

Land of Sky Regional Council
February 22, 2023, 12:30 pm
Regular Meeting

Land of Sky Regional Council office, 339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140, Asheville,
NC 28806



When joining the virtual meeting, Delegates are requested to mute themselves and to un-mute for discussion or moving on orders of business.
Delegates are requested to state their names when moving on orders of business. Thank you!

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** (12:30pm)
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Roll Call**
- IV. **Consent Agenda**
 - A. Modification/Approval of Agenda
 - B. Approval of the Previous Minutes (January 2022)
- V. **Comments by the Chair and Delegates Roundtable** (Delegates are requested to limit their remarks to three (3) minutes during the roundtable. Each month we will ask Delegates to focus on a topic of importance in the region. This month the topic will be short-term rentals)
- VI. **Public Comment**
- VII. **Recognition**
 - A. Western North Carolina Congressional representatives: US Senators Budd and Tillis; and NC-11 Congressman Chuck Edwards.
- VIII. **Presentations**
 - A. Land of Sky Regional Council Board Orientation
 - B. Land of Sky Regional Council Strategic Plan
 - C. Land of Sky Regional Council Legislative Priorities
- IX. **Executive Director's Report**
- X. **Important Dates**
 - A. Next regularly scheduled Board meeting is planned for March 22, 2023.
- XI. **Adjournment**



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** Consent Agenda
- Item Number:** IV. Consent Agenda:
A. Modification/Approval of the Board's Agenda for February 22, 2023
B. Approval of Minutes from the January 25, 2023, Regular Meeting and Annual Awards Presentation.
- Responsible Party:** Zia Rifkin, Administrative Services
- Attachment(s):** Minutes from the January 2023 Regular Meeting
- Background:** Item B. January 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes Recap:
Quorum was present to conduct business at the January 2023 meeting and the minutes provide a recap of the Chair's comments and Delegates' updates focused on the topic of affordable and workforce housing from around the region. Recognition of Years of Service Awards for Land of Sky Regional Council Staff, including Wanda Clark, who has been with the organization for 45 years. Presentations included an updated from NC Attorney General Josh Stein, Tanya Rodriguez, Chief Shawn Freeman, and others regarding Law Enforcement and Community Civility Training; and Julie Roper with Dominion Energy and Martha Wegner with Duke Energy regarding green initiatives provided through these public utility service providers.
- Staff Recommendation:** Recommend approval of the Consent Agenda
- Suggested Motion(s):** Move to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented.

**Land of Sky Regional Council
Board of Delegates
Regular Meeting**

January 25, 2023

Minutes

- I. Call to Order – Chair Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at approximately 12:30pm.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Fitzsimmons led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. Roll Call – Nathan Ramsey called the roll. The following members were present: Matt Wechtel, Jason Chappell, Jonathan Kanipe, Pam King, Barbara Volk, Deb Bridges, Jeff Young, Daniel Cobb, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Elizabeth Ervin, Brad Guth, and Bob Tomasulo

Guests Present – April Riddle, Dorian Palmer, Kennedy Young, Rod Honeycutt, Julie Roper, Kindl Detar, NC Attorney General Josh Steen, Tanya Rodriguez, Rebecca McCall Chief Shawn Freeman

- IV. Consent Agenda – The consent agenda, consisting of the Board’s January agenda, and the minutes of the November 30, 2022 meeting was presented for approval.

Elisabeth Ervin moved to approve the consent agenda including the November 30, 2022 minutes and today’s agenda as presented. Jason Chappell seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

Quorum was established by the roll call for the vote.

- V. Chair’s Comments and Delegates Roundtable -
Chair Fitzsimmons encouraged Delegates to share information of interest from their jurisdictions focused on the topic of affordable and workforce housing.

Delegates Roundtable -

Commissioner Jason Chappell – Shared that Transylvania County is experiencing the same issues developing affordable and workforce housing as the other jurisdictions in the region. Surveys have been done with the community to determine needs and the County is working with the City to address needs.

Town Manager Jonathan Kanipe – Shared that the Town of Biltmore Forest is working on hiring public works employees and police officers at good wages. No answers for the affordable housing issue yet.

Council Member Pam King – Shared that the Town of Black Mountain has many great things happening, but unfortunately a solution to the affordable housing issue is not one of those things. Bringing together stakeholders to work on the issue that will take the entire community to address.

Mayor Barbara Volk – Shared that the City of Hendersonville is excited that the parking deck is on track and the City is working with nonprofits to address the affordable housing issue including the development of affordable housing.

Town Commissioner Deb Bridges – Shared that in the Town of Laurel Park, the average cost of a single family home is over \$400 thousand. The Town’s situation is that there is very little property that is suitable for apartments or homesites. Other news includes the engineering contract has been signed for roads and storm water improvements. Meeting with NCDOT to develop and plan for the highway project and other projects are moving forward. Parks and Greenways Bicycle Advisory Committee working hard on bike routes and maps, wayfinding signs, lane markings, etc. Parks and Greenways has also initiated a plan to mark walking trails throughout the town. As part of the roads and stormwater projects, a bike passing lane is included On Laurel Park Highway. The new Town Hall is moving forward and three design firms are scheduled for interviews next

week. Public Works staff are working on the establishment of the Town first Emergency Response Plan. The Town also has numerous upcoming events that are listed on the Town's website in the newsletter (<https://www.laurelpark.org/news>).

Town Manager Daniel Cobb – Shared the Town of Mills River is working through the housing issue as the cost of real estate is quite high. The Town is interested in affordable housing but has not taken any concrete steps to date regarding the issue. Other updates include launching new software platforms for recreation events and the permitting process is going online.

Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons – Shared that the Town of Weaverville has the fifth most competitive housing market in the country. The Town has not had a lot of luck developing affordable housing but are working with a group that develops affordable housing using shipping containers. They want to do a development in the Town.

Town Commissioner Elisabeth Ervin – Shared that the Town of Woodfin welcomes everyone to the Town of Woodfin and the Buncombe County Training facility on the A-B Tech /Woodfin campus. With regards to affordable housing, a lot of longtime residents were being pushed out by increasing real estate costs. The Town is working with nonprofits and has put in place restrictions on short term rentals to help address this issue.

Madison County Economic Development Rep Brad Guth – Shared that Madison County has not established any specific initiatives for affordable housing yet. In other news, the County finished a concept plan for an industrial park and the County has engaged the engineer for another concept plan. Economic development in the County is robust.

Nathan Ramsey introduced Traci Thompson who has joined LOSRC as a planner working on the affordable housing issue in the western region.

VI. Public Comment -

Chair Fitzsimmons called for public comments. None were received.

VII. Recognition -

A. Land of Sky Regional Council Staff Years of Service Recognition –

Nathan Ramsey presented the LOSRC Staff Years of Service Recognition that included recognition for five years of service by Charlie Lee and Heather Roberts-Van Sickle on the Mountain Mobility Team, and Dr. Mary Roderick for five years with ECD as a Planner. For Ten years of service, Barbara Darby, Assistant Workforce Director/Business Services Lead, and Vicki Eastland, RPO Director with ECD. Wanda Clark was recognized for 45 years of Service to LOSRC. Nathan Ramsey gave a shout out to Wanda for all the many things she does on the Finance Team to support LOSRC. Patricia Rosenberg shared that Wanda has an immense amount of knowledge, does a lot of the financial reporting, assists with the annual audit, among other significant duties.

VIII. Presentations –

A. Department of Justice Update --

NC Attorney General Josh Stein shared that the vision for the communities in the State are to live in safety and prosperity. The Attorney General's Office works to protect the people of NC in many different ways always with a commitment to keeping people safe by prosecuting crime, developing law enforcement staff, analyzing crime, forensics testing, and other tasks. He reported that all 100 counties and the largest cities have signed onto the Opioid Settlement Funding. Ninety-three million dollars has been disbursed during the first year of the funding for prevention, harm reduction, etc. Some of the funding goes to the State for administrative costs. Attorney General Stein shared that he has recently been traveling throughout the State to learn how jurisdictions plan to spend their share of the money and he's been impressed by the priorities of these jurisdictions. Dashboard: <https://ncopiodsettlement.org/>. The Attorney General shared that because of these funds and the hard work, passion and creativity, more people will be alive in the future because of this work. Another criminal justice issue is the work being done to keep people safe from violent sexual assault. This is being accomplished through the testing of many backlogged untested sexual assault kits. The Attorney General's Office created a plan to attack the backlogged kits and cold cases have been solved as a result. By eliminating the backlog, providing justice for survivors, bring perpetrators to justice, communities have been made safer. Attorney

General Stein shared about the Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice (TREC- <https://ncdoj.gov/trec/>) and about the first meeting of the newly reconstituted task force that occurred this morning. He noted that this work impacts the training of law enforcement personnel, community members interactions with the justice system, among many other measures that were included in a new law that also includes the restriction of the shackling of pregnant women within the justice system, encourages the establishment of a Juvenile Review Board. The Attorney General's Office seeks to improve and make the work of the criminal justice system better and more equal under the law. In addition to this work, the Office works to protect seniors, students and others from fraud and to ensure a level playing field for all businesses. Work is also being done to protect youth, especially with regards to social media platforms and investigating TikTok to see if state laws are being violated. The Department of Justice also works to protect tax payers and reduce fraud.

B. Law Enforcement and Community Civility Training –

Tanya Rodriguez, Executive Director of the National Institute for Racial Equity and Chair of the City of Asheville Human Relations Committee and Chief Shawn Freeman, Asheville Police Department, Former Chief of Black Mountain Police Department, and BLET Instructor shared that civility training initially started in the room today's meeting is being held in and included discussion of what law enforcement wanted to see in their communities and to provide an avenue to further communications between law enforcement and community members. These programs have yielded fantastic results and stimulated many discussions leading to better understanding of stresses faced by community members, etc. Civility training is a living, breathing program, fostering better relationships between law enforcement and community members. The program is expanding to other agencies and communities. This training is the first that has been designed to bring community members and law enforcement personnel into the same space. Working regionally currently and expanding.

Discussion occurred regarding the training that has expanded to Madison County and how impactful it was to see community members sharing space with law enforcement, reducing stigmas, expanding conversations, and working to resolve issues, and bringing additional resources to communities.

Tanya Rodriguez shared feedback from training participants that included reconciliations within the training over two days between community members and law enforcement personnel. The training builds compassion for both sides and brings in a depth of training regarding self-awareness on implicit bias, and acknowledgment of the legacy of trauma between law enforcement and the community. She encouraged folks to reach out by email (info@nifre.org) to learn more and to bring civility training to additional communities.

