

## Northwest North Carolina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Alleghany, Ashe, Davie, Forsyth, Rockingham,  
Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin Counties

January 2004

*AngelouEconomics would like to thank the Economic Development Administration, the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, and the Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring this project.*

*AngelouEconomics would like to especially thank Matthew Dolge and John Robertson with the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, David Bradley with the Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce, and the 45 members of the CEDS Committee for the strong support, guidance, and insight they provided during the development of this strategy. The team would also like to thank the residents from the Northwest North Carolina region for their input. Many of the recommendations within this strategy are reflections of the ideas we received during interviews, focus groups, and surveys with local residents. Without the community's support, this strategy would not be possible.*

*The CEDS consulting team from AngelouEconomics included Angelos Angelou, Amy Holloway, Sean Garretson, Chris Engle, Nicole Urbis, Travis Warziniack, and Kristin Boyd.*

*The illustration on the cover of this strategy depicts art and craftwork created by Northwest North Carolina residents Audrey Hash-Hamm, Archie Powers, Elkland Handwerke, Delta Peterson, and Jeff and Betty Thomas.*

## Outline

---

### Project Overview

#### Executive Summary

Core Themes

Vision

Goals

Implementation

Project Priorities

### Strategies

Workforce Development

Entrepreneurship

Quality Of Life

Infrastructure and Sites

Marketing

### Appendix

Table of Strategies, Funding, Timing, and Responsibility

Metrics



**The Northwest North Carolina CEDS process was about more than developing a report. The project was designed to bring about a renaissance in the region: to transform people and organizations, changing them in heart and mind and enlarging their vision, insight, and understanding. The goal is to bring about change that is permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building.**

**AngelouEconomics thanks the CEDS Committee and the 1,400 residents and businesses that contributed to this strategy. This is a plan that incorporates the bold vision of the people of Northwest North Carolina and builds upon the positive transformation that has already begun to take place in the region.**

## **Project Overview**

In December 2002, AngelouEconomics was hired by the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments and the Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Northwest North Carolina. The purpose of the project, funded by the Economic Development Administration department of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is to develop a strategic plan for the region that will attract new investment, businesses, and jobs to the counties of Northwest North Carolina. The study includes eight counties in North Carolina: Alleghany, Ashe, Davie, Forsyth, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin.

The strategic planning process began with thorough research and analysis of the region. In addition to data collection, AngelouEconomics conducted interviews and focus groups with hundreds of individuals and businesses in Northwest North Carolina. In addition, the consulting team developed and administered a survey asking participants to rank the strengths and weaknesses of the area. Including the 1,400 people who responded to the survey, more than 2,000 NWNC residents and business owners provided their input on this project. The analysis and recommendations within the CEDS reports were formulated on this public input and as well as AE's analysis.

Following the public input process, AngelouEconomics developed the first report of the project, the *Economic and Demographic Assessment*, which reviews the current economic conditions within each county and the region. Based on the results of public input and the findings of the *Economic Assessment*, AngelouEconomics developed the second report of the project – the *SWOT Analysis*. This report highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each county in five broad categories: economic development efforts; workforce development and education; business climate; sites and infrastructure; and quality of life.

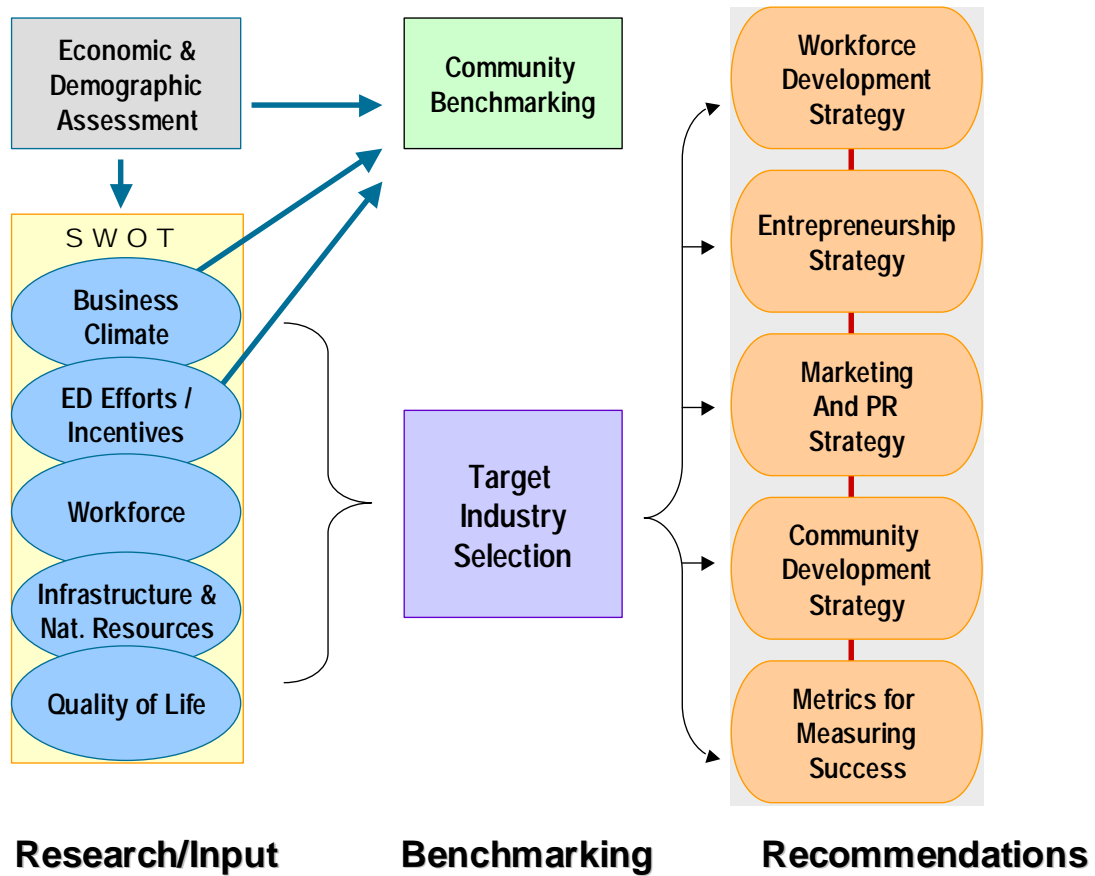
In the third report, *Target Industries*, AngelouEconomics recommends specific industries around which economic development efforts in Northwest North Carolina and each county should be focused. The report contains profiles of each target industry, highlighting information about trends, site selection requirements, and the “fit” of each industry within Northwest North Carolina.

The Target Industries report was followed with a *Benchmarking* report containing a description of the economic development and marketing efforts of 13 communities across the U.S. The *Benchmarking* report is designed to provide Northwest North Carolina leaders creative ideas from communities that have been successful in economic development.

This document, the *Economic Development Strategy*, is the final report of the CEDS project. It represents the culmination of 11 months of analysis, public input, and idea generation from the CEDS Committee, consulting team, and the residents and businesses of the region. This report is designed to provide Northwest North Carolina leaders a five-year plan for economic development activities. In combination with the other reports, Northwest North Carolina now has not only a plan of action, but also a toolkit of information about the community, national best practices, and industry information, equipping the community to pursue new investment.

All of the reports and presentations developed during this process are available on the Web site, [www.NorthwestNC.com](http://www.NorthwestNC.com).

### Project Process Diagram



## ***Executive Summary***

***Northwest North Carolina's economic development efforts have reached a critical juncture.*** The region has suffered significant economic downturn during the past ten years. The U.S. transition away from manufacturing employment has been particularly hard on Northwest North Carolina – whose mainstay has historically been in the textiles, furniture, and tobacco industries. The region's future now points in a new direction.

Northwest North Carolina leaders can take one of two paths. Should the region rest complacent with its current situation, job loss will continue and social disparity will increase, making it even more difficult to bring in new investment in the future. Alternatively, should Northwest North Carolina's leaders acknowledge economic problems and vow to strengthen collaborative economic development activities at the local and regional levels, the situation can be reversed and positive change can start to take place.

This is a choice that Northwest North Carolina's leaders must make. This document maps out a strategy for taking aggressive action to remedy the current economic problems that the region faces. It calls for all Northwest North Carolina residents to proactively work to change economic conditions. ***All Northwest North Carolina leadership organizations must agree to an unprecedented level of cooperation with one another and a unified focus on economic development.***

### **The Challenge**

In the past, Northwest North Carolina's economic development efforts have struggled with several challenges. First, local economic development efforts have been segmented along jurisdictional lines and have not been coordinated at the regional (sometimes county) level. Second, in several Northwest North Carolina counties, economic development budgets have been cut while the loss of jobs at major employers has reached record proportions. Third, though several previous economic development plans have been commissioned within the region, there is little evidence that they have been implemented or resulted in a regional vision for economic development.

Regional economic development activities in Northwest North Carolina must also include Guilford County. Although Guilford County was not a part of the CEDS study area (the study area was determined by congressional district boundaries), many of the recommendations in this report will affect Greensboro and High Point. Because of their proximity to the CEDS area, smart economic development decisions and successful investment within Northwest North Carolina will also impact Greensboro and High Point. Employers locating in Northwest North Carolina will consider the workforce skills, infrastructure, and quality of life amenities available in Greensboro and High Point when making their site selection decisions. When marketing nationally and internationally, it will be important for both Guilford County and Northwest North Carolina to include information about each other and sell the entire region rather than a single county or site.

### **What makes Northwest North Carolina unique?**

This strategy proposes a national economic development campaign in which Northwest North Carolina aggressively competes for new investment. In addition to the many recommendations related to internal community improvements, this plan also calls for an external marketing campaign for the entire region. It is critical that Northwest North Carolina increase awareness of the region as a place to do business. It is also important that the new marketing initiative convey a fresh face for the region – one that shows the region’s core talents are far beyond textiles and tobacco.

The strongest economic development initiatives in the U.S. communicate the aspects of the community that are truly unique, traits that differentiate a region from any other in the marketplace. This CEDS process sought early on to identify the region’s traits and core values. **Northwest North Carolina’s history is based in the tradition of manufacturing. But within that manufacturing sector, we found a workforce whose talents lie in their ability to conceptualize a product and build it. This union of concept and construct is what makes Northwest North Carolina unique. In spirit, it is a region of “design.”**

Design touches many fields of business across Northwest North Carolina – from engineering to software development to fine crafts. Design activities are found within the biotechnology industry – a field in which scientists and engineers apply “biological knowledge and techniques to develop products.” Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center and the Greater Winston Chamber of Commerce have launched an aggressive biotechnology initiative that promises significant economic impacts for the region. The initiative has been bolstered by the development of the Piedmont Triad Research Park. In the past month, the initiative gained enormous momentum when Wake Forest recruited an internationally recognized leader in tissue engineering and his team of 20 research scientists, engineers, and physicians to the Medical Center. This, in combination with Wake Forest’s recent recruitment of 15 nanotechnology researchers from Clemson University, has helped the region take a tremendous step forward in the field of high tech design and development.

Design activities are also found in Northwest North Carolina’s tradition of arts and fine craft, for example. The region is internationally recognized as the center of American fine crafts. Fine craft encompasses handmade objects that are either useful in daily life (pottery, clothing, or jewelry) or used to ornament our lives (sculptures, wall hangings, and decorative objects). Every county in Northwest North Carolina is home to artists and crafts workers. Within this strategy, we recommend workforce training programs that help displaced workers who are used to working with their hands in a manufacturing environment to apply those skills to the design of new, locally produced handmade objects.

Science and fine craft represent just two of the many industries in Northwest North Carolina that employ design. Design is the common thread that links almost all Northwest North Carolina businesses together. It is the region’s most distinguishing characteristic. For these reasons, we recommend that “design” be utilized as the core marketing theme for the region. Within this marketing campaign, the region should tout its tremendous applications of design – from the Piedmont Triad Research Park and

Medical Center to activities at the North Carolina School of the Arts to individual, entrepreneurial fine craft workers.

### **The Future**

Northwest North Carolina has tremendous qualities that – if built upon and promoted at the regional level – can strongly compete for high impact businesses and continued tourism growth. The region contains rich cultural, recreational, economic, and educational assets. The region has the talent, experience, and spirit of innovation desired by high impact businesses. This plan strongly points out that entrepreneurship and small business growth will drive economic development in the future. The region has a history of successful entrepreneurs. North Carolina was home to self-made success stories. Almost every one of the region's large employers was founded by Northwest North Carolina families two or three generations ago.

Imagine a future in Northwest North Carolina that is filled with new opportunities, one in which the region's indigenous design skills open the doors to new, diverse fields of engineering, life sciences, industrial design, software development, electronics design, teaching and training, graphic design, computer animation, and fine crafts. Imagine the entrepreneurial strength that lies at the core of these industry applications.

It is time to look optimistically to the future and be willing to be bold. Business and government leaders must be active supporters of economic development as the region's primary tool for revitalizing the economy. Many good efforts are already in place. This plan calls for a closer coordination of existing efforts across the region and identifies new initiatives that will further fuel Northwest North Carolina's economic recovery.

## Core Themes

Several themes have emerged during this project that provide direction and justification for regional Strategies. These themes are apparent throughout this strategy, interlaced throughout all recommendations.

- NWNC is in the middle of an economic transition. It is more important than ever before to invest in strengthening the core of the communities, including leadership, education, and urban revitalization.
- External marketing and business recruitment will be made easier long-term if internal investment is concentrated on today. Investments in local schools, businesses, downtown, and quality of life need to take place now to lay the foundation for future economic growth.
- The ability to attract and retain quality workers is of equal importance as the ability to recruit new companies.
- Entrepreneurship and small business growth will drive economic growth in the future.
- The tradition of design in NWNC differentiates the area. Design-oriented activities will help NWNC transition from traditional manufacturing into the industries of the future.
- Local leaders must strongly commit to economic development, both in policy making and resource allocation, to reach long-term goals.
- Reducing disparity throughout region will ultimately lead to more interest in the region from business prospects.

## Vision

*Northwest North Carolina is a beautiful region comprised of diverse communities who collaborate to create a region of thriving downtowns, superior technology, a talented workforce, diverse corporations and small business, and infrastructure to support business and tourism growth.*

## Goals

The economic development strategy contains recommendations that will increase Northwest North Carolina's opportunities for attracting new investment from its target industries and other high impact businesses. AE has identified five goals for regional economic development efforts. Each goal relates to each section of this plan. These goals are the same for each county in the 8-county area. They are:

- Goal One: **Workforce development and education** programs are focused on preparing a workforce for Northwest North Carolina's target industries.
- Goal Two: **Entrepreneurship** and small business growth are significant drivers of the Northwest North Carolina economy.

- Goal Three: Northwest North Carolina offers a place for its residents to **live, play, and work** and the region is an appealing place to live for young professionals and individuals employed by **target industry companies**.
- Goal Four: Northwest North Carolina's **sites and infrastructure** meet the needs of target industries and a growing population.
- Goal Five: Northwest North Carolina is engaged in a proactive, targeted **marketing** campaign.

### **Implementation**

AE recommends that the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments (NWPCOG) is the lead organization for coordinating implementation. Although Alleghany and Ashe are not part of the NWPCOG region, AE would recommend that these two counties continue to participate in regional strategy implementation with this COG.

