

Land of Sky (Asheville-Brevard Metro Area)

Regional Resiliency and Strategic Plan Alignment

Land of Sky Board of Delegates

9/28/2002

Regional Collaboration Overview

- ▶ Project Process
- ▶ Workforce Highlights
- ▶ Priority Strategies

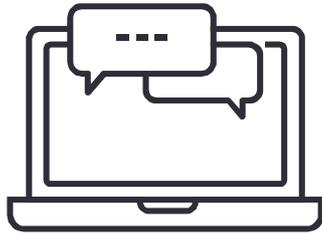
Funding for this project has been provided by:
Dogwood Health Trust & US Economic Development Administration



Project Timeline

CLIENT COLLABORATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

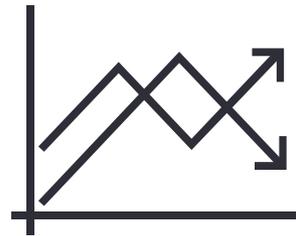
Plan alignment and leadership facilitation



December – April

- ▶ Project kickoff meeting with client project managers
- ▶ Review of plans and reports (20)
- ▶ Advisory committee meetings (7)
- ▶ Business leaders committee meetings (3)
- ▶ Economic and workforce development practitioner committee meetings (3)

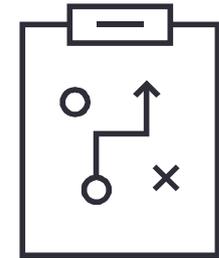
Research



January to June

- ▶ Regional workforce assessment
- ▶ Target industry alignment and insights
- ▶ Research findings and report
- ▶ Advisory committee meetings

Regional strategy



May to August

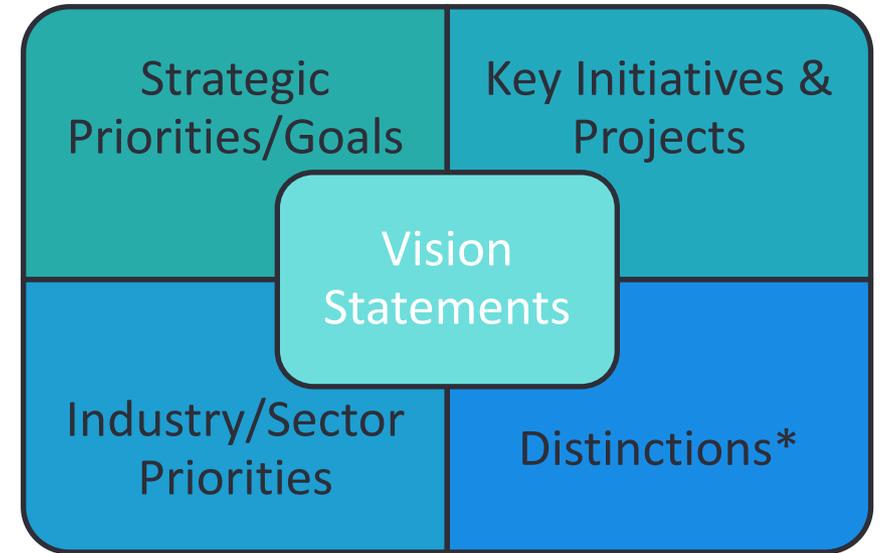
- ▶ Draft report on findings and strategic alignment
- ▶ Final report and presentation
- ▶ Advisory committee meetings

Plan Review & Alignment

Plans, studies and documents reviewed

- AAA Plan (Land of Sky Region, Aging)
- AVL 5x5 Plan (Asheville, Strategy)
- AVL Greater (Asheville, Strategy)
- Buncombe 2025 (Buncombe County, Strategy)
- Buncombe Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Buncombe County, Hazard)
- City of Asheville Plan (Asheville, Strategy)
- Dogwood Health Trust Strategic Plan (Western North Carolina, Strategy)
- Dogwood Health Trust Housing Study (Western North Carolina, Housing)
- French Broad River Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Land of Sky Region, Transportation)
- Haywood County Tourism Development Plan (Haywood County, Tourism)
- Henderson County Comprehensive Plan (Henderson County, Comp Plan)
- Henderson County Goals (Henderson County, Strategic Goals)
- Land of Sky CEDS (Land of Sky Region, CEDS)
- Madison County Comprehensive Plan (Madison County, Comp Plan)
- Madison County FY22 Priorities and Next Steps (Madison County, Priorities)
- MAWDB Workforce Plan (Land of Sky Region, Workforce)
- South Mountains Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (Henderson County, Transylvania County, Hazard)
- Transylvania County Tourism Strategic Plan (Transylvania County, Tourism)
- Transylvania Alliance Strategic Plan (Transylvania County, Strategy)
- Transylvania County Comprehensive Plan (Transylvania County, Comp Plan)
- Transylvania County Hazard Mitigation Plan (Transylvania County, Hazard)
- Waynesville Comprehensive Plan (Waynesville, Comp Plan)

Review Matrix



** This category was originally Misalignments and Contrasts*

Plans by Geography

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

Aligning regional plans and studies

Vision Statements

Common language includes:

- Care (for people)
- Cultural diversity
- Inclusivity
- Health
- Sustainability

Strategic Priorities/Goals

- Hone strategic economic clusters based on the region's strengths
- Protect older residents' ability to age in place
- Increase median household income to the North Carolina state benchmark
- Increase the supply of housing for those at or below the area median household income
- Grow total employment in region's target industries
- Cultivate civic and business leadership from representative citizens
- Foster entrepreneurship and organic growth of local businesses through BRE efforts

Key Initiatives & Projects

- Adopting the "Purpose Built Communities" model to tie together housing, workforce development and wellness
- Increasing the region's marketing and product development
- Addressing zoning codes and planning policy to allow for density and thoughtful development
- Creating and harnessing a regional tourism brand
- Integration of workforce systems – Work Ready Communities Certification Program, apprenticeships, reskilling and upskilling
- Site readiness initiatives to identify developable land in each county for advanced manufacturing

Industry/Sector Priorities

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Breweries and Distilling
- Creative Industries
- Outdoor Recreation & Retail
- Professional Services
- Tourism

Distinctions

- Madison County has a strong focus on agriculture that could be marketed more directly
- Henderson County seems to focus on business recruitment and incentives as priorities.
- Buncombe County has a focus on equitable growth and care for the aging population.
- Transylvania County has the makings of a robust marketing plan and a focus on year-round, seasonal tourism.
- Haywood County has a unique focus on its main streets.

Business Leaders – key themes and takeaways

Regional Strengths

- ▶ Desirable location for people (talent)
- ▶ Quality of life (climate, geography and outdoors experience; pace of living)
- ▶ *Beautiful place with beautiful people.*
- ▶ Strong leadership (private and public sectors)

Regional Challenges

- ▶ Resistance to growth
- ▶ Workforce shortages and skills misalignments
- ▶ Limited housing availability, especially affordable housing
- ▶ Lack of reliable transportation and mobility (impacts access to jobs and training)

Business Leaders – key themes and takeaways

Regional Opportunities

- ▶ Preserving outdoors assets and recreation through proactive planning
- ▶ Enhancing business community engagement
- ▶ Learning from communities that are larger, but similar (e.g. Portland, OR)
- ▶ Increasing resident mobility and connectivity to jobs and training
- ▶ Expanding housing supply and variety

Economic and Workforce Development Practitioners – key themes

Regional Strengths

- ▶ Resilient and committed partners (strong collaboration)
- ▶ Engaged public (residents have an active interest in regional growth)
- ▶ Higher education (community colleges and four-year colleges and universities)
- ▶ Attractive destination for residents and visitors
- ▶ Growing workforce

Regional Challenges

- ▶ Need for more coordinated workforce development efforts
- ▶ Lack of affordable housing to meet workforce needs
- ▶ Limited quality childcare and early education options
- ▶ Lack of public transportation and resistance to bus stops in certain neighborhoods

Economic and Workforce Development Practitioners – key takeaways

Regional Opportunities

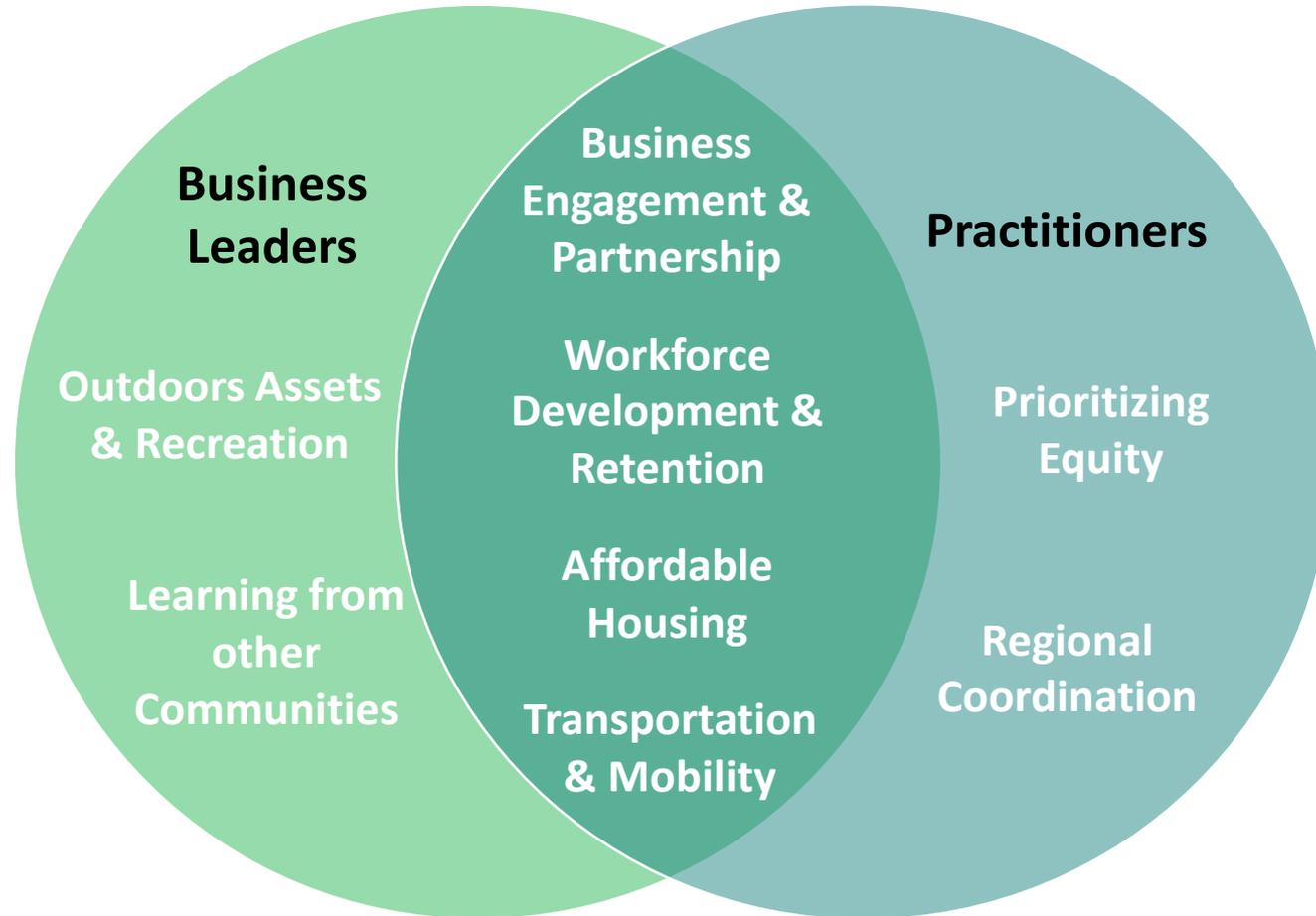
- ▶ Fostering a truly regional approach to economic, community and workforce development (“blurring the lines”)
- ▶ Prioritizing equity in economic growth, so that all residents and counties benefit
- ▶ Increasing focus on talent retention, especially with college students
- ▶ Partnering with employers to enhance workforce benefits and support services (e.g. health, childcare and transportation)
- ▶ Advocating for expansions in affordable housing and public transportation



Do the takeaways reflect your understanding of the top strengths and challenges for the region?

Was there anything that was surprising or unexpected?

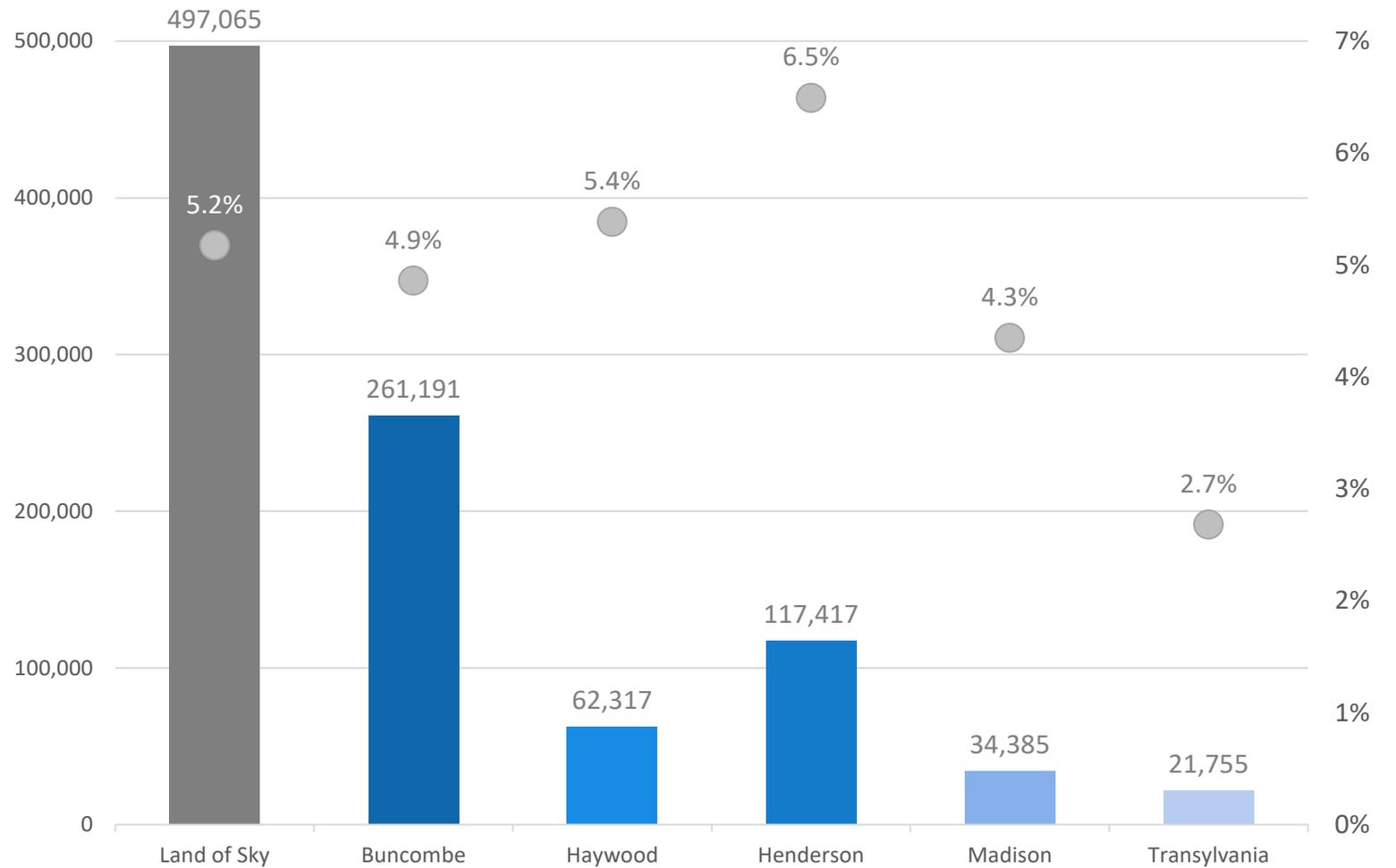
Business Leaders and Practitioners – regional opportunities



Do these opportunities reflect your understanding of the most urgent issues for the region's development and growth?

Workforce Insights: Population growth

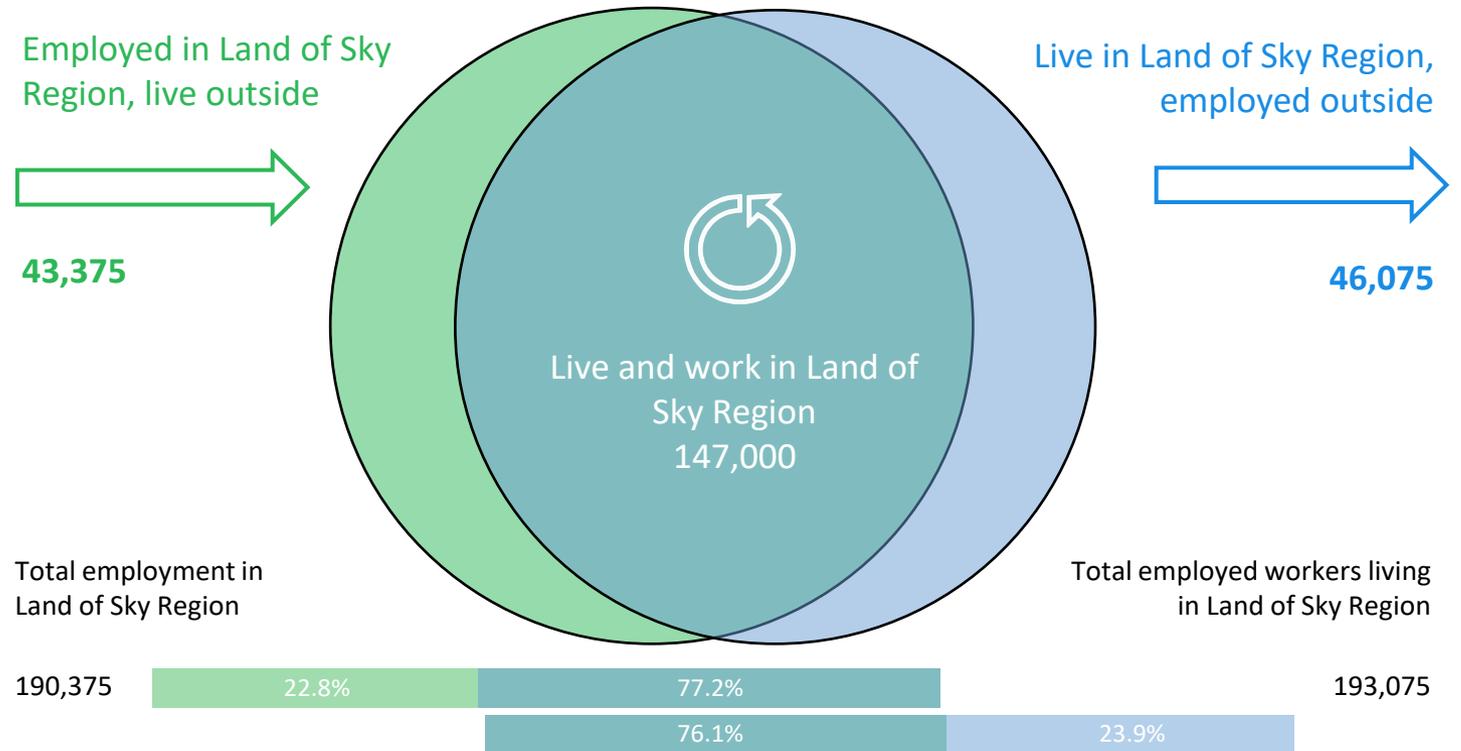
▶ Between 2014 and 2019, the Land of Sky region grew faster than the national average (3.4%) (3.4%)



Source: US Census Bureau

Workforce insights: Regional talent flow

- ▶ Of the nearly 193,100 employed individuals residing in the Land of Sky region, approximately 24% are employed outside of the five-county region.
- ▶ Approximately 23% of workers employed in the Land of Sky region live elsewhere.



Source: US Census Bureau

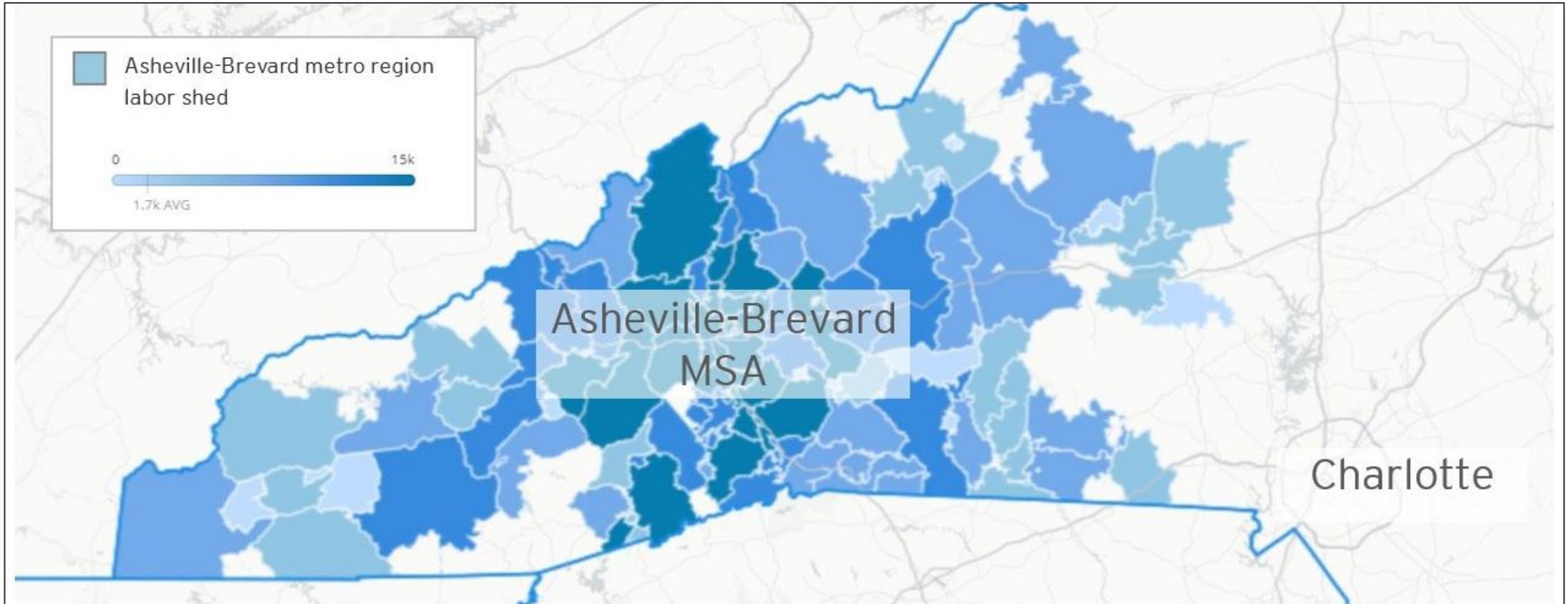
Workforce insights: Intra-regional talent flow

More than 75% of workers commute from within the region.

Live & Work		Work					Lives and works in home county within LOS	Works in LOS, <u>not</u> in home county
		Buncombe County	Henderson County	Madison County	Transylvania County	Haywood County		
Live	Buncombe County	72,625	7,392	892	636	1,957	68.4%	31.6%
	Henderson County	12,120	18,576	100	1,210	531	43.0%	57.0%
	Madison County	3,642	247	1,744	58	142	21.9%	78.1%
	Transylvania County	1,558	1,411	16	4,683	161	42.0%	58.0%
	Haywood County	5,602	929	57	207	10,500	42.9%	57.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

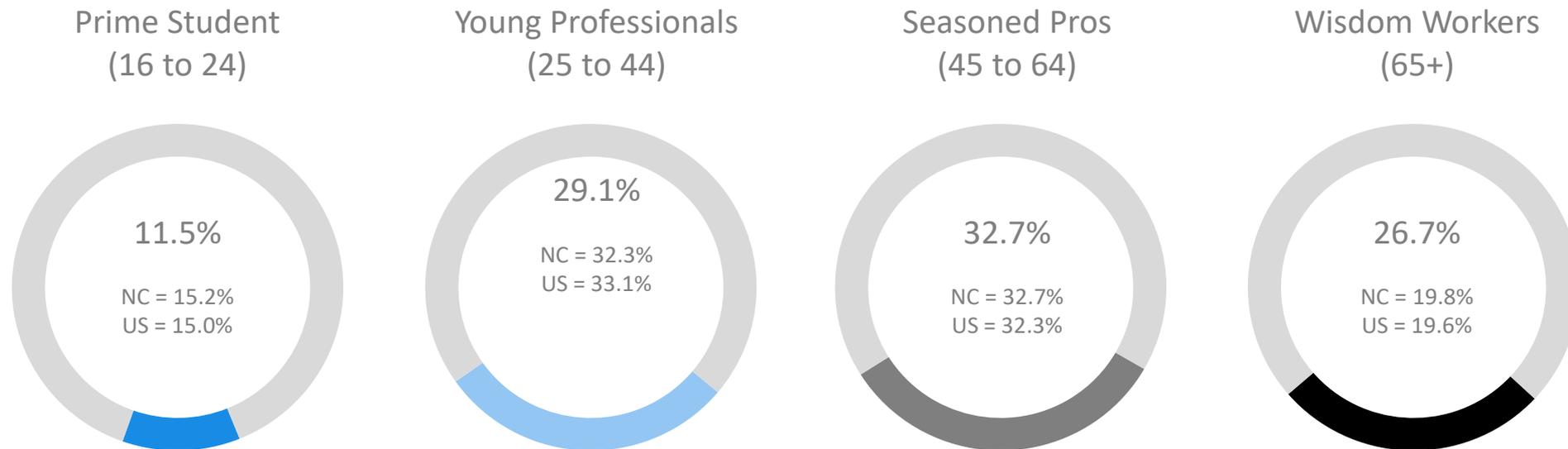
Workforce insights: Labor shed



Source: US Census Bureau

Workforce insights: Age demographics

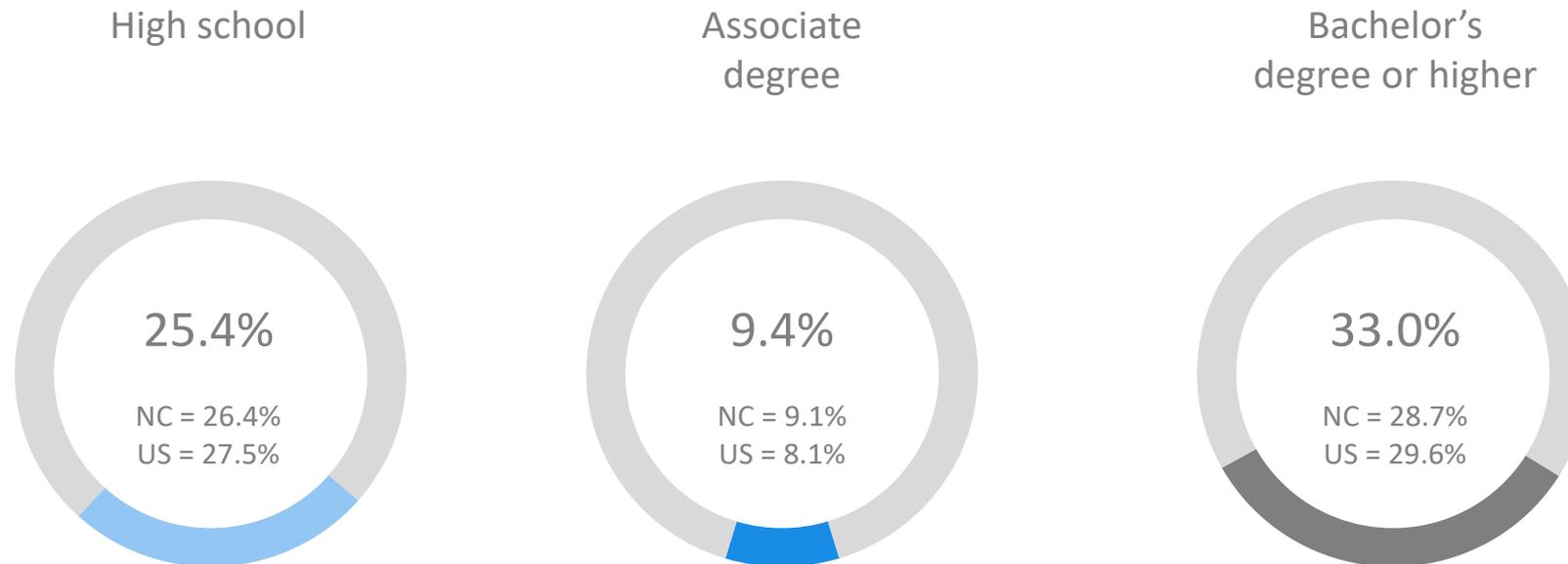
- On the whole, Land of Sky is home to a slightly older labor force population.
- Nearly 60% of Land of Sky's resident worker population (those employed or seeking work that live in the region) are 45 years of age and older.



Source: US Census Bureau

Workforce insights: Education attainment

- Workers living in the Land of Sky region have levels of educational attainment that largely mirror that of North Carolina.

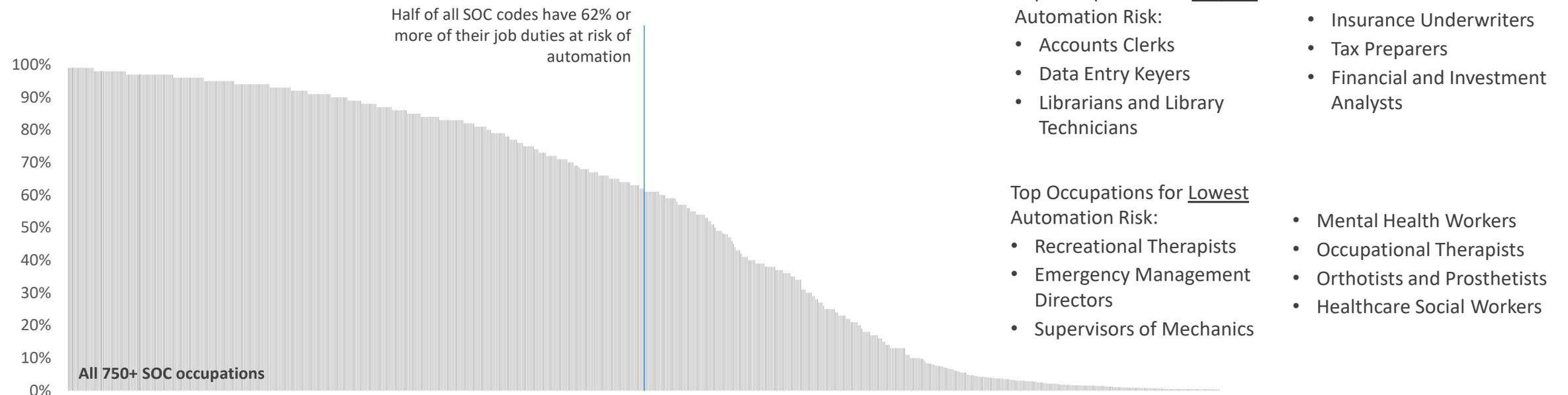


Source: US Census Bureau

Oxford's estimate of Automation Risk by Occupation

Oxford's analysis utilized machine learning to assess the likelihood of automation risk for over 700 occupations. Due to their use of SOC codes from 2010, EY extended their assessment to new or changed occupation codes through 2020 SOC taxonomy changes. Below is a graph that shows all occupations according to their "computerizable" index from 0% to 100%. Important: Data shows how much of a job could be automated. Higher automation potential implies either job losses and/or significant use new technologies to boost productivity.

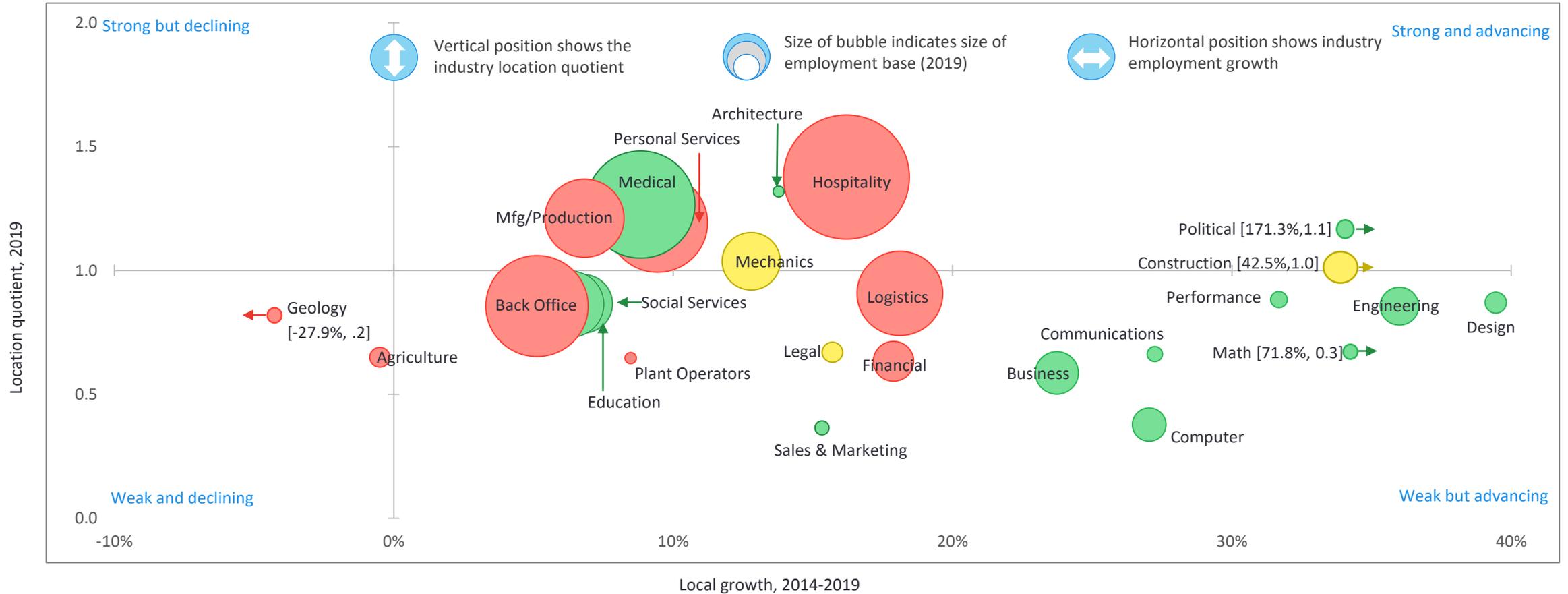
Potential for Automation of Jobs Tasks



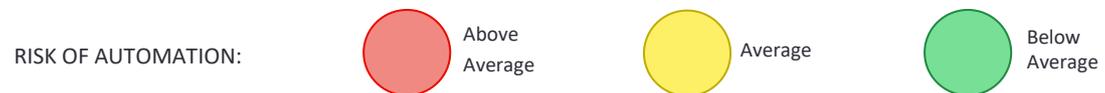
Source: EY using data from Oxford University

Automation assessment insights

Land of Sky Occupation Cluster Analysis for Automation Risk

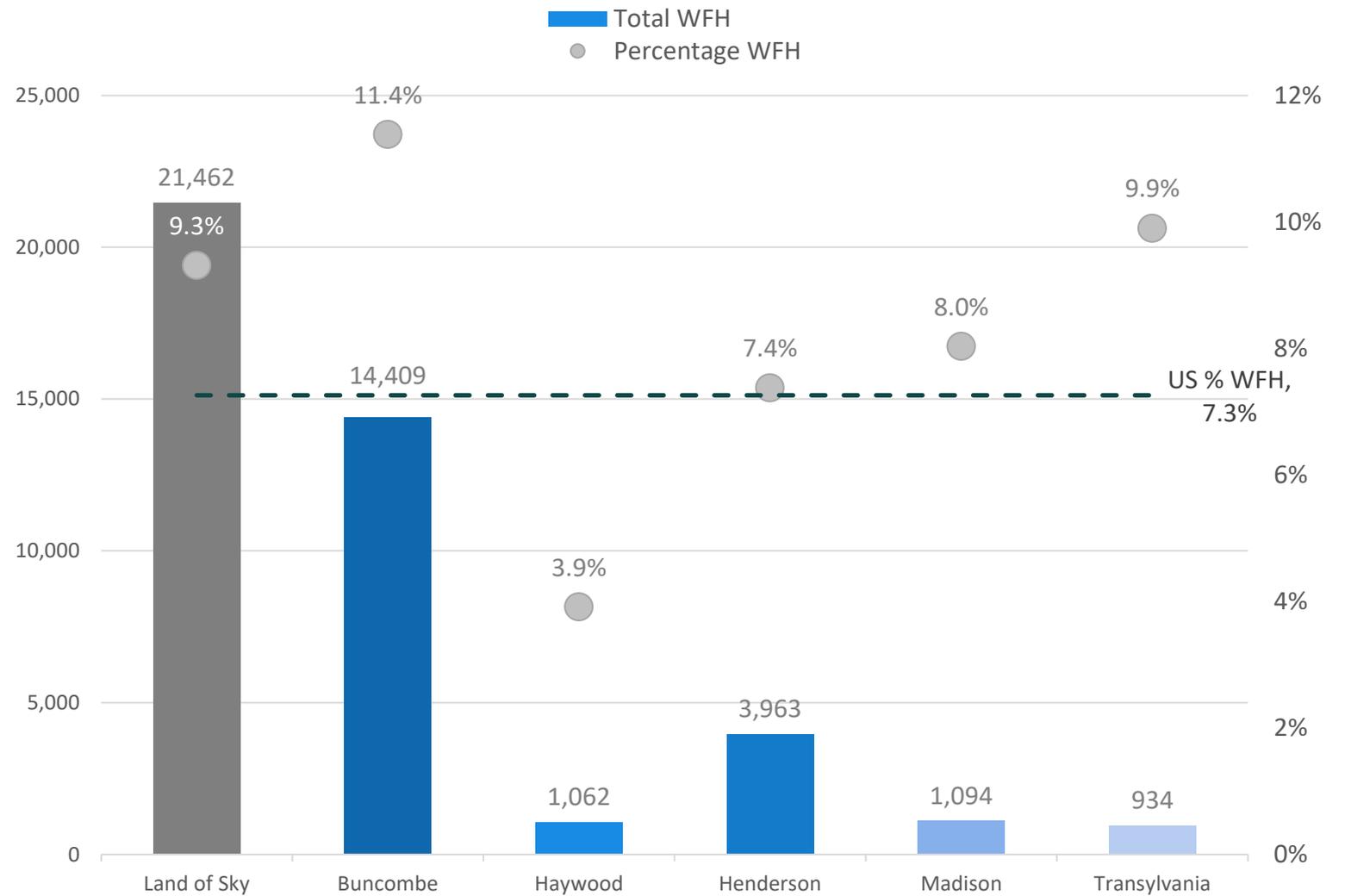


Source: EY analysis of EMSI, Oxford



Remote workforce insights

- Except for Haywood County, all counties within the region have larger shares of their workers working from home (WFH) as of 2020.
- This is the latest data available. How do you think the pandemic affected these numbers?



Source: US Census Bureau

Industry cluster insights

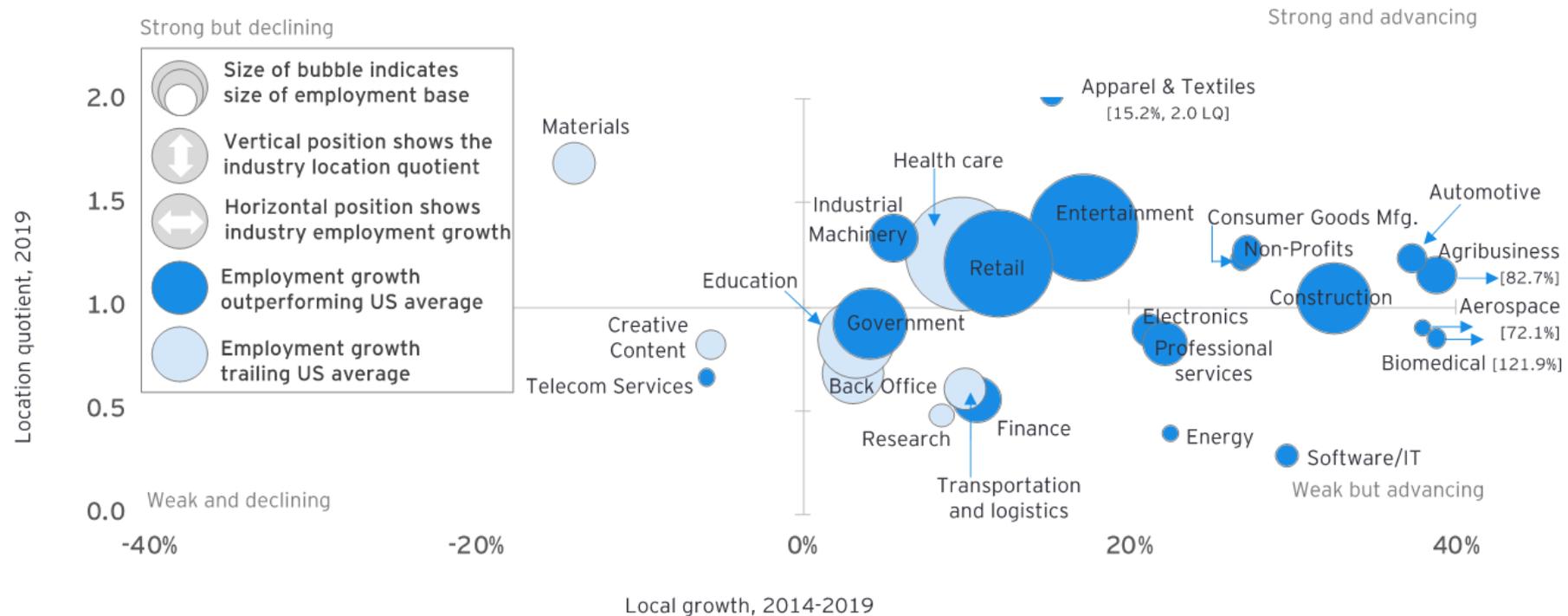
Performance:

- ▶ Nearly all industry clusters were growing (pre-pandemic)
- ▶ Pandemic recovery in Tourism, Health is underway

2020 CEDS Targets:

- ▶ Advanced Manufacturing
- ▶ Retail & Recreation
- ▶ Professional Services
- ▶ Health Care
- ▶ Government

Land of Sky region industry cluster analysis

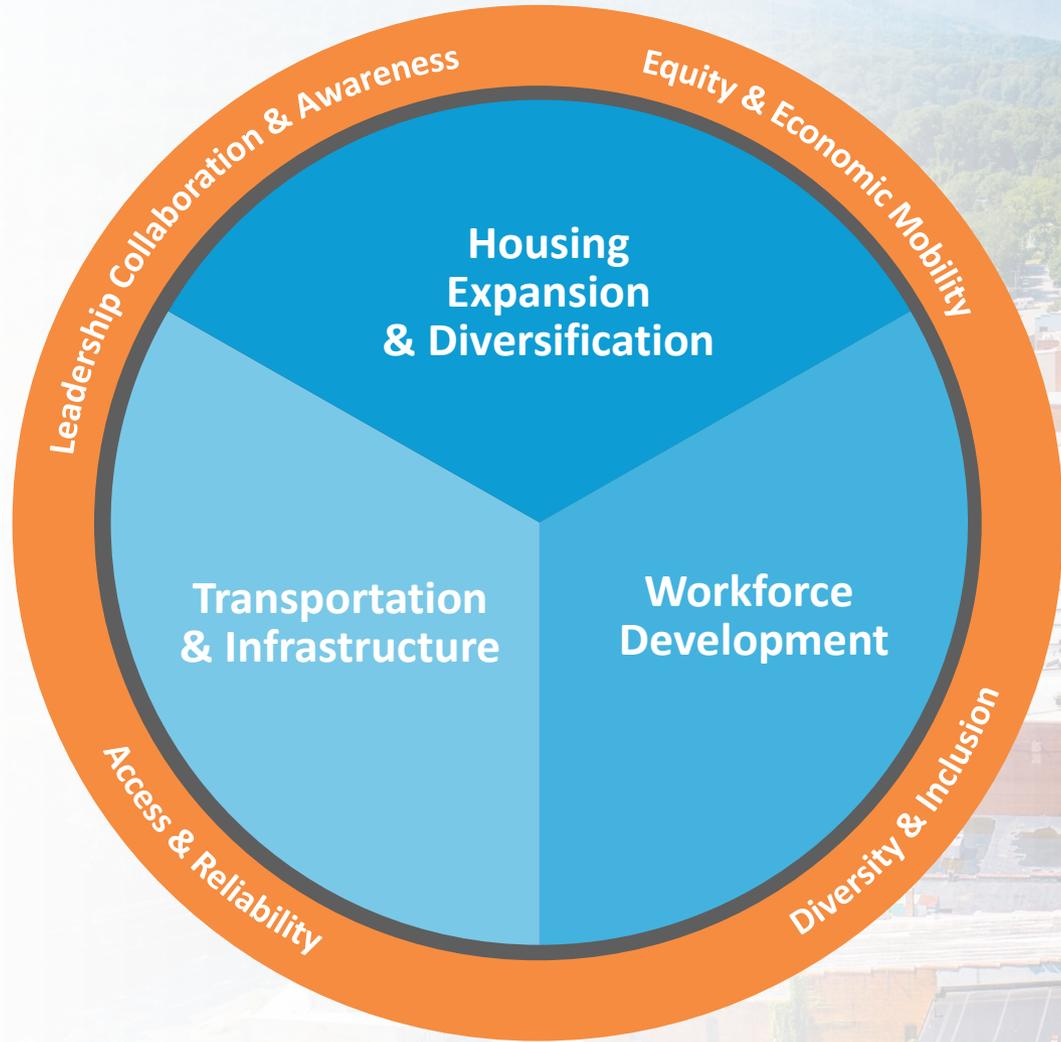


Source: EMSI (only clusters with more than 500 jobs are shown).

Refining regional target industries



Strategic framework



Chamber-led regional business council

Advancing regional alignment with enhanced private sector leader leadership



Regional Business Council overview

Volunteer leadership group consisting of **executive leaders from major employers, small business owners and entrepreneurs**. The Council would be representative of the five counties in the region and serve as a vehicle for advancing the priorities and goals outlined in the plan, especially in the areas of housing, transportation and infrastructure.

- The **area chambers will serve as organizing entities**, with LOSRC supporting as needed.
- Co-chairs could be representative of two of the region's target industries (Manufacturing, Tourism/Recreation & Retail, Health & Life Sciences, Business & Professional Services).
- Elected officials and other public sector leaders (including education and nonprofit), could be invited to join select meetings to exchange information and ideas.
- The chambers could work with the Council on convening a regional symposium on all three priorities or a series of events that cover each of the topics.

Priorities, goals and initiatives



Priority: Housing expansion and diversification

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

- 1.1 Champion an integrated approach to housing and infrastructure
- 1.2 Enhance collaboration with the Dogwood Health Trust housing initiative and other established programs.
- 1.3 Explore forming a regional housing trust to strengthen investment in, and coordination of, housing development and rehabilitation.



Priority: Transportation and infrastructure improvement

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

- 2.1** Connect and expand the region's greenway and trail systems.
- 2.2** Reinforce current transportation planning and development efforts to foster enhanced connectivity for living, learning and working.
- 2.3** Expand the region's WestNGN Broadband Initiative.
- 2.4** Strengthen the region's water and sewer infrastructure with proactive planning and enhanced funding.

Priorities, goals and initiatives



Priority: Workforce development

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

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

- *WNC Innovation Park concept is referenced as an opportunity that can be integrated into workforce development alignment efforts.*

Priorities, goals and initiatives [\[More detailed\]](#)

Priority: Housing expansion and diversification



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

1.1 Champion an integrated approach to housing and infrastructure development.

- The Regional Business Council and chambers can serve as a catalyst for more collaborative planning at the intersection of these priorities.
- Publish an annual “State of the Region” report with updates on housing, infrastructure and other priorities.
- Educate the broader community on importance of investments in this area and keep a pulse on shifts in public opinion (i.e. NIMBYism).

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

- Continue to partnership with Dogwood, especially around housing research and analysis.
- Collaborate on fundraising and grant writing to fund more housing construction and support services.

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

- Review existing models of housing trust models and conduct informational interviews with program staff.
- Identify funding sources, including public (federal, state, local) and private and philanthropic.
- Educate and engage business leaders in housing expansion and diversification efforts.

Priorities, goals and initiatives [\[More detailed\]](#)

Priority: Transportation and infrastructure improvement



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

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

- Work closely with RPOs and MPOs to understand barriers to greenway and trail connectivity, and pursue funding from public (state and federal) and private/philanthropic sources.
- Leverage the Regional Business Council, LOSRC board, planning organizations and others to develop connectivity plan and timeline.
- Consider collaborating on an impact study to better assess the quantitative impact of greenways and trails on economic, quality of life/place and environment.

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

- Regional Business Council could host special workshops for brainstorming and/or design-thinking sessions to identify solutions to transportation challenges.
- Explore leading transportation and mobility frameworks and initiatives from across the country to inform regional efforts.
- Continue to collaborate on the pursuit of government funding (e.g. IJJA and NCDT).

Priorities, goals and initiatives [\[More detailed\]](#)

Priority: Transportation and infrastructure improvement (continued)



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

2.3 Expand the region's WestNGN Broadband Initiative.

- Continue working with local governments and providers to identify areas in need of broadband development.
- Partner with providers, education and workforce partners on providing digital literacy opportunities.
- Explore the removal of barriers to doing business for providers, such as simplifying permitting processes.

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

- Create a regional needs assessment for water, sewer and stormwater needs.
- Leverage the Regional Business Council and the LOSRC board to convene stakeholders with knowledge and involvement in this area to prioritize and determine feasibility of projects.
- Continue to explore federal and state funding required.

Priorities, goals and initiatives [\[More detailed\]](#)

Priority: Workforce development, attraction and retention

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

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

- Coordinate with Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, Southwestern Commission COG, education institutions and other partners to inventory target-industry aligned programs and identify gaps.
- Share findings with employers and provide feedback to workforce and education providers.
- Utilize LOSRC's P-20 Council to strengthen coordination around education attainment and employment programs.
- Collaborate with Regional Business Council to increase involvement of employers in regional workforce alignment.
- Explore opportunities to integrate these initiatives and activities into the development of the WNC Innovation Park, an initiative focused on expanding high-growth sectors in the Asheville-Brevard metro area and surrounding counties.
- Pursue Foreign Trade Zone designation for the region and assist the Asheville Airport in pursuing a Port of Entry designation to support job growth and business expansion.

Next Steps

- Support Chamber in Regional Business Leaders
- Incorporate recommendations into LOS Work & CEDS
 - Innovation Centers for High Tech & IT careers
 - Hire Housing Planner & research solutions
 - Continue to leverage funds for Infrastructure

