*\*! Thanks for great service. – Joan G.

”

“

We found ourselves in a difficult situation this year because it was very painful for Shams to ride in the passenger seat of our car after her second hip surgery. Although she has access to transportation to go to school and doctor's appointments, Shams needed affordable transportation to enjoy outdoor activities with her family. RIDE has been a game changer for us. Now Shams is able to go downtown on Saturdays to see festivals and enjoy music outdoors. This was extremely beneficial for her mental health, because otherwise she will be confined to her home, while we are waiting for the funds to help us purchase an accessible vehicle. Thank you so much for your help!” – Nara M, Sham's mother.

”



# P-20 COUNCIL

## WORKFORCE

A substantial achievement of the council in PY22 centered around exposing best practices from the region that represent the various counties and the stakeholders from early education, K12, and postsecondary education. Due to the generosity of the Belk Endowment, the Council was able to identify best practices, provide funding to the partners to advance their practice and this will be used as a tool to highlight best practices within the P20 continuum moving forward. Four entities (with one from each county and one for each strategic direction) were awarded “Action for Implementation Measures” grants and this wouldn’t have been possible without that specific budgetary element. Below is the overview of those awards.

Finally, the Council was chosen as one of fifteen collaborative groups by UNC’s nclIMPACT initiative. These collaboratives offer an organized way to respond to community challenges that no single institution or even an entire sector can effectively tackle. This effort aligns with the state’s legislative goal of 2 million individuals between the ages of 25-44 who possess a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree by 2030. As part of its work with the nclmpact team, P20 identified an initial project to ‘increase communication between employers and educators’, and self-produced a promotional video to expose employers to the importance of our Career & Technical Education (CTE) departments in all five school systems of the Land of Sky region. This was intended to outline how employers can get involved with their local CTE employer advisory boards (a statutory requirement in NC). This can be seen in the by visiting [losp20.org/cte](http://losp20.org/cte).

### AIM AWARDED RECIPIENTS FOR \$12,500 EACH

Recipient	County	Concept	Impact
Smart Start Partnership for Children	Henderson	Scholarships Emergency Fund	Provide childcare while caregivers search for employment, which helps to increase and strengthen the workforce in the region. This funding will provide early childhood education to children whose caregivers could not access this resource if they were searching for a job while the child is at home
Muddy Sneakers	Madison, Transylvania	Closing the Science Literacy Gap through Outdoor Education and Instructional Support	By providing access to outdoor education for fifth-grade public school students, Muddy Sneakers will assist educators with tools and resources to aid in the instruction of NC Essential Science Standards through a variety of enrichment measures.
Literacy Together	Buncombe	Igniting Superhero Readers	Offering paid internships for young adults of color, primarily rising high school juniors and seniors, who will be trained and supported to work as tutors for intensive reading instruction for children in Grades K to 5. Tutors will receive an initial intensive training in an established multi-sensory approach to teaching reading, and the students will be pre- and post-tested to measure their progress.
Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe	Re-Imagine Buncombe Middle College	The involves the design of an innovative, career-driven, community-minded school that supports any student to develop the necessary skills and experiences to thrive in a career pathway that leads to employment with a local industry. To alter this current model into a true Career Academy model, Buncombe Middle College will re-brand and recruit students and industries to form a partnership with the school district in this innovative design.

Below Emily Nicholson presents checks to the AIM Award Recipients



# INSPIRE PROGRAM

## WORKFORCE

WNC Recovery to Career serves the needs of individuals who are leaving treatment centers and ready for career/life skills. The program also focuses on employment readiness and education attainment. Since its inception in 2021, INspire has served a total of 227 clients from 11 counties 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.

Jenna Woodman, Certified Peer Support Specialist with the INspire Program, is excited to be working with those recovering from Substance Use Disorder in our communities and has a powerful success story about Danielle – an INspire client who is taking her lived experience and using it to benefit others.



*INspire Squad*  
 Standing L-R: Intern Felix Soto, Dillon Moss, Rick Montgomery, Amanda Layton, Intern Angela Frady, Jenna Woodman, Philip Cooper. Sitting: Brandon Manson



Danielle...has 5 months clean and, in that time, she has been working full time at a restaurant but starts at the Mary Benson house as a Substance Abuse Treatment Specialist on (October) 31st! She has saved up money and got herself a car, and she has been out to Neil Dobbins (Treatment Center) on multiple occasions to speak and do service work. I am extremely proud of her! She also will hopefully be getting a charge dropped once she pays off the rest of her probation fees. She is on fire and jumped in when another addict was in need and helped her get into a sober living! She has a huge heart!- Jenna Woodman, CPSS



Angela Frady is another INspire success story. Angela started as a client in February of 2022 after she was released from incarceration. After taking advantage of the multiple opportunities provided by INspire, she is continuing to progress in her recovery and career. She has earned her certification for Peer Support Specialist and is currently excelling in her Community Health Worker class. She will graduate with the certification in November. Angela is now an intern with Land of Sky and helping others reach their recovery goals.