C. Green Initiatives in Public Utilities –

Julie Roper, Economic Development & Local Government Manager, Dominion Energy and Martha Wegner, Western Region Representative with Duke Energy presented information regarding their respective organizations. Julie Roper shared that Dominion Energy has grown a lot over the past many years and provides service in fifteen states providing 88700 miles of electric lines and 101700 of gas pipeline. Dominion serves a broader mission to confront a changing climate by building clean and sustainable infrastructure. Dominion energy's net zero commitments are among the boldest in the energy industry. Dominion is operating the largest offshore wind project in the country that is planned to provide zero-carbon electricity for 650 thousand homes in the future. Dominion also has the third largest US solar fleet that is working to provide zero-carbon electricity for over three million homes by 2025. Working with Smithfield Food and Vanguard Renewables partnerships to develop investments and capture millions of metric tons of CO₂e in the next decade. Dominion Energy is exploring how hydrogen can help to achieve the goal of net zero emissions in the future by blending with RNG. Dominion Energy also provides the Green Therm program that can help customers lower or completely offset the carbon footprint associated with using natural gas in their home or business by supporting renewable energy projects in the state or surrounding states. This is a voluntary program that is affordable to many people. Another program is ThermWise that is a suite of energy efficiency programs that builds on Dominion's existing

conservation program and is designed to help customers save money on their monthly bill. Other existing programs include the Conservation Education Program, discounted gas rate program that provides rebates on the purchase of energy efficient appliances.

Martha Wegner from Duke Energy shared about some organizational changes at the utility including her management responsibilities for WNC effective at the beginning of 2023. She addressed the outages that occurred during the Christmas holiday Arctic blast due to excess residential load on the system. She noted that the combination of lack of anticipated resources and additional demand led Duke Energy to shed load through rolling blackouts. Unfortunately, generating capacities were unable to keep up with the load needs. This was frustrating for everyone involved in the temporary outages. This has provided the opportunity to learn what could be done to better communicate with customers. Martha Wegner shared about the attack on the utility substation in Moore County, that experienced an outage that lasted four days.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Delegates and guests were encouraged to reach out to Nathan Ramsey with any questions or comments regarding the report, which is available in the meeting packet.

X. Important Dates –

A. The next LOSRC Board of Delegates meeting is planned for February 22, 2023.

XI. Adjournment –

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

Respectfully submitted by Zia Rifkin



Land of Sky Regional Council

Your Regional Council



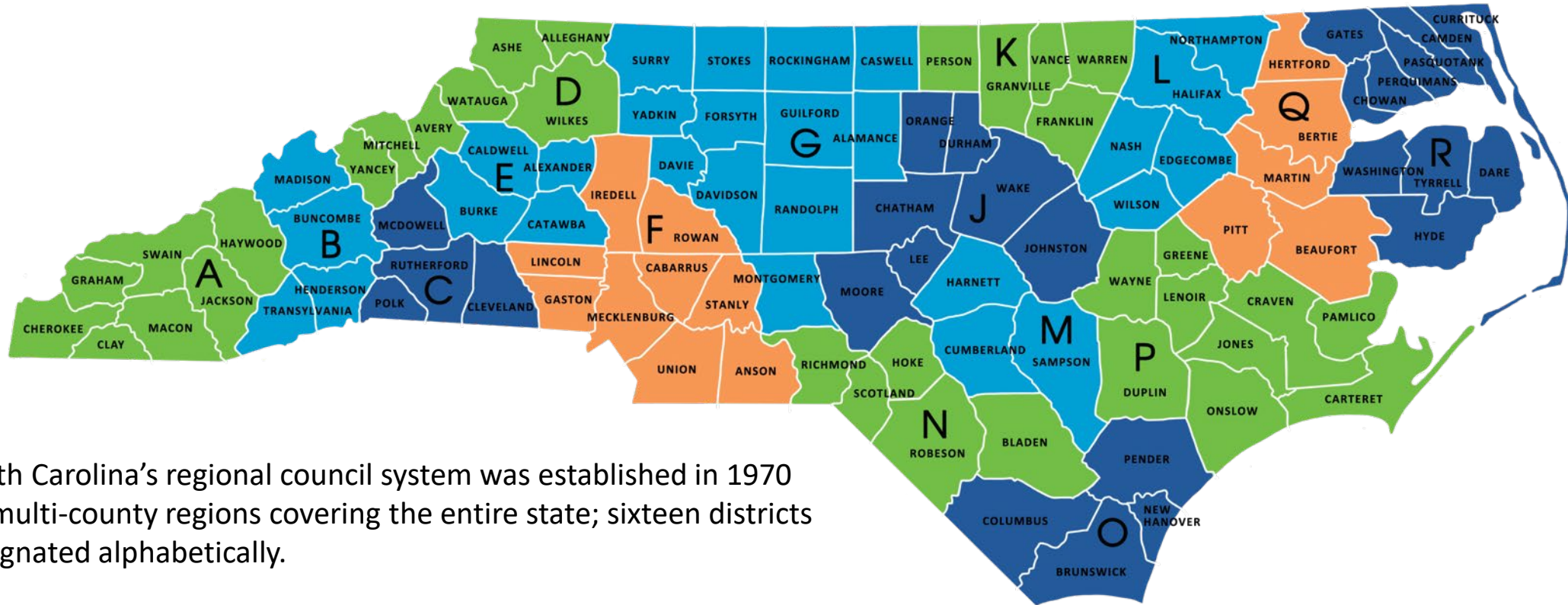


LOSRC BEGINNINGS

- Land of Sky Regional Council began in 1966 as a partnership of five counties, Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. Today, Haywood County is part of Southwestern Commission (Region A) and the other four counties form Land of Sky Regional Council (Region B).
- The designation of Regional Councils was a result of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act in 1968 which called for closer cooperation between federal programs and state and local governments.
- By 1970 the Lead Regional Organization (LRO) policy was announced directing North Carolina state agencies to deal with a single regional organization in each region for the delivery of services.



NORTH CAROLINA REGIONS



North Carolina’s regional council system was established in 1970 as multi-county regions covering the entire state; sixteen districts designated alphabetically.

The new “Lead Regional Organizations are a mechanism for strengthening local government, and each one deserves the full support of state agencies which are similarly concerned with the effective operation of local government.”

-Governor James Holshouser, Jr. (1973-1977)



WHO WE ARE

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.

Land of Sky Regional Council, one of **16** regional councils in North Carolina and one of 540 such organizations nationwide, serves North Carolina's Region B – Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties.





OUR MISSION

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.



OUR COMMITMENT

- We value cultural, gender, racial and ethnic diversity
- We believe diversity and inclusion make us stronger
- We will treat all people with dignity, respect and compassion to foster a trusting and supportive working environment
- We will be honest, open and clear in our communication with our co-workers, member governments, funders, clients and our region
- We will respect diversity of opinion
- We are committed to a culture of personal responsibility with an appreciation for risk taking
- We will hold ourselves accountable to our co-workers, member governments, funders, clients and our region
- We will develop and implement policies and procedures that are fair, consistent and equitable



HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

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. The officers of Land of Sky Regional Council are the Chair, 1st Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers are selected from members of the Executive Committee and serve one year terms.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair, Town of Weaverville Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons

Vice Chair, City of Brevard Mayor Maureen Copelof

Secretary, City of Brevard Mayor Maureen Copelof

Treasurer, Town of Fletcher Mayor Preston Blakely

Past Chair, City of Hendersonville Mayor Barbara Volk

County Delegate, Madison County Commissioner Matt Wechtel

Municipal Delegate, City of Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore

Minority Representative, Transylvania County Commissioners Chair Jason Chappell

Aging Programs Delegate – Aging Advisory Council Chair Bob Tomasulo



LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Council employs an Executive Director and professional staff to carry out the day-to-day operations of the organization.

LOSRC LEADERSHIP TEAM



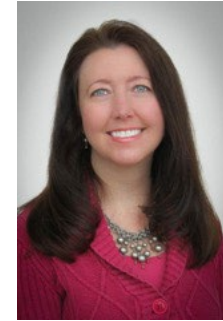
Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director & Workforce Director



Patricia Rosenberg, Finance Director



Erica Anderson, Economic & Community Development Director



LeeAnne Tucker, Area Agency on Aging Director



Tristan Winkler, French Broad River MPO Director



Vicki Jennings, Strategic Initiatives Director



Glenda Brown, NEMT Manager



Christina Giles, Administration and Communications Director



HOW WE ARE FUNDED & OUR BUDGET

Federal Funds (63%)

State Funds (17%)

Local Government Contracts, Private Grants,
Donations, and In-Kind (18%)

Local Government Dues (2%)

Land of Sky uses local government dues for:

- Grant matching requirements
- Council meeting expenses and operations
- Dues for state/national organizations

For every \$1 dollar of member dues, we leverage over \$58.64 in additional funding for our region.

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.

The budget for Fiscal Year 22-23 is over \$20M.

LEAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



Land of Sky Regional Council is recognized by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Lead Economic Development District for regional economic development planning and activities in our four county area.



WHAT WE OFFER

Area Agency on Aging - Promotes the well being of older adults and their families in our region.

Mountain Area Workforce Development - Plans for and addresses workforce development needs of our citizens and businesses.

Economic & Community Development - Planning, transportation, economic, and community development services for our local governments and communities.

Transportation Resource Center – Provides administrative and transportation services to qualified Buncombe County clients.

ADMINISTRATION

This department is responsible for the overall administration 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.





FINANCE

Land of Sky is primarily grant-funded, with additional support from dues from our 19 local governments. With an annual budget of over \$20M, we manage almost 200 grants, 63% Federal, 17% State and the balance from Local and Private Foundation contracts.

LOS has an annual external audit that is approved by the Local Government Commission and accepted by the Council Board. The Accounting staff (4.5 FTE, a Payroll and Finance Specialist, 1 Accounts Payable Specialist, 1 Grant Accounting Specialist and .5 Accounting Specialist) at LOSRC has combined experience in Governmental Accounting of over 80 years. The Council's policies and procedures clearly outline a strong internal control environment, a purchasing policy compliant with current Federal and State requirements and any issues of conflicts of interest.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Staff leverage resources, ideas, and capital to provide superior programs and services to older adults and caregivers in the region. Our goal is to support older adults as they age in place. Staff manage over 50 state and federal contracts, 5300 nursing home beds, hundreds of volunteers, and is accountable for over 8 million dollars on an annual basis.

