



Laurinburg Economic Development Strategic Plan

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CREATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING, LLC

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Executive Summary

Laurinburg is remaking itself. After seeing unemployment top 18% during the recession, the economy has slowly recovered. The new economy is built on key industry sectors like automotive, diverse small businesses, and tourism. The I-74 corridor, along with the airport, are transportation assets that will attract distribution and manufacturing companies. The highway also opens up Laurinburg to more tourists interested in outdoor recreation. Laurinburg citizens are passionate about restoring the vitality of the community. They see the keys to growth as education, downtown revitalization, and recruiting quality jobs that can not only entice young people to stay and but also draw new people to move to the city.

The economic development strategic planning process was sponsored by ElectriCities of N.C., Inc., as a service to its member communities. ElectriCities knows that companies and people invest in communities that invest in themselves. This strategic plan will guide Laurinburg to make strategic investments that will result in a stronger, more sustainable economy.

The strategic planning process included community engagement, SWOT Analysis, and economic and demographic research. An asset-based approach to strategic planning was used, building goals, strategies, and action steps around Laurinburg's assets and future opportunities. Laurinburg's strengths include Richmond Community College, St. Andrews, UNC Pembroke, future I-74, Laurinburg-Maxton Airport, and the city's designations as a Certified Retirement Community and three-time All America City. The city struggles with many issues related to long-term poverty, including work ethic, crime, housing, declining population, and lack of private investment. Economic development opportunities include workforce development, I-74 travelers, small business growth, tourism, and downtown revitalization. Most of the threats identified are things that Laurinburg can impact, key ones being attitude, perception, community division, and appearance.

The Laurinburg Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines strategies in branding, education, new business recruitment, site and building development, small business development, and leadership. The economic development goals, strategies, and action steps are summarized on the next page. We encourage a full read of this report to understand the context of the strategic plan.

Laurinburg has been investing in infrastructure and amenities that will make the city attractive to business and residents. The new linear park in downtown is one example. Another is public art and the partnership with students at UNC Pembroke. In partnership with the county, Laurinburg is attracting business and industry that will provide better paying jobs. In order to combat the chief concern of citizens – poverty – the city will need to continue and increase its efforts in economic development.

Laurinburg Economic Development Strategic Plan Summary

Goal: Brand and Market Laurinburg

- Strategy: Change the Laurinburg Story
- Actions: Branding, Public Information Officer, City Website, Economic Development Website, Certified Retirement Community

Goal: Leverage the Education Assets of the Region

- Strategy: Strengthen Partnerships with all Levels of Education
- Actions: Align high school and RCC programs with target sectors, College Internship Program, Work Ethics Certification

Goal: New Business Recruitment

- Strategy: Create a Superior Product to Attract Quality Companies
- Actions: Targeted Marketing, Streamline Regulatory Process

Goal: Quality Sites, Buildings, and Business Parks

- Strategy: Develop Buildings and Qualify Sites
- Actions: Extend Infrastructure, Spec Building, Incubators for Manufacturing and Small Business, Vacant Building Grant

Goal: Business Support and Downtown Development

- Strategy: Make Small Business Big Business in Laurinburg
- Actions: Economic Gardening, Business Retention, Pop-Up Markets, How-to Kits, Retail Development, Student Engagement

Leadership Development

- Strategy: Educate and Engage the Next Generation of Laurinburg Leaders
- Actions: Leadership Programs, Young Leaders, East Carolina University Economic Development Training

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis was compiled using information from interviews, a community survey, and staff and leadership input. In total, approximately 140 people had input into the strategic plan. Please refer to Appendix B for full results of the community survey.

Laurinburg needs to tell the positive story of revitalization and turn citizens into ambassadors and community champions. The city has assets like St. Andrews University and UNC Pembroke, a highway network, and available land and buildings. At the same time, it is struggling with poverty, work ethic, and resources to invest in economic development.

Strengths

- Richmond Community College
- St. Andrews, UNC Pembroke
- Future I-74
- Laurinburg-Maxton Airport
- Certified Retirement Community
- Proximity to Ft. Bragg
- Three-time All America City
- Health care

Weaknesses

- Work ethic
- Declining population
- Long-term poverty
- Local regulatory process
- Crime, safety
- Lack of private investment
- Recreation facilities and activities for youth
- Leadership supporting economic development

Opportunities

- Workforce development
- I-74 travelers
- Small business development
- Leverage St. Andrews and UNC Pembroke
- Tourism development
- Downtown revitalization
- Retirement industry development
- Re-brand the city

Threats

- Low education levels
- Divided community
- Leadership
- Crime, drugs
- Poverty
- Declining property values
- Negative attitude
- Appearance

STRENGTHS

Sound economic development strategies are built upon assets. Laurinburg citizens noted higher education assets such as Richmond Community College, St. Andrews, and UNC Pembroke, along with available land and buildings. Future I-74 brings lots of travelers and easy access for business and industry. Laurinburg is a Certified Retirement Community and three-time All American City.

- ⦿ Richmond Community College, training programs
- ⦿ St. Andrews University and UNC Pembroke
- ⦿ Location, proximity to population centers
- ⦿ Hwy 74, major beach transportation route
- ⦿ Industrial and business areas and available land
- ⦿ Scotland Memorial Hospital
- ⦿ Scotland County Public Schools
- ⦿ Laurinburg-Maxton Airport and railroad
- ⦿ City's support of economic development
- ⦿ Festivals and sporting events
- ⦿ Welcoming attitude and family atmosphere
- ⦿ Three-time All-America City
- ⦿ Quality of unemployed labor force
- ⦿ Available homes for sale
- ⦿ Certified Retirement Community
- ⦿ Scotland County Economic Development Corporation
- ⦿ Near Fort Bragg
- ⦿ Small business base
- ⦿ Infrastructure
- ⦿ Available empty facilities
- ⦿ Arts & cultural programs
- ⦿ Revitalizing the downtown area

WEAKNESSES

Public sentiment on the survey ranged from community champion to overwhelmingly negative perceptions of the city. One comment on the survey read, “Who would want to come here after reading the constant negativity?” The negative internal perceptions, press, and public relations is hindering economic growth. Companies invest in communities that invest in and believe in themselves. The rhetoric in Laurinburg needs a positive change in order to attract outsiders to live, work, and visit the city.

- ⊙ Available jobs and trained workers
- ⊙ Work ethic
- ⊙ Lack of industry and recruitment incentives
- ⊙ Recreation facilities, activities for youth, family recreation
- ⊙ High taxes
- ⊙ Crime, safety
- ⊙ High energy cost
- ⊙ Dining and shopping options
- ⊙ Declining population
- ⊙ Inspections department difficult to work with
- ⊙ Literacy
- ⊙ Long-term poverty
- ⊙ Lack of private investors
- ⊙ Lack of professional planning
- ⊙ Downtown area
- ⊙ Loss of the middle class
- ⊙ Low income housing
- ⊙ Laurinburg receives bad publicity: one of the poorest counties, unhealthy population, high crime
- ⊙ Socio-economic decline: brain-drain and out-migration of people with the most opportunities
- ⊙ Competing with larger communities for long-term opportunities
- ⊙ Reluctance of business owners/ developers to invest in rural areas

OPPORTUNITIES

Laurinburg's opportunities leverage assets such as transportation, available land, and higher education. Future I-74 attracts many travelers that could be enticed to stay overnight or pull off the highway to shop, eat, and recreate. Available land has been developed into business parks and sites. Engaging St. Andrews and UNC Pembroke in entrepreneurship, small business development, and the arts can create a win-win for students and the city. The small, passionate group of champions in Laurinburg will be called upon to get behind these, and other, opportunities.

- ⦿ Workforce training, specifically for trades: brick mason, plumbers, electricians
- ⦿ Resident recruitment
- ⦿ Economic diversification
- ⦿ Capitalize on Hwy 74 travelers
- ⦿ Restaurants, lodging, entertainment, retail
- ⦿ Small businesses
- ⦿ New business incentives
- ⦿ Fill vacant existing facilities
- ⦿ Develop green industries
- ⦿ Industrial parks
- ⦿ Healthcare system
- ⦿ Technically-oriented school system
- ⦿ Leverage Richmond Community College and St. Andrews University
- ⦿ Partnership with UNC Pembroke
- ⦿ Leadership development
- ⦿ Young entrepreneurs moving back to invest into the community
- ⦿ Leverage I-74 and the airport
- ⦿ Investment in arts and cultural programs
- ⦿ Recreational facility development such as a YMCA
- ⦿ Tourism development
- ⦿ Invest in our schools
- ⦿ Leverage fiber infrastructure
- ⦿ Attract young professionals
- ⦿ Break the cycle of poverty
- ⦿ Retirement industry development
- ⦿ Aggressive local and state level marketing of available industrial sites
- ⦿ Pro-active city council and administration
- ⦿ Revitalize downtown
- ⦿ Re-brand the city

THREATS

“The most critical threat to economic growth is a township that is not willing to adapt to change”-survey respondent. Laurinburg, like all cities, is changing. The threat is not shaping that change to maintain the character of the community. Other threats include appearance, lack of leadership, negative internal public relations, and apathy. Laurinburg’s assets are concrete items like highways and infrastructure, while threats are intangibles like attitude.