*Above: Danielle*  
*Right: Amanda Layton and Angela Frady (l-r) are both INspire success stories. Frady is now an INspire intern, and Amanda is a full-time CPSS with Land of Sky.*

229  
 TOTAL CLIENTS  
 SERVED

- Avery - 1
- Buncombe - 104
- Burke - 1
- Cherokee - 14
- Clay - 5
- Graham - 4
- Haywood - 23
- Henderson - 16
- Jackson - 10
- Macon - 11
- Madison - 4
- McDowell - 3
- Mitchell - 2
- Rutherford - 8
- Swain - 14
- Transylvania - 7
- Yancey - 2



# IN THE NUMBERS

MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**\$901,115**

ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER (ADW) BUDGET	
\$82,000	Adult Training Funds
\$92,000	Dislocated Workers Training Funds
\$160,750	National Dislocated Workers Grant Training Funds
\$311,346	AB Tech (serving Buncombe and Madison)
\$257,018	Blue Ridge Community College (serving Henderson and Transylvania)

**\$343,234**

YOUTH BUDGET	
\$14,643	In-School Youth Participant Support
\$2,000	In-School Youth Training
\$41,930	Out-of-School Youth Participant Support
\$2,000	Out-of-School Youth Training
\$62,637	Madison County Schools
\$152,192	Henderson County Schools
\$174,258	Goodwill (serving Buncombe and Transylvania)

**23,706**

Job Seekers Served	
Buncombe	14,598
Henderson	5,124
Madison	2,926
Transylvania	1,058

**185**

ADW & Youth enrolled in WIOA training services	
Buncombe	112
Henderson	36
Madison	20
Transylvania	17

**16,472**

Business Services provided to employers	
Buncombe	10,064
Henderson	3,908
Madison	2,051
Transylvania	449

**78**

Youth Individuals Served	
Buncombe	23
Henderson	39
Madison	7
Transylvania	9

**1,646** INDIVIDUALS SERVED GENERATING **\$74,416,394** IN WAGES FOR OUR REGION. FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT THE REGION GENERATED OVER **\$35** IN WAGES.



# YOUTH

## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board along with the NCWorks NextGen Youth Committee has set some goals in areas that have always been a challenge in the past for our area and facing them head on with the recovery from the pandemic.

We are working with the North Carolina District Export Council. This organization has a sub-committee which regularly speaks to students in age ranges from 8-18 in the K-12 schools and speaks at Community Colleges and Universities. The NCDEC will be holding an Export Council 101 event at the local college next year and the local Case Managers plan to take their students for a job shadowing event being held where the students will receive an industry recognized certificate.

The committee has come up with a couple of ideas to help in the barrier of transportation which include employee carpooling and supporting possible employer assistance with transportation through gift cards. These would be used until the student could earn enough for their own transportation. Financial education and soft skills are also barriers to our students. The committee is providing information to the schools on workshops at our local Career Centers that are available to students and cover items such as resume building, soft skills training, employment interviews and many other topics.

Blue Ridge Community College received the 2022 ApprenticeshipNC Outstanding Registered Pre-Apprenticeship Program for the Made in Henderson County Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

YOUTH PARTICIPANT ACTIVITIES	BC	HC	MC	TC
Enrolled in WIOA	23	39	7	9
Obtained a recognized post-secondary credential	37	15	5	5
Participated in college tours/post-secondary exposure	18	14	1	8
Completed Working Smart / soft skills training	30	50	3	10
Entered post-secondary education at EXIT	8	21	7	3
Obtained a high school diploma	18	25	10	1
Obtained a high school equivalency	14	2	1	4
Entered work experience and On-the-Job opportunities	5	18	5	1
Enrolled in occupational skills training	56	6	1	4
Entered full-time / part-time employment	16	35	10	7
Received supportive services	39	39	0	4

## BUNCOMBE

Tom decided he wanted a career in the trades while in middle school. Rather than be home-schooled, he preferred to get his General Education Diploma and start working. His mother allowed him the freedom to make this choice. Tom has attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and is at his best when he is busy and learning. He took courses in heating, ventilation and air conditioning and general studies at Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College and worked in fast food making \$12/hour. Tom combined his savings and a grant from the Cares Act with his mother's 50/50 match to purchase a car. His plan is to be on his own at age 18 and to build his skills and eventually become a licensed plumber.