Programs Include:

- Family Caregiver Support Program
- Foster Grandparent Program
- Health Promotion & Disease Prevention
- Home and Community Care Block Grant and ARPA Funds
- Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Money Follow the Person Program
- Project C.A.R.E.
- Regional Aging Advisory Council
- Senior Companion Program
- Senior Tar Heel Legislature



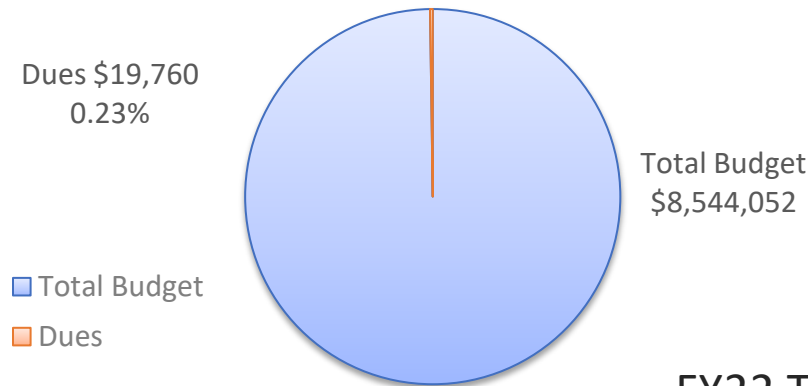


AAA FUNDING MATCH

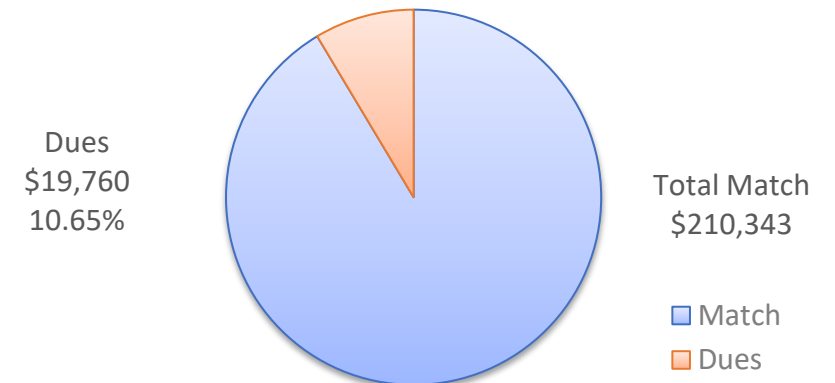
Local Dues Match Invest in:
Administration of federal aging funds on behalf of the counties:

- Home and Community Care Block Grant: \$4,525,187 (yearly reoccurring funds)
- American Rescue Plan Act: \$2,152,564
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES): \$1,272,964
- Nutrition Funding:
 - \$357,673 - Families First Coronavirus Response Act
 - \$249,028 HDC5 - Consolidated Appropriations Act

FY22 AAA Budget



FY22 Total Match Required



AGING PROFILE



Buncombe Aging Profile, 2020

Ages	2020		2040		% Change (2020-2040)
	#	%	#	%	
Total	270,224		332,660		23.1%
0-17	48,432	18%	48,731	15%	0.6%
18-44	93,809	35%	107,186	32%	14.3%
45-59	42,748	20%	69,805	21%	32.3%
60+	72,235	28%	106,938	32%	42.1%
65+	56,767	21%	84,765	26%	49.3%
85+	6,914	3%	15,282	5%	121.0%

Top Five Leading Causes of Death, Age 65+

Rank	Cause	# of Deaths	% of Total Deaths
1	Diseases of the Heart	522	23%
2	Cancer	398	17%
3	COVID-19	138	6%
4	Cerebrovascular Disease	123	5%
5	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	123	5%

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Staff leverage over 50 state, federal, and foundation grants and local contracts to develop and implement priority programs and services, in collaboration with member governments and partner agencies, throughout the region. Programs include:

Community Development

- Federal, State & Foundation Grant Services & Administration
- Code Enforcement
- Planning and Zoning
- Comprehensive & Land Use Plans
- Environmental & Watershed Planning
- Stormwater Inventory & Asset Management
- Waste Management & Recycling Program
- GIS, Mapping & Data Analysis Services
- Board & Committee Facilitation & Training

Economic Development

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- WestNGN Broadband Coordination
- Brownfields Program
- Infrastructure Implementation (water, sewer, access roads, broadband, etc.)
- Regional Resilience Planning

Transportation Planning

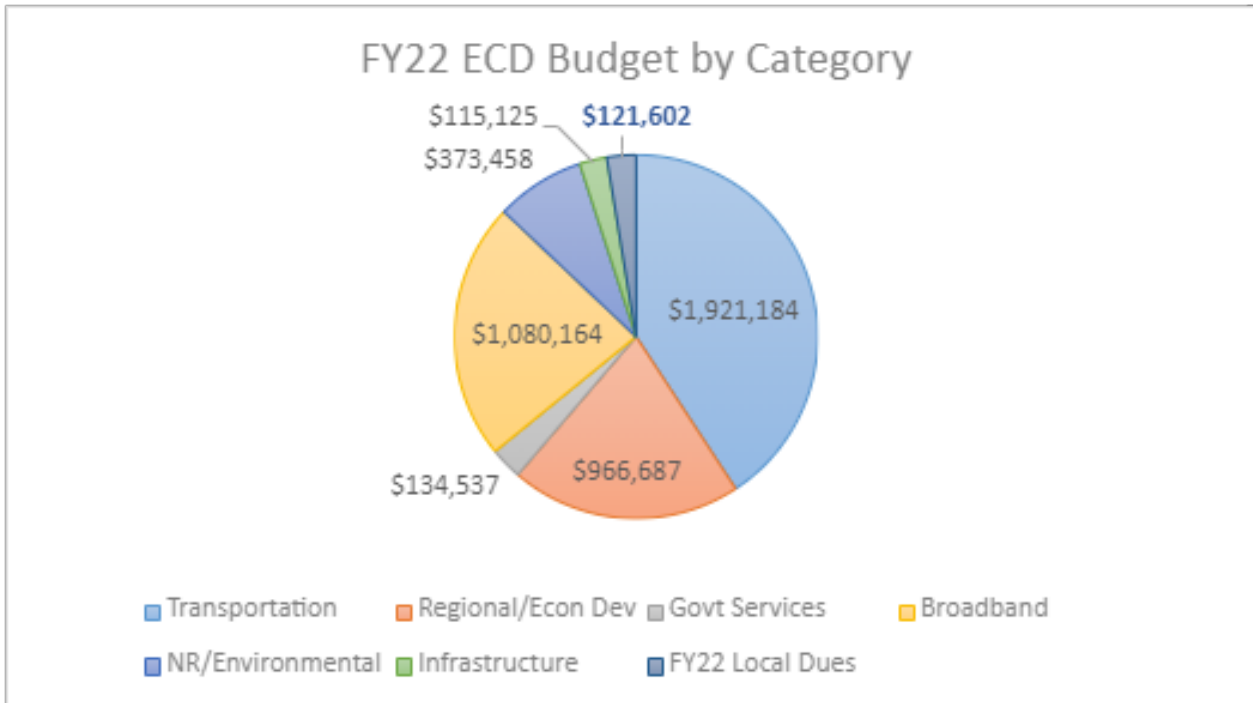
- French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization
- Public Transportation Technical Assistance
- Transportation Demand Management
- Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles Program



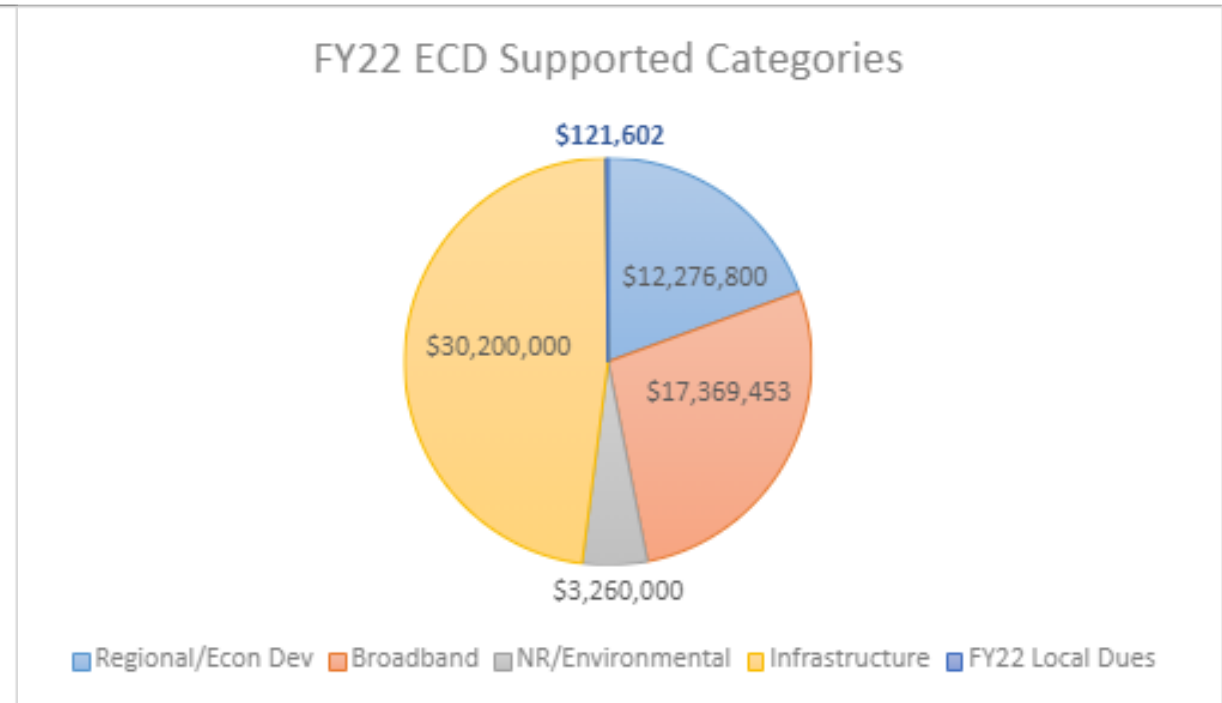
ECD PROJECTS



ECD Budgeted Projects



ECD Supported Projects



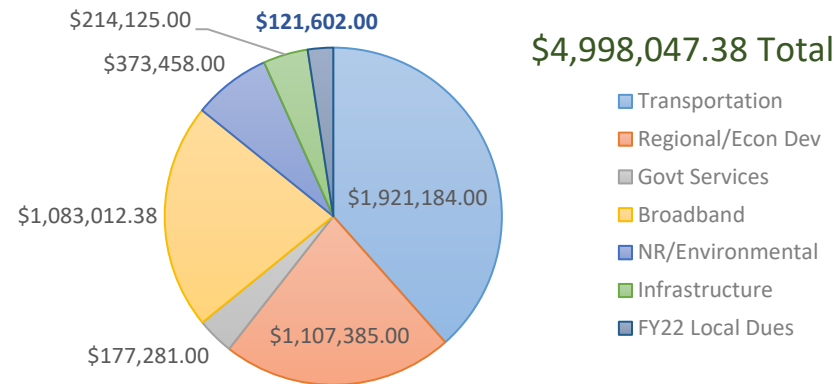
ECD ARC & EDA MATCH



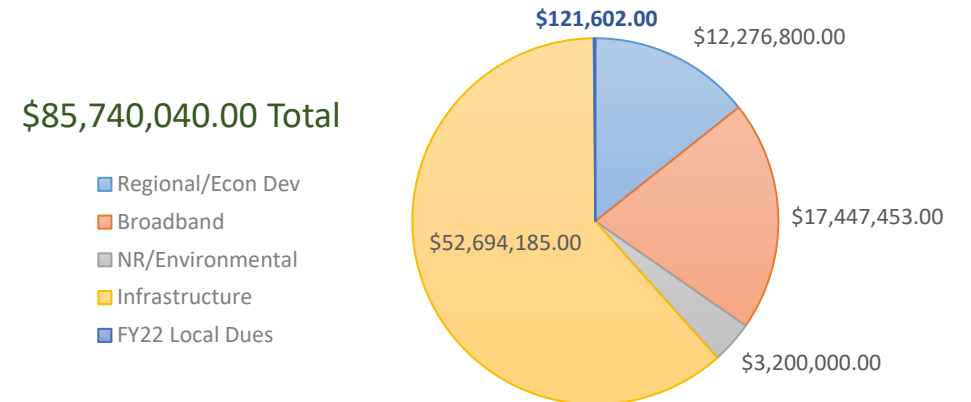
Local Dues Match Invests in:

- ARPA Support for Local Governments
- Free Education/Training – COGWorks
- Regional Projects
 - WNC Innovation Park
 - Regional Chambers & Business Collaboration
- Statewide, National & Regional Committees
- Data & GIS Requests
- Leveraged numerous partnerships
- Regional Dashboard
- Resilience Toolkit
- Tech Assistance & Grant Writing to Local Governments, Nonprofits, COGs & Partner Agencies

FY22 ECD Budget by Category



FY22 ECD Supported Categories



FBRMPO & LOSRPO



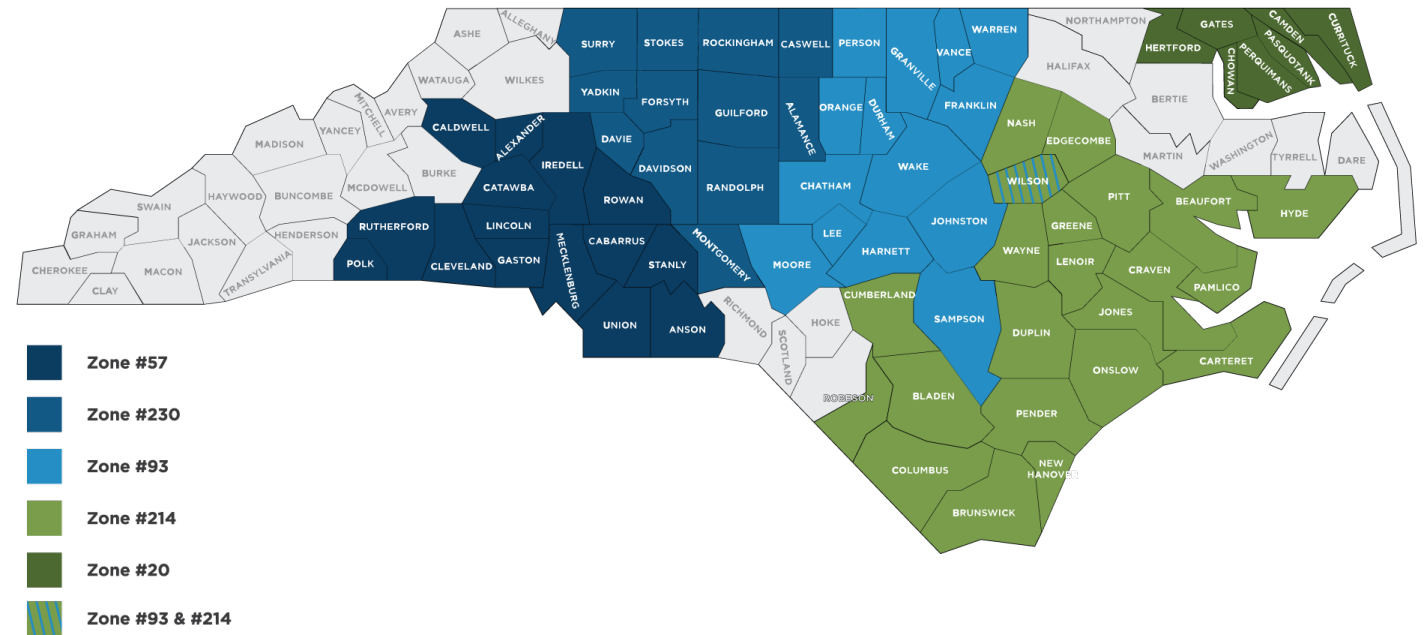
- Regional Forums for Transportation Decision Making (MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization, RPO = Rural Planning Organization)
- Help Determine Transportation Priorities in the Region
- Provide Technical Assistance to Transit Operators, Local Governments, and Stakeholders
- Work with NCDOT, Local Governments, and Other Stakeholders on Transportation Projects
- Carry out the Federally-Required Transportation Planning Process
- Participate in Statewide Transportation Policy Initiatives
- Program Competitive Transportation Grants to Member Governments (MPO)



FOREIGN TRADE ZONE INITIATIVE

LOSRC seeks FTZ Grant of Authority

- FTZ: An area inside the US that is designated as being outside US Customs' territory for duty purposes.
- 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
- Valuable addition to the economic development toolbox
- Promotes US exports
- FTZ adds investment dollars to the local economy



EDPNC estimates an FTZ program will result in 300-400 new jobs and up to \$100M in investment in just the LOSRC counties.

MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Employer led board with a \$2+ million annual budget to support our region's NCWorks Career Centers and NCWorks NEXTGEN youth programs. Focus on helping employers meet their workforce needs while helping job seekers and youth find rewarding career pathways.



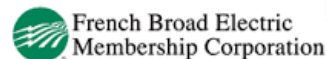
ncworks.gov

Get Help To Get The Job You Want

Contact Us At:
 Asheville - (828) 251-6200
 Henderson County - (828) 694-1755
 Madison County - (828) 782-2632
 Transylvania County - (828) 883-2550

MOUNTAIN AREA
workforce
development board
mountainareaworks.org

MAC
Mountain Area Careers
mountainareacareers.org



TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE CENTER



Land of Sky contracts with Buncombe County to provide administrative and transportation services to qualified clients through Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation and Mountain Mobility.

Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation

- 5 staff members serving 1976 clients annually

Mountain Mobility

- ADA Complementary Paratransit Service
- Trailblazer Services
- RIDE Program Coordination (Ridership Independence for the Disabled and Elderly)

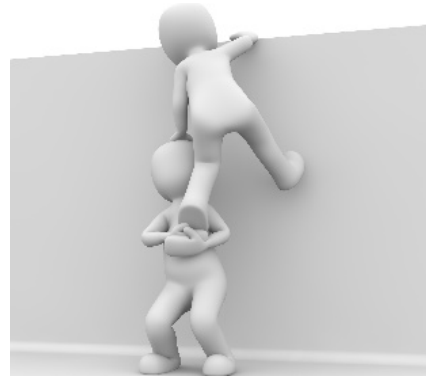


INSPIRE RECOVERY TO CAREER



Integrating Recovery into the Workplace

Workforce
Development



Peer
Support

Buncombe, Madison, Henderson, Transylvania, Haywood, Jackson, Swain, Macon, Graham, Clay,
and Cherokee Counties

Transportation



Work Attire



Sober Living



Recovery
Support

HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES PILOT



The Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP), part of North Carolina’s Medicaid transformation, addresses four of the social determinants of health – food insecurity, housing, transportation and interpersonal violence/toxic stress. By understanding the linkages between these focus areas and overall health, the HOP works with local organizations to provide services to Medicaid members that will ultimately result in healthier communities in Western North Carolina.

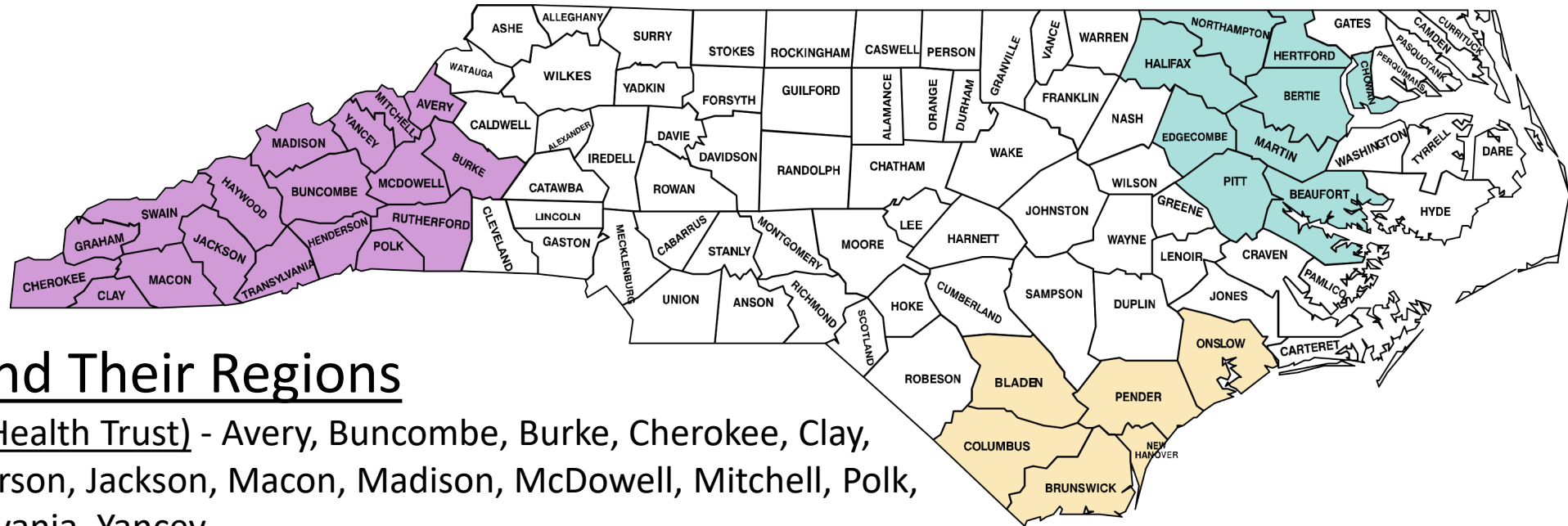
Land of Sky Regional Council is working with Impact Health, an arm of Dogwood Health Trust, to provide transportation oversight and technical assistance to the 18 westernmost counties in North Carolina.



HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES PILOT



The federal government authorized up to \$650 million in state and federal Medicaid funding to provide non-medical services to Medicaid enrollees at higher risk to evaluate the impact on their health outcomes and health care utilization and costs.



Network Leads and Their Regions

Impact Health (Dogwood Health Trust) - Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Yancey

Access East, Inc. - Beaufort, Bertie, Chowan, Edgecombe, Halifax, Hertford, Martin, Northampton, Pitt

Community Care of the Lower Cape Fear - Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender

P20 COUNCIL



Target: Fill the 10K workforce gap by 2030.

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.



LAND OF SKY P20 COUNCIL ACTION TEAMS



Partnerships from Pre-K to Post-Grad

Pathways to Enrollment Through FAFSA

Increase FAFSA awareness and completion rates in the region.

Collaborating to produce an additional 10K in the workforce with credentials to meet employer needs

Credentials of Value

Enhance awareness and alignment of local training opportunities within the NC Workforce Credentials list.