Other regional organizations will have a significant role in implementing this strategy (e.g., the Winston-Salem Alliance, Piedmont Triad Partnership, Advantage West, High Country Host, and Triad Entrepreneur Initiative), but the NWPCOG should be the primary entity responsible for convening meetings, disseminating information, assisting local governments with grant writing and other facilitative and technical initiatives to support the regional economic development efforts.

The CEDS committee should continue to operate through the NWPCOG for a minimum of five years to realize the impact of the strategies that are contained within this plan. Ongoing communication about the implementation process and idea sharing should occur through a collaboration Web site. We have recommended this Web site as one of the region's priority projects.

Upon approval of the final CEDS, the CEDS Committee should convene a meeting to discuss the implementation of this plan. A facilitator should be used for this meeting, and the outcome of the meeting should be to gain consensus on the organizational strategy and resource allocation for implementation.

## ***Regional Priorities***

Seven priority projects have been identified that are critical to jump starting economic development in Northwest North Carolina. These projects, as well as others recommended throughout this report, may require resources that the region does not currently have. For these projects, we have suggested possible outside funding sources. We have recommended the formation of a Grants Team that will assist all Northwest North Carolina counties with pursuing government and private foundation funding.

Other projects recommended in this report will require internal investment. They call for the entire community to assume a role in economic development. Throughout this strategic planning process, Northwest North Carolina's leaders have proven that they are committed to economic development. Improving the economic health of the county will require work from all sectors of the community. This plan contains ideas for enhancing and creating new volunteer initiatives that have the potential for making enormous change in the region.

This plan is a roadmap for the region to use that will lead to a sustained, healthy economy. However, when resources are scarce within the region or at the state and federal level, the following prioritized project list will assist the region in directing resources to the most critical needs and to areas that will have the biggest impact in the region (details for each regional priority projects follow this bulleted list):

- **Create a National Design Institute and Design Collaborative**
- **Continue to develop and support the Piedmont Triad Research Park (PTRP)**
- **Complete construction of I-73 / I-74**
- **Supply utility infrastructure to the Highway 421 / I-77 Intersection**
- **Launch strong regional internal and external marketing efforts**
- **Develop a Virtual Arts Market to sell Northwest North Carolina arts and fine craft to national and international markets**
- **Establish a regional Grants Team**
- **Create an on-line CEDS implementation tool**
- **Develop a Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CARTS)**

### **1. Create a National Design Institute and Design Collaborative**

Design industries and design themes are central to the regional and county strategies that AE has provided to NWNC. By developing a National Design Institute, the region will be able to gain national and worldwide recognition as a region rich in design skills. This novel concept embodies the spirit of a research institution or national laboratory but with a focus on education and innovation in design. It will bring together experts in biotechnology design, software design, and artistic design to work jointly on solving problems of national significance. It would illustrate to the world that the essence of design skills apply to many disciplines and help NWNC

draw internationally renowned designers to the region for study, business, and conferences.

The Institute would be home to a regional Design Collaborative, a membership organization comprised of top design talent in the region. The design collaborative will help design professionals network, learn, and connect to new business opportunities. The goal of the Collaborate should be to ensure that every product manufactured in NWNC is originally designed in NWNC.

**Cost estimate:** \$1.5 million

**Potential funding sources:** EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC

**Timing:** Obtain funding in 2004/2005 and begin developing

2. **Piedmont Triad Research Park (PTRP).** This park will undoubtedly have one of the biggest impacts in the region, not only in terms of wealth generation, but also job creation. As startups grow in size within the park, these businesses will seek space within Forsyth County and throughout the region for expansion.

The mission of the PTRP is to promote academic, industry, and government collaboration to grow and sustain the region's core science in the areas of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, nutrition, medical devices-instruments, imaging, and information technologies. The scope of technology development at PTRP is balanced to diversify economic trends in any given area.

Plans have been developed to increase the size and effectiveness of the park. The incredible transformations taking place at PTRP today - led by Wake Forest University Health Sciences and the Idealliance - will create 5.7 million gross square feet of developed space, reclaiming 200 acres of Winston-Salem's downtown core. It is an ambitious and well-thought out framework for redevelopment that will stimulate 62 acres of infrastructure improvements including new roads and road surface improvements, the relocation of railway tracks, bridges, new utilities and utility upgrades.

PTRP and Idealliance have accomplished a great deal in a very short period of time. Since its establishment in 1996, PTRP now has four buildings (342,240 square feet) and 20 companies, with university and corporate employees totaling 368. Economic change has begun.

On August 13, 2002 the park announced a major expansion with the acquisition of an additional 180 acres in downtown Winston-Salem led by Wake Forest University Health Sciences in developing its biomedical research campus in PTRP. **This expansion to take place over the next thirty years to full development will require large capital investments by the private and public sectors.** The first phase of the expansion development will require \$12 million to \$15 million investment in new and improved roads (\$2.5 million), building demolition (\$2.2 million), power line relocation (\$2.8 million), railroad relocation (\$1.5 million), railroad

bridge-road extension (\$1 million), landscaping (\$1 million), and First Street bridge (\$500,000). Land acquisition will cost \$22 million. (Costs are subject to change as construction bids have not yet been requested.)

However, one of **the most immediate needs is to develop affordable lab space to grow new bio-medical companies at PTRP**. This is a capital-intensive industry with cost pressure on the development process in a market that has not recently been favorable. Therefore, in addition to the above capital costs, PTRP needs **low cost lab space** available to start-up companies. Capital to up-fit a lab can cost in a range of \$300 per foot with clean rooms at \$1,000 per foot. A shell building can cost from \$50 per foot to \$90 per foot. We estimate that a 45,000 square foot office/lab building could cost approximately **\$10 to \$16 million dollars**.

Grants for building cost and/or lab up-fits would reduce PTRP's overall cost, thus reducing the lease cost to the start-up company. PTRP, Idealliance, and Wake Forest University should apply for an EDA grant (and other Federal, State, and foundation support) to fund future improvements to PTRP. *This would be similar to EDA's support for life science development in other states such as the Fitzsimmons Redevelopment Authority in Aurora, Colorado, at which funds were used to build and up-fit a biotech building.*

**Cost estimate:** \$20 million (lab space and other infrastructure assistance)

**Potential funding sources:** EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, other

**Timing:** Obtain funding in 2004/2005 and begin developing lab space in 2006

- 3. Construction of I-73 / I-74.** This highway project has been on the drawing board for several years. It will connect, via a major interstate, Virginia to South Carolina, and traverses through Rockingham and Forsyth Counties, along the proposed FedEx location at the Greensboro-Winston-Salem International Airport. This project will not only improve accessibility to and throughout the region, but it will also provide a better distribution network for the FedEx operation and various supporting industries.

**Cost estimate:** Funding is earmarked, but needs to become higher priority project.

**Potential funding source:** Federal and State Departments of Transportation

**Timing:** Start strong, regional lobbying efforts to State and Federal Departments of Transportation in 2004; Goal, to have project approved and construction started in 2008

- 4. Regional Internal and External Marketing.** This non-infrastructure priority project is possibly the most important project of all. The regional marketing recommendations contained in this report and in a separate *Marketing Guide* report, detail the strategies for both internal and external marketing.

Funding for initiatives that improve internal, regional communication between economic development organizations needs to be obtained as soon as possible. Not only does the implementation of this strategy depend on improved communication, but many of CEDS recommendations require a mechanism to efficiently distribute information to all Northwest North Carolina residents. Specifically, internal campaigns have been recommended that communicate the value of education, successful economic development efforts, and information about entrepreneurship. These three key areas are among the most critical issues that have arisen during the course of this study and ones that, if addressed, will bring the most return on investment to the region.

After internal marketing initiatives are successfully put into action, Northwest North Carolina must launch an external marketing campaign aimed at increasing awareness of the region in the minds of its target audiences.

The region should hold an annual economic development forecast event that will allow each county in the region (and include counties not part of this study who comprise an economic region) to market their communities, learn from each others experiences, and focus on implementation successes.

**Cost estimate:** *Approximately \$100,000 per year for first two years and \$220,000 per year for following years to launch and maintain external marketing campaign for the region.*

**Potential funding source:** *Municipal support, Private Sector donations, Additional revenue sources such as revenue from sales from the Virtual Arts Market)*

**Timing:** *Internal marketing begins in 2004; External campaign is fully started in 2006*

- 5. Regional Grants Team.** A critical need exists to develop a capacity in the region to research, write, and administer grants. The Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in Raleigh serves in this capacity for that region in North Carolina, but this critical link is missing in the NWNC region. The NWPCOG already provides ad hoc grant research and writing for its member municipalities, but a better funded and full time grants team will help all Northwest North Carolina counties identify funding sources and apply for funds that contribute to implementing the recommendations in this strategy.

AE recommends that the NWPCOG seek funding to pay for three full-time staff of experienced grant researchers, writers, and administrators. Through administration fees, this could become a self-sustaining aspect of the COG, but start-up funding is needed to help initiate this effort. Eventually, this program could develop into something similar to the RTI to support university as well as municipal needs.

**Cost estimate:** \$500,000 (over 3 years)

**Potential funding source:** EDA, NWPCOG, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, Other foundations, Other state or federal sources

**Timing:** Staff positions in mid-2004

6. **Virtual Arts Market.** One of the top priorities for the region is to generate a national and international recognition of the region (see the Marketing Strategy section at the end of this report). An online market (similar to Ebay © in how transactions occur) that promotes only quality products that are made in the region would bring recognition to the region as an arts and crafts center for the U.S. This has tremendous potential as a private sector initiative, but should be started with the public sector (e.g., NWPCOG with a team from the CEDS Committee) developing the framework and contracting it to a private entity for profit. Some of the benefits include:

- Builds a regional brand and product recognition
- Expands the market for local artists and crafts workers
- Increases sales and sales tax to the region
- Generates a spillover effect for support businesses, including shipping, insurance, finance, and information technology

The NWPCOG and the CEDS Committee should work with a select group of premier information technology professionals to develop the infrastructure to support such a system. The Committee can then “lease” the concept to a private entity who will run the system, in exchange for return profit that will go to support regional marketing efforts.

**Cost estimate:** \$1-1.5 million

**Potential funding source:** National Arts Council, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, Foundations,

**Timing:** Seek funding in 2004; Launch site in 2005/2006

7. **Infrastructure to Hwy 421 / I77 Intersection.** This intersection is a very visible and potentially lucrative intersection, but it currently lacks water and wastewater utility infrastructure. It is located in Yadkin County (see *Yadkin County Economic Development Strategy* report) and that county, along with other municipalities, have undertaken a preliminary engineering study to determine feasibility and cost. If infrastructure were available to this site, private development could impact several counties in the region, creating job opportunities and increasing sales and property tax revenues. In addition to the utility needs, some additional assistance with modifications of the road interchanges to support the business growth may also be

necessary, but these needs are not yet identified.

**Cost estimate:** *\$4.6 million is needed to serve utility needs. An additional amount of funding (estimated to be \$600,000) is needed for modifications to the road interchanges.*

**Potential funding source:** *EPA, USDA, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, Foundations*

**Timing:** *Seek funding in 2005; Implement in 2006 and onward*

**8. Creation of an on-line CEDS implementation tool.** Web technologies offer the best solution to serve a large geographic area comprised of multiple economic development directors, community stakeholders, and interested citizens. AE recommends that the COG spearhead the development of a Web Portal that will enable:

- Members to post news on their community
- Scheduling of county or regional events
- Discussion groups on specific topics (e.g., downtown development, arts, biotechnology)
- Private correspondence between local officials
- A central knowledgebase of reports, data, and ideas for use by all

This Web Portal will allow stakeholders to “stay connected” on their own time, without requiring regular meetings (which can be difficult for such a large area). While this Portal could be opened to the public, some areas will be password protected and restricted to official use only.

The continued communication among project participants will best enable the successful implementation of these strategies.

**Cost estimate:** *\$50,000 - \$65,000*

**Potential funding source:** *NWPCOG and Northwest North Carolina counties, EDA*

**Timing:** *Upon adoption of the CEDS*

**9. Develop a Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CARTS)**

The Center for Advanced Research and Technology ([CART](#)) is the most comprehensive, state-of-the-art education reform effort at the secondary level to

date. The CART combines rigorous academics with technical, design, process, entrepreneurial, and critical thinking skills. AE recommends that the Region develop similar programs as this Fresno-based initiative throughout the region to improve high schools and entrepreneur initiatives.

The 75,000 square foot CART facility, designed as a high performance business atmosphere, is organized around four career clusters. They are [Professional Sciences](#), [Engineering](#), [Advanced Communications](#), and [Global Economics](#). Within each cluster are several career-specific laboratories in which students complete industry-based projects and receive academic credit for advanced English, science, math, and technology.

Eleventh and twelfth grade students from the Clovis and Fresno Unified School Districts are bused to CART where they attend half-day classes in one of the laboratories taught by teams of instructors from both education and business. The partnership between the school districts is a unique opportunity to make systemic change in education and positively influence the future of all students in the San Joaquin Valley, a rapidly expanding economic area for high-tech business and agricultural firms.

CART provides a state-of-the-art research and technology facility where students design and complete projects in collaboration with partners from the local, national, and international business community. Through learning plans, individualized attention, and a coordinated sequence of projects, CART students explore the variety of ways they can achieve their career goals. Working with business partners, teachers, and parents, students design a program of study that qualifies them to pursue the post-secondary path of their choice from entry-level positions to industry certification to university admission. With the knowledge, skills, and support they receive, students leave CART ready to launch their careers.

CART began with the development of a [foundation](#), a non-profit arm for the Center that could receive donations and grants. However, a majority of their funding is from business partners who receive technical assistance from students at CART.

<b>Cost estimate:</b>	<i>\$1-2 million</i>
<b>Potential funding source:</b>	<i>EDA, NC School Partners, US Department of Education, Foundations, Private Contributors</i>
<b>Timing:</b>	<i>This initiative should be researched beginning in 2004. Projects throughout the region should be identified in late 2004, and potential funding agencies and investors should be identified in 2005/6.</i>

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

**GOAL: Workforce development and education programs are focused on preparing a workforce for the region’s target industries.**

All counties in Northwest North Carolina are in economic transition, with many workers unemployed and home to aging workers who have inappropriate skills for future high wage, high impact employers. This problem presents the region with a tremendous opportunity: to start fresh and re-tune all workforce development and educational programs on preparing a workforce that meets the needs of its target industries. To meet this goal, it is imperative that investment in education and workforce development becomes a top priority for all counties.

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, attitudes in the South about workforce development and education reflected a limited vision of business development – relying on low-skill, low-wage, and low-value-added industries. Many of these traditional manufacturing industries are no longer providing jobs in the region, thus underlining the importance of changing the regional perspective on education and workforce. Education and workforce training must be the top priority for the region.

During this 10-month planning process, AE conducted interviews, focus groups, and surveys with nearly 2,000 people in Northwest North Carolina. This input revealed several concerns shared by many residents across the region. First, in every county, increasing “job availability” and “career advancement” opportunities ranked on the top of the list of issues in which the region needs improvement. Second, residents closely connected social disparity to the plight of economic development. Focus group participants strongly urged us to include ideas for improving access to workforce development and education for those individuals suffering the worst economic hardship. Finally, many participants requested that this strategy make improved workforce development its top priority for the region.