Tom's mother made the connection with the Business Services Lead at Mountain Area Workforce Development Board who suggested the On-the-Job Training Program for Youth with Ambica in Asheville, NC. This program would develop Tom's employability skills and train him in facility maintenance while complying with Department of Labor guidelines. Tom began training in January 2021 at \$14/hour as a maintenance helper at Holiday Inn Biltmore West. Based upon his performance, he received a raise to \$15.30/hour in March 2022 and his training site became The Element, a new green hotel in downtown Asheville. Under the Supervision of the Corporate Chief Engineer and the Maintenance Manager, Tom has experienced impressive personal and professional growth. He helped renovate a break room at Holiday Inn Biltmore West where he learned drywall, painting, and basic carpentry. At The Element he was trained in guest room maintenance and repair, fundamentals of electricity and electronics and has observed computer aided design and rapid prototyping. He was provided a company laptop for logging and tracking maintenance work orders.

Tom loves the variety that his job offers and the oversight and guidance that he receives on his work. His supervisors give him outstanding marks for work ethic, dependability, and interest in learning and have noticed how "Tom has come out of his shell and is a remarkable bright young man, and he is a great employee." He hopes to enter a registered apprenticeship with his employer in the future.

# BUSINESS ACCELERATOR GRANTS

MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Business Accelerator Grants provide up to **\$10,000** for training incumbent workers. The company must have a minimum of 5, W-2 employees and be current on all local, state and federal taxes, and males must have registered for Selective Service. The grant is competitive and is offered one-two times per Program Year based upon availability of funding. The grant program is funded by WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funds. An Ad Hoc Committee of the Workforce Board reviews and recommends which grants should be funded. The guidelines, application, and other documents are posted on the LOS and MAWDB websites when the grant is open for submission of applications.

BUSINESS ACCELERATOR GRANTS					
Company	County	Award	# Trained	# of Employees	Sector
Metropolitan Medical	Buncombe	\$10,000	1	8	Machine Repair
Equilibr	Buncombe	\$3,028	4	31	Manufacturing
Skyrunner	Buncombe	\$8,520	4	37	Utility / Broadband
Friday Services	Buncombe	\$9,985	10	11	Recruiting Services
Devil's Foot Beverage	Buncombe	\$10,000	5	5	Beverage Brew / Can
Accurate Technology	Buncombe	\$2,269	1	8	Manufacturing
The Flying Bike	Buncombe	\$10,000	9	16	Tourism
Survival Innovations	Henderson	\$8,350	2	32	Manufacturing
Elkamet	Henderson	\$7,715	12	140	Manufacturing
Total		\$69,867	48		

# RAPID RESPONSE ASSISTANCE

MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

In response to the closure of Continental Automotive Systems in Fletcher, the dislocated workers were eligible for services through the Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA). Business services staff of the Workforce Board, NC Commerce, and Blue Ridge Community College provided information sessions to all employees regarding Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Act benefits, and opportunities for short- and long-term training. Business staff also assisted with Continental's in-house job fair involving scheduled interviews with 25 employers from March 21-25, 2022. The NC Works Career Center - Henderson County, provided resume writing, interview preparation, and career advising. Many Continental employee's enrolled in the community college system or completed on-line training and certification programs while they continued to work.





# WORKFORCE SURVEY

## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

In early 2022, the Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County, the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, and the Land of Sky P-20 Council began working with independent nonprofit institute RTI International to survey businesses across a 10-county region in Western North Carolina. The region included: Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Madison, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, and Yancey Counties. This survey was also conducted in 2018 among businesses in the same Western North Carolina footprint. The 2022 State of Our Workforce: Western NC survey ran from March 15 – May 31, 2022, collecting 795 completed responses and 548 additional partial responses.

The survey asked business leaders, primarily those most informed about their organization’s immediate and future hiring needs, about their expectations for growth, the types of skills and training they most needed in workers, how they connected with talent, and where they intended to source their future workforces.

The State of Our Workforce: Western NC findings suggest that just as in the 2018 survey, most Western North Carolina employers in each surveyed industry expect to grow over the next three years. Despite COVID-19-related challenges experienced by many businesses in recent months, the expectations that many Western North Carolina employers have for business growth remain similar to the growth expectations they held before the pandemic. Overall, respondents to the 2022 survey anticipate hiring between 22,150 and 44,140 total new employees in the next three years. To help meet these growing workforce needs and to ensure economic opportunity is accessible to every member of our community, organizations in local government, education, and economic and workforce development across our region will need to work individually and collaboratively to connect prospective workers with skills, training, and opportunities.