- ⦿ Increasing taxes
- ⦿ Poorly educated workforce
- ⦿ Lack of workforce skills
- ⦿ Divided community
- ⦿ Our city council
- ⦿ High utility bills
- ⦿ No new business development
- ⦿ Declining customer base and investors
- ⦿ Crime rate, drugs, gangs
- ⦿ Not marketing to the community and surrounding communities
- ⦿ Poverty
- ⦿ Litter, appearance
- ⦿ Lack of work ethic
- ⦿ Property values declining
- ⦿ Lack of unity in local government, no clear unified vision or leadership
- ⦿ Small businesses competing with chain stores
- ⦿ Decline of population, especially young people
- ⦿ Amount of Section 8 housing
- ⦿ Bad publicity
- ⦿ Apathy, negative attitudes
- ⦿ People shopping and/or moving out of town
- ⦿ Competing with similar communities who are aggressively offering incentive packages

WHAT IS ONE THING THAT LAURINBURG DOES BETTER THAN OTHER TOWNS?



Economic and Demographic Profile

The consulting team analyzed economic and demographic data to get a snapshot of how Laurinburg is changing. The full data set can be found in Appendix A. The main take away from this research is that the city needs to attract quality jobs that will attract more educated people who will invest in homes, businesses, and the community. The declining labor force, low income levels, and lower educational attainment contribute to the issues many citizens are concerned about: poverty, work ethic, crime, and declining property values. Laurinburg is not alone in the struggle to turn an economy around – most small, rural communities have many of the same challenges.

Summary

- ⦿ The 2015 population of Laurinburg is 15,694. Over the last five years, the population has declined by 1.71%, while the region and state have seen population increases. There was a slow decline in 2011-2012, then further declines after 2013.
- ⦿ Laurinburg has fewer young workers, ages 25 - 54, than the county, region, and state. The median age in the city increased from 37.7 to 40.2 from 2010 to 2015, and remains above the regional and state averages. With the population above the age of 60 growing and educated young people leaving, there is a negative impact on educational attainment.
- ⦿ Laurinburg, Scotland County, and the Fayetteville MSA are more racially diverse than the state.
- ⦿ Overall, educational attainment (73.2% are high school graduates or higher) falls below the county, regional, and state averages. The SAT scores of Scotland County (1,282) are below the state (1,485) and national averages (1,453), as are the ACT scores (approximately 86% of state average).
- ⦿ Per capita and median household incomes fall below the state average by about one-third. Recruiting jobs that pay above the average wage will be important to Laurinburg to increase income levels.
- ⦿ Homes are more affordable in Laurinburg and Scotland County than in the region, making Laurinburg a good value for home buyers. However, lower home values could indicate a limited inventory of professional and management housing.
- ⦿ The labor force is declining, a real concern for economic development. Anecdotally the labor force decline is attributed to discouraged workers leaving the labor force. The unemployment rate is declining; however, it remains above the regional average.

*Population
declined by
1.71%*

*73.2% high school
graduate or higher*

*Labor force
declining*

- ◎ Most people are employed in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, Government, Education and Health Services, and Manufacturing. The highest paying sectors are Information, Manufacturing, and Construction. It is important to note that one of the largest employment sectors, Manufacturing, is also one of the highest paying sectors, at \$952 a week. The overall average weekly wage is \$652.61.
- ◎ Approximately 83% of all Scotland County businesses have less than 10 employees, making small business development an important part of the economic development strategy. That figure is consistent with the state average.
- ◎ Retail sales and collections of sales and use tax have been increasing after a one year decline in 2012-2013.
- ◎ A quality of life feature of Laurinburg is that more people have a shorter commute than in the county and region. Approximately 23% commute less than 10 minutes.
- ◎ The tourism industry has seen growth in total expenditures, payroll, and employment.
- ◎ The index crime rate in Scotland County has been decreasing since 2011, 30% over the five-year period.

\$652.61
avg. weekly wage

Crime rate
decreasing

Economic Development Strategic Plan

The Laurinburg survey clearly identified what citizens believe are the most important goals for economic development. Citizens ranked education and workforce development, new business recruitment, and existing business support as the top three economic development strategies. This aligns with the concern expressed over schools and quality jobs. Following this top group of strategies, small business and entrepreneur development, retail and commercial development, recreation and infrastructure improvements were ranked next. Citizens want to see these strategies result in local job creation, better paying jobs, increased business-start-ups, and downtown revitalization. Laurinburg's economic development goals are designed to produce the results desired by citizens and community leaders.

The **goals** of the strategic plan are:

- ◎ Brand and Market Laurinburg
- ◎ Leverage Higher Education Assets
- ◎ New Business Recruitment
- ◎ Sites, Buildings, and Businesses Parks
- ◎ Business Support and Downtown Development
- ◎ Leadership Development

Goal: Brand and Market Laurinburg

Laurinburg needs to create a positive story and tell it often, so often that others begin to tell the Laurinburg story. One of the major hurdles to growth is the negative perception of what it is like to live, work, and play in Laurinburg. Through a branding campaign and internal marketing, we believe that Laurinburg can shift the story to a positive one about transformation.

Strategy: Change the Laurinburg Story

Action Steps:

- ⦿ Engage a branding firm to assist the city with a branding campaign. Recently, ElectriCities developed a new logo for Laurinburg, but the rest of the brand should be developed and disseminated. For example, the logo and brand can be extended to street banners, the city website, and tourism ads. The brand should reinforce the history and assets of Laurinburg, while at the same time creating a sense of transformation.
 - Implement the brand throughout the city and on the website and social media.
 - Encourage partner agencies to use the brand, such as the tourism department.
 - Ask businesses to include the new tagline in their marketing materials.
- ⦿ The city is hiring a Public Information Officer (PIO) who will have the responsibility to market Laurinburg as well as manage the Main Street program.
 - We did not find links to any social media channels on the city website. The Twitter account has not been updated in months, and we could not find a Facebook account. The PIO should update all social platforms and maintain regular communications. Social media is time-consuming; however, it is an important means of communicating the Laurinburg story.
 - Update the events calendar on the website. People need to know that good things are happening in Laurinburg.
- ⦿ A new city website is under development. We recommend the city create an economic development site within the city website.
 - Make the economic development site a marketing site. The images on the Planning and Community Development site are of code enforcement issues. Change to images that will attract people and businesses to Laurinburg.
 - Add information about downtown redevelopment, available buildings, incentive programs, and Main Street programs.
 - Under the business heading, add information on how to start a business (see starter kits below), who to contact, and resources.
 - Spotlight a few businesses on a rotating schedule to show the good things that are happening in the economy.
 - In the News section of the website, add connections to social media channels, discussed above.
 - The city site will have weekly video updates from the manager. Link these to the economic development site.

- ☉ Laurinburg is a Certified Retirement Community, a state designation that indicates an “unprecedented quality of life sought by the mature community.” The “retire in NC” logo should be prominently displayed on the city’s new website and marketed.

Goal: Leverage the Education Assets of the Region

Citizens voted education and workforce development as the number one economic development strategy. They see a direct corollary between developing a qualified workforce and economic success. The strategy also aligns with the many comments on combating poverty, low incomes, crime, and poor work ethic. Currently, students who are dual-enrolled in Scotland County High School and Richmond Community College can continue community college classes after graduation tuition free. This a progressive step toward combating poverty.

Strategy: Strengthen Partnerships with all Levels of Education

Action Steps:

- ☉ Align the curriculum at the high school level with target sectors. An example is Monroe/Union County developing industry specific academies within high schools. Monroe has an aerospace cluster and has developed an Aviation Academy. Laurinburg can be the voice that encourages Scotland County Schools to develop academies for agri-industry and food processing, aviation and aerospace, defense, and logistics. Another example is in York County, SC, where the school system partners with a logistics firm to fill backpacks with food for students. The logistics company uses their technology to determine what to put in the backpacks and students work to fill the packs, kind of like on-the-job-training.
- ☉ Laurinburg will have a full Richmond Community College campus by 2019. This presents an opportunity to align not only high school curriculum with target sectors, but also community college training programs.
 - Ensure that RCC offers industry certifications used in target sectors such as aviation, automotive, etc.
- ☉ Engage students at St. Andrews University and UNC Pembroke in a formal internship program. Develop a list of companies with internship opportunities and work with the universities to match students to employers. This will give students an opportunity to learn, while at the same time opening the door for them to become employed and stay in Laurinburg.
 - Seek interns for city government. This will expand capacity of city staff and encourage graduates to stay in Laurinburg.
- ☉ Explore integrating a Work Ethics Certification Program in Scotland County High School. The program is currently in Greenwood and Dorchester Counties in South Carolina. Students volunteer to enter the program. They agree to be assessed on team work, communication skills, showing up on time, completing assignments on time, etc. After completion, students are awarded a gold, silver, or bronze certificate. Greenwood County, SC, companies recognize the credential in the hiring process.

Goal: New Business Recruitment

If Laurinburg is going to attract quality jobs that pay above average wages, it must be a stronger partner and supporter of the Scotland County EDC, which leads external marketing and business recruitment and is the primary contact for prospective new businesses.

Strategy: Create a Superior Product to Attract Quality Companies

Action Steps:

- ◎ Scotland County does not have stated targets for recruitment. The Southeast Regional Partnership targets advanced textiles, agri-industry and food processing, aviation and aerospace, biotechnology, defense and military, distribution and logistics, energy, and metalworking. Laurinburg has assets that support all of these sectors except for biotechnology; however, we recommend the city focus on agri-industry and food processing, aviation and aerospace, distribution and logistics, and defense and military. Automotive should be a separate target of Scotland County given the existing cluster.
 - Work with Scotland County EDC to add information to its website that explains why Laurinburg and Scotland County are a good location for these target sectors.
 - Add targeted marketing information on agri-industry, food processing, aviation and aerospace, distribution and logistics, and defense and military on the city economic development website. Include information on assets that support each sector, such as the how the transportation network can support distribution.
 - Use the ElectriCities site consultant's database to market the opportunities in Laurinburg. Regular eblasts are low cost and low time commitment.
 - In partnership with the EDC, host EDPNC on tours of available sites and buildings.
- ◎ The regulatory process was cited as being onerous by some businesses. Even though Scotland County oversees much of the permitting, inspections, zoning, and other regulatory processes, the city can advocate for a more business-friendly approach.
 - Enact a best practice from Chatham County – the Technical Review Team. Every week Chatham County has a standing meeting open to developers to meet with every involved department. There is representation from planning, zoning, inspections, utilities, fire, etc. Developers get consistent answers at the meeting with input from all departments. This addresses the issue of getting one answer from one department and a conflicting answer from another department.
 - In BRE visits, ask about experiences with the regulatory process and begin quantifying and reporting business concerns.

Goal: Quality Sites, Buildings, and Business Parks

Laurinburg has no buildings and only three sites listed with EDPNC's online database of industrial property. The overwhelming majority (80%) of prospects wants or prefers an existing building. Of the three sites, one is an ElectriCities Smart Site, a qualified, shovel-ready site.

Strategy: Develop Buildings and Qualify Sites

Action Steps:

- ◎ The Pate 82 Site, 82 acres, is a NC Certified Site. The shortcoming is that utilities are not at the site. The information on the EDPNC website reads, "City has 2MGPD water and waste capacity to serve site. Although not on site, all utilities can be installed in less than 6 months." Prospects expect water and sewer to be at the site. It is a key elimination factor. The county is pursuing funding to extend infrastructure. We recommend this be a priority for the city and county.
- ◎ The 104-acre Smart Site is a qualified, shovel-ready site. The next steps for this site:
 - Post the Smart Site on the city's new economic development website (see above).
 - There are only a few more steps to make this site a NC Certified Site. We recommend Laurinburg move forward with state certification because it will create another marketing advantage.
 - Start planning for a spec building development on the Smart Site. Laurinburg's lack of available industrial buildings is a serious disadvantage. Catawba County has used a public-private partnership model to develop its last two spec buildings. The county and city carried the cost of interest, electric utilities, insurance, and taxes for up to three years while a developer carried the cost and risk of the building. The total local government commitment was approximately \$200,000.
- ◎ The Scotland County Incubator Site is ideal for small businesses and start-ups. Investigate developing a small manufacturing incubator. A good example is in Abbeville, SC. The community raised funds through a U.S. Economic Development Administration Grant and local utilities tax revenue to build a 22,000 SF incubator that will house four manufacturing companies. Read more about the project here: <http://www.creativeedc.com/growing-small-ideas-into-big-business/>.
- ◎ The Sanford Building, once vacated by the city, would make an ideal small business incubator. The location near downtown, the layout, and ownership by the city are all positives. A good example of a small business incubator is in Danville, VA, <http://www.drbdc.com/index.html>.
- ◎ Develop a vacant building grant to encourage reuse of facilities.
 - In downtown, the incentive could be structured like an industrial incentive, a grant based on net new tax revenue.
 - For industrial development, the vacant building incentive could be a lower threshold for investment or jobs, a higher percentage of grant, or additional years of the grant.

Goal: Business Support and Downtown Development

The bread and butter for all economies is small business. Laurinburg is no different – 83% of businesses than less than 10 employees. Focusing on small business development, retention and expansion, and entrepreneurship will help with economic diversification and growth.

Strategy: Make Small Business Big Business in Laurinburg

Action Steps:

- ◎ Have the city's Planning and Community Development Department adopt an economic gardening approach. Economic Gardening™ was pioneered in Littleton, CO, several years ago as a strategy to help small businesses grow.
 - Use retail leakage information to council existing small businesses on market expansion opportunities.
 - Implement a business retention and expansion program for small businesses.
 - Host, in partnership with the chamber of commerce, networking opportunities, business expos, and other events for small businesses to connect.
 - Organize the small business resource providers into a streamlined team, providing efficient and effective service.
 - Host a quarterly/semi-annual meeting of service providers to network.
 - Post a resource providers guide on the new economic development site.
 - The new RCC Small Business Center Director will be housed in Laurinburg. Leverage this opportunity for additional seminars, classes, and outreach.
- ◎ Scotland County EDC has a business retention and expansion program; however, the city's Planning and Community Development Department can focus on visiting small businesses and visiting larger employers with the EDC.
 - Set a goal of visiting 100 small businesses every year. The purpose is to identify businesses poised for expansion (or closure) and provide services and connections that help them grow locally.
- ◎ Promote the concept of pop-up markets for Main Street. Pop-up events are a way to encourage foot traffic in downtown, eventually creating enough traffic to support a business start-up. Examples of pop-ups include food truck events and short-term retail, dining, and entertainment.
- ◎ Create "how to start a business" information and place on the website. Some cities have starter kits with all information and contacts to get a business up and running.
- ◎ The city is promoting a site near Food Lion for retail development. Through ElectriCities, Laurinburg is using Retail Strategies to assist with recruitment of retail companies. Auto parts and home furnishings are two sectors with the highest retail leakage.
- ◎ Engage St. Andrews and UNC Pembroke students with the city more.

- Provide transportation from campus to festivals and special events in the city.
- Advertise outdoor recreation and outdoor events on campus.
- Even though St. Andrews is several miles from downtown, consider how, over time, the campus can be connected to downtown via a greenway.

Goal: Leadership Development

Leadership is THE defining factor of economic success. From community engagement for this study, we found that Laurinburg's leadership is fractured. No level of effort in economic development will be successful without consensus, collaboration, and cooperation of leadership.

Strategy: Educate and Engage the Next Generation of Laurinburg Leaders

Action Steps:

- ◎ Laurinburg and Scotland County have several leadership development programs in place. Continue to support them:
 - Leadership Scotland
 - Young Professionals Network
 - Citizens Academy
- ◎ A critical component to leadership development is engaging future leaders, especially as more boomers retire and millennials enter the workforce. Pledge to recruit at least one person under the age of 30 to serve on every city committee, advisory board, and commission. Encourage partners (chamber, EDC, civic groups) to take up the pledge.
- ◎ East Carolina University has started a new economic development training program for community leaders. A pilot project was recently completed in Vance County. Contact ECU to see if Scotland County/Laurinburg can be the second community to host the training program.

Implementation Guide

This strategic plan is meant to be implemented over a three-year period. Each year, we recommend Laurinburg identify a few action steps to work on. We also recommend that Laurinburg revisit the strategic plan annually to update and make course corrections. Below is a suggested outline for implementation categorized by years one through three.

01

- Branding Campaign
- Public Information Office Position
- Targeted Marketing
- Infrastructure Extended to Pate 82 Site
- Vacant Building Grant Program
- Economic Gardening Approach
- "How to Start a Business" Kits on Website
- Market the Certified Retirement Community Designation
- Community Leader Economic Development Training

02

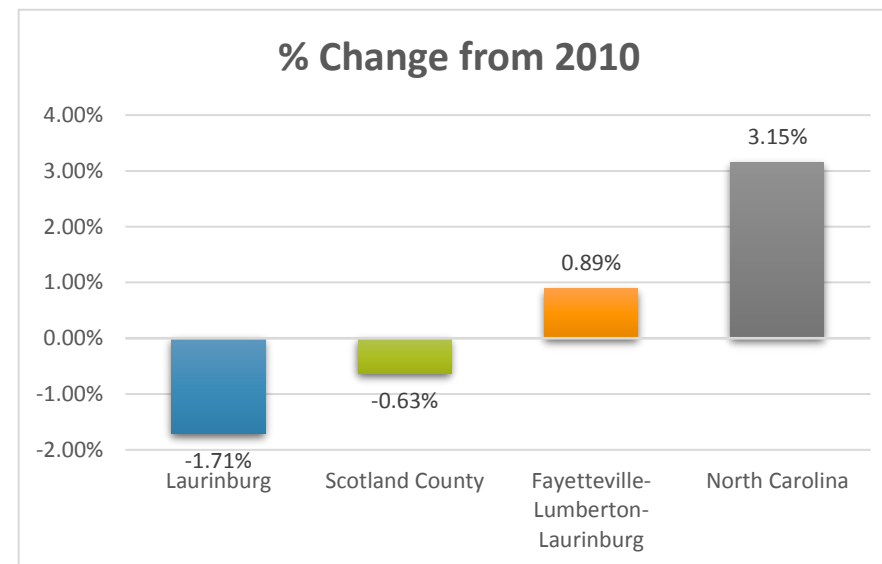
- Economic Development Website
- High School and RCC Curriculum Aligned with Target Sectors
- Work Ethics Certification
- Regulatory Process Reform
- Spec Building on Smart Site
- Small Business Incubator
- Pop-Up Downtown Markets
- Provide St. Andrews and UNC-P Students Transportation to Special Events

03

- UNC Pembroke and St. Andrews University Internship Program
- Manufacturing Incubator
- Young Leader Engagement

Appendix A: Economic and Demographic Profile

Population	2010	2015	% Change 2010 - 2015
Laurinburg	15,962	15,694	-1.71%
Scotland County	36,157	35,932	-0.63%
Fayetteville-Lumberton-Laurinburg	541,611	546,481	0.89%
North Carolina	9,535,483	9,845,333	3.15%



Source: www.census.gov (American Fact Finder Population Data for 2010 and 2015. American Community Survey 5 year estimates)

Age Distribution	Laurinburg		Scotland County		Fayetteville-Lumberton-Laurinburg	North Carolina
	2010	2015	2015	2015		
Total population	15962	15694	36157	35932	541611	9535483
Under 5 years	7.89%	6.71%	6.90%	6.35%	8.16%	6.63%
5 to 9 years	6.65%	7.24%	6.32%	6.94%	7.30%	6.67%
10 to 14 years	6.45%	7.35%	7.25%	6.14%	7.08%	6.62%
15 to 19 years	7.81%	7.02%	7.58%	7.07%	7.29%	6.92%
20 to 24 years	7.27%	7.67%	6.22%	7.44%	8.72%	6.94%
25 to 34 years	11.15%	9.49%	11.41%	11.17%	15.12%	13.07%

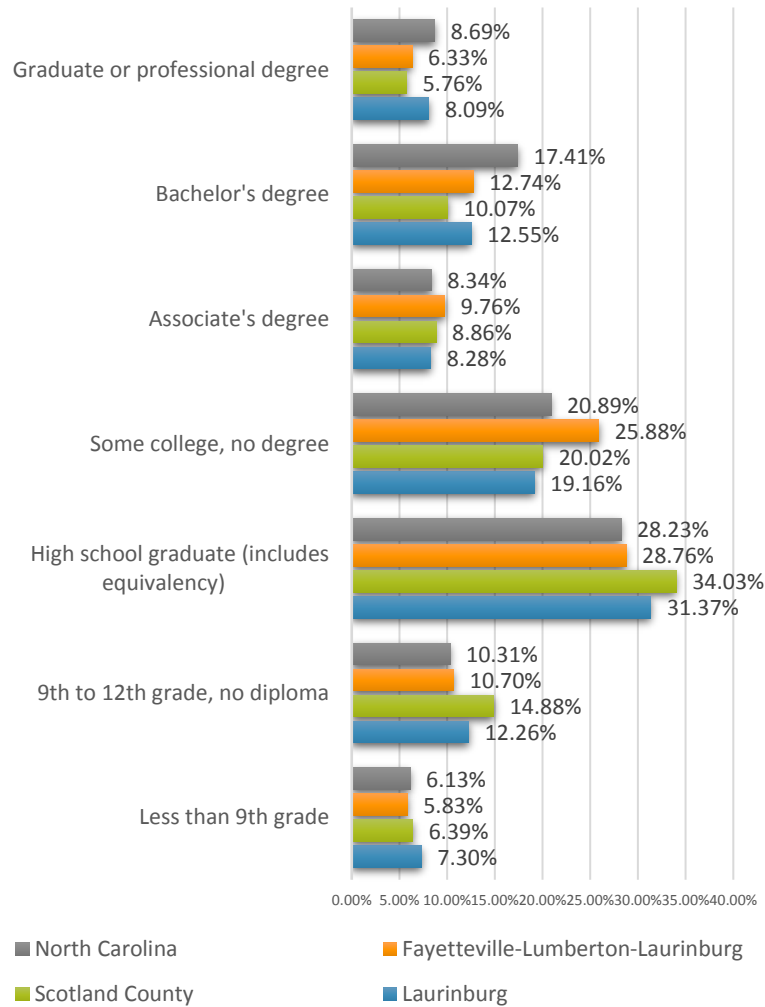
35 to 44 years	10.89%	10.88%	12.69%	12.56%	12.66%	13.92%
45 to 54 years	13.20%	12.32%	14.43%	13.31%	12.78%	14.35%
55 to 59 years	6.91%	7.21%	7.25%	6.89%	5.68%	6.30%
60 to 64 years	5.87%	7.14%	6.37%	6.92%	4.89%	5.64%
65 to 74 years	8.01%	8.99%	7.80%	8.88%	6.12%	7.32%
75 to 84 years	5.33%	4.87%	4.09%	4.25%	3.06%	4.08%
85 years and over	2.57%	3.12%	1.70%	2.09%	1.14%	1.55%
Median Age	37.7	40.2	38.4	39.1	32.1	37.4

Source: www.census.gov (American Fact Finder 2010 and 2015 & American Community Survey Data)

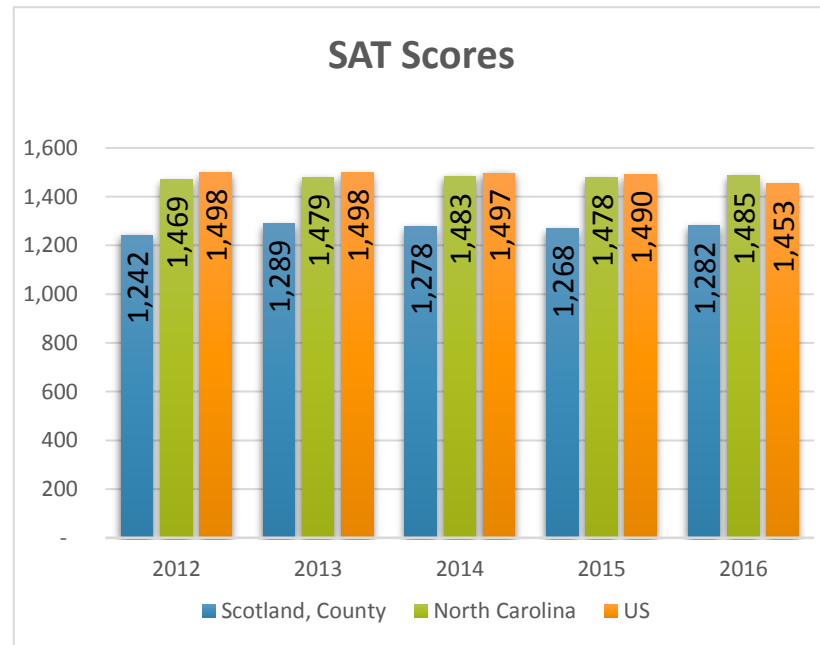
Race Distribution	Laurinburg		Scotland County		Fayetteville- Lumberton- Laurinburg	North Carolina
	2010	2015	2010	2015	2015	2015
White Alone	42.39%	40.97%	45.92%	41.89%	41.08%	65.27%
Black Alone	46.65%	46.13%	38.40%	35.83%	32.37%	21.18%
American Indian Alone	5.95%	6.27%	10.68%	9.70%	11.30%	1.14%
Asian Alone	0.97%	1.35%	0.76%	7.25%	1.64%	2.17%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.03%	0.00%	0.02%	0.02%	0.21%	0.06%
Some Other Race Alone	0.08%	0.11%	0.14%	0.05%	0.30%	0.16%
Two or More Races	1.89%	1.94%	2.00%	2.77%	3.90%	1.63%
Hispanic Origin	2.04%	3.22%	2.09%	2.50%	9.20%	8.39%

Source: www.census.gov (American Fact Finder 2010 and 2015 & American Community Survey Data)

Educational Attainment 25 Years & Older



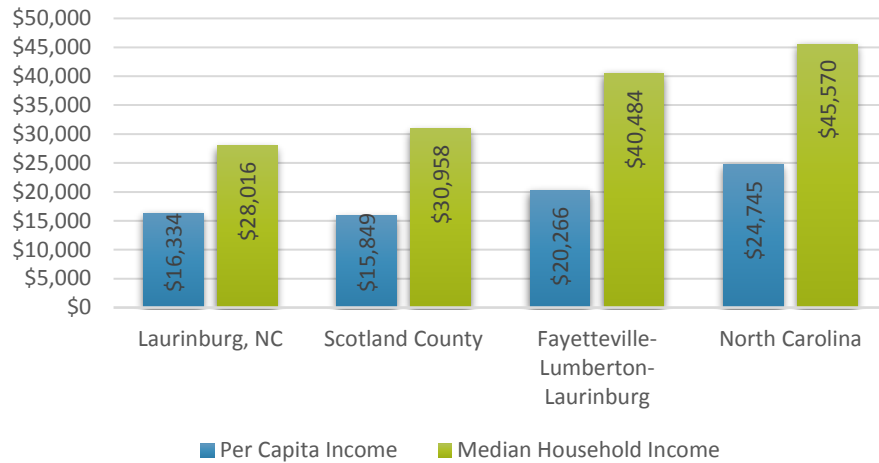
SAT Scores



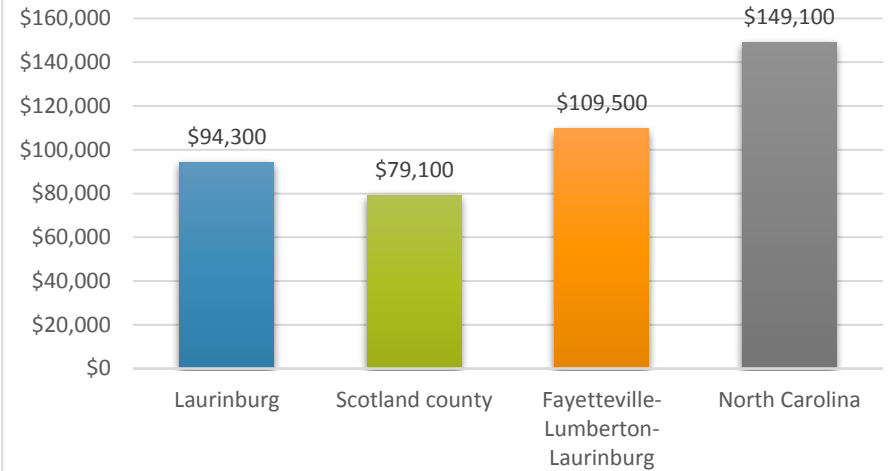
Source: NC Department of Public Instruction

Source: www.census.gov (American Fact Finder 2010 and 2015 & American Community Survey Data)

2015 Income Data

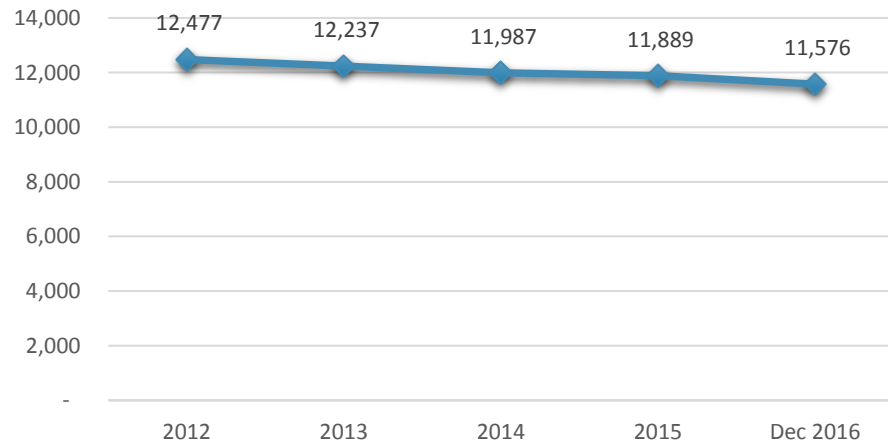


Median Home Value



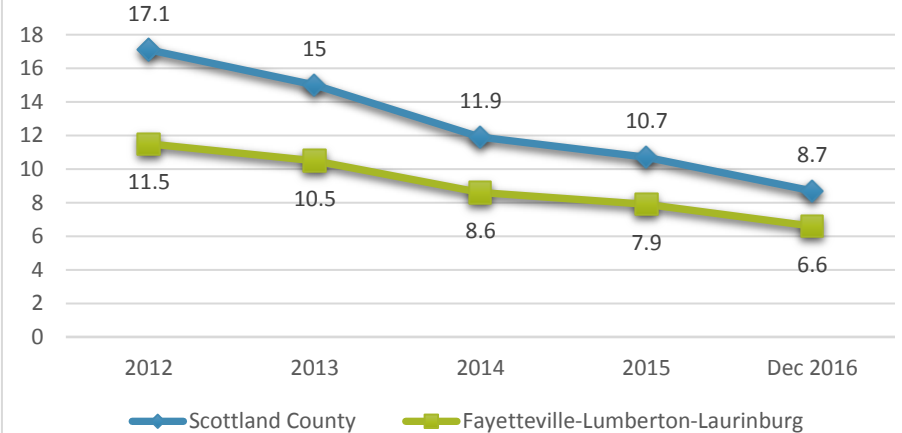
Source: www.census.gov (American Fact Finder 2010 and 2015 & American Community Survey Data)

Scotland County Labor Force



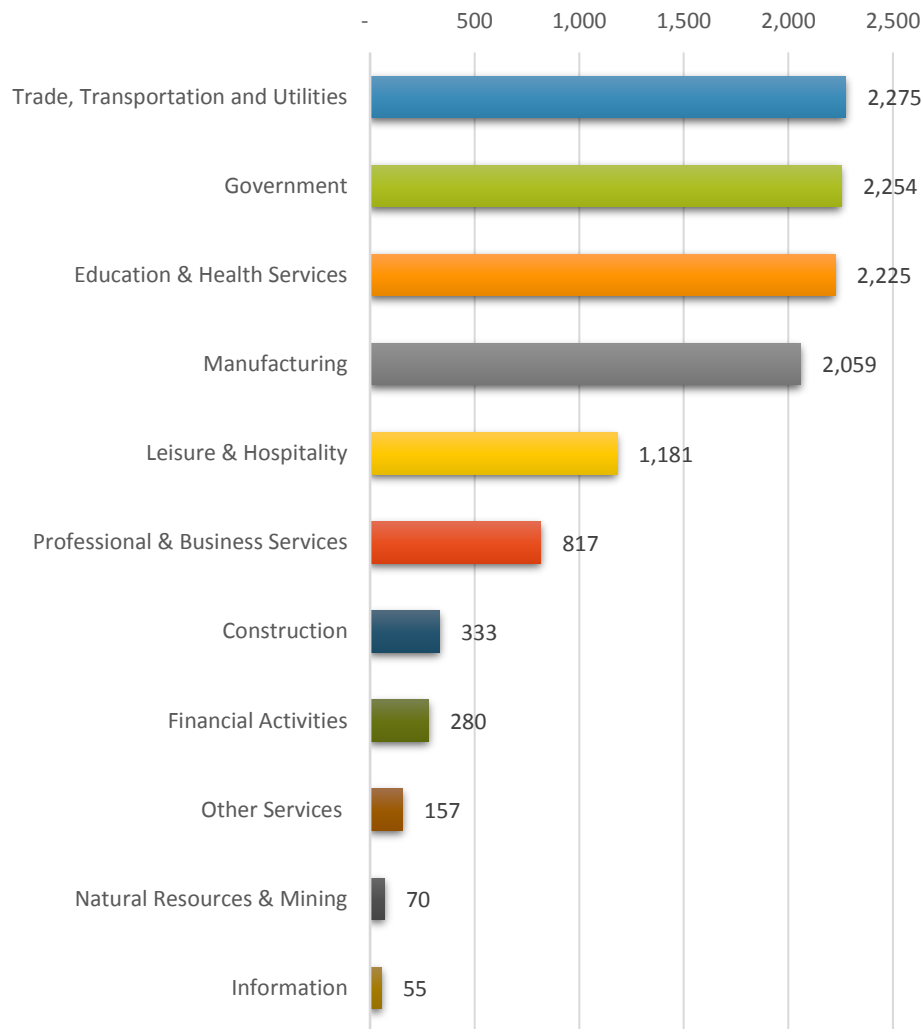
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

Unemployment Rate



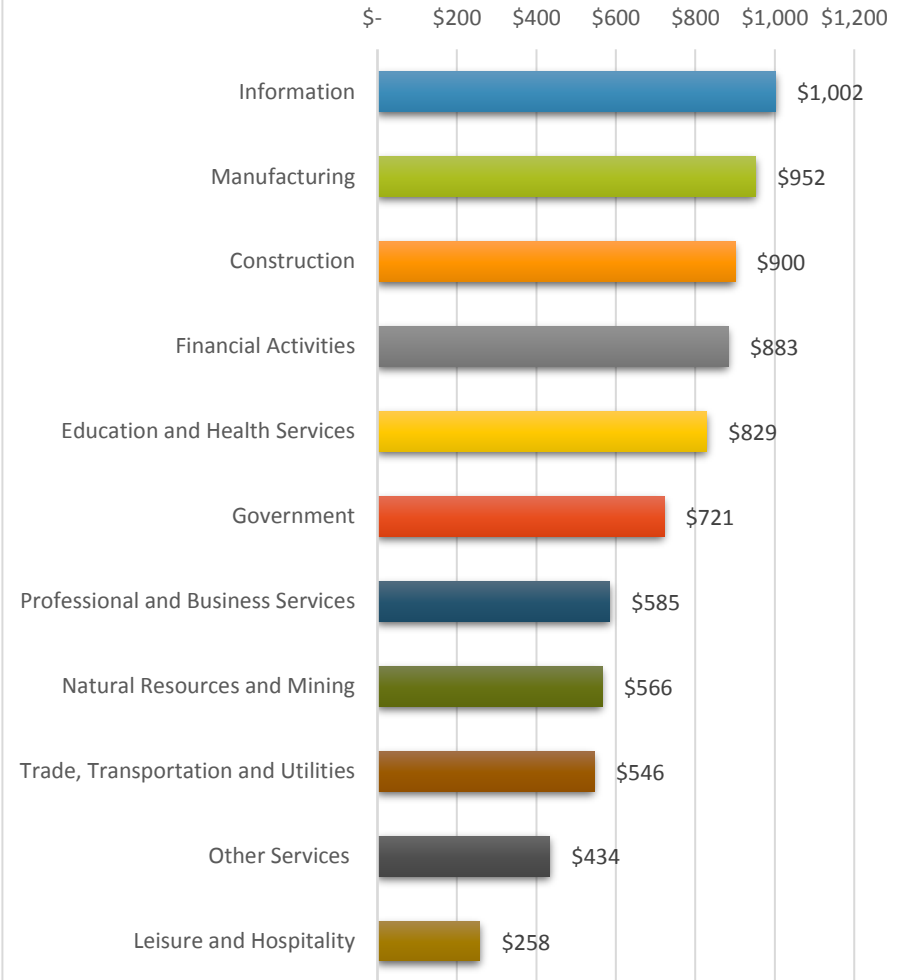
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

Employment by Industry



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

2016 Scotland County Average Weekly Wage by Sector



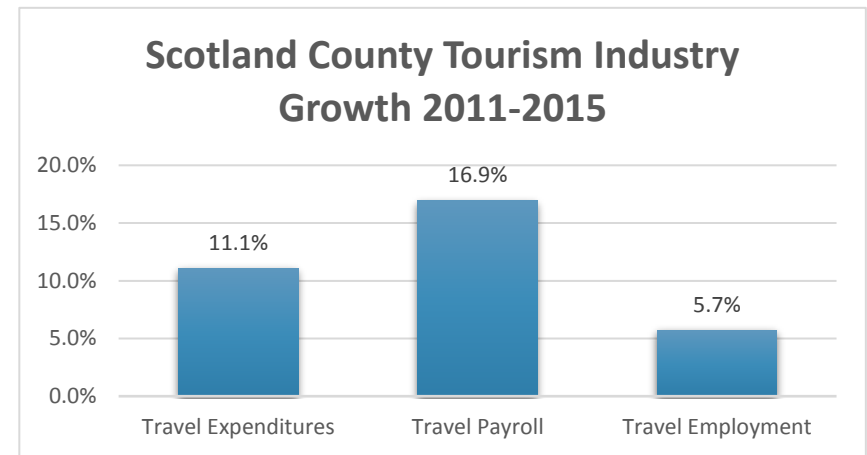
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

Scotland County Top Employers			
Rank	Company	Industry	Employment Range
1	Scotland County Schools	Education & Health Services	1000+
2	Scotland Memorial Hospital (A Corp)	Education & Health Services	500-999
3	NC Dept Of Public Safety	Public Administration	500-999
4	Feck (North Carolina) LLC	Manufacturing	250-499
5	Scotland County	Public Administration	250-499
6	Wal-Mart Associates Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	250-499
7	Pilkington North America Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
8	Maverick Transportation LLC	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	250-499
9	Farmers Furniture Co	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249
10	Hanesbrands, Inc	Manufacturing	100-249
11	Saint Andrews Presbyterian College	Education & Health Services	100-249
12	Meritor Heavy Vehicle Systems LLC	Manufacturing	100-249
13	The Presbyterian Home Inc	Education & Health Services	100-249
14	Railroad Friction Products Corp	Manufacturing	100-249
15	1990	Public Administration	100-249
16	Scottish Pines Rehabilitation & Nur	Education & Health Services	100-249
17	Nics Pic Kwik Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249
18	Lowes Home Centers Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249
19	Kordsa Inc	Manufacturing	100-249
20	Debbies Staffing Services	Professional & Business Services	100-249
21	Service Thread Mfg Co	Manufacturing	100-249
22	Carolina Container Co (A Corp)	Manufacturing	100-249
23	Food Lion	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	50-99
24	Hoff Companies Inc	Leisure & Hospitality	50-99
25	Rostra Precision Controls Inc	Manufacturing	50-99

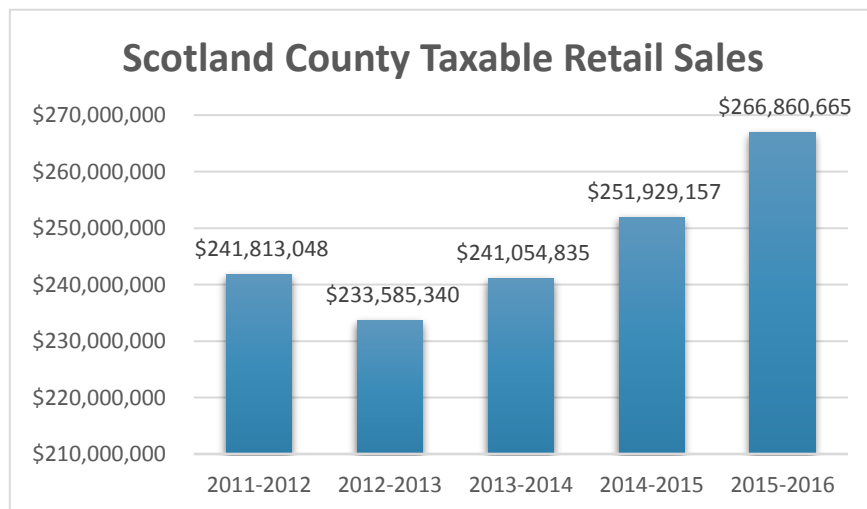
Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce (www.nccommerce.com)

2011-2015 Employment Stages				
ESTABLISHMENTS	2011	% of TOTAL	2015	% of TOTAL
ALL	1,464	100%	1,573	100%
Self-Employed (1)	203	13.9%	213	13.5%
Stage 1 (2-9)	1,008	68.9%	1,089	69.2%
Stage 2 (10-99)	236	16.1%	251	16%
Stage 3 (100-499)	14	1%	17	1.1%
Stage 4 (500+)	3	0.2%	3	0.02%

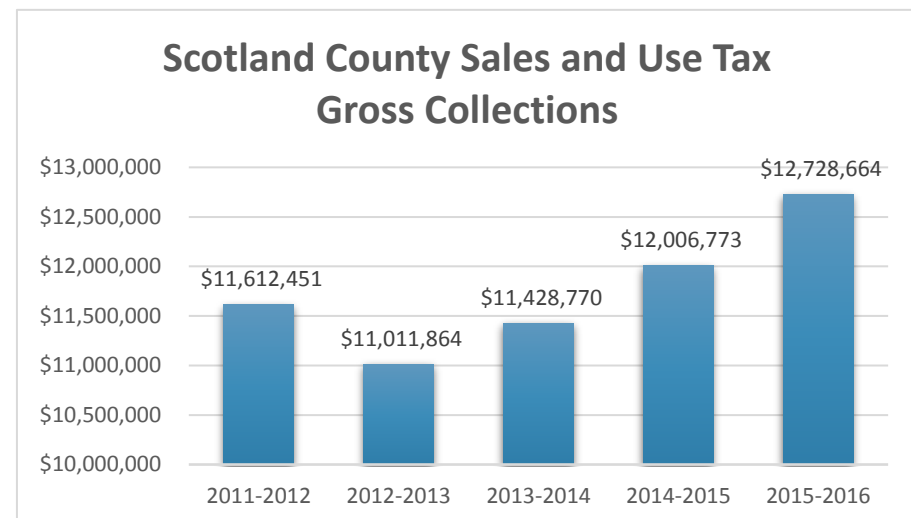
Source: YourEconomy.Org



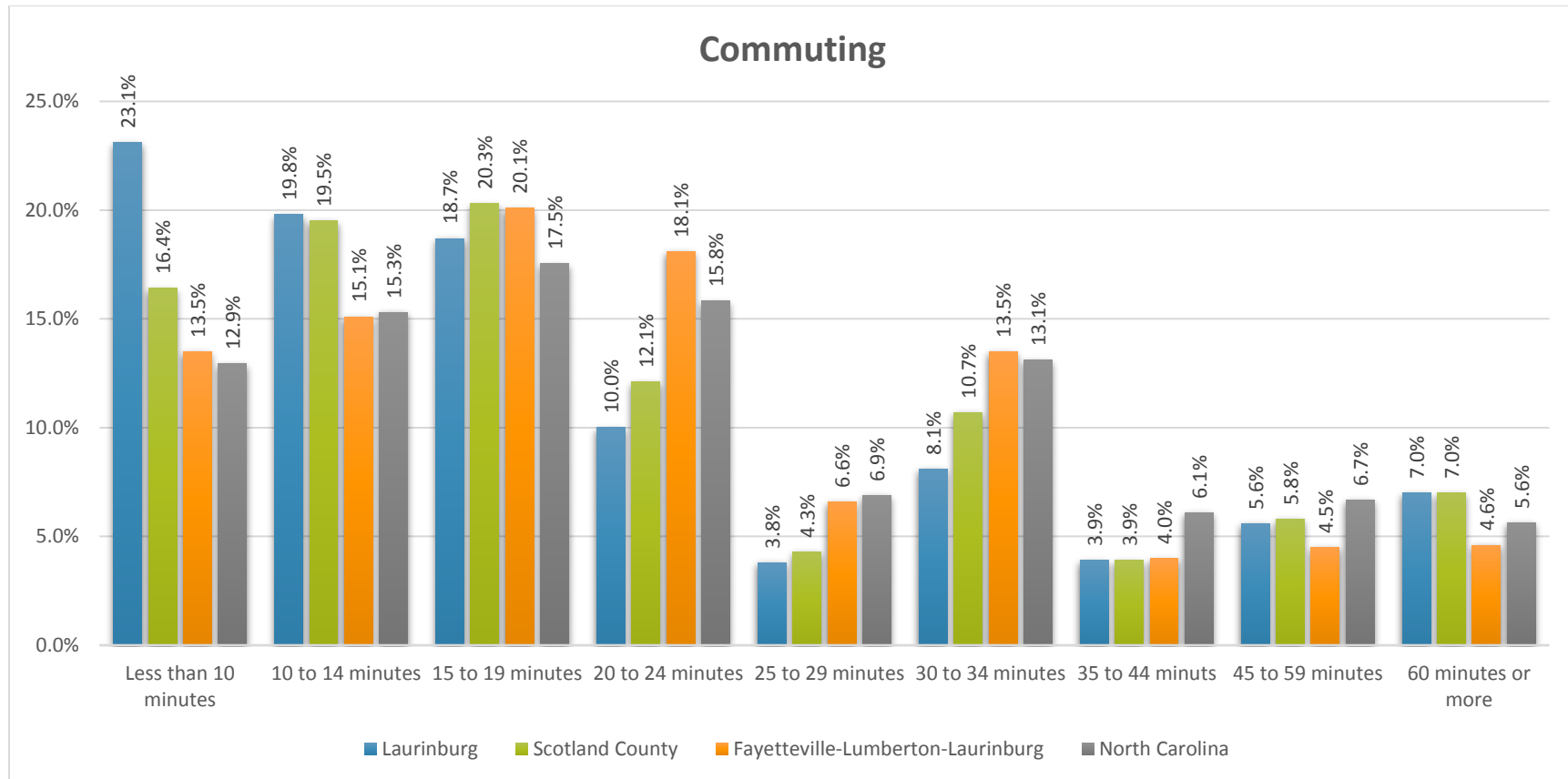
Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management



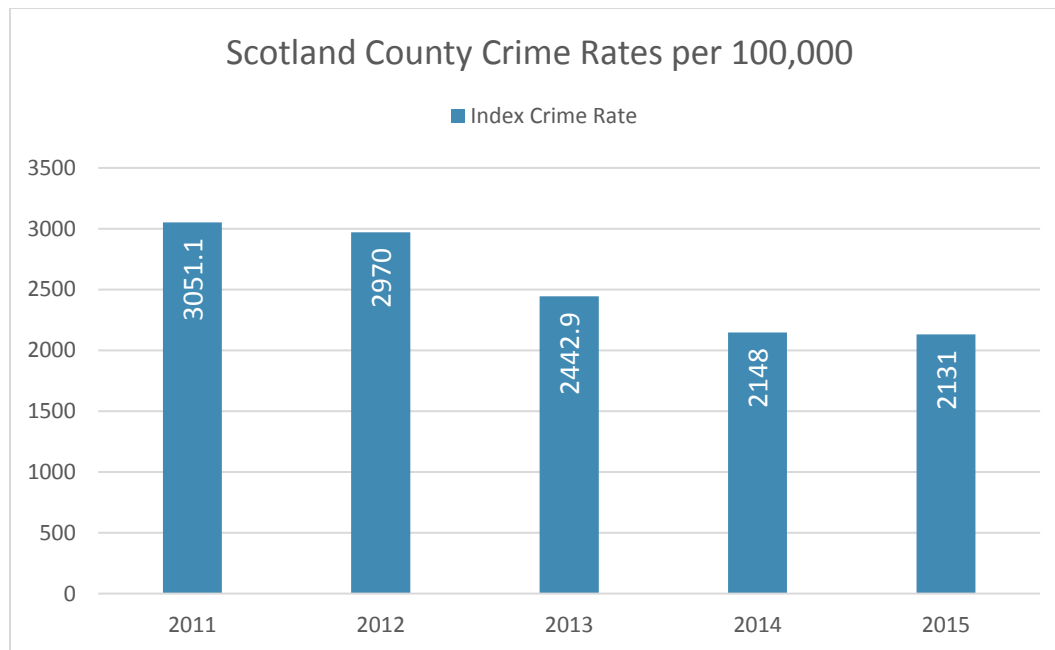
Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue (www.dornc.com)



Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue (www.dornc.com)



Source: U.S. Census (www.census.gov American Fact Finder/American Community Survey)



Source: NC Department of Justice

Retail Leakage-Retail Market Place Profile

Summary Demographics

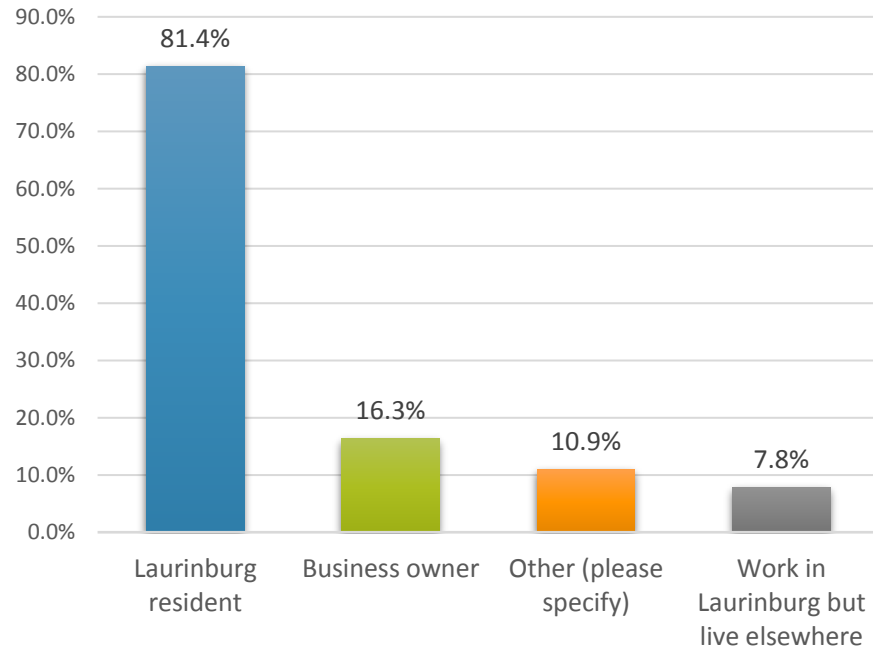
2016 Population	16,129
2016 Households	6,278
2016 Median Disposable Income	\$23,926
2016 Per Capita Income	\$16,931

NAICS Industry Summary		Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$141,415,137	\$345,770,718	-\$204,355,581	-41.9	173
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$128,740,749	\$305,772,543	-\$177,031,794	-40.7	126
Total Food & Drink	722	\$12,674,388	\$39,998,175	-\$27,323,787	-51.9	47
NAICS Industry Group		Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$29,945,791	\$26,615,833	\$3,329,958	5.9	9
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$25,254,306	\$19,738,165	\$5,516,141	12.3	3
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$2,416,157	\$0	\$2,416,157	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$2,275,328	\$6,877,668	-\$4,602,340	-50.3	6
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$4,363,517	\$13,190,574	-\$8,827,057	-50.3	8
Furniture Stores	4421	\$2,758,851	\$12,779,296	-\$10,020,445	-64.5	7
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$1,604,666	\$411,278	\$1,193,388	59.2	1
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$5,707,392	\$5,921,847	-\$214,455	-1.8	4
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$7,973,475	\$21,988,901	-\$14,015,426	-46.8	8
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$7,363,589	\$21,449,638	-\$14,086,049	-48.9	6
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$609,886	\$539,263	\$70,623	6.1	2
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$23,565,481	\$56,204,219	-\$32,638,738	-40.9	20
Grocery Stores	4451	\$21,754,690	\$53,790,219	-\$32,035,529	-42.4	16
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$1,149,236	\$2,414,000	-\$1,264,764	-35.5	4
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$661,555	\$0	\$661,555	100.0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$7,875,053	\$14,615,584	-\$6,740,531	-30.0	15
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$9,024,453	\$38,260,987	-\$29,236,534	-61.8	13
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$5,195,057	\$7,927,761	-\$2,732,704	-20.8	15
Clothing Stores	4481	\$3,456,171	\$3,955,987	-\$499,816	-6.7	9
Shoe Stores	4482	\$776,646	\$2,914,851	-\$2,138,205	-57.9	4
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$962,240	\$1,056,923	-\$94,683	-4.7	2
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$3,033,818	\$21,026,684	-\$17,992,866	-74.8	5
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$2,519,397	\$20,335,691	-\$17,816,294	-78.0	3
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$514,421	\$690,993	-\$176,572	-14.6	2
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$22,610,750	\$91,076,070	-\$68,465,320	-60.2	14
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$16,932,714	\$81,543,176	-\$64,610,462	-65.6	7
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$5,678,036	\$9,532,894	-\$3,854,858	-25.3	7
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$6,732,998	\$8,944,083	-\$2,211,085	-14.1	15
Florists	4531	\$186,077	\$584,793	-\$398,716	-51.7	3
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$1,052,165	\$2,014,540	-\$962,375	-31.4	1
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$549,339	\$1,192,919	-\$643,580	-36.9	3
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$4,945,417	\$5,151,831	-\$206,414	-2.0	8

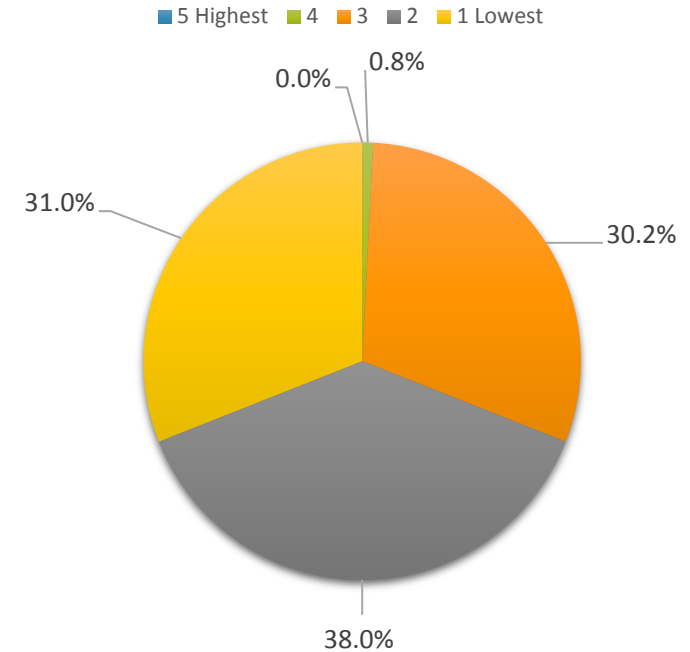
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$2,712,964	\$0	\$2,712,964	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$1,670,293	\$0	\$1,670,293	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$145,106	\$0	\$145,106	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$897,565	\$0	\$897,565	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$12,674,388	\$39,998,175	-\$27,323,787	-51.9	47
Special Food Services	7223	\$114,427	\$59,259	\$55,168	31.8	1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$803,872	\$0	\$803,872	100.0	0
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$11,756,089	\$39,938,916	-\$28,182,827	-55	46
Source: Esri and Infogroup. Retail MarketPlace 2016 Release 2. Copyright 2016 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.						

Appendix B: Community Survey Results

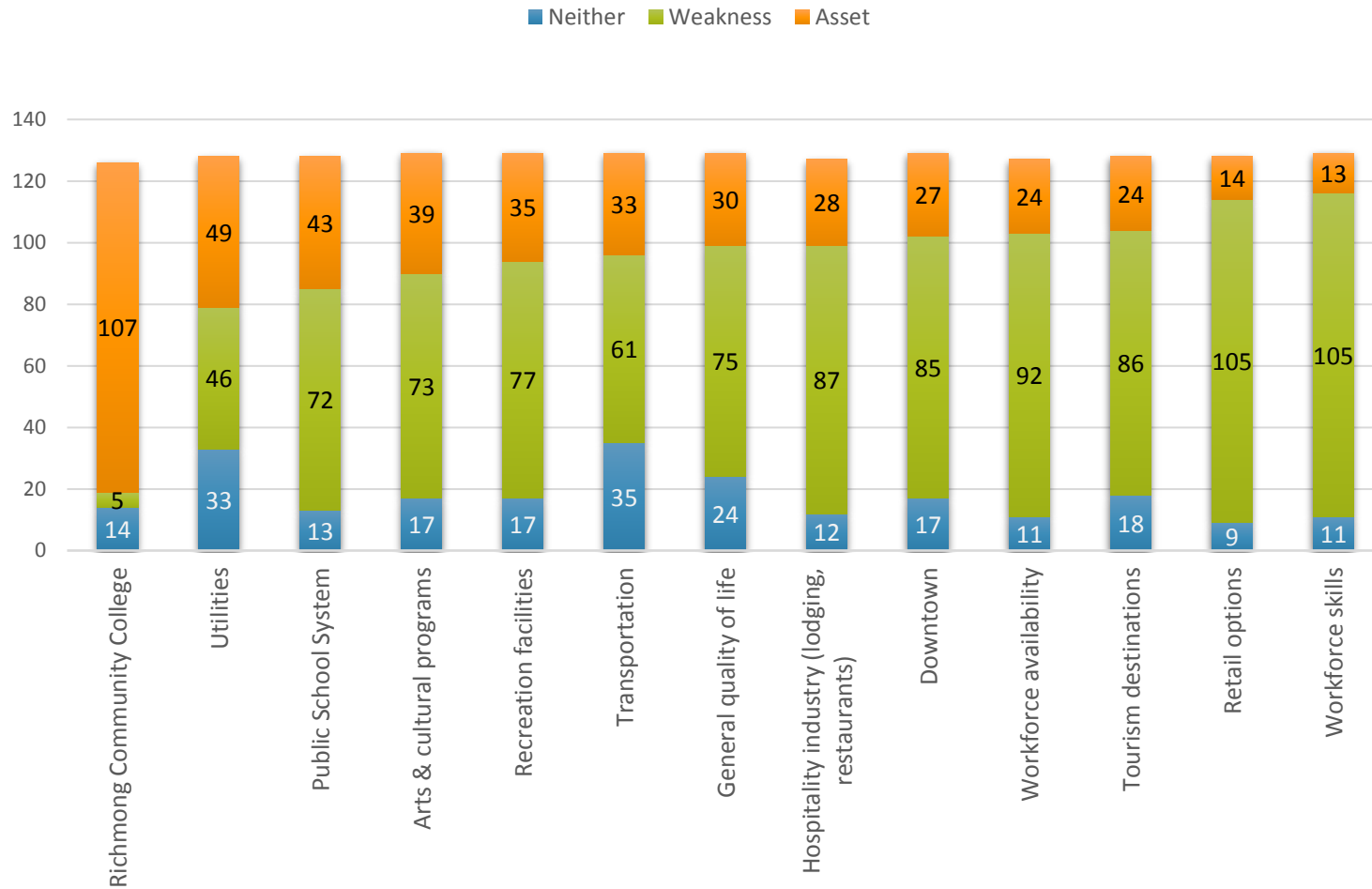
I am a (check all that apply)