Policies & Regulations

Provide policy/regulatory recommendations, regarding chronic regulatory barriers that impede credential growth

Communications & Connections

Increase awareness of local industry and job growth opportunities in the region using specific success stories

Benchmarking Through Data/Metrics

Obtain a sustainable data platform that will accurately reflect credential completers in the region



LOSP20.ORG

Prek



“P20”



postgrad



THANK YOU!

Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director
Nathan@landofsky.org



LEGISLATIVE GOALS



31

Total Responses

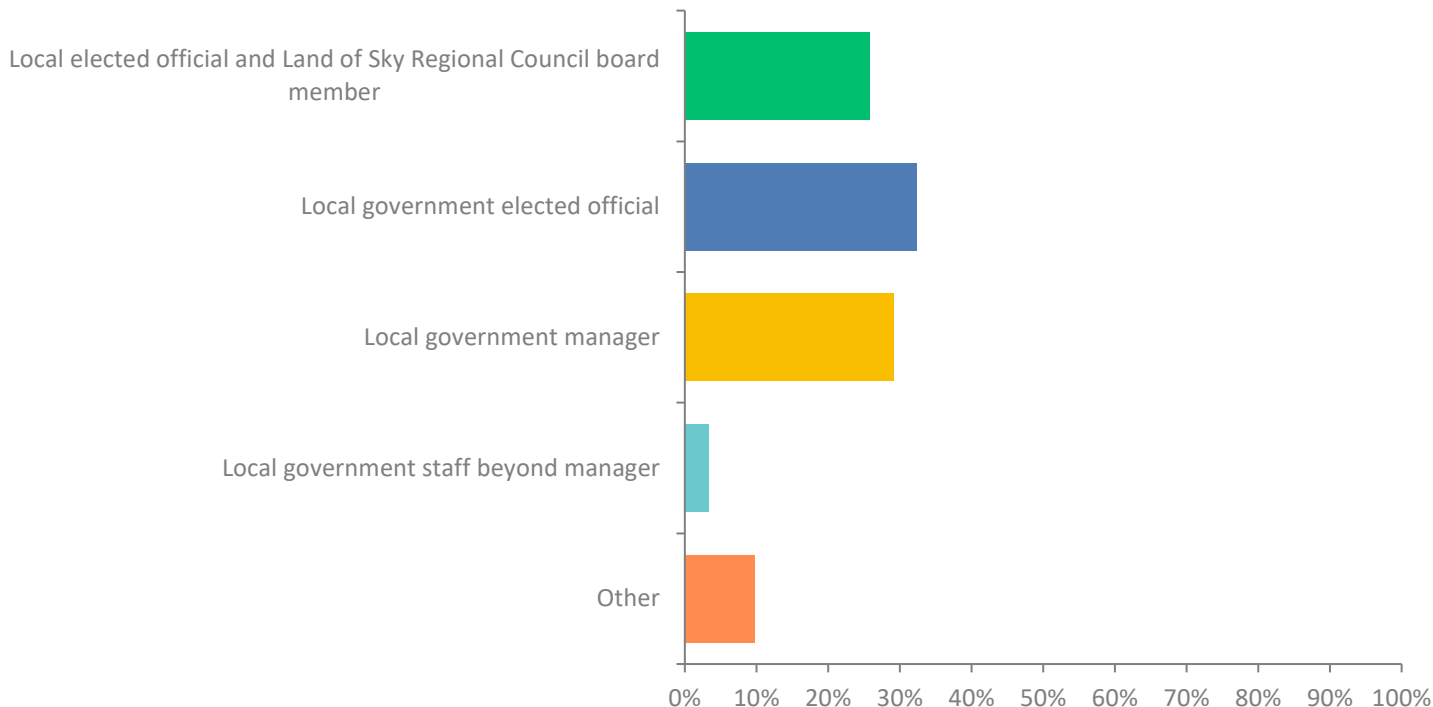
Date Created: Monday, February 06, 2023

Complete Responses: 31



Q1: What is your role at Land of Sky Regional Council?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



38



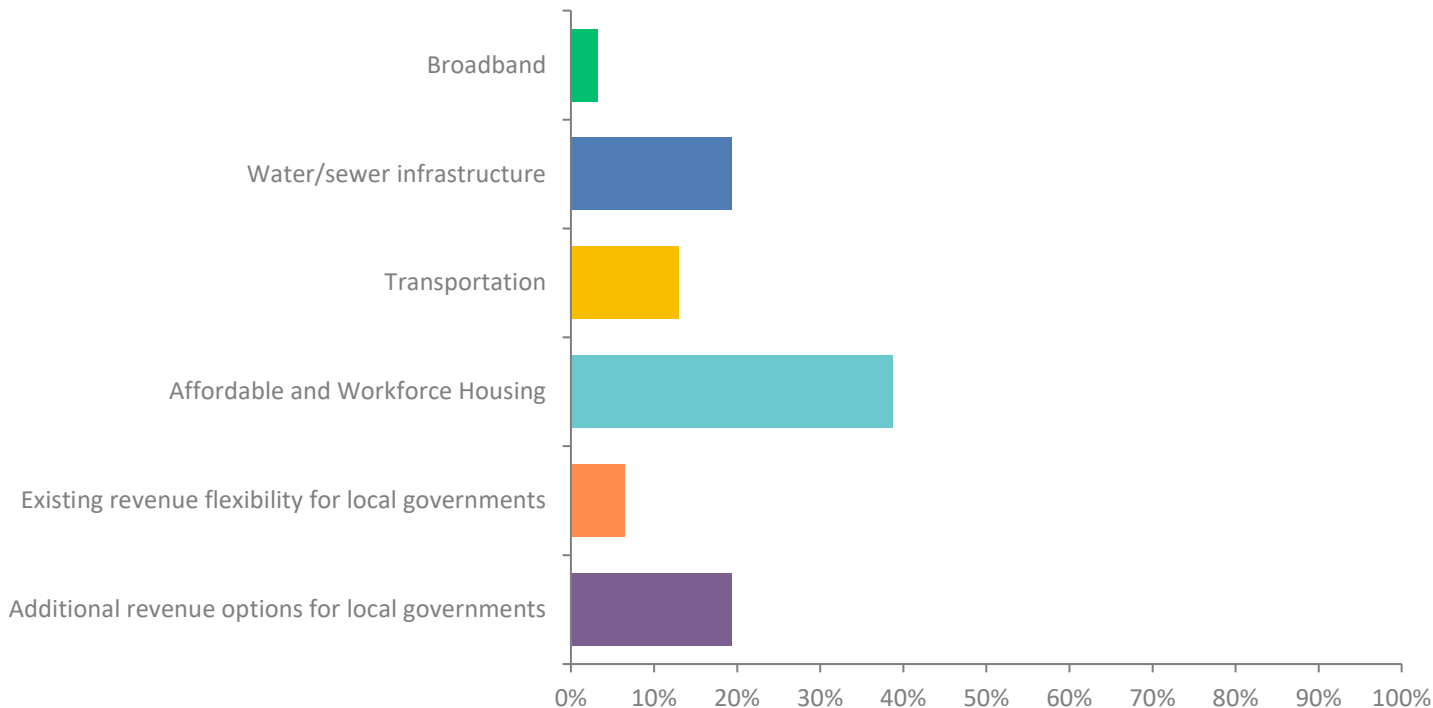
Q1: What is your role at Land of Sky Regional Council?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local elected official and Land of Sky Regional Council board member	25.81%	8
Local government elected official	32.26%	10
Local government manager	29.03%	9
Local government staff beyond manager	3.23%	1
Other	9.68%	3
TOTAL		31

Q2: What should be the top legislative priority for Land of Sky?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



40



Q2: What should be the top legislative priority for Land of Sky?

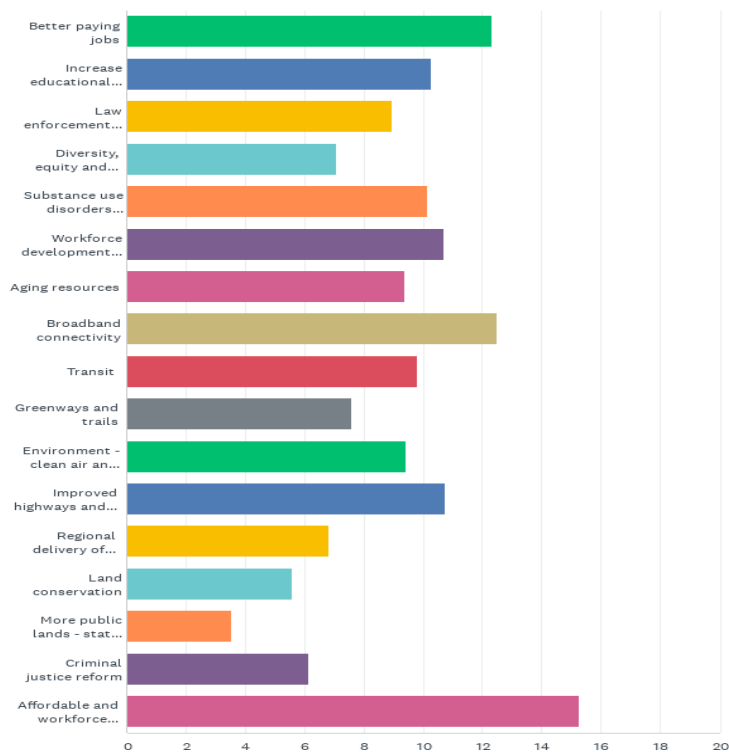
Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Broadband	3.23%	1
Water/sewer infrastructure	19.35%	6
Transportation	12.90%	4
Affordable and Workforce Housing	38.71%	12
Existing revenue flexibility for local governments	6.45%	2
Additional revenue options for local governments	19.35%	6
TOTAL		31



Q3: What is the top regional need for the Land of Sky region?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0





Q3: What is the top regional need for the Land of Sky region?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Better paying jobs	21.42% 6	7.14% 2	14.29% 4	14.29% 4	3.57% 1	7.14% 2	7.14% 2	3.57% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.57% 1	3.57% 1	3.57% 1	3.57% 1	3.57% 1
Increase educational attainment	0.00% 0	8.00% 2	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	20.00% 5	16.00% 4	4.00% 1	12.00% 3	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	12.00% 3	0.00% 0	
Law enforcement resources	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	15.38% 4	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	
Diversity, equity and inclusion	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.69% 2	0.00% 0	11.54% 3	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	15.38% 4	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	15.38% 4	
Substance use disorders support	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	15.38% 4	7.69% 2	7.69% 2	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	
Workforce development resources	0.00% 0	18.52% 5	7.41% 2	3.70% 1	7.41% 2	14.81% 4	7.41% 2	3.70% 1	3.70% 1	3.70% 1	11.11% 3	3.70% 1	7.41% 2	3.70% 1	
Aging resources	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	11.54% 3	15.38% 4	7.69% 2	7.69% 2	0.00% 0	
Broadband connectivity	10.71% 3	17.86% 5	7.14% 2	10.71% 3	10.71% 3	3.57% 1	10.71% 3	7.14% 2	1.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 4	3.57% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Transit	0.00% 0	7.69% 2	0.00% 0	11.54% 3	19.23% 5	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	19.23% 5	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	
Greenways and trails	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	12.00% 3	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	8.00% 2	20.00% 5	4.00% 1	12.00% 3	8.00% 2	4.00% 1	
Environment - clean air and clean water	4.00% 1	8.00% 2	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	12.00% 3	8.00% 2	8.00% 2	8.00% 2	8.00% 2	4.00% 1	16.00% 4	8.00% 2	0.00% 0	
Improved highways and streets	7.14% 2	10.71% 3	17.86% 5	3.57% 1	10.71% 3	0.00% 0	7.14% 2	0.00% 0	3.57% 1	0.00% 0	17.86% 5	7.14% 2	3.57% 1	3.57% 1	
Regional delivery of services	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.54% 3	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	7.69% 2	0.00% 0	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	7.69% 2	3.85% 1	7.69% 2	23.08% 6	
Land conservation	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	8.00% 2	8.00% 2	0.00% 0	8.00% 2	20.00% 5	12.00% 3	
More public lands - state and local parks	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	8.00% 2	16.00% 4	
Criminal justice reform	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	12.00% 3	12.00% 3	8.00% 2	4.00% 1	4.00% 1	0.00% 0	8.00% 2	
Affordable and workforce housing	58.62% 17	10.34% 3	10.34% 3	3.45% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.34% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.45% 1	0.00% 0	3.45% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	

Q4: If our state legislators and Governor could accomplish one thing, what would you want that to be?