# JOB FAIRS

## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The primary need of all employers in the LOS region for this program year was the critical need for workers. To help meet this need, the Mountain area Workforce Board hosted three job fairs, co-sponsored two WNC Career Expo Events, and assisted with job fairs hosted by the NCWorks Centers and Community Colleges. With the unemployment rate at pre-Covid levels, there was concerted effort given to assist businesses and job seekers. Even though the job seeker numbers were not as high as in the past, all the job fairs were successful and appreciated by businesses and those seeking work.

DATE	NAME OF JOB FAIR	# EMPLOYERS	# ATTENDEES
August 10, 2021	\$18/Hour & Beyond Job Fair	75	350
August 18, 2021	NC4ME Veterans Job Fair	6	150
October 12, 2021	WNC Career Expo	122	323
March 23, 2021	Excellence in Public Service Job Fair	17	50
March 30, 2022	WNC Career Expo	144	219
June 29, 2022	\$19/Hour Job Fair	75	325

In addition to large-scale job fairs each NC Works Center has held job fairs at their centers.

- Buncombe County - 68 Individual Employer Job Fairs – 360 attendees
- Madison County - 8 Individual Employer Job Fairs – 40 attendees
- Henderson County - 4 Individual employer job fairs (2 on monthly basis) - 50 attendees
- Transylvania County - 6 Individual Employer Job Fairs – 15 attendees



\$18/Hour & Beyond job Fair at the WNC Ag Center on August 10, 2021.

# AWARDS

## LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL

### NADO AWARDS

Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region  
\$17 per Hour and Beyond Job Fair  
Caregivers Harnessing Technology to Connect

### THE CHARLES H. CAMPBELL REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Albert Gooch, Village of Flat Rock Council Member

### THE ROBERT C. PARRISH, SR. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AWARD

Avril Pinder, Buncombe County Manager

### THE ROBERT E. SHEPHERD EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Dr. Jim Meyer, Land of Sky Regional Council Volunteer

### CAROL MCLIMANS TRAILBLAZER AWARD

Deb Haight, Director of Older Adult Services and Thrift Store, WNCSource

### EXTRAORDINARY PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

Dr. Tony Baldwin - Superintendent of Buncombe County Schools  
Dr. John Bryant - Superintendent of Henderson County Schools  
Dr. Gene Freeman - Superintendent of Asheville City Schools  
Dr. Will Hoffman - Superintendent of Madison County Schools  
Dr. Jeff McDaris - Superintendent of Transylvania County Schools

Dr. Jeffery Heck - Chief Executive Officer of Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC)

# AWARDS LUNCHEON

## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

### WIOA BUSINESS & COLLABORATING PARTNERS IN THE MAWDB REGION

SylvanSport – MAWDB Outstanding Business Partner  
Hunter Automotive Group—Outstanding Business Partner for BRCC/NCWorks-Flat Rock  
Astral Designs—MAWDB Business Accelerator Grant-Incumbent Worker Training  
Deringer-Ney, Inc. – Outstanding Business Partner for A-B Tech/NCWorks-Madison

### NCWORKS NEXTGEN YOUTH PROGRAMS

Rivers Whittle—Goodwill Industries-OSY Program-Buncombe County  
Leah Parris—Goodwill Industries-OSY Program-Transylvania County  
Hannah Shipman – Henderson County Public Schools OSY Program

### WIOA PARTICIPANTS SERVED THROUGH NCWORKS AND MAWDB

Jacqueline Ballard—NCWorks Career Center-Madison County  
Laurie Sykes—MAWDB Regional Business Services/On-the-Job Training Program  
Valerie Ayala—NCWorks Career Center-Brevard  
Denise Roberts – Mountain Area Regional Business Services-DW Training

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION BY MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE

Marc Czarnecki – Experienced Worker Initiative  
Stacy Hill – Deborah Holbrooks Outstanding Customer Service



L-R: Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells, Buncombe County Manager Avril Pinder, Hendersonville Mayor Barbara Volk



L-R: Village of Flat Rock Council Member Albert Gooch, Hendersonville Mayor Barbara Volk



Deb Haight, Director of Older Adult Services and Thrift Store, WNCSource



Barbara Darby, Assistant Workforce Director / Regional Business Services Leader, MAWDB, presented the first Outstanding WIOA Business Partner to SylvanSport

# STAFF

LAND OF SKY REGIONAL COUNCIL



## ADMINISTRATION

Nathan Ramsey - Executive Director  
Christina Giles - Administration and Communications Director  
Jane Pies - Administrative Support Specialist