Reinvigorating Northwest North Carolina’s workforce will require patience. In some Northwest North Carolina counties, educational attainment is nearly ½ of the national average. The re-education and shifting skill sets away from traditional manufacturing could take a decade or longer. To begin this long-term process, Northwest North Carolina must put into place the tools that will help the adult workforce update their skills and provide local K-12 students with the best, most innovative schools. To encourage displaced workers to use workforce services, they must be convenient and set in a comfortable environment. Knowledge about workforce services should be disseminated through internal awareness campaign.

Northwest North Carolina’s leaders must commit to a long-term, continuous improvement in workforce skills. This commitment should center on four strategies:

- (1) Ensuring that K-12 education is as strong as possible**
- (2) Adopting programs that improve adult education for workers in transition that have not received a high school degree or who need to update their skills to prepare for new job opportunities**
- (3) Enhancing programs at community colleges and workforce service providers that help workers transition into target industry occupations**
- (4) Developing workforce programs geared towards Hispanic population**

In the following pages, we have provided specific action steps, an estimated budget, and timing to help the region complete these strategies.

### **Workforce Strategy 1: Ensure K-12 education is as strong as possible.**

Basic education should be considered the foundation of successful economic development. Those regions across the U.S. who have invested in basic education are also the most successful in growing high tech, high wage employers. The two go hand-in-hand.

Northwest North Carolina has suffered significant job lay offs and economic decline in the past decade. Before an aggressive external economic development campaign is launched, it is essential that all NWNC counties invest in the core of their communities: K-12 education, the revitalization of their downtowns, and infrastructure that supports new economy businesses. This investment will have much greater pay off long term by helping each county retain its current employers and high skilled workers, as well as renew a positive spirit across the community. Businesses in the target industries that have been recommended by AE demand that the best possible K-12 education system and workforce training programs are in place that are preparing the workforce to succeed in targeted industry businesses. This ensures that they will be able to recruit and retain young professionals who demand that their children receive excellent education. It also shows them that the community is willing to invest in itself, its future, and therefore will support them into the future.

**Action 1: Inform students, teachers, and parents of post-graduation options other than college. These programs will help keep graduates in the county, fill workforce needs and keep students from dropping out of high school.**

- Early in high school, identify students who may be interested in a different track other than college. A good example is the Mountain Empire Community College's Talent Search Program. This program helps 12-18 year old students from low-income families define career and educational goals. Students set long-term career and educational goals in the beginning of the program, and then work with educators to monitor their progress.

- Track these students into apprenticeship programs for occupations that are growing but currently not being pursued (construction trades such as plumbing and electrical installation, for example).
- Over time, develop a Web site and printed information package containing resources for non-university bound youth. The Web site and package should contain information about non-college options, links with training organizations, apprenticeship programs, and the community college. The Web site could also contain job postings. Promote the Web site on junior high school and high school campuses.
- Ensure all Northwest North Carolina high schools currently have or plan to establish General Prep and Vocational Prep courses of study.
- Promote the resources of the Community Colleges in all high schools.

*Funding: To be determined*

*Timing: Work should begin in 2004. New school programs will take 4-5 years to initiate.*

## **Action 2: Develop a Center for Advanced Research and Technology**

The Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) is the most comprehensive, state-of-the-art education reform effort at the secondary level to date. The CART combines rigorous academics with technical, design, process, entrepreneurial, and critical thinking skills. AE recommends that the Region develop similar programs as this Fresno-based initiative throughout the region to improve high schools and entrepreneur initiatives.

The 75,000 square foot CART facility, designed as a high performance business atmosphere, is organized around four career clusters. They are [Professional Sciences](#), [Engineering](#), [Advanced Communications](#), and [Global Economics](#). Within each cluster are several career-specific laboratories in which students complete industry-based projects and receive academic credit for advanced English, science, math, and technology.

Eleventh and twelfth grade students from the Clovis and Fresno Unified School Districts are bused to CART where they attend half-day classes in one of the laboratories taught by teams of instructors from both education and business. The partnership between the school districts is a unique opportunity to make systemic change in education and positively influence the future of all students in the San Joaquin Valley, a rapidly expanding economic area for high-tech business and agricultural firms.

CART provides a state-of-the-art research and technology facility where students design and complete projects in collaboration with partners from the local, national, and international business community. Through learning plans, individualized attention, and a coordinated sequence of projects, CART students explore the variety of ways they can achieve their career goals. Working with

business partners, teachers, and parents, students design a program of study that qualifies them to pursue the post-secondary path of their choice from entry-level positions to industry certification to university admission. With the knowledge, skills, and support they receive, students leave CART ready to launch their careers.

CART began with the development of a Foundation, a non-profit arm for the Center that could receive donations and grants. However, a majority of their funding is from business partners who receive technical assistance from students at CART.

*Funding: \$1-2 million; Potential funding sources include: EDA, NC School Partners, US Department of Education, Foundations, Private Contributors*

*Timing: This initiative should be researched beginning in 2004. Projects throughout the region should be identified in late 2004, and potential funding agencies and investors should be identified in 2005/6.*

### **Action 3: Invest in technological infrastructure within schools.**

- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation \$11 million grant recently awarded to the State of North Carolina. This is the first part of North Carolina's \$30 million initiative to create more than 40 redesigned high schools throughout the state. The region should attempt to be a recipient of a portion of these funds.
- All Northwest North Carolina counties should invite student teams to help school officials brainstorm about the type of technological infrastructure they would like to see in their schools. Students can, for example, help school officials and teachers envision what an ideal computer laboratory would look like. This will help school officials plan facilities that are tuned into student needs while empowering students.
- Adopt a take home computer program. In this program, Northwest North Carolina schools would lend computers to parents for 4-6 weeks at a time. To be eligible for the program, parents should be required to take an orientation workshop that teaches them the basics of operating a computer, common software packages, and using the Internet.
- Over time, create WI-FI networks on all Community College and high school campuses in Northwest North Carolina.
- Re-evaluate arts programs and classes in K-12 education. Incorporate design-oriented activities into these programs. For example, arts training for elementary school children could include a segment on the rules of good design. As children progress through school, introduce computer-aided design, graphic design, and animation, for example.

*Funding: To be determined (sources from private sector, Community Colleges, ISDs, Counties, Cities, Foundations)*

*Timing:* Work should begin in 2005. Initiatives may take 3-5 years to complete.

**Action 4: Develop Adopt-A-School Programs in every school in the region.**

- Adopt-a-School programs match local companies or “partners” with a school or school district program of their choice. The partner adopts the school by providing volunteer services, in-kind contributions, and cash donations. Adopt-a-School programs are typically organized by a local chamber of commerce and school district.
- Develop a model program for every school district in Northwest North Carolina to support and utilize. The School Business Partners program through Leadership Winston-Salem could be replicated as a model to use in the region. Winston Salem also has an adopt-a-classroom program in which a business or individual can donate \$500 to adopt a classroom of their choice.
- Austin, Texas’ Partners in Education offers a good example of a successful Adopt-a-School program. In its 16-year history, Partners in Education provided more than \$52 million in donations of time and financial resources to Austin schools. In 1998-99, the program generated about \$7 million in contributed resources, a \$90-per-student return on investment versus a cost of \$5 per student.

*Funding:* Funding for the program requires volunteer time and donations from local companies.

*Timing:* Establish adopt-a-school programs in all Northwest North Carolina counties by 2006.

**Workforce Strategy 2:**

**Adopt programs that improve adult education for workers in transition that have not received a high school degree or who need to update their skills to prepare for new job opportunities.**

Workforce training programs need to be holistic, encompassing not just formal education and skill development but also healthcare, affordable housing, transportation, daycare, and a monthly stipend. To effectively transition displaced workers into target industries, coordinating workforce development programs with these other types of services will yield the most positive results.

**Action 1: Examine initiatives of other communities for ideas on innovative new programs for Ashe County. Good examples include:**

- **Project STRIVE.** The intensive, three-week STRIVE program develops skills for job seeking and job readiness. It helps people in need of finding a job gain skills for workforce behavior, appearance, and attitude through programs such as: group interaction, interviewing, and telephone usage. Many of Project STRIVE's participants have severe financial or personal difficulties and do not have time to enter a vocational training program. Project STRIVE helps these people acquire jobs quickly so they can get back on their feet.
- **Danville Community College in Virginia.** After a careful assessment of who utilized the college and who did not, Danville Community College established four Neighborhood Educational Opportunity centers that provide GED, computer literacy, and continuing education courses for underserved populations. Through the centers, residents have access to education, job training and placement, neighborhood revitalization work, economic development assistance, and leadership development activities for youth and adults.
- **Southeastern Community College (WCC) in Whiteville, North Carolina.** WCC in collaboration with the Columbus County Partnership for Children, Columbus County Schools, and Four County Community Services offers a Family Literacy Program. In this program, parents and children go to school together. Parents can improve upon their own basic education skills and then actively participate in teaching their children.

**Action 2: Identify the best program(s) for Northwest North Carolina. Seek funding for program development**

- Although there are some federal and state funds to support some of this, philanthropic funds would be more flexible to use. The most successful programs (such as HOPE) are community-based approaches.

**Action 3: Inform the community that these programs are available.**

- Encourage people in need to participate, and ensure that all leadership and economic development professionals fully understand the new workforce program delivery at all levels so that they can talk intelligently about these programs in their business development and expansion efforts.
- Include a brief discussion of how a community-wide informational program is needed to funnel these, often hesitant, older workers into new vocational programs. The reason they have not worked in the past is because these workers were forced back into a traditional educational environment in which they did not feel comfortable.
- Include details about where and how to distribute information throughout the community (e.g. libraries, churches, chambers, employers, local media).

*Funding: To be determined*

*Timing: Ongoing starting in 2004*

**Workforce Strategy 3:  
Create and enhance programs at all Community Colleges that help workers transition into target industry occupations.**

The following chart illustrates the target industries that have been recommended by AE for Northwest North Carolina. Each county has in their respective county strategy reports, a summary of those skills that are currently being addressed for these target industries. The Workforce Development Boards located in Northwest North Carolina should work with each county’s community college in adopting and enhancing curricula that help the region improve its ability to meet the demands of these industries:

	Logistics, Distribution	Biotech	Design	Materials	Transportation Equipment	Food Processing	Value-Added Agriculture	Hospitality
Alleghany			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Ashe			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Davie	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Forsyth	✓	✓	✓					✓
Rockingham	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stokes			✓	✓			✓	✓
Surry		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Yadkin	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Action 1: The Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development Board and the High County Workforce Development Board should work with each NWNC county’s community college to adopt and enhance curricula that prepare residents for target industries.**

- The two Northwest North Carolina workforce development boards should become knowledgeable about the specific skills requirements of the target industries recommended for their respective counties. (Skills requirement information is provided in the *Target Industry* report.)
- Workforce development boards should meet one on one with community college officials. Discuss with them the school’s current degree, certification, and continuing education programs. Share with them the tables illustrating their current programs compared with the target industries. Identify gaps in current curricula and brainstorm about new programs that could fill in the gaps. (A regional table is provided below, county tables are within the individual county reports. County reports contain recommendations about future community college programs that will meet target industry needs.)

- Hold quarterly workshops with community college leaders to discuss progress on program enhancement and adoption.
- Programs that should be considered by all Northwest North Carolina include the following:

- Train workers for the biotechnology industry. Winston-Salem is developing a strong biotechnology cluster. The economic impact of businesses in the Piedmont Triad Research Park will radiate across the entire region. In the future, biotechnology businesses may expand out into counties neighboring Forsyth.

Forsyth Technical Community College has 100 majors in its new biotechnology laboratory assistant Associate's Degree program. Other Northwest North Carolina community colleges should consider the Forsyth program as a model for developing their own biotechnology or bioinformatics degree programs.

- Train workers for the design industry. The design industry includes a number of fields, from bioinformatics and computer software to industrial design to traditional arts and crafts. Every community college in Northwest North Carolina currently contains courses that are design-related. We recommend that design-related curricula be expanded upon and that future students are encouraged to explore a design-oriented tract versus one related to traditional manufacturing.
- Train workers for the hospitality industry. The region has numerous tourist attractions, major annual festivals, and historic downtowns. The number of tourists coming to region is expected to climb as the region begins to better package and promote its tourism assets and the Yadkin Valley viticulture region brand becomes more widely recognized. Many Northwest North Carolina counties, however, lack infrastructure to support tourists. In examining the Community Colleges and other workforce programs in the county, it is apparent that potential hospitality workers have few places to turn for training. The hospitality industry offers a good short- to medium-term solution for displaced workers, because training takes a short amount of time and jobs will quickly emerge in the region.

*Possible workforce training programs for the hospitality industry include: culinary arts, instruction on starting and managing bed and breakfasts, tour guide instruction, or instruction for farmers starting a home-based business for agri-tourism. See county plans for specific hospitality related training programs recommended for each county.*

*Funding: Targeting workforce development programs is already a function of workforce development boards, therefore the cost is in staff time. Long-term, the cost for adopting new curricula at community colleges depends on the program. Costs would include salary and benefits for new staff, equipment, office overhead, and possibly facility construction or renovation.*

*Timing: Starting in 2004, the two workforce development boards should review the workforce development sections of the regional CEDS and county-specific reports. Meetings with community colleges should begin as soon as possible.*

	Target Industries									
	Log., Dist.	Biotech	Design	Materials	Trans. Equip	Food Process.	Value-Added Agri.	Hosp.	Health Care	Small Business Entrepreneurship
<b>Davidson County CC</b>										
Automotive Systems Tech. (D,C)	8				8					
Biotechnology (A)		8								
Carpentry (C)										
Computer Eng. Tech. (A,D,C)		8								
Electrical/Electronics Tech. (D,C)	8									
Electronics Eng. Tech. (A,D,C)	8	8								
Industrial Systems Tech. (D,C)										
Machining Tech. (D,C)	8				8					
Masonry (C)										
Mechanical Drafting Tech. (D,C)					8					
Medical Laboratory Tech. (A)		8								
Welding Technology (D,C)					8					
Truck Driver Training (C)	8									
Cashier Training								8		
House-Keeping Certificate								8		
Waitstaff Training								8		
<b>Forsyth Technical CC</b>										
Arch. Imaging/Digital Imaging (C)			8							
Architectural Technology (A)			8							
Biotechnology (A)		8								
Broadcasting & Prod. Tech. (A)			8							
Computer Engineering Tech. (A)		8								
Electronics Eng. Tech. (A,D,C)		8								
Film & Video Prod. Tech. (A)			8							
Graphic Arts/Imaging Tech. (A,D)			8							
Global Logistics Technology (A)	8									
Machining Technology (A,D)	8									
Mfg. Engineering Tech. (A)	8									
Mechanical Eng. Tech. (A)	8									
Welding Technology (D,C)										
<b>Rockingham CC</b>										
Electrical/Electronics (A,D,C)	8									
Electronics Technology (A,D,C)	8									
Fluid Power Technology (C)				8						
Horticulture Technology (A,C)							8			
Machining Technology (A,D)	8			8	8	8				
Mfg Engineering Tech (C)				8		8				
Mechanical Technology (C)	8			8		8				
Welding Technology (C)					8					

(Community College/Target Industry Table Continued)

Northwest North Carolina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

	Target Industries									
	Log. Dist.	Biotech	Design	Materials	Trans. Equip	Food Process.	Value-Added Agri.	Hosp.	Health Care	Small Business Entrepreneurship
<b>Surry CC</b>										
Accounting (A,C)										8
Business Administration (A)										
Advertising & Graphic Design (A)			8							
Agribusiness Tech. (A,D,C)							8			
Auto Body Repair (D,C)					8					
Automotive Sys. Tech. (A,D,C)					8					
Computer Engineering Tech. (A)		8								
Computer Programming (A,C)		8								
Electronics Eng. Tech. (A,D)		8								
Enology (A,D,C)							8			
Horticulture (A,D)							8			
Industrial Systems Tech. (A,D,C)					8					
Information Systems (A,C)		8	8							8
Info. Sys/Networking Admin.(A,C)			8							8
Livestock & Poultry Tech. (A,D)							8			
Machining Technology (A,D,C)					8					
Mechanical Drafting Tech. (A,D)			8		8					
Medical Office Admin. (A,D,C)									8	
Nursing (A, Practical Nursing Diploma)									8	
Occupational Therapy Assist. (A)									8	
Viticulture (A,D,C)							8			
Welding Technology (D,C)					8					
<b>Surry CC, Yadkin Campus</b>										
Advertising & Graphic Design (A)			8							
Agribusiness Tech. (A,D,C)							8			
Automotive Sys. Tech (A,D,C)					8					
Electrical Engineering Tech (A,D)	8									
Enology (A,D,C)							8			
Horticulture (A,D)							8			
Industrial Systems Tech (A,D,C)				8	8	8				
Livestock & Poultry Tech (A,D)							8			
Machining Technology (A,D,C)	8			8	8	8				
Mechanical Drafting Tech (A,D)	8			8	8	8				
Viticulture (A,D,C)							8			
Welding Technology (D,C)					8					
<b>Wilkes CC, BDC Campus</b>										
Architectural Technology (A,D,C)			8							
Auto Systems Technology (A,D)					8					
Broadcast & Prod. Tech. (A,D)			8							
Construction Tech. (A,D,C)			8	8						
Computer Engineering Tech. (A)										
Computer Programming (A,D,C)										
Heavy Equip./Trans. Tech. (A,D,C)				8	8					
Horticulture Technology (A,D,C)							8			
Industrial Systems Tech. (A,D,C)										
Machining Technology (A,D,C)				8	8					
Welding Technology (D)					8					

\* A- Associate's Degree; D-Diploma; C-Certificate

#### **Workforce Strategy 4: Develop workforce-training programs geared towards Hispanic population.**

In the past three years, the Hispanic population in the U.S. has been growing at almost four times that of the overall U.S. population and is the region's largest minority group. Between 2000 and 2002, the number of Hispanics living in the U.S. increased 10% to reach a total population of 38.8 million. Every region across the country is going to see an increase in the Hispanic population. It is therefore essential to consider this group in any future plans for economic and workforce development.

Northwest North Carolina has seen an increase in Hispanic population during the past decade. Although, minority populations in the majority of the region total less than 10% of residents today, it represents a significant increase since 1990 (when Hispanic populations made up less than 1% in most of Northwest North Carolina). The Hispanic population in the region will continue to rise. Migrant workers are typically undercounted by the Census, which may mean that the Hispanic population in the region is actually much larger.

It is important that all Northwest North Carolina communities have programs in place that assist Hispanics in learning English, obtaining job training, job placement, and saving money in local banking institutions. Along with this, it is important that the community learn about Hispanic culture so that incoming residents feel welcome and accepted in the community.

##### **Action 1: Continue to support English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.**

- Every Northwest North Carolina county should offer English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to help non-English speaking residents. The Workforce Development Center, local public school facilities, and churches provide accessible locations at little cost to the community.
- Ensure ESL programs are placed in locations that are in close proximity to Hispanic and non-English speaking areas of each county, including churches or on-site at employer facilities.
- Ensure ESL programs are offered at times that fit with working schedules. Offer them after working hours in the evenings, for example. Also, ESL programs should be increased during times of the year experiencing higher seasonal worker in migration.

##### **Action 2: Widely promote the availability and value of ESL and other assistance programs.**

- A recent study shows that Hispanic residents tend to respond best to radio advertisements and word-of-mouth communication.
- Launch a countywide program to educate Hispanic residents about the options available to them, including ESL, other educational opportunities, and banking services. The program will involve a mix of public service

announcements (PSAs), billboards, and flyers distributed at churches, restaurants, and employers. Promotional materials should be in Spanish.

*Funding: Depending on the detail of the awareness campaign, the cost of the campaign could range from \$100 for copying and placing informational flyers to \$2,500 for billboards or local media placement. The initiative should be lead by workforce development boards, community colleges, and local social service organizations.*

*Timing: By 2006, an awareness campaign should have been launched in each county.*

**Action 3: Develop cultural awareness programs for all residents and businesses.**

- Make learning about the Hispanic culture fun. Host a regional Mexican-American Culture event at which cuisine, traditions, and artwork are showcased. Invite leaders from the Hispanic community and Hispanic businesses to help organize and promote the event.

*Funding: Funding depends on the size of the event. Funding should come from sponsorships from local businesses and media organizations. A Hispanic business leaders group, Chambers of Commerce and the Winston-Salem Foundation.*

*Timing: The first event should be held in 2007.*

## ***ENTREPRENEURSHIP STRATEGIES***

### **GOAL THREE: Entrepreneurship and small business growth are significant drivers of the economy.**

A critical aspect of building sustainable economic competitiveness is linking economic performance with social cohesion. The NWNC region is very diverse in terms of education, workforce skills, and economic performance yet the region must strive to reduce disparities among the counties. The stimulation of entrepreneurship through the formation and development of new commercial businesses and social enterprises can play a key role in employing underutilized resources in the distressed areas of the region.

The entrepreneur in the community is a primary contributor and mobilizer of resources to develop the economy, a provider of employment for others, and a stabilizing factor in the society. The following are some of the major benefits of entrepreneurship:

- ✓ Provide a productive outlet for energies of enterprising and energetic people
- ✓ Creation of jobs at relatively low capital cost, especially in the fast growing service sector.
- ✓ Development of a pool of skilled and semi skilled workers who are the base for industrial expansion
- ✓ Small businesses are a source of innovation in products, services and techniques
- ✓ Contributing to increased participation of all communities in the economic activities of the region.
- ✓ Serve a social function by creating career opportunities and upward social mobility, and by preserving, in many instances, a set of values increasingly needed in these days of large impersonal firm

Several entities currently provide services for entrepreneurs within Northwest North Carolina with programs ranging from training, technical assistance, funding, and networking. Although there are numerous groups providing an aspect of entrepreneur development, the most overarching organizations in the region are the **Triad Entrepreneurial Initiative (TEI)**, serving Forsyth, Surry, Yadkin, Davie, Stokes, and Rockingham Counties (as well as six other counties outside of this study area), and the **Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council (BREC)**, serving Western North Carolina and including Alleghany and Ashe counties.

TEI's primary mission is to promote economic development in the North Carolina Piedmont Triad region by fostering the start-up and success of high-growth companies. The Winston-Salem Alliance along with Action Greensboro provide the majority of funds for the Triad Entrepreneurial Initiative. Their focus is on creating high-growth companies in the North Carolina Piedmont Triad region. Although most of the effort of this fledgling organization is within the immediate Winston Salem / Greensboro / High Point area, a regional

entrepreneurship program could be incorporated into their work plan after a few more years of success in the metropolitan area.

BREC is a nurturing organization for entrepreneurs in Western North Carolina, creating homegrown jobs and growing the region's economy. BREC supports entrepreneurs through the following four methods: education, mentoring and networking, communications and capital formation. BREC meets monthly, and provides quarterly opportunities for qualified entrepreneurial businesses to present plans before a group of local investors, the Blue Ridge Angel Investors Network.

Entrepreneurship should be viewed as a career path that all Northwest North Carolina residents can pursue. Like any discipline, with proper education and resources, individuals can learn to be successful entrepreneurs.

The education process should begin by instructing the workforce that starting a business can happen in any field. Often, entrepreneurship is thought of as an activity only engaged in by people in the high tech industry. This is not the case. Starting a small business can occur in any field. All of the region's target industries – from biotechnology to design to tourism and hospitality offer opportunities for local residents to start a company.

Entrepreneurship has a long tradition in Northwest North Carolina. The majority of the region's major employers in tobacco and textiles, for example, were started by local entrepreneurs decades ago. It is this spirit of innovation and creativity that must be reinvigorated. Provided the proper tools, Northwest North Carolina residents can begin rebuilding its employment base one company at a time.

The following are the four major entrepreneurship strategies that we recommend for Northwest North Carolina:

- **Provide Northwest North Carolina residents with innovative educational resources to help them learn about entrepreneurship and start new businesses.**
- **Better connect venture capital, angel investors, and entrepreneurs within the Northwest North Carolina region.**
- **Improve access to capital for startup and small businesses.**
- **Develop a National Design Institute and formalize a Regional Design Collaborative**

Specific activities to support each of the above strategies are provided in the following sections.

**Entrepreneurship Strategy One: Provide residents in the region with innovative educational resources to help them learn about entrepreneurship and start new businesses.**

In the future, entrepreneurship will be responsible for more than 70 percent of economic development in the U.S. As manufacturing jobs continue to be lost to overseas to competition, the U.S. economy will be driven even more by the success of small businesses. It is critical, therefore, to be preparing today's workforce for a future where they create their own jobs, rather than expect a job with a large employer to be waiting for them when they graduate or transition into a new career.

**Action 1: Think entrepreneurially in all K-12 school programming and investment.**

Seven out of ten high school students want to start their own businesses, according to the first national Gallup poll on entrepreneurship education commissioned and co-developed by the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL) of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation [1994]. Young people no longer believe that Corporate America will take care of them. Today's high school students watched their parents invest years of hard work and loyalty in companies that promised career growth and security in return. These same youngsters are observing in dismay as corporation after corporation downsizes its workforce and drastically abandons the assumptions that used to constitute the unwritten contract between the long-term employee and the corporate employer.

- **Start a school mentor program or Junior Achievement program in every junior high and high school in the region.** This program will invite local business owners to talk to students about why they started their own business, what they enjoy about it, and how they did it.
- **Develop a youth leadership training program in 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> grade for every high school in the region.** Look to the John Ben Sheppard Institute, or the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA, utility company in Austin, Texas) as model programs for youth leadership.

Another example to consider is the Fort Bend County (Texas) Youth Leadership Institute. This model program develops leadership and entrepreneurial skills while getting youth to focus on improving their community through specific improvement projects.

- **Support an annual business plan competition for all high school students in the region.** Invite local business leaders to conduct business plan instruction each fall semester. In the spring, launch a competition in which students conceive of a business idea and submit an executive summary of a business plan. Winners should receive college scholarships or seed capital. Invite previous year's winners to become mentors and judges in the competition. TEI should lead this initiative.
- **Start a summer entrepreneurship training program for teachers.** Ask leaders at TEI, Community Colleges, and private businesses to lead a 1 day seminar for teachers to provide them with tools they can use in their own classrooms to train students on entrepreneurship.

*Funding:* To be determined. Mentoring, Junior Achievement, and internship programs rely on volunteer time. The business plan competition should rely on local donations. The amount of scholarship awards or start-up capital could range from \$500 per student to thousands of dollars.

*Timing:* Several of these recommendations have already started. All initiatives that are not currently underway should start by 2006.

## **Entrepreneurship Strategy Two: Better connect venture capital, angel investors, and entrepreneurs within the region.**

Funding for business startup is also one of the biggest impediments to furthering entrepreneurship the region. The Piedmont Angel Network is one of the only angel investor groups in the Piedmont Triad region, yet seems to be under-funded to be able to have a large impact on entrepreneurship development. According to a recent article by Erik Pages and Shari Garmise in the *Economic Development Journal*, “networks are a central component of an entrepreneurial climate – a cultural, social, and economic milieu that encourages and nurtures the creation of new business ventures.” The objective of an entrepreneurial network is to provide a forum in which business executives and people who seek to become executives of their own companies can share ideas, do business together, and build relationships.

### **Action 1: Broaden the Triad Entrepreneur Initiative to a regional scope**

- Promote membership to small business owners, aspiring entrepreneurs, professional service providers, local civic leaders, economic developers, and investors.
- Offer memberships at a low annual cost (less than \$200).
- Ask Chambers, county and city governments, local libraries, churches, and other community organizations to post flyers and online announcements about the foundation of the Association and the date/time of the first networking event.
- Examine the Council for Entrepreneurial Development at Research Triangle Park ([www.cednc.org](http://www.cednc.org)) as a good example program and statewide resources for entrepreneurs.
- Utilize the North Carolina Rural Entrepreneur Initiative as a resource to further regional entrepreneur programs.

### **Action 2: Host a monthly Entrepreneurs' Association event.**

- The event should include 20-30 minutes of networking time and a 20-30 minute educational presentation.
- Speakers for the event could include: successful entrepreneurs from the region, venture and angel capitalists, representatives from the SBDC (and SBTDC) and business incubator, instructors from Community Colleges' recommended entrepreneurship class.

**Action 3: Host a one-day entrepreneurial education workshop in conjunction with the SBDC and Community Colleges.**

- The workshop should occur every six months.
- Present topics such as how to write a business plan, small business finance, and marketing.

**Action 4: Develop a regional Entrepreneurs' Association.**

- Action Greensboro and Winston-Salem Alliance are already funding the TEI with similar large contributions. This type of regional collaboration towards entrepreneurship is an excellent start.

*Funding:* Charge members a small admission price to attend monthly networking events (to cover the cost of the facility and refreshments), but obtain private funding to support association events during first year.

*Timing:* Begin forming the Association in 2005 or earlier. The first networking events should be held in 2006 or earlier. The Web site should be on-line by 2006.

**Entrepreneurship Strategy Three: Improve access to capital for startup and small businesses.**

**Action 1: Identify and market existing regional loan programs that are available through local banks.**

**Action 2: Provide local banks with resources that educate them on the best way to support small and start up companies.**

**Action 3: Link in to regional venture capital and angel investor networks.**

- TEI could expand the business plan competition to include/reach other counties outside the MSA. It should encourage and assist its members in development business plans for submission into regional and statewide business plan competitions.
- TEI or other organizations such as the Piedmont Triad Research Park could provide temporary office space to venture capitalists visiting the region to evaluate local investment opportunities
- TEI and other organizations should include an entrepreneurs' resource guide on their Web sites and in public facilities, SBDC offices, and local colleges. The resource guide should contain an inventory of all loan programs and capital sources in Northwest North Carolina and the surrounding. It should also contain tips for starting a business in the region and a listing of local support and entrepreneurship educational organizations.

Funding: *In-kind assistance can be solicited from area business organizations to better market existing loan programs to entrepreneurs and banks.*

Timing: *2005/2006*

#### **Entrepreneurship Strategy Four: Create a Virtual Arts Market.**

One of the top priorities for the region (*as mentioned above under regional Priorities*) is to generate a national and international recognition of the region. An on-line market (similar to Ebay © in how transactions occur) and offering only quality products that are made in the region would bring additional recognition to the region as an arts and crafts center for the U.S. This has tremendous potential as a private sector initiative, but should be started with the public sector (e.g., NWPCOG and members of the CEDS Committee) developing the framework and contracting it to a private entity for profit. Some of the benefits include:

- Reinforces the regional brand and product recognition
- Increases awareness of the region
- Expands the market for locally produced artistic and handmade objects to a national audience
- Increases sales and sales tax revenue in the region
- Generates a spillover effect for support businesses, including shipping, insurance, finance, information technology (e.g., system integration of “cash registers” with online systems)

The NWPCOG and CEDS committee should work with a select group of premier information technology experts to develop the infrastructure to support such a system. The Committee can then “lease” the concept to a private entity who will run the system, in exchange for return profit that will go to support regional marketing efforts.

Funding: *\$1-1.5 million; Possible funding sources: National Arts Council, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, Foundations)*

Timing: *Seek funding in 2004; Launch site in 2005/2006*

#### **Entrepreneurship Strategy Five: Develop a National Design Institute and Formalize a Regional Design Collaborative**

Design industries and design themes are central to the regional and county strategies that AE has provided to NWNC. By developing a National Design Institute, the region will be able to gain national and worldwide recognition as a region rich in design skills. This novel concept embodies the spirit of a research institution or national laboratory but with a focus on education and innovation in design. It will bring together experts in biotechnology design, software design, and artistic design to work jointly on solving problems of national significance. It would illustrate to the world that the essence of design skills apply to many

disciplines and help NWNC draw internationally renowned designers to the region for study, business, and conferences. The Santa Fe Institute ([www.santafe.edu](http://www.santafe.edu)) provides a good example.

The Institute would be home to a regional Design Collaborative, a membership organization comprised of top design talent in the region. The design collaborative will help design professionals network, learn, and connect to new business opportunities. The goal of the Collaborative should be to ensure that every product manufactured in NWNC is originally designed in NWNC.

An example to consider for the design collaborative is "AustinChips." The vision of AustinChips ([www.AustinChips.com](http://www.AustinChips.com)) is to develop a vibrant and cross-connected community of semiconductor professionals in Central Texas by bringing together entrepreneurs from large and small companies. The group sponsors informal networking and social events as well as more formal lectures from experts in the field. AustinChips website offers an easy method to become a member, a schedule of upcoming events, and industry links. By developing a similar collaborative, NWNC can quickly build upon current design assets and become a stronger design cluster. The Collaborative should be up and running in 2006 or earlier.

**Action 1: Investigate models for national institutes, looking at how they are funded, how they were formed, and how they have impacted a community or region.**

**Action 2: Locate a home for the Institute at the PTRP. Seek funding for upgrading or constructing space for the Institute.**

**Action 3: Hire a director for the Institute. Institute staff and volunteers should first form the Regional Design Collaborative. Next, they should use regional organizations' marketing channels to launch a national public relations and marketing campaign.**

**Action 4: Develop an informal network for design professionals to collaborate. Begin by first having informal get-togethers in W-S that are sponsored privately. Expand the outreach after several of these meetings, but invite individuals throughout the region to attend.**

*Funding: \$1.5 million; Possible Funding source: EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, Private Foundations.*

*Timing: Seek funding in 2004/2005. Establish the Collaborative by 2006.*

## **QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIES**

### **GOAL FOUR: The region is an appealing place to live for young professionals and individuals employed by target industry companies.**

The most successful economic development regions in the U.S. also contain strong quality of life amenities. In addition to quality education, a quality environment plays a large part in the choice of young, skilled professionals in where they move. It also plays a significant role in retaining good citizens.

A high quality of life is also directly connected to the region's ability to attract tourists. Through the choice of investments in quality of life amenities, the region will be able to target the specific type of tourist that visits. Tourists should be considered an economic development audience. Oftentimes, tourists are the very decision makers around which economic development campaigns are targeted. To get the highest return, economic development and tourism promotions should be closely connected. The audience of both should overlap.

One of the easiest ways for NWNC to become top of mind for its target industries is for executives from those industries to visit the region for vacation. Therefore, tourist activities should portray a certain image of the county, one that is appealing to those executives and other decision makers. Make sure all tourist attractions showcase the county's creativity, natural beauty, and unique lifestyle.

The recommendations offered within this section are aimed at improving the quality of life for two audiences: young professionals and target industry companies. As addressed in the Workforce Development recommendations, both audiences look for cities with high performing primary and secondary schools. Both groups are also attracted to locations with good healthcare, quality housing, safety, ample parks and green space, artistic and cultural amenities, vibrant downtowns (any size), and environmental cleanliness.

The following are the quality of life strategies that we recommend for the region:

- **Expand parks and recreation, preserve green space and improve trail connectivity.**
- **Invest in the beautification and revitalization of downtowns.**
- **Become nationally known as a center for fine craft and design.**
- **Foster an environment to take advantage of the Yadkin Valley Viticulture region**

Specific activities to support each of the above strategies are provided in the following sections.

From the urban culture of Forsyth County to the scenic beauty, rivers, and mountainous terrain of more rural counties, NWNC contains many qualities that will be appealing to young professionals. The region, however, continues to lose this population. Although the region contains ample amenities that should be attractive to a young, creative population, its population continues to age. So why, with all of its amenities, does the region lose young people? The problem lies partially in the region's external image that does not convey a message that entices a younger population. Future marketing efforts, for example, could be

aimed at attracting younger tourists to the region by promoting Yadkin Valley wineries or by promoting the county and region's tremendous outdoor recreation opportunities, world-class entrepreneurship programs, and accessibility to the other areas in the southeast.

Retaining young professionals is as important as recruiting them. In this section, we recommend improvements to existing quality of life features and the creation of new amenities that will show the region's young families that Northwest North Carolina is progressive and paying attention to their needs. The projects we recommend are designed to generate a new energy in the county that appeals to a younger population.

### **Quality of Life Strategy One: Expand parks and recreation and preserve green space.**

#### **Action 1: Develop a regional greenway plan**

Outdoor recreation is an important factor impacting the location decisions of young professionals. With today's technological infrastructure, skilled workers are more flexible in where they live, no longer as tied to the location of a major employer. Connecting the region's greenways will create quality of life amenity that is marketable to a younger population.

Successful programs have used "rails to trails", river frontage, floodways, electric transmission and other and utility easements as opportunities for potential trails.

*Funding: Funding should come from partnering cities and counties, but this effort is most successful as a private initiative. Models to examine include the Land & Greenspace Initiative of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council,*

*Timing: Full regional connectivity of greenways could take up to more than 20 years to complete. This is a long-term initiative but planning should begin now. Develop the regional greenway plan by 2007.*

#### **Action 2: Organize and attract major regional and national sporting events to Northwest North Carolina.**

- Sporting events will attract young people to the region and expose the region to a national audience.
- Support the creation of a Northwest North Carolina Sports Promotion Agency. A similar organization exists within the Triad Partnership, but this entity could be expanded with a fiduciary role to fund certain strategies. This agency would coordinate marketing efforts aimed at bringing regional and national sporting events to the region. The agency would also be responsible for providing each county and city with guidance on developing its own sporting venues.
- Work with local sports equipment shop owners to organize a regional adventure sports, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, or running races.

*Funding: TBD (funding sources could include user taxes as well as foundation funding)*

*Timing: Establish a regional sports authority in 2005; Host first regional sports event in 2007.*

**Action 3: Include Northwest North Carolina's parks and recreational amenities as part of a larger regional marketing packaged aimed at attracting vacationing outdoor enthusiasts.** *Information on this is provided in the Marketing Strategies. External marketing of the region should begin in 2006.*

### **Quality of Life Strategy Two: Invest in the beautification and revitalization of downtowns.**

Active, beautiful downtowns are an essential quality of successful regions. They provide a space in which locals can convene, create an immediate, visual impression of the health of the local economy, and draw in tourists. A thriving, interesting downtown keeps residents living close and reduces sprawl, helping a community accomplish another important goal – preserving the natural environment and green space.

Creating an active downtown requires hard work and determination. It cannot occur overnight. Complete downtowns, no matter the size, offer a place to work during the day as well as places to live, to learn, to eat, to shop, to experience arts and culture, to attend community events, and to enjoy sports and recreation. To build a complete downtown, community leaders must commit to inducing as many activities as possible to locate downtown. Long-term, new government and public facilities should be located in downtown locations, new civic and recreation centers are located or relocated within walking distance of downtowns, and city and county agencies gear downtowns with ample infrastructure to support small business expansions – attracting even the highest tech companies. Some Northwest North Carolina towns, or a regional organization, may consider creating a revolving loan fund to assist downtown improvements.

#### **Action 1: Incentivize business growth in the region's downtowns.**

Incentives come in many forms, from financial inducements to developing soft infrastructure such as educational resources and business incubators. Several good downtown incentives are already available in the region. By establishing a wireless Internet access, downtowns create a significant incentive to attract new businesses and visitors to its downtown. Utilizing special taxing districts (including TIFs) for their downtowns will continue to support certain improvements downtown such as façade improvements.

- NWPCOG should become a clearinghouse of information regarding model programs in the region. (*Timing: 2005 or earlier*)
- By 2006, an annual downtown revitalization conference highlighting downtown initiatives throughout the region. During this workshop, cities from Northwest North Carolina would share their success stories and new ideas for downtown revitalization.

- Create design standards for downtown areas and offer incentives (such as paying ½ of the cost of façade improvements) for businesses to comply with standards.

### **Quality of Life Strategy Three: Become nationally known as a center for fine craft and design.**

Northwest North Carolina's rich tradition in fine craft, arts, and design is what truly differentiates the region from other communities. Each county in the region has a role to play in ensuring that the region becomes nationally recognized for its abundant cultural amenities. This is, in part, a function of marketing. It is also a function of rallying the community around a few, specific projects that will unite the county and region's artistic resources and form a beacon for fine craft and arts enthusiasts around the world.

The activities recommended here will improve the quality of life for all residents by enhancing local arts and cultural amenities. At the same time, these activities will result in attracting higher end tourists - executives and their families who will come to the region as tourists, recognize the value and beauty of the region as a business location, and place the region on their list of future site locations.

As the regional Marketing Strategy suggests, each county has a role to play in the overall regional messaging whether it be arts and crafts festivals, wine festivals, extreme sport events, art exhibitions, or bake sales. Schedule festivals across counties to be near each other to retain tourists.

#### **Action 1: Recognize local artists and artistic ventures as economic development prospects.**

- Art schools, artists, and skilled crafts workers are each their own engines of economic development and entrepreneurship.
- Invite local artists and organizations to become a part of community organizations, such as Downtown / Main Street organizations, economic development boards, Chambers of Commerce, or Convention and Tourist Boards. Their creativity will add spark to event planning and marketing efforts.
- Chambers of Commerce and other community organizations should organize a series of evening workshops designed to teach The region's residents about fine craft. Invite local artists and organizations to be guest lecturers at the workshops. These events should cover topics about the history of fine craft in the region, introduce the fine craft marketplace, and show residents examples of fine craft products developed in the region.

*Funding: No cost. Activities are organized by volunteers.*

*Timing: Immediately*

#### **Action 2: Support a virtual arts market for Northwest North Carolina arts and fine craft. (See Strategy under Entrepreneurship Section above)**

#### **Quality of Life Strategy Four: Foster an Environment to Take Advantage of Yadkin Valley Viticulture region**

One of the greatest strengths that Northwest North Carolina has and will continue to have is its fledgling wine industry. The Yadkin Valley Viticulture region, though in its early stages, has the potential to draw in tens of thousands of tourists to the region each year. As Yadkin Valley wine is sold in other U.S. regions, the name will become well known, providing the region a powerful brand for marketing and for naming other products and services that are created in Northwest North Carolina.

How will the wine industry benefit the region? Consider some of this information from the NAPA Valley (from [www.mapavintners.com](http://www.mapavintners.com)). It illustrates the enormous potential that the Yadkin Valley Viticulture region has for Northwest North Carolina:

- Only 9% of Napa County is planted in vineyards and less than 3% remains suitable for grape planting, according to the findings of the Napa County Watershed Task Force.
- Napa Valley accounts for only 4% of California's total wine production and only 5% of total United States vineyard acreage.
- In 1968, Napa Valley vintners and others in the community had the forethought to preserve open space and prevent future over-development of 30,000 acres by enacting the nation's first Agriculture Preserve. Since its adoption, not one acre of land has been removed from the Preserve
- Vineyards and surrounding open space provide a natural habitat for a variety of wildlife species and many growers invite birds, including owls and hawks, into their vineyards by installing special protective bird boxes. The birds of prey help control rodent and pest populations in and around the vineyards.
- Napa Valley's wine industry accounts for \$4 billion of California's annual \$33 billion economic impact from winemaking and related industries.

**Action 1: Organize a regional delegation to tour Napa Valley or other prominent U.S. wine regions. Interview wine growers and associations in the regions to learn how to better promote and brand Northwest North Carolina wines.**

**Action 2: Continue good efforts to package regional wine tours of Yadkin Valley. Tie these wine tours with other prominent regional events and festivals. Create 2, 3, and 5-day tourism packages of the region. Include this package on regional marketing Web sites, national travel publications and Web sites, and in brochures that are placed in North Carolina hotels.**

*Funding: Funding estimates for marketing are provided in the Marketing Strategies section of this report. Regional delegation tours of other wine regions should be led by the Yadkin Valley Wine Growers Association and include tourism agencies, Chamber leaders, the NWPCOG, and local wine producers.*

Northwest North Carolina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Timing: *Marketing effort and wine region tour should start in 2006.*

## **SITES AND INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES**

### **GOAL FIVE: The region's sites and infrastructure meet the needs of target industries and a growing population.**

When firms are queried as to which factors are musts when selecting a state or region while making location decisions, labor and education considerations are often the most important, followed by proximity to markets, operating cost environment, and residential amenities for managers and engineers. The only infrastructure that is often mentioned in a regional context is transportation.

When choosing a specific development location within a state or region, however, the availability of infrastructure grows in importance. As infrastructure is available in almost every city, business prospects will compare the availability and pricing of sites that come fully equipped with utility infrastructure and roadways. The availability of a shovel ready site allows a company to move quickly into the community, saving time and energy. It also indicates that the community is business friendly and forward thinking.

The reason for the apparent contradiction in the importance of regional infrastructure versus specific sites is that larger areas such as regions or states possess sufficient infrastructure somewhere, so it is not a major corporate consideration until after the general location is picked. Therefore, although not the top priority to get a company to choose a region, once they have chosen the NWNC region, it is imperative that adequate infrastructure - water, sewers, bridges, streets and mass transit – be available to support business growth and development – and that this infrastructure fair competitively with that of another region.

Several counties in the region (Stokes, Rockingham) have several sites available for business, while others such as Forsyth, Yadkin and Alleghany are limited in their available sites. This is another area where there is a significant disparity among the NWNC counties – and potential opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, several projects can foster a regional economic impact. These include transportation projects as well as multi-jurisdictional projects – taking advantage of new legislation that the State of North Carolina has given counties. All infrastructure projects should follow the policies of cities and counties that have been developed in comprehensive plans for these counties. For example, the *Legacy Plan* for Forsyth County clearly indicates a need to reduce sprawl. Therefore, infrastructure should be planned and developed so that development is directed to growth areas identified in local land use plans.

We are offering the following major strategies for improving the region's infrastructure:

- **Meet resource needs of the PTRP**
- **Provide water and wastewater infrastructure to Hwy 421/I-77**
- **Build the remainder of I-73 and I-74, as well as both legs of the Northern Beltway**
- **Cooperate regionally on the FedEx development**
- **Look to the Smith-Reynolds airport as a satellite facility for FedEx**
- **Improve telecommunications capacity**
- **Develop regional Industrial Parks**

Detailed activities to support these strategies are provided in the following section.

### **Sites and Infrastructure Strategy One: Meet resource needs of the PTRP**

This park will undoubtedly have one of the biggest impacts in the region, not only in terms of wealth generation, but also job creation. As startups grow in size within the park, these businesses will seek space within Forsyth County and throughout the region for expansion.

The mission of the PTRP is to promote academic, industry, and government collaboration to grow and sustain the region's core science in the areas of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, nutrition, medical devices-instruments, imaging, and information technologies. The scope of technology development at PTRP is balanced to diversify economic trends in any given area.

*The PTRP will become the type of park that not only has a high impact on the region, but will also help in branding the region, through national recognition of the park's success.*

Plans have been developed to increase the size and effectiveness of the park. The incredible transformations taking place at PTRP today - led by Wake Forest University Health Sciences and the Idealliance - will create 5.7 million gross square feet of developed space, reclaiming 200 acres of Winston-Salem's downtown core. It is an ambitious and well-thought out framework for redevelopment that will stimulate 62 acres of infrastructure improvements including new roads and road surface improvements, the relocation of railway tracks, bridges, new utilities and utility upgrades.

Although the research park area is currently well served by two major highways, the downtown road network and the city's historic street grid, a new network of roads will be required to complete the PTRP. The proposed road network will link the park with the surrounding urban area and provide continuous connections between the North, Central, and South districts. The future road network for the research park will be in concert with the transportation initiatives outlined in the Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Urban Area 2025 Long-range Transportation Plan (prepared by the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation and City-County Planning Board in 2002), the US 52 Corridor Study, the Southeast Gateway Plan, and rail service initiatives.

The proposed road network includes a new four-lane "Research Parkway" extending through the entire Park. Research Parkway will create a continuous vehicular route and pedestrian promenade, connect the three districts, link these areas with the surrounding downtown road network and provide direct access to the Research Park from US 52. The Master Plan also establishes a primary road network within each district based on existing roads to be retained or new roads that will be needed to support the development concept for the particular district.

PTRP and Idealliance has accomplished a great deal in a very short period of time. Since its establishment in 1996, PTRP now has four buildings (342,240 square feet) and 20 companies, with university and corporate employees totaling 368. Economic change has begun.

On August 13, 2002 the park announced a major expansion with the acquisition of an additional 180 acres in downtown Winston-Salem led by Wake Forest University Health Sciences in developing its biomedical research campus in PTRP. **This expansion to take**

**place over the next thirty years to full development will require large capital investments by the private and public sectors.** The first phase of the expansion development will require \$12 million to \$15 million investment in new and improved roads (\$2.5 million), building demolition (\$2.2 million), power line relocation (\$2.8 million), railroad relocation (\$1.5 million), railroad bridge-road extension (\$1 million), landscaping (\$1 million), and First Street bridge (\$500,000). Land acquisition will cost \$22 million. (Costs are subject to change as construction bids have not yet been requested.)

However, one of **the most immediate needs is to develop affordable lab space to grow new bio-medical companies at PTRP.** This is a capital-intensive industry with cost pressure on the development process in a market that has not recently been favorable. Therefore, in addition to the above capital costs, PTRP needs **low cost lab space** available to start-up companies. Capital to up-fit a lab can cost in a range of \$300 per foot with clean rooms at \$1,000 per foot. A shell building can cost from \$50 per foot to \$90 per foot. We estimate that a 45,000 square foot office/lab building could cost approximately **\$10 to \$16 million dollars.**

Grants for building cost and/or lab up-fits would reduce PTRP's overall cost, thus reducing the lease cost to the start-up company. PTRP, Idealliance, and Wake Forest University should apply for an EDA grant (and other Federal, State, and foundation support) to fund future improvements to PTRP. *This would be similar to EDA's support for life science development in other states such as the Fitzsimmons Redevelopment Authority in Aurora, Colorado, at which funds were used to build and up-fit a biotech building.*

*Funding: Priorities for the PTRP include \$20 million (lab space and other infrastructure assistance) Potential funding sources include: Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, Participants in National Nanotechnology, Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Treasury (DOTreas), Department of Commerce (DOC), Department of State (DOS), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Defense (DOD), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Energy (DOE), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Intelligence Community (IC), Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Department of Transportation (DOT), National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Homeland Security (DHS)*

*Timing: Seek funding in 2004/5 and begin developing lab space in 2006*

## **Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Two: Provide water and wastewater infrastructure to the intersection of Hwy 421 / Interstate 77.**

This intersection is a very visible and potentially lucrative intersection. Interstate 77 is a North-South, 4-lane interstate that connects the NWNC region to Charlotte. Hwy 421 is an East-West, 4-lane state highway that the western reaches of North Carolina to the East. However, there are no water or wastewater lines to this site. It is located in Yadkin County and that county, along with other municipalities, have undertaken a preliminary engineering study to determine feasibility and cost. If infrastructure were available to this site, private development could impact several counties in the region, creating job opportunities and increasing sales and property tax revenues. In addition to the utility needs, some additional assistance with modifications of the road interchanges to support the business growth may

also be necessary, but these needs are not yet identified.

**Action 1: Obtain funding for infrastructure improvements.**

**Action 2: Meet with landowners to determine development interests**

**Action 3: Seek outside developer interest in site**

**Action 4: Consider an interlocal agreement to develop a business or industrial park with multiple municipal involvement and a revenue sharing scheme.**

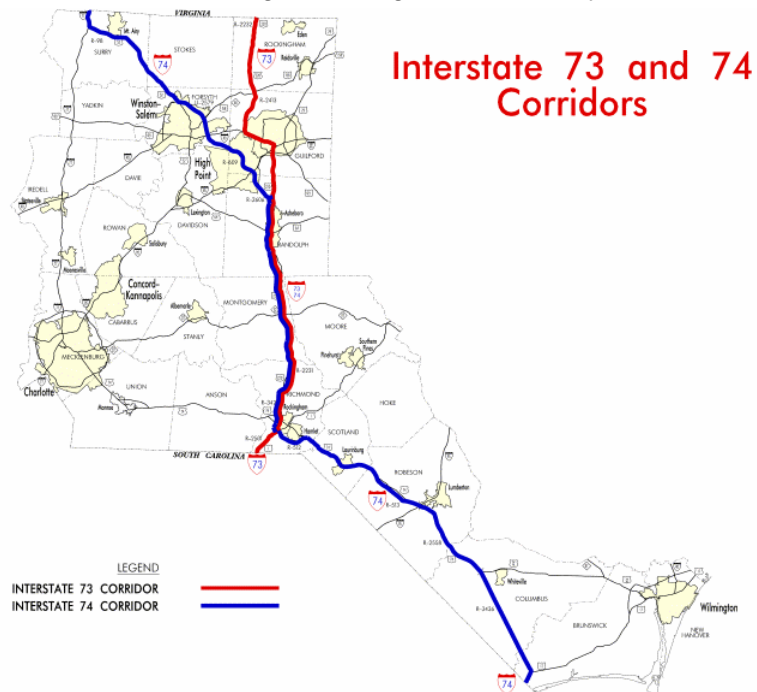
***Funding:** \$4.6million is needed to serve this intersection's utility needs. An additional amount of funding (estimated to be \$600,000) is needed for modifications to the road interchanges. Potential funding sources include: EPA, USDA, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, Foundations*

***Timing:** Meet with landowners to determine interests in 2004; Seek outside developer interest in 2005; Seek and obtain funding in 2006 onward; Project start should be 2008.*

### **Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Three: Build the remainder of I-73 and I-74, as well as both legs of the Northern Beltway.**

Completing I73 and I74 is another critical project to the Region. This highway project has been on the drawing board for several years and is planned to connect, via a major interstate, Virginia to South Carolina, and traverse through Rockingham and Forsyth Counties, along the proposed FedEx location at the Greensboro-Winston-Salem International Airport. This project will not only improve accessibility to and throughout the region, but it will also provide a better distribution network for the FedEx operation and various supporting industries.

**If fully constructed as proposed, I-74 would be North Carolina's second longest interstate, totaling about 270 miles, trailing only I-40's 420 miles but ahead of I-85's 233 miles. I-73 would be the fourth longest at about 135 miles, beating out I-77 (105 miles) and I-26.**



**Action 1: Continue to strengthen local and state delegation for this project.**

Since most of the money for this project (90%) will come from the federal level, the State of North Carolina must first demonstrate that this project is a top priority by elevating this project to the top of the State's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) list.

**Action 2: Obtain private sector support for project (particularly FedEx since it will benefit them greatly)**

The state and federal government needs to understand how this project will have an impact on the public and private sector. The region's and State's position on this roadway will become bolstered by obtaining testimony from key private sector companies, such as FedEx.

*Funding: To be determined.*

*Timing: 2006*

**Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Four:  
Cooperate regionally on the FedEx development**

This is certainly going to provide a huge impact to the region. Much of the work for this initiative has already been done, but efforts by certain local municipalities have stalled this project.

- Continue to collaborate with other municipalities.
- Hold workshops (not public hearings) describing the economic benefits that will be realized throughout the region (including the long-term vision of how improvements in road infrastructure will create a network for several counties to take advantage of the FedEx operation).

**Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Five:  
Look to the Smith-Reynolds airport as a satellite facility for FedEx.**

FedEx generally needs a satellite facility to have as a backup for air traffic (in the event of the Greensboro/W-S Airport being temporarily shutdown) as well as a facility to do certain types of maintenance on FedEx planes. AE recommends that the Smith-Reynolds airport supply this need.

**Action 1: Determine required funding for this initiative**

*Funding: \$75,000 for feasibility Study. Funding sources for the feasibility study should come from local sources. Funding for the development of the airport to meet FedEx demands should come from the FAA, State of NC, and local sources, including private sector contributions.*

*Timing: Begin feasibility study in 2006, seek funding in 2006/2007, and develop in 2008+.*

**Action 2: Seek legislative support if necessary (state and federal) Involve FedEx in supporting this effort so that federal agencies see the private sector supporting it.**

*Funding: To be determined*

*Timing: If this is necessary, begin discussions with FedEx immediately and obtain their support for this initiative in 2005/2006.*

### **Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Six: Improve telecommunications capacity.**

Cellular phone reception is poor and spotty throughout the region, yet is critical to both tourist and business development. Additionally, improvements in rural telecommunications will help counties outside of Forsyth in business development and expansion, particularly in the area of entrepreneur growth.

#### **Action 1: Improve cellular phone capacity**

- Develop model ordinances for municipalities to adopt that would allow for co-location of cell towers of differing providers. (NWPCOG)
- Provide annual conference on model cellular phone reception programs for mountain areas. Bring in specialists to address how this can be improved upon throughout the region.

*Funding: Cost for these initiatives should be funded by the private sector.*

*Timing: The COG should begin developing model ordinances for communities in 2005. Host a regional workshop for and showcase model ordinances in 2006. Consider utilizing private utility companies / engineering companies to sponsor this event, as they have begun initiatives throughout North Carolina utilizing water towers for cellular antennae.*

#### **Action 2: Develop wireless networks**

- Forsyth County / Winston-Salem or Surry County / Mt. Airy should hold regional workshops (in conjunction with telecommunication providers and state/federal telecommunications regulators and funders) to showcase the wireless system in W-S and downtown Mt. Airy and discuss how those projects were developed and funded.

*Funding: This workshop should be sponsored by the private sector.*

*Timing: Begin developing the program and lining up resources in 2005/2006.*

## **Sites and Infrastructure Strategy Seven: Develop Regional Industrial Parks**

The North Carolina Legislature recently gave municipalities the authority to enter into joint financing and interlocal agreements for business or industrial parks. Although this legislation must first be approved by the NC voters, AE recommends that the region look for opportunities to utilize this new tool. The Tier structure that exists for business development incentives is a useful tool, but even if this system were to be reduced, utilizing the interlocal agreements for regional collaborations is worth pursuing.

**Action 1: NWPCOG should hold a regional forum focused on this legislation, where this legislation is being used in North Carolina, and how interlocal agreements for purposed of business development are crafted in the State.**

**Action 2: NWPCOG should facilitate a workshop where municipalities, economic development professionals and private developers throughout the region (including other groups in the MSA) convene to brainstorm on potential projects worthy of collaboration.** These projects should be prioritized and an action plan for developing these sites should be developed as part of this workshop.

*Funding: Funding for the forum and workshop should be secured by the COG from the private sector.*

*Timing: Develop the forum in the latter part of 2004 and look to host the workshop in early 2005.*

## **MARKETING**

**GOAL: The Northwest North Carolina Region is engaged in a proactive, targeted marketing campaign to send a clear message that the county is dedicated to these goals and the importance of these strategies to improving the economy.**

Regions benefit from engaging in marketing campaigns that promote the entire area and educate/engage the local public about the importance of regional and county economic development initiatives. It is most effective to have a marketing strategy that is managed by a well-integrated team of economic development leaders representing the region. The overarching goal is to balance both local county marketing strategies, while at the same time implement combined regional marketing strategies.

This section of the regional recommendations is laid out similar to each county's individual marketing recommendations. It describes how to form a regional economic development marketing team, necessary funding, and internal and external campaigns.

The remaining section provides a description and Actions necessary for NWNC to engage in a regional targeted marketing plan. **There are six recommended strategies, including:**

- 1. Form a regional marketing committee, made up of individuals from each county's marketing committee and lead ED organization, to lead regional marketing for the eight counties**
- 2. Each county agree to allocate funds for the new regional marketing committee**
- 3. Create a brand for the region and hire an agency to design a logo**
- 4. Launch regional internal marketing campaigns to increase awareness**
- 5. Develop and implement external marketing campaigns to recruit new businesses to the region**
- 6. Measure and readjust the plan**

AE is providing a Marketing Guide (MG) that contains information to assist the Northwest North Carolina region and each county in implementing the economic development strategies over the next five years. It is meant to be used in conjunction with the NWNC Economic Development Strategic Report and specifically to support leaders who will execute the marketing campaigns.

**Regional Marketing Strategy One:**

**Form a regional marketing committee (RMC), made up of individuals from each county’s economic development (ED) marketing committee and lead ED organization, to oversee regional marketing for the eight county-area.**

Just as each county needs a lead organization to implement marketing, the region needs a team to implement the regional plan. The table to the right lists each county lead economic development organization that is being charged with marketing the county plan. The county marketing recommendations call for community volunteers to assist by being on a

<b>County</b>	<b>Lead ED Organization</b>
<b><i>Ashe</i></b>	<b><i>Economic Development Coordinating Industrial Board</i></b>
<b><i>Alleghany</i></b>	<b><i>Blue Ridge Business Development Center</i></b>
<b><i>Davie</i></b>	<b><i>Davie County Economic Development Council</i></b>
<b><i>Forsyth</i></b>	<b><i>Winston-Salem Alliance</i></b>
<b><i>Rockingham</i></b>	<b><i>Rockingham County Partnership for Economic &amp; Tourism Development</i></b>
<b><i>Stokes</i></b>	<b><i>Stokes County Economic Development</i></b>
<b><i>Surry</i></b>	<b><i>Surry County Economic Development Partnership</i></b>
<b><i>Yadkin</i></b>	<b><i>Yadkin County Chamber of Commerce</i></b>

county economic development marketing committee. The counties have similar recommendations that need to be marketed. By jointly implementing these marketing activities, pulled resources lead to efficient and effective campaigns. Therefore, AE recommends a similar approach to regional marketing. Form the RMC by having two individuals from each county’s committee, which is led by the lead ED organization, to manage regional marketing activities.

The COG should oversee the RMC’s internal marketing efforts. Since the Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP) and Advantage West (AW) have strong recruitment efforts already in place, the COG should ask these two organizations to mentor and work closely with the RMC when it comes to implementing external marketing. AE’s objective is to provide the PTP and AW with direct access to county lead economic development leaders who support external efforts. This section offers recommendations for the PTP, AW, and RMC to discuss jointly implementing. The overarching goal is to ensure alignment among all groups that manage recruitment marketing for NWNC and targeted towards specific industries. By better collaborating, marketing communication and campaigns will improve and the region as a whole will gain awareness and generate more business. The COG should also oversee the external marketing budget.

**Action 1: The COG should ask each local economic development lead marketing organization to nominate two leaders to be on the regional marketing committee.**

**Action 2: The COG oversees the committee and initiates quarterly meetings.**

**Action 3: The COG asks PTP and AW to oversee the RMC external marketing efforts.**

## **Regional Marketing Strategy Two: Each County should agree to allocate funds for the RMC**

Each county should be asked to contribute \$12,500 per year beginning in 2004 to implement regional internal marketing campaigns and an additional \$15,000 beginning in 2006 for external marketing.

This will provide the RMC with approximately \$100,000 each year to market within the region. Then, in 2006 each county will need to raise their budget to include marketing to target audiences outside of the region. This will provide the RMC with an additional \$120,000 per year for recruitment marketing. During 2006, the RMC will need a total of \$220,000 to implement local and national (external) marketing, which amounts to \$27,500 per county.

By year three, the region should double its marketing budget.

**Action 1: At the first regional marketing committee meeting, members should review and modify the budget needed (\$12,500 per county, per year) for regional internal marketing.** These funds can come from the private sector. It is up to each County to determine where their respective resources originate.

**Action 2: RMC members should discuss the marketing budgets with county marketing teams and approve the budget.**

**Action 3: The RMC should meet to develop a strategic plan for marketing and budget allocation** (based on recommendations found within this strategy document).

**Action 4: In 2005, the RMC members should review and modify the budget needed (\$15,000 per county, per year) for regional external marketing.**

**Action 5: The RMC, PTP, and AW should agree on the external marketing implementation approach.**

## **Regional Marketing Strategy Three: Create a brand for the region and hire an agency to design a logo**

***It is highly effective for a region to market a single brand to build awareness. A component of this project is to identify one umbrella theme for the eight county-region.***

**NWNC is primarily marketing to make consumers aware of the region.** Consumers reside within the state, throughout the U.S., and internationally. Building awareness is accomplished by implementing campaigns to clarify a position. Each county will market an individual brand within its county and the state of North Carolina. However, when the eight-county region markets to consumers outside of the state, it will communicate a single, umbrella brand. This will present a clear message to external audiences and make it easier

for them to associate “*who*” and “*what*” NWNC stands for when it comes to economic development and also assist each county by improving their local image.

When describing Alleghany, Surry, Stokes, Forsyth, Davie, and Yadkin to prospects outside of the state, Winston-Salem is the name mentioned. When describing Ashe, Blue Ridge is mentioned. And, when describing Rockingham, Greensboro is mentioned. It is recommended that all eight counties use one brand identity and theme when promoting the region outside of the state. Brand identities to consider include Winston-Salem, Winston, Greensboro, Greater Winston-Salem, and Northwest NC. In this case, there is not a single name that all counties use when referring to their geographical location. The most appropriate and logical regional brand identity to use is Northwest NC.



NWNC has been a region with a long tradition of being recognized for creating the world’s finest textiles, furniture, agriculture, technology, and arts and crafts. Many have recognized the region’s pristine natural beauty and creative talent. Film producers from all over the world select NWNC to create their movies. The region is enriched with art and culture. Winston-Salem founded the first Art Council in the U.S. and is home to a renowned art school, the North Carolina School of Arts.

Regional leaders feel that the most marketable economic development attributes of NWNC are:

- **Scenic Landscape** – NWNC is a place to escape to if you are a tourist, business travel, or resident, and enjoy the pristine mountains, hiking, and rafting. This provides a nice balance of work and play.
- **Creative Culture** – NWNC has an upscale art scene with some of the world’s most talented artists. The creative workforce, workforce development programs, and entrepreneurship resources are a major strength.
- **Motivated People** – People are results-oriented. NWNC has a wealth of business leaders, from seasoned Fortune 500 Executives with Martin Marietta, RJ Reynolds, Hanes, and Krispy Kreme, to entrepreneurs in the technology and design industries, Targacept, BREW Bikes, and Out of Your Mind.

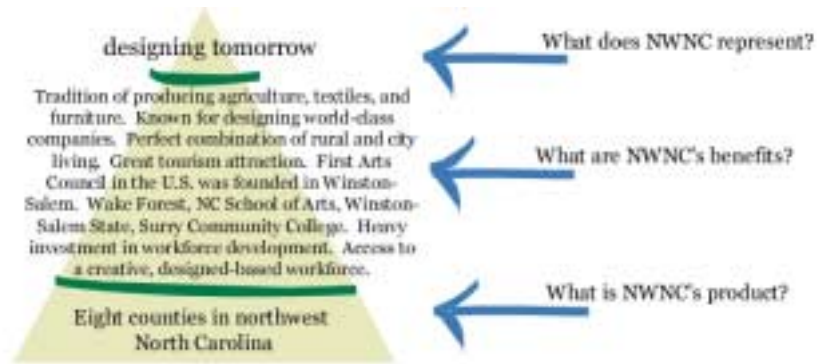
**The NWNC region is designing tomorrow.** As a phrase, “**design**,” reflects a unique aspect of **Northwest NC** – it has been a region that has had a tradition of nurturing and designing world-class companies. The region is also known for its unique artists that design beautiful furniture, fine art, crafts, and entertainment. It is a region that nature has designed for all types of recreation. Design is the most appropriate position to build upon when marketing locally and within the state.

The proposed theme is meant for the regional marketing committee to use when developing a logo and messaging to use in communication. Each county may consider jointly hiring one advertising firm to create the region and county logos. The region should have a style guide that denotes who, how, and when to use the logo. The style guide (logo rules) should

be distributed to county ED organizations and businesses throughout the region that will incorporate the message into their corporate marketing message.

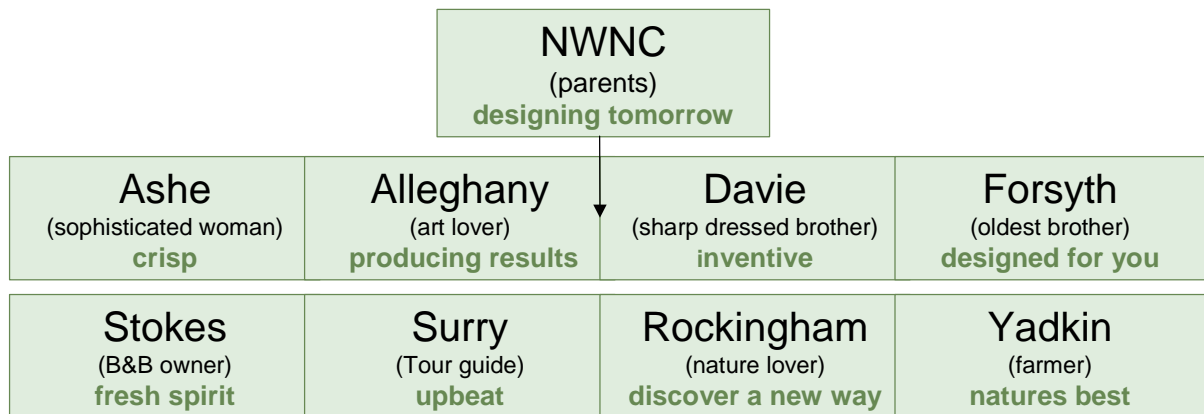
**Positioning the Region**

To stand out compared to competitors, NWNC should communicate a primary message centered on a unique quality of the community. The region’s core differentiator is “design.” **The region is similar to parents, planning for their children (counties’) futures.** A positioning pyramid technique determines the primary message to use in communication. It answers three questions (see the positioning pyramid illustration above) and is the foundation of all future promotional activities.



AE has provided economic development themes (see below) for each county, which supports this umbrella theme. The branding process looked at each county’s personality as if the county was a person within a family. The result is catchy themes that differentiate each county and support an umbrella theme of the region. The diagram below illustrates NWNC “family brand” tree. The MG explains the process that AE followed to create themes and further discusses why and how to use the brand themes.

**Family Brand Tree**



*This process looked at each county’s personality as if the county was a person within a family*

**Action 1: COG and RMC should review and agree on brand theme and messaging for regional communication.**

**Action 2: RMC should hire an agency to design the logo and style guide for distribution.**

**Action 3: RMC should revamp or create collateral to use for regional marketing.**

### **Regional Marketing Strategy Four: Launch regional internal marketing campaigns to increase awareness**

Just as local internal marketing activities build buy-in and awareness on particular issues, **the regional internal marketing campaign builds awareness on key issues that all counties face, such as the importance of education and entrepreneurship.** Having the right mix of publicity, promotion, and distribution of collateral is the recommended strategy for regional internal marketing.

It is important for the RMC to promote each county's primary economic development **Web site**, the lead ED organization, and link each site. Web sites are a preferred collateral for the majority of NWNK targeted audiences. Next, commit to **press relations (PR)** to cost effectively reach internal audiences and generate a buzz. As the *IEDC Economic Development Journal Summer 2003* issue states in the "A view from Corporate America" article, "nearly two-thirds (62%) of the business leaders identified 'articles in newspapers and magazines' as a leading source of information." The RMC may consider hiring a public relations (PR) firm to assist with writing and distributing press announcements. Focus on **promotional opportunities**, includes spreading information by word-of-mouth, attending regional industry events with local businesses, speaking at business networking events with key influencers, and jointly calling prospects to provide information on *why do business in NWNK*.

During the first year of receiving this plan, Northwest NC and specifically the RMC can consider implementing the following six activities. By jointly implementing these activities as an eight-county region it is cost and time efficient and will have a greater impact.

#### **Regional Internal Marketing Activities**

1. Implement a joint **publicity campaign** on three topics:
  - 1) education & workforce development,
  - 2) entrepreneurship, and
  - 3) ED vision & marketing.

*Each county contribute \$10,000 a year to hiring a PR firm.*
2. Support the regional awareness campaign by **advertising** (*Ask for discount space*).
  - Billboard
  - Main newspaper and business journal in each County
  - Main radio station in each County

3. Develop a **collateral** (value of education) piece with a letter that can be used in a direct mail campaign to residents and also reside on each county's ED Web site *Each county contribute \$1,500.*
4. Assist **regional economic development organization** (AW, PTP, and High Country Host) by supplying them the new logos and exact marketing message to use in revising their Web sites. *Have meetings to share information. Volunteer's time.*
5. Build awareness by having members of the RMC **speak at regional business association events.** *Volunteer's time.*
6. Host a **regional economic forecast conference.** The forecast could be held as an annual follow up to this strategy. *Ask sponsors to invest \$60,000. Charge \$85/person to attend.*

**Action 1: COG and RMC should review and agree on regional internal marketing campaigns**

**Action 2: RMC should plan to develop collateral, hire PR agency, obtain advertising space, and implement campaigns**

### **Regional Marketing Strategy Five: Develop and implement external marketing campaigns to recruit new businesses to the region**

NWNC should plan to discuss external campaigns during the mid-part of 2005 and begin implementing in 2006.

**Web sites, publicity, and targeted direct marketing are the most cost effective for communities to “get their message out.”** NWNC should balance these activities, be consistent in the message it conveys, and focus on campaigns that will directly reach prospects. The *IEDC Economic Development Journal Summer 2003* issue also states, “business leaders prefer dialogue with industry peers (56%) and business travel (47%) when it comes to expansion or relocation.” For this reason, AE recommends a recruitment marketing strategy that incorporates these preferred sources.

NWNC RMC should plan to jointly fund and implement the following five external activities.

#### **Regional External Marketing Activities**

1. Continue to recruit prospects from markets with high concentration of targeted businesses by taking a **mission** (business travel). *Volunteer's time*
2. **Publicity campaign** towards Target national publications  
*Budget \$5,000*
3. Jointly **sponsor industry conference** events.  
*Each County contribute \$3,000 for conference and \$2,500 for collateral*

4. Invest in a **CNBC's Odyssey media feature**  
*One 5-7 minute story - \$20,000, 82-million homes, also available for Web site  
Cost for 5-7 minute Web video \$5,000 – 10,000.  
Announce Virtual Arts Market Website. Each county contribute \$2,500*
  
5. Host a **two-day conference** for 10 national site selectors  
*Provide accommodations and a tour of regional assets  
Each county contribute \$2,000*
  
6. Have a **film contest** and create a movie showcasing the state of North Carolina  
Ask local creative film production companies to create a short 10-30 minute movie on  
"a well known individual from the region, popular tourist attraction, or night life /  
entertainment. The winner gets \$50,000 (from a local investor) to produce a full-  
length movie. Ask the business community leaders to fund contest.  
*Distribute documentary on local business leader to PBS and obtain additional  
funding to film new adventure (tourist draw) movie. Examples could include: A  
documentary on Phil Hanes, or an Adventure movie about young adults on a rafting  
tour at the Dan or Mayo Rivers.*

**Action 1: COG, PTP, AW, and the RMC should review and agree on regional external marketing campaigns during the mid part of 2005, including approving the budget (15,000 per county).**

**Action 2: RMC working closely with PTP and AW should plan to implement external campaigns.**

### **Regional Marketing Strategy Six: Measure and improve plan**

In the long term, a successful marketing initiative will result in an increase in the number and quality of companies expanding and starting operations in NWNC. The RMC should establish metrics to monitor the success of its marketing activities. These numbers should be calculated at least twice a year to assess whether NWNC's identity is better recognized at a national level. Please review the metrics section found within this report.

## Appendix 1: **Performance Metrics**

## Performance Metrics

An important component of the implementation of the Northwest North Carolina Strategic Plan is a monitoring system to track regional performance in the future. AngelouEconomics has identified several data sets that have been used during the strategic planning process that we believe will be good measures of economic performance. These data are easily found at state and national sources, are available at the county level, and should be considered good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its citizens.

Many state and local economic development organizations already use performance metrics. These data are also called “benchmarks,” as local data is usually placed side-by-side state or national data for comparison. By committing to measuring its achievements, NWNC will be joining the ranks of communities in Oregon, North Carolina, Minnesota, and Indiana who have developed successful benchmarking systems to monitor their economic performance. The performance metrics proposed in this plan provides NWNC leadership an excellent opportunity to demonstrate positive results of their efforts and policies and build confidence among the general public that the economy is heading in the right direction.

AngelouEconomics has identified several performance metrics for each recommendation area of this plan that could be used by county leaders to track progress:

### **Workforce Development**

- Job growth in non-manufacturing industries
- Average wage growth
- Unemployment rate
- SAT scores
- Educational attainment
- Drop out rates

### **Entrepreneurship**

- Net firm creation
- Venture capital inflows
- Membership in entrepreneurs associations

### **Infrastructure & Sites**

- Existence of business parks and sites
- Available developable acreage (with utility service)
- Commuter congestion
- Office and industrial vacancy rates

### **Quality of Life**

- Percent of population in the 25-34 age group
- Net migration of new people to the county/region
- Poverty rate
- Per capita income
- Parkland acreage per capita

**Marketing**

- State or national media mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity (info requests or visits)
- Tourism revenues

Each county may choose some or all of these metrics, and may have additional metrics that fit well with the county’s goals. AngelouEconomics recommends that performance be measured on a county-by-county basis and that each metric is benchmarked against the U.S. where possible (or to North Carolina if not). Metrics are best used when they are calculated as a share of the U.S. average. For example: Forsyth County’s average wage is currently \$31,700 (2002), or 93% of the U.S. average. Forsyth can then set goals to bridge the gap over time with the U.S.

Performance metrics work best when they are easily updated on an annual basis, are easy to understand by the general public, and are measures of results not activity (such as measuring marketing calls or conference visits).

Most of this data can be easily found online at the North Carolina LINC system website: <http://linc.state.nc.us/> This site is extremely comprehensive and monitors hundreds of social, economic, and political progress measures. Most data, but not all, is available on an annual basis.

AngelouEconomics recommends that NWNC counties identify the set of benchmarks that they will track, set goals for when the county will reach parity with U.S. levels, and monitor their progress. We provide an example table with actual benchmark data that can be used to start this discussion:

**Potential Performance Metrics  
Northwest North Carolina (8-county)**

	Job growth (CAGR) 2000-02	Non-mfg job growth (CAGR) 2000-02	Average Wage 2002	Unemploy- ment Rate 2002	Poverty Rate 2000	Per Capita Income 2001
<b>NWNC</b>	-3.5%	-0.2%	\$34,212	6.6%	11.3%	\$27,764
<b>North Carolina</b>	-1.3%	0.2%	\$32,696	6.8%	12.3%	\$27,308
<b>United States</b>	-0.6%	0.7%	\$36,744	5.8%	12.4%	\$30,413
<b>NWNC as % of U.S.</b>	0.0%	0.0%	93.1%	113.8%	91.1%	91.3%
<b>NWNC Target Benchmarks as a Percent of U.S.</b>						
1997			95%	70%	--	100%
2000	119%		89%	91%	91%	93%
2002	0%		93%	114%	--	91%
2007	83%		95%	103%	--	96%
2012	98%		100%	96%	85%	102%
2017	110%		105%	89%	--	107%
2022	124%		110%	84%	82%	112%

Appendix 2:  
**Table of Strategies, Funding, Timing, and  
Responsibility**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS		PROJECT TIMING	EST. COST	FUNDING SOURCES	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	
<b>Workforce and Education</b>						
<b>Strategy 1: Ensure K-12 is strong</b>						
<b>GOAL: Workforce development and education programs are focused on preparing a workforce for NWNC's target industries</b>	Action 1: Increase awareness of post H.S. options	2004	TBD	Volunteer and Donation, Bill Gates and State	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	Action 2: Develop a CART Program	2004	\$1-2 million	Private sector, Community Colleges, ISDs, Counties, Cities, Foundations)	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	Action 3: Invest in technological infrastructure	2005+	TBD	Volunteer and Donation, Bill Gates and State	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	Action 4: Develop an Adopt-A-School program	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation, Bill Gates and State	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	<b>Strategy 2: Improve adult education for workers</b>					
	Action 1: Examine other communities for ideas	2004	NA		Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	Action 2: Seek funding for program development	2005/2006	TBD	Private sector, Community Colleges, ISDs, Counties, Cities, Foundations)	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	Action 3: Market new programs	2006	TBD	Private sector, Community Colleges, ISDs, Counties, Cities, Foundations)	Northwest NC School Systems, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
	<b>Strategy 3: Create and enhance college programs</b>					
	Action 1: Workforce board should become familiar with target industry skill requirements	2004/2005	NA	Budgeted (WF Board & CC Staff time)	WF Boards, Community Colleges, ISDs, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers	
<i>Train workers for the biotechnology industry</i>						
<i>Train workers for the design industry.</i>						
<i>Train people for the hospitality industry</i>						
<b>Strategy 4: Develop workforce training programs geared toward Hispanic population</b>						
Action 1: Continue to support ESL programs	2006	TBD	Budgeted (WF Board & CC Staff time)	WF Boards, Community Colleges, ISDs, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers, Churches		
Action 2: Promote programs	2006	TBD	Budgeted (WF Board & CC Staff time)	WF Boards, Community Colleges, ISDs, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers, Churches		
Action 3: Develop cultural awareness programs	2007+	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	WF Boards, Community Colleges, ISDs, State of NC, Private Sector, Chambers, Churches		

Entrepreneurship					
<b>GOAL: Entrepreneurship and small business growth are significant drivers of the economy.</b>	<b>Strategy 1: Provide innovative entrepreneurial educational resources</b>				
	Action 1: Think entrepreneurially in K-12 programming / investment	2006, if not already underway	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	NWPCOG, AW, PTP, Chambers, ED Organizations, Private Sector
	<i>Junior Achievement program in Middle/High School                      Youth leadership training program in 10th/11th grade                      Business plan competition for all high school students                      Summer entrepreneurship training program for teachers</i>				
	<b>Strategy 2: Better connect venture capital, angel investors, and entrepreneurs</b>				
	Action 1: Broaden TEI, BREC, and other entrepreneur programs to regional level	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 2: Host monthly entrepreneurs' events	2006	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 3: Host a one-day entrepreneurial educational workshop with SBDC, CC, and Chambers	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation, Admission Fees	TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 4: Develop a regional entrepreneurs' association	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 5: Develop regional entrepreneurs' association Web site	2006	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	<b>Strategy 3: Improve access to capital for startup and small businesses</b>				
	Action 1: Market existing loan programs	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	Banks, TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 2: Provide local banks with resources that educate them on supporting small companies	2006	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	Banks, TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector
	Action 3: Link to regional venture capital and angel investor network	2005	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	Banks, TEI, BREC, NCREI, NWPCOG, SBDC, Chambers, Private Sector, PAN
	<b>Strategy 4: Create a virtual arts market.**</b>				
	Action 1: Develop and promote the site	2004/2005	\$500,000	National Arts Council, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, Foundations	NWPCOG, AW, PTP, Chambers, ED Organizations, Private Sector
<b>Strategy 5: Develop a National Design Institute and Formalize a Regional Design Collaborative</b>					
Action 1: Examine Models such as AustinChips (www.AustinChips.com)	2004	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	NWPCOG, TEI, BREC, NCREI, Design Industry Representatives	
Action 2: Begin holding informal design networking opportunities throughout region.	2004	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	NWPCOG, TEI, BREC, NCREI, Design Industry Representatives	

Quality of Life					
<p><b>GOAL: NWNC offers a place for its residents to live, play, and work., and the region is an appealing place to live for young professionals and individuals employed by target industry companies.</b></p>	<b>Strategy 1: Expand parks and recreation - preserve green space</b>				
	Action 1: Develop a regional greenway plan	2007/2008	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	Action 2: Organize and attract major regional and national sporting events	2007/2008+	TBD	User taxes, Foundation Support, Donations	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	Action 3: Use parks and recreational amenities as part of a larger regional marketing package	2006+	NA	Part of existing tourism promotion	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	<b>Strategy 2: Invest in the beautification and revitalization of downtowns</b>				
	Action 1: Incentivize business growth in the region's downtowns				Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	<i>NWPCOG become clearing house for model ordinances and programs</i>	2005+	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	
	<i>Sponsor annual downtown revitalization conference</i>	2006+	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	
	<b>Strategy 3: Become nationally known as a center for fine crafts and design</b>				
	Action 1: Recognize local artists and artistic ventures as ED prospects	Immediately	NA	NA	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	Action 2: Support a virtual arts market for Northwest North Carolina arts and fine craft.**	<i>(see Entrepreneur Section above)</i>	NA	<i>(see Entrepreneur Section above)</i>	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	<b>Strategy 4: Foster an environment to take advantage of Yadkin Valley's Viticulture region</b>				
	Action 1: Send regional delegation to Napa Valley	2006	TBD	Volunteer and Donation	Vineyards, Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
	Action 2: Create regional package tours promoting wine industry with other tourism amenities	2006		Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Vineyards, Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partership, Advantage West, NWPCOG

Sites and Infrastructure				
<p><b>GOAL: NWNC's sites and infrastructure meet the needs of target industries and a growing population.</b></p>	<b>Strategy 1: Meet resource needs of the PTRP**</b>			
	<i>Low Cost Lab Space, Additional Infrastructure Needs (to expedite development for biotechnology applications)</i>			
	2004+	\$20 Million	Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, Participants in National Nanotechnology, Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Treasury (DOTreas), Department of Commerce (DOC), Department of State (DOS), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Defense (DOD), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Energy (DOE), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Intelligence Community (IC), Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Department of Transportation (DOT), National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	PTRP, WFU, Idealliance, Chamber of Commerce, W-S, Forsyth County, PTP
	<b>Strategy 2: Provide w/ww infrastructure to Hwy 421 / I77**</b>			
	Action 1: Obtain funding for infrastructure improvements			
	2006+	\$5 million	EPA, USDA, EDA, Golden Leaf, Private Sector Investment, NCDOC, Foundations	Yadkin County and Yadkin Cities, NWPCOG
	Action 2: Meet with landowners to determine development interests			
	2004	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Yadkin County and Yadkin Cities, NWPCOG
	Action 3: Seek outside developer interest in site			
	2005	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Yadkin County and Yadkin Cities, NWPCOG
	Action 4: Consider an interlocal agreement to develop a business or industrial park			
	2005/2006	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Yadkin County and Yadkin Cities, NWPCOG
	<b>Strategy 3: Build the remainder of I73 and I74, &amp; both legs of Northern Beltway**</b>			
	Action 1: Continue to strengthen local and state delegation for this project			
	2004+	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, NWPCOG, FedEx, NC State Legislators
Action 2: Obtain private sector support for this project (i.e., FedEx)				
2006+	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, NWPCOG, FedEx, NC State Legislators	
<b>Strategy 4: Cooperate regionally on the FedEx development</b>				
<i>Continue to collaborate with other municipalities.</i>				
2004	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, NWPCOG, FedEx, NC State Legislators	
<i>Hold additional economic benefits workshops to educate public</i>				
2004	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, NWPCOG, FedEx, NC State Legislators	
<b>Strategy 5: Look to the Smith-Reynolds airport as a satellite facility for FedEx</b>				
Action 1: Determine required funding for initiative.				
2006	\$75,000	FAA, State of NC, and local sources, including private sector contributions..	Chamber of Commerce, W-S, Forsyth County, PTP, FedEx	
Action 2: Seek legislative support (state and federal)				
2007/2008	NA	NA	Chamber of Commerce, W-S, Forsyth County, PTP, FedEx	
<b>Strategy 6: Improve telecommunications capacity.</b>				
Action 1: Improve cellular phone capacity				
			Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG	
<i>Develop model ordinances for municipalities</i>				
2005	NA	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants		
<i>Provide annual conference on model cellular phone reception programs</i>				
2006	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants		
Action 2: Develop wireless networks				
			Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG	
<i>Hold regional workshop with telecommunications providers to begin developing more WiFi downtowns in region</i>				
2005	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants		
<b>Strategy 7: Develop regional industrial parks</b>				
Action 1: Hold regional forum focused on new legislation ( <i>interlocal cooperation</i> )				
2004	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG	
Action 2: Determine potential regional projects for interlocal agreements				
2005	TBD	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State/Federal Grants	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG	

Marketing				
<b>Strategy 1: Form a regional marketing committee with representation of each county in the region</b>				
Action 1: COG asks each counties lead ED organization to nominate two individuals to be on regional committee	Immediately	NA	NA	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
<b>Strategy 2: Each county reviews recommendations and funds regional marketing plans</b>				
Action 1: Each county contribute to the region's internal campaigns	2004	\$100,000	Golden Leaf, Private sector, AW, PTP, COG and RMC (\$12,500	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD
Action 2: Each county contribute to the region's external campaigns	2006	\$80,000	Golden Leaf, Private sector, AW, PTP, COG and RMC (\$10,000 per county in the NWNC region)	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG
<b>Strategy 3: Create a brand for the region and hire marketing agency to develop logo</b>				
Action 1: Review and agree on the new brand for the region	Immediately	NA	NA	Chambers, Cities, Counties, TRIAD Partnership, Advantage West, NWPCOG, RMC
Action 2: Hire agency and distribute logo style guide	2004/2005	\$20,000	Volunteer, Donation, Public Sector, Foundations, State of NC, Counties	NWPCOG, RMC
Action 3: Revamp regional ED Web site to present a unified message		NA	NA	Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
<b>Strategy 4: Launch regional internal marketing campaign</b>				
Action 1: Implement a joint publicity campaign	2004	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 2: Support regional PR campaign with select advertising	2004	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 3: Develop "value of education" collateral	2004 Q3	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 4: Update regional ED organizations Web sites	2005	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 5: Speak at regional business associations' events	2004	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 6: Host a regional economic forecast conference	2006+	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 1	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
<b>Strategy 5: Develop and implement external marketing campaign</b>				
Action 1: Host a two-day site selector conference	2008	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 2	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 2: Have a film contest - create a documentary film on a business leader and / or tourists attraction	2006	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 2	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 3: Invest in a CNBC Odyssey media feature - Announce virtual market Web site	2005	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 2	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 4: Take or continue taking missions to benchmark communities	2005	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 2	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
Action 5: Jointly sponsor industry conferences	2008	NA	See Marketing, Strategy 2, Action 2	RMC, Chambers, Cities, Counties Lead ED organization, TRIAD Partnership, AW, NWPCOG
<b>Strategy 6: Measure and readjust the plan</b>				
Review Metrics Section for examples on developing metrics	2004	NA	NA	Cities, Counties, NWPCOG, AW, PTP
Determine county and/or regional entity who will lead metrics development and evaluation	2004	NA	NA	Cities, Counties, NWPCOG, AW, PTP

**GOAL: NWNC is engaged in a proactive, targeted marketing campaign.**

**\*\* Regional Priority Project**

<b>KEY:</b>	
AW	Advantage West
BREC	Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council
NCREI	North Carolina Rural Entrepreneur Initiative
NWPCOG	Northwest Piedmont Council of Government
PAN	Piedmont Angel Network
PTP	Piedmont Triad Partnership
PTRP	Piedmont Triad Research Park
RMC	Regional Marketing Committee (New)
TEI	Triad Entrepreneur Initiative
WFU	Wake Forrest University