1. Less interference in local issues
2. Provide more tools and resources to support workforce housing
3. Create a fair, reasonable, non-partisan and just budget for the coming two years
4. Increase funding and revenue streams for local government
5. Practice good government and stop the pointless wedge issues
6. More equal resources and representation for those who live in the western part of the state
7. Reinstate ETJ for the Town of Weaverville
8. Land conservation, water and air quality
9. Make all the resources they've made available for economic development also available for housing
10. Better local control of our own destiny
11. Resources for small communities without restrictions
12. Better roads and transportation
13. To allow more local control of tourism spending vs. infrastructure and educational spending
14. Fix the tier criteria
15. Create more affordable housing, especially for essential workers and low-income families
16. Abolish the State Board of Education
17. Provide mental health services for those with long term substance abuse, many of the mental health services have been defunded and the unaddressed need results in homelessness, crime and other systematic problems
18. Help with funding from the surplus
19. Not to limit local governments and region's ability to function as it deems appropriate and necessary
20. Create a State electoral college
21. Medicaid expansion
22. Expand Medicare
23. Reduce government size and scope
24. Affordable healthcare for entrepreneurs and small businesses
25. Medicaid expansion
26. Medicaid expansion
27. Sustainable funding for all education
28. Pay to replace the hundreds of thousands of aging septic systems along the French Broad River
29. Create authorization for municipalities to support affordable and workforce housing projects with public funds
30. Water sewer funding

Q5: What assistance from the state do local governments most need at this time?

1. Affordable housing funding assistance
2. Revenue flexibility
3. STR clarity; housing options, fair redistricting, Medicaid expansion
4. Increase funding and revenue streams for local government
5. Funding for infrastructure and expedited regulatory approval process so those projects can move forward and quickly
6. A western NC communications center so people from Western North Carolina can conduct and participate in North Carolina state business without having to take a 4-hour drive to Raleigh
7. Infrastructure grants
8. Resources for affordable housing & home repair
9. Infrastructure funding
10. Flexible monies
11. I don't know
12. Mental health services
13. No unfunded mandates
14. Improve road conditions
15. Storm water and other infrastructure funding source
16. The ability to pay for much needed infrastructure improvements/extensions; school building rehabilitation, new courthouse
17. Broadband and infrastructure resources
18. Ban unfunded mandates
19. Revenue
20. More ARPA funds or support for aging infrastructure
21. Additional money for water and sewer infrastructure improvements. More tools to address affordable and workforce housing. Less restrictions on municipalities and their ability to address new challenges – STRs, housing, etc.
22. State taking on environmental responsibilities to help develop
23. Autonomy! Let's us our towns for resident benefit, not state elected officials' future campaigns.
24. Support to maintain autonomy. There have been several bills introduced in recent sessions which would remove some local authority, for instance, land use controls. More authority for local control should be created, not less.
25. Increased Powell Bill funds



Q6: How can Land of Sky Regional Council more effectively support your local government?

1. Keep local officials updated on issues affecting them
2. Continue to look for opportunities to provide regional support for locally required services, i.e. stormwater quality mandates (MS4 permit compliance)
3. You do a great job of this now. Continue doing what you're doing.
4. Direct assistance with obtaining funding and facilitating the regulatory approval process.
5. Continue to provide assistance to municipalities that don't have the resources or knowledge to deal with difficult issues which might be encountered.
6. Assist with Grant applications.
7. You guys are great!
8. Help develop regional strategy
9. Provide resources for small towns
10. Keep open channels of communications and collaboration among agencies and governments.
11. I don't know— I think you are very effective already.
12. Continue what you are doing
13. be a partner and lobbying organization for our area that seems to be forgotten by our Raleigh counterparts.
14. Continue operating as LOS Regional Council does now! Great work!
15. Identifying and promoting grant opportunities.
16. Regional cooperation
17. Continue to build cooperation and support for local & regional priorities
18. communication avenues with elected state officials and agencies.
19. Continue to assist with grant writing and administration.
20. Effective advocacy at state and federal levels
21. Advocate for revenue flexibility, and additional funding for infrastructure (broadband, sewer/wate)
22. Keep asking questions and speaking up!
23. LOSRC does a great job of supporting our local government.
24. Regionalization of services



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** Executive Director's Report
- Item Number:** IX. Executive Director's Report
- Responsible Party:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director
- Attachment(s):** Executive Director's Report for September 22, 2023
- Background:** The Executive Director's Report provides updates and relevant information regarding projects and initiatives for LOSRC Departments/Agencies.
- Staff Recommendation:** N/A.
- Suggested Motion(s):** N/A

1. Finance

- Accounting staff will attend MIP financial system training in Austin, Texas
- Finance training provided to LOSRC staff
- Work is underway preparing for the FY22-23 budget
- Finance office is undergoing renovations to accommodate an additional finance staff member

2. Economic & Community Development & Transportation Planning

Kudos!

- Congratulations to Rosman and Mars Hill for completing the RC2 (Rural Community Capacity Building) Program through NC Commerce and their recent awards for small planning grants.
- Congratulations to Rosman for an RTFG award for a pedestrian bridge connecting their Town Park to the Elementary School.
- Congratulations to Brevard for receiving a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant for engineering and design for Ecusta Trail in Transylvania County.
- Congratulations to Madison County for Building Reuse for Highland Metalworks.
- Congratulations to French Broad Electric Co-Operative for their GREAT grant in Madison County
- Congratulations to Zitel Broadband for their GREAT grant in Transylvania County
- Congratulations to City of Asheville for their \$4.2M Low-No grant to support clean transportation fleet technologies.
- Congratulations to French Broad Electric Co-Operative for their CFAT grant in Madison County
- Congratulations to VW Grant Awardees in the region:
 - Transylvania Economic Alliance
 - Transylvania Habitat for Humanity
 - Town of Waynesville
 - Town of Hayesville
 - Buncombe County Sustainability
 - EGolf Ford of Brevard

Announcements

- The Racial Disparity Analysis has been updated with current data:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/34c9390316874caeab288d332dac3b12>
- We are assisting residents sign up for discounted internet service (ACP) in Buncombe County. Please contact ian@landofsky.org for more information.

Upcoming Events

- 3/1- Quarterly Managers Meeting @ LOSRC
- 3/1 - Regional Health Forum @ LOSRC
- 3/12-15 NADO & DDAA Washington Policy Conference in Arlington, VA
- 3/20-21 Rural Summit 2023 at the Raleigh Convention Center
- 4/26-28 NCAMPO Conference *Transforming Transportation* in Greenville, NC
- 7/14 Housing Forum

COGWorks: Please visit <https://www.landofsky.org/cogworks.html> for more information and registration links. Courses are added as details become available.

- April - North Carolina's Transportation Prioritization Process
- May - Housing and Accessory Dwelling Units in North Carolina
- May - Transportation Grants
- June - TIPs and STIPs
- July - Green Growth Toolbox, Wildlife Crossings, and Related Planning Efforts
- August - Ethics Cases of the Year
- October - Rural Road Safety

Transportation

1. MPO & RPO staff continue to work with local partners and NCDOT on project design and development.
2. Staff is assisting in TAB, STIP and CTP development and Board meetings.
3. RPO staff is also serving on the new NCDOT EV/Clean Energy Committee.
4. RPO, MPO and ECD staff are assisting several communities write grants for transportation projects, including RAISE, FLAP, and the IJA Discretionary Funds.
5. MPO and RPO staff are serving on the state's Prioritization Workgroup with other representatives from MPOs, RPOs, and NCDOT.
6. The MPO is providing funding to several special studies in the region getting ready to begin in FY 2024: The Woodfin-Weaverville Trail Connection Study and the Fletcher Cane Creek Greenway Study.
7. Haywood County adopted their Greenway Master Plan at their February 6th meeting
8. The MPO is providing funding for on-going studies at the City of Asheville, including the purchase of bicycle and pedestrian counters, the Reed Creek Greenway Extension Study, and the Patton Avenue Corridor Study.
9. MPO & RPO staff are serving on a Locally Administered Projects Program committee with NCDOT to provide policy recommendations to achieve better success rates and more on-time delivery of LAPP projects.
10. MPO & RPO staff continue to update local governments on NCDOT's financial situation and the Draft 2024-2033 STIP. A public survey is planned to be distributed by the MPO in November.
11. The MPO & RPO were awarded a Safe Streets for All Planning Grant from USDOT to cover Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties
12. The City of Hendersonville was awarded a feasibility study grant through the NCDOT Paved Trail Study program for the Above the Mud project.
13. The City of Brevard was awarded a feasibility study grant through NCDOT Paved Trail Study Program for the Old Hendersonville Hwy Shared Use Path.
14. The MPO was awarded a feasibility study grant through the NCDOT Paved Trail Study program for a small section of the Swannanoa Greenway near Meadow Road
15. MPO New Member Orientation is scheduled for Friday, March 3rd

Broadband

1. LOS partnered with NC DIT and the Division of Rural Health to distribute hotspots with 12 months service and digital literacy training for telehealth programs in WNC. To date 146 hotspots have been distributed to programs in three counties.
2. LOS is partnering with the Institute of Emerging Issues and Dogwood Health Trust to assist development and implement Digital Inclusion Plans in WNC with COGS across the region.
3. LOS received funding from Buncombe County to provide Wi-Fi in several Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (HACA) residential buildings. Staff received an update from the sub-consultant, Elawuit, that installation is proceeding as scheduled.

4. LOS is working with NEMAC to develop a broadband planning tool. The tool is aimed to consolidate many of the various data sources into a project planning catalyst for future broadband projects in the region.
5. LOS staff worked to set up public WIFI in the Broad River area of Buncombe County. Staff partnered with fire department and Skyrunner to implement this project.
6. LOS staff supported providers in the region with GREAT grant assistance leading to 21 applications across the region. To date award announcements in Madison, Transylvania, Buncombe, and Henderson have been made. We are hopeful to gain additional awards in the coming weeks. If your community wants to start working on CAB, please get in touch with Sara Nichols.

Community Development/Water, Sewer, Stormwater Infrastructure

1. Staff is continuing to support Fletcher, Laurel Park, Montreat, Weaverville and Woodfin with their MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) permit compliance. Updated stormwater management plans have been completed for Weaverville and Laurel Park in February and submitted to DEQ.
2. Weaverville's 205j-funded stormwater system inventory and green infrastructure planning kicked off in January, and field work is underway.
3. Brevard has requested assistance with a stormwater system inventory as well and work will begin in late Spring.
4. Final design has been completed for a 319-funded bioretention system at TOBM public works.
5. Staff is evaluating and synthesizing water and sewer system needs throughout the region, starting with Transylvania County.

Housing

1. Staff submitted two pre-applications to Dogwood Health Trust for housing programs. One was invited for a full application, and one was deferred to the next round.
2. Staff has begun reaching out to Local Governments and Housing nonprofit providers to gather information and data for the Housing Asset Inventory and determine needs.
3. LOSRC was awarded a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, matched with a grant to Southwestern Commission from the Dogwood Health Trust, to create a WNC Housing Asset Inventory for the western 15 counties. This project will be completed through a multi-COG effort.
4. LOSRC was awarded a grant from Cares at the UNC-CH School of Social Work in partnership with North Carolina Money Follows the Person (MFP), for the initiative titled Building Capacity for Home and Community Based Services through Collective Impact. The project is called Remain at Home - Accessibility Assessment Program, in partnership with the Institute for Preventative Care and Advocacy, Mountain Area Health Education Center, RL Mace Universal Design Institute.
5. Staff set a LOSRC Housing Forum date of July 14, 2023

Economic Development/Workforce

1. Staff submitted the I26 Interchange/Access Road application to EDA to request \$2 million in funding on behalf of NCDOT. Staff assisted NCDOT receive \$2.5 million from ARC's Access Road fund.
2. The Creative Manufacturing Sector Development plan is final! Please contact us for a copy of the plan.
3. The reports for the Regional Economic Collaboration and Analysis led by the Region's Chambers of Commerce and business sector are complete:
 - a. Regional Resiliency and Strategic Plan Alignment Presentation
 - b. Regional Resiliency and Strategic Plan Alignment Report
 - c. Labor Shed and Target Industry Analysis
4. Staff and partners have completed the analysis and final products with Outdoor/Recreation Sector manufacturers to determine opportunities in supply chains, workforce and economic diversity

in cooperation with High Country Council, Southwestern Commission and Riverbird Research.
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/291e98f0291643c49a6462395ec3e6e5>

5. We continue to partner with the Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Support Agencies, nonprofits, and economic developers to assist small businesses through COVID-19 impacts.
6. The TDM Coordinator is working with Workforce, Inspire, and employers to develop a vanpool for under-resourced individuals to access job sites.
7. LOSRC's Waste Reduction Partners program is providing free water-use management assessments for large customers of the City of Asheville's Water Resources Department. These on-site assessments help identify utility costs savings for the City.

Resilience/Hazard Mitigation

1. LOSRC is supporting the development of the Domestic Preparedness Region 9 THIRA/SPR through the COG Disaster Recovery Grant and will start with Buncombe County to develop an information base and process that can be used across the 12 counties in DPR 9 (Regions A & B, as well as Polk County from Region C).
2. The LOS Regional Resilience Assessment Phase IV kicked off in January, also funded in part with through COG DRR, and includes new features and data in AccelAdapt to support resilience planning, and well as training and user group support.

Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles

1. Clean Cities Program is assisting local governments prepare for VW Settlement projects. During the first round of settlement funding released in 2020, the Land of Sky Clean Vehicles Coalition helped the region bring in more than \$4.1 million in grant funding to support purchases of new clean vehicles and EV infrastructure. During the second round of funding, all of the applications that LOS staff assisted with under the Level 2 Public Access Program were funded. Staff also assisted with applications for the DC Fast Chargers and Level 2 Multi-Unit Dwelling programs. Please contact Sara Nichols with questions on how to apply for more than \$68 million in state funding available for clean fleets: sara@landofsky.org
2. LOS received CMAQ funding to continue support of air quality outreach initiatives in WNC.
3. Staff supported applications for the EPA school bus rebate for Buncombe and Madison County Schools.
4. Cherokee Clean Vehicles participated in the first electric school bus in North Carolina ribbon cutting, including a visit from Governor Cooper and Administrator Reagan. Staff recently helped with a training for school leadership including a school bus drag race.
5. Staff are partnering with the Blue Ridge Electric Vehicle Club to host an electric vehicle car shows on April 22nd in Hendersonville, and April 30th in Asheville.
6. Staff are working on developing a EV planning map for the region.
7. Staff are working on their annual clean cities report for the region. This report quantifies the grant funding, public engagement, and greenhouse gas emission reductions in the region for 2022. Please contact Sara Nichols (sara@landofsky.org) and Ian Baillie (ian@landofsky.org) if your municipality or organization use an alternative fuel vehicle or equipment, replaced any diesel vehicle or equipment, implemented any idle reduction technology, and/or have a work from home policy.

Waste Reduction Partners

1. WRP engineers helped Buncombe County Schools apply for a \$2.4 million grant through the US Department of Energy Renew Americal School program to upgrade HVAC systems at 4 elementary schools.
2. WRP staff helped Henderson County with the review of a \$4 million grant application to expand both recycling and composting capacity at the county's solid waste transfer station.
3. WRP engineers will be providing an energy assessment to Ridge Haven Camp in Brevard to identify practical energy and utility cost savings.
4. WRP staff assisted Blue Ridge Event Staffing in Asheville with a food waste reduction plan.

5. Staff assisted Reems Creek Nursery in Weaverville with recycling solutions for its agriculture plastics.

Planning Services

1. Staff continue to work with area communities providing land use planning and zoning assistance. Towns include Hot Springs, Mars Hill, Marshall, Montreat, Woodfin, Flat Rock, Maggie Valley, Montreat, Clyde, Canton, and Andrews. Note that we are partnering with Southwestern Commission, Region A staff to assist with communities in their region as well.

Grants & Project Development

1. Staff are working with several jurisdictions to support ARPA projects and administration. Please connect with Erica if you would like to learn more: erica@landofsky.org ARPA information can be found here: <https://www.nc.gov/agencies/pandemic-recovery-office/american-rescue-plan-act-information-and-resources>
2. Staff have been working with Sister Councils of Government on ARPA, Resilience and Multi-regional projects. Partnerships include sharing ARP policies, ordinances, and guidance; grant development; developing scopes of work and project delivery for ARPA State funds; budgeting and project development for housing, transportation and broadband tech assistance.
3. Staff continues working with several local governments and partners on applications for economic development, community development, transportation, and infrastructure implementation with BRIC/FEMA, EDA, and foundations. These projects will support transportation connections, resilience, job growth, industry expansion, and place-based development.
4. The NCGS 160D requires all Comprehensive Plans be updated to meet the new guidelines by July 1, 2022. (i.e. Municipalities and Counties must have a “reasonably-maintained” [updated within last 5-10 years] Comprehensive Plan in effect in order to legally continue having local zoning/development regulations. At minimum, a reasonably updated Land Use Plan must be in place by July 1, 2022 as a rational nexus to zoning/development regulations. (see Town of Canton’s phased-approach, Phase 1: Land Use Plan by July 1, 2022; Phase 2: Other Comprehensive Plan elements to be included after July 1, 2022)
Please contact erica@landofsky.org if you have questions or would like assistance updating your plans.

3. Aging

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

- Kim Ward, Aging Program Specialist for ARPA funding, has moved into the position of Accounts Receivable Clerk in the finance department. Her duties will be taken on by Zack Schmitt who is the current Aging Specialist in charge of Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) funding.
- Monitoring of ARPA funded providers continues moving forward.

Family Caregiver Support Program

- Staff and volunteers helped facilitate in-person caregiver and care receiver support groups in Hendersonville. There were 7 caregivers and 4 care receivers who participated in 2 meetings.
- Staff continue to offer \$500 Respite Vouchers to family caregivers in Transylvania County. So far there are 8 caregivers who have received a total of \$5,500 in vouchers.
- Staff are working with AARP and MountainCare on developing a presentation to give to employers on how they can assist their employees who are caregivers.

- Staff is co-sponsoring with AARP, “Powerful Tools for Caregivers” online. This is a 6-week training to assist caregivers. There are 13 caregivers registered.

Foster Grandparent Program

- Number of active volunteers: 31 volunteers are working one-on-one with children ages infant to 8 years old.
- Number of volunteers waiting on paperwork, placement, etc.: 4 volunteers are waiting for their school to reopen to volunteers so that they can return to service.
- Number of active stations (schools, day cares, etc.): 11
- Number of stations waiting to sign MOU, volunteer placement, etc.: 1 of childcare centers have not yet allowed volunteers to return to service.
- Recruitment efforts (press releases, presentations, etc.): Volunteer recruitment efforts are beginning now that the majority of Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) stations have reopened. Recruitment efforts include a recruitment bonus offered for FGP volunteers that refer someone, staff participated in the Junior League Volunteer Expo in February and plan to start running some articles and ads in local media.
- In-service/training update: On February 14, Foster Grandparent volunteers attended in-person in-service training at Land of Sky Regional Council. Volunteers learned about different “Love Languages” and how they show the children they work with love through their own love language and how the children show love through their own love language. Upcoming in-services topics will be as follows:
 - March 14- Stewards of Children-Sexual Abuse Prevention
 - April 18- WNC Fall Coalition will be presenting and doing fall screenings

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

- Staff have seen an increase in volunteer involvement for evidence program delivery. Additional leaders have received training or will be starting early March, including several A Matter of Balance Master trainers and Living Healthy trainers, and two returning volunteers that will be recertified in the Living Healthy Programs.
- Staff continues scheduling evidence-based programs in community including Living Healthy in Madison County, Tai Chi and A Matter of Balance in Buncombe, as well as Tai Chi in Transylvania County.
- Staff will deliver a “Fall Risk and Prevention to Jewish Family Service” volunteers.
- Staff continues close collaboration with the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness working on initiatives that include Referral Pathways for falls reduction, A Matter of Balance-Parkinson’s Pilot, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in evidence-based programming.
- Staff have completed Mon Ami training, a program designed to manage all evidence-based programs and events in one platform. March 1st is the targeted “go-live” date.
- Staff is working with Jewish Family Services to address recommendations resulting from the Aging in Place Assessment project.
- Staff is working with Blue Ridge Pride Generation Plus to present “Eldercare with Pride.”
- Asheville Terrace Community Health Workers have been diligent in addressing social isolation through social opportunities for residents. November through January there were 42 social engagements with 461 overall participants attending.
- Staff and Asheville Terrace Community Health Workers continue to partner with MANNA, Trader Joes, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) volunteers to bring nutrition to residents. In January, 102 bags of groceries were distributed to residents, and 308 “Neighbor Knock” visits were conducted.

- Adult Day Care/Health Days = 1,611
- Meals – delivered/congregate = 118,292
- In-home Aide hours = 9,221
- Legal Services hours = 1,118
- Transportation trips = 28,575
- Home Improvement Projects = 37

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Community Inclusion (serves 37 Western Counties):

- Staff completed in-person skilled nursing facilities providing training and materials as needed. Counties completed include: McDowell, Cleveland, Lincoln and Henderson.
- Staff provided in-person training for the McDowell County Department of Social Services. Participants included staff from the Community Alternatives Program as well as Adult Medicaid.
- Staff joined the planning committee for the 2023 *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Walk* helping with outreach and sponsorship procurement.
- Staff attended Transition Coordinator meeting where we discussed end-of-year transition numbers as well as referrals received.
- Staff hosted the Professional Social Workers in Long-term Care organization (PSWLTC). Land of Sky Regional Council will continue to host this group until further notice.

Money Follows the Person Transition Coordinator

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

- The western region has a caseload of 10.
- One person on the caseload has housing secured and will transition 4/1/2023.
- Nine people are waiting on housing, and some have been on the caseload for at least one year waiting on affordable, safe housing.
- January, 2023 the Transition Coordinator worked with landlords to secure housing for a person that had a Section 8 voucher. It had been extremely difficult for this person to secure housing. The first week of January, a landlord in Shelby agreed to accept the voucher. The person completed the rental application and was on his way to securing housing. On January 14th an employee found the person dead in his bed at the nursing facility. It appears people are literally dying on waitlist for housing.

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

- Staff completed on-boarding phase of training and has taken over the central caseload.
- Currently, staff has 9 clients.
- Staff traveled to the Winston-Salem area to meet in person with clients and meet with PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) to work on collaboration.
- Staff also attended WISH (WNC Initiative for Supportive Housing) Collaborative event.
- Staff continues to learn about housing resources and difficulties, as lack of safe and affordable housing is an issue for 6 out of the 9 clients.

Ombudsman Program

- Ombudsman presented Long Term Care Placement information to Buncombe County Council on Aging Community Services Department.
- Ombudsman attended Jr. League Asheville Volunteer Expo in order to discuss volunteer options with the Community Advisory Committees in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties.
- Ombudsmen will attend the North Carolina Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman Association meeting in Kernersville on February 16th, 2023.

- Ombudsman will attend the North Carolina Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman Quarterly training in Raleigh, NC on February 28th, 2023.

Outreach and Assistance

- The focus for 2023 is a reboot of volunteers for all 6 different Area Agency on Aging programs (Regional Aging Advisory Council, Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program, Senior Tar Heel Legislator, Community Advisory Committee, and Wellness Volunteers). Creating flyers, informational Facebook posts, and ideas on where to reach older adults.
- Staff continues to work on becoming an option counselor to better assist when folks call for help.
- Staff are getting out into the community to be more visible and share about volunteer programs. Staff have been to Marshall Library, Mars Hill Library, Hendersonville Library and Fletcher Library to talk with folks.
- Staff attended the Junior League of Asheville Volunteer Expo which had a great turn out of community members.
- Staff created a display for Heart Health month (February) at the Marshall Library also sharing about Area Agency on Aging programs.
- Staff is working with other Area Agency on Aging programs to create “marketing material” to help inform and recruit depending on the program.

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

- Staff is partnering with UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy-Asheville campus students to provide in-home prescription and non-prescription medication reviews for Project C.A.R.E. enrolled caregivers and their care receivers. Eight individuals living in three homes will receive this service soon and several families are waiting for their reviews to be scheduled.
- Staff assisted three caregivers in registering as participants in a telephone-based research project designed to understand the experiences of non-immediate family members (grandchildren, siblings, nieces, nephews, and step-kin) who help a relative with dementia. This project, CareEx, is a research project of Virginia Tech and is funded by the National Institute on Aging.
- Since July 1, staff has distributed 97% of the nearly \$43,000 allotted by the State to Project C.A.R.E. for dementia caregivers who live in one of the 15 counties in Project C.A.R.E.’s western region. 75% of these funds have been utilized. The funds are for respite care services that give the caregiver time to engage in self-care activities.
- Staff is currently distributing American Rescue Plan Act funds. Since the beginning of this calendar year 13 caregivers have been awarded one \$500 voucher each.
- All caregivers receiving respite vouchers are also receiving care consultation services.
- Staff provides assistance, information, and referrals to non-enrolled caregivers and maintains a waiting list for respite funds/care consultation services. For Buncombe County alone 56 caregivers are on the waiting list.

Senior Companion Program

- Number of active volunteers: 55 volunteers
- Number of volunteers waiting for placement: 1 and 4 in application process
- Number of active stations:7
- Recruitment efforts: Council on Aging-Henderson County, Givens Estate-Gerber Park Apartments, Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments
- In-service/training update:
February: Information session
March: Dementia Care and resources

April, May, July: Cindy Keehn-Usable Skills with Dementia Clients

June: Volunteer Celebration

August: Audrey Morris, Hoarding and Its Mental Health Impact

4. Administration

- Christina is working to complete the FY21-22 Annual Report. We plan to post the report online on our website and mail all elected officials a hard copy report.
- Christina designed LOSRC 21-22 Annual Report
- Christina onboarded 2 new employees (Wendy Frye and Halston Fisher), one intern (Elizabeth Li), and one volunteer (Kathy Poling)
- Christina trained Jane Pies on RPO website and Distribution Lists edits
- Christina worked with Buncombe County to do another round of building construction to outfit the Finance Office for one more staff member and build another closet for the Aging Department
- Christina completed the edits to the Long Term Care Directory
- Christina designed and printed the 2023 Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion calendars
- Christina preparing for the Land of Sky website redesign and update
- Christina designing logos and graphics for the Foreign Trade Zone, LOS DEI committee, and the Innovation Centers of Excellence
- Nathan attend the COG Directors meeting at TJCOG and visited the NC General Assembly in support of the Buncombe County Schools Foundation “SMART Scholars” proposal for the LOSRC region
- Nathan participated on a panel at the NC Community College Presidents meeting in Morehead City with the CEO of EDPNC Chris Chung, NC Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary Chet Mottershead and NC Community College System Vice President Dr. Bruce Mack
- Nathan and Erica met with Representative Eric Ager and Representative Lindsey Prather
- Nathan hosted LOSRC Legislative Goals meeting with NC League of Municipalities, NC Association of County Commissioners, NC Association of Regional Councils of Governments, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and Chris Wall with EQV Strategic
- Nathan met with YMCA of WNC CEO Paul Vest
- Nathan attended the Institute for Emerging Issues Talent Economics forum with several LOSRC employees
- Nathan is planning multi-day French Broad River tour of the region’s four counties with elected officials, local government staff and partners attending.
- Hosted monthly staff meeting with celebration of Wanda Clark’s 45th anniversary as a LOSRC employee
- Nathan joined Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce CEO as presenters for the WNC Early Childhood Education Forum
- Nathan joined multiple P-20 Council meetings
- Nathan attended the Surry Yadkin Works apprenticeship meeting with my Future NC
- Office will be a 2024 voting location for Buncombe County and we have signed an agreement with BCBOE.

5. Workforce

- Region's unemployment rate of 2.5% for December 2022, metro has the #1 lowest unemployment rate in NC. Our region generally has more people working, more jobs and more people in our labor force than at any time pre-pandemic. There are monthly fluctuations with the data and subject to revisions.
- Philip Cooper, Coordinator of the Accelerate Buncombe program will be co-leading the Talent Economics Forum with the Institute of Emerging Issues in Raleigh, NC at NC State's McKimmon Center.
- We are planning WNC Career Expo in partnership with the Asheville Chamber of Commerce to be held March 23 at the WNC Ag Center in Fletcher. Prior to the job fair we will host high school students for career exploration with over 100 employers.
- We are in the process of planning WNC Construction Career Day on March 28 and 29 in Haywood County at the Smoky Mountain Event Center. Over 20 school systems will be participating. We have raised about \$20,000 in private funds to support this event. Vannoy Construction is our presenting sponsor.
- P20 Council met with region's school superintendents to discuss options to increase FASFA completion and held a meeting at Mars Hill University.
- Mountain Area WDB board member Steve Newman with IMS Solutions will be making a presentation at the Southeast Employment and Training Association (SETA) in Memphis TN to share our region's IT career pathways and our partnership with Guided Compass.
- Our region's IT career pathway will be endorsed by the NCWorks Commission at their May 10 meeting.
- We are working to implement grant awards for small business training, re-entry, and substance use recover.
- We participated in a statewide small business forum in partnership with several other workforce boards.
- Steve Newman with IMS Solutions and MAWDB member will make a presentation about our board's IT career pathways and partnership with Guided Compass at the Southeastern Employment and Training Association conference in Memphis, TN
- Dr. Wendy Frye, former Assistant Superintendent of Henderson County Schools will be joining the MAWDB as a part-time staff

Strategic Initiatives

- **Mountain Mobility** – Passenger trips rebounded from the holiday month of December, increasing by almost 7% to more than 9,000 trips in January. The Trailblazer services saw modest gains across all three services as well (Black Mountain, North Buncombe and Enka-Candler), with Black Mountain showing the greatest increase over the slumping numbers of November and December. We expect to see steadily increasing numbers as the weather moderates through the Spring months.
- **INspire: Recovery to Careers** – In January, 30 new participants recovering from Substance Use Disorder were enrolled for services. Of those 30 clients, 18 have secured employment, and INspire staff provided 10 pairs of work shoes for those participants. Additionally, 22 clients were assisted with sober living housing funds totaling \$12,655. Also, three clients were referred to Certified Peer Support Specialist training through VAYA Health. We're also excited to announce we have secured additional funding through Dogwood Health Trust to ensure the program can continue through FY24.
- **Accelerate Buncombe** – Work continues on this one-year grant provided by Buncombe County ARPA funds through a partnership with the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. The program assists those in underrepresented communities with significant barriers to employment secure job training and/or career services. Fourteen participants have been enrolled in the Certified Production Technician Training since the program began in November. All participants (11 African-American males; 1

African-American female and 1 Caucasian female) have been justice-involved and experiencing significant barriers to employment.

- **NEMT** - Active Cases 1289, Clients Utilized Services 580, Total Number of Trips 5635
- **Healthy Opportunities** – We currently have 16 active cases of clients needing transportation through the pilot program – four (4) clients in Henderson, three (3) in McDowell, two (2) in Buncombe, and one each in Haywood, Mitchell, Burke, Rutherford, Transylvania, Jackson and Madison counties. In December, we successfully provided transportation for four (4) clients in Buncombe.