## FINANCE

Patricia Rosenberg - Finance Director  
Sherry Christenson - Payroll and Finance Coordinator  
Wanda Clark - Accounting Assistant  
Melissa Lindsey - Administrative and Finance Clerk  
Zia Rifkin - Workforce and Accounting Specialist

Thank you for your service during FY22:  
Danna Stansbury - Deputy Executive Director  
Charlotte Sullivan - Finance Director



## TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER

Vicki Jennings - Strategic Initiatives Director  
Charlie Lee - Mountain Mobility Transportation Specialist  
Heather Roberts-VanSickle - Mountain Mobility Transportation Specialist  
Sarah Marcin - RIDE Program Coordinator  
Dalton Buckner - Transportation Finance Specialist  
Glenda Brown - NEMT Manager  
Tanya Carver - NEMT Specialist  
LeChelle Fore - NEMT Specialist  
Diana Boone - NEMT Specialist

Thank you for your service during FY22:  
Yareli Portillo - NEMT Specialist

## LEADERSHIP TEAM



Nathan Ramsey



Patricia Rosenberg



Christina Giles



## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

LeeAnne Tucker - Area Agency on Aging Director  
Dee Heinmuller - Senior Companion Program Manager  
Vicki Benavides - SCP Support Specialist  
Stacy Friesland - Foster Grandparent Program Manager  
Edward Jones - Family Caregiver Specialist  
Pat Hilgendorf - Caregiver Program Associate  
Carol McLimans - Caregiver Program Associate  
Nancy Hogan - Project C.A.R.E. Manager  
Cori Search - Long Term Care Ombudsman  
Donna Thomason - Long Term Care Ombudsman  
Donna Case - Long Term Care Ombudsman  
Zack Schmitt - Aging Program Specialist, Contracts  
Kim Ward - Aging Program Specialist, Contracts  
Brea Kuykendall - Aging Program Specialist, Health Promotion  
Jenna Sharrits - Aging Program Specialist, Outreach  
Ginger Hill - Money Follows the Person (MFP) Transitions Coordinator  
Kathryn Florack - MFP Transitions Coordinator  
Carol Allison - MFP Community Inclusion Specialist

Thank you for your service during FY22:  
Telle King - Long Term Care Ombudsman





Erica Anderson



Tristan Winkler

# ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Erica Anderson - ECD Director
- Jon Beck - GIS Coordinator
- Mary Roderick - Regional Planner
- Sara Nichols - Regional Planner
- Stuart Bass - Regional Planner
- Paul Moon - Regional Planner
- Kayla DiCristina - Regional Planner
- Ian Baillie - Regional Planner
- Traci Thompson - Regional Planner
- Renee Boyette - Foreign Trade Zone Administrator
- Tristan Winkler - French Broad River MPO Director
- Hannah Bagli - Transportation Planner
- Scott Adams - Transportation Planner
- Logan DiGiacomo - Transportation Planner
- Vicki Eastland - Land of Sky RPO Director
- Terry Albrecht - Waste Reduction Partners Director\*
- Russ Jordan - Energy Program Manager
- Jan Hardin - Solid Waste Manager
- Tom Kimmell - Water Programs Manager
- Dee Hanak - WRP Office Manager

\*NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Employee

Thank you for your service during FY22:

- Nick Kronke - Regional Planner
- Emily Scott-Cruz - Transportation Planner
- John Ridout - Transportation Planner



Vicki Jennings



Glenda Brown



LeeAnne Tucker

# MOUNTAIN AREA workforce development board

## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

- Nathan Ramsey - MAWDB Director
- Barbara Darby - Assistant Workforce Director / Regional Business Services Leader
- Brandon Priester - Regional Services Representative, Youth
- Marc Czarnecki - Business Services Representative
- Christy Cheek - Education & Work-Based Learning Coordinator
- Melissa Wright - Workforce Operations Specialist
- Zia Rifkin - Workforce and Accounting Specialist

## WORKFORCE

- Emily Nicholson - P-20 Director
- Joseph Fox - myFutureNC Coordinator
- Brandon Manson - INspire Project Coordinator
- Amanda Layton - INspire Project Liaison
- Jenna Woodman - INspire Peer Support Specialist
- Dillon Moss - INspire Peer Support Specialist
- Rick Montgomery - INspire Peer Support Specialist
- Philip Cooper - Workforce Equity Advocate

Thank you for your service during FY22:

- Derrick Edwards - Business Services Representative
- Jessi Haftel - INspire Project Coordinator



# LAND<sub>of</sub>SKY

REGIONAL COUNCIL

SINCE 1966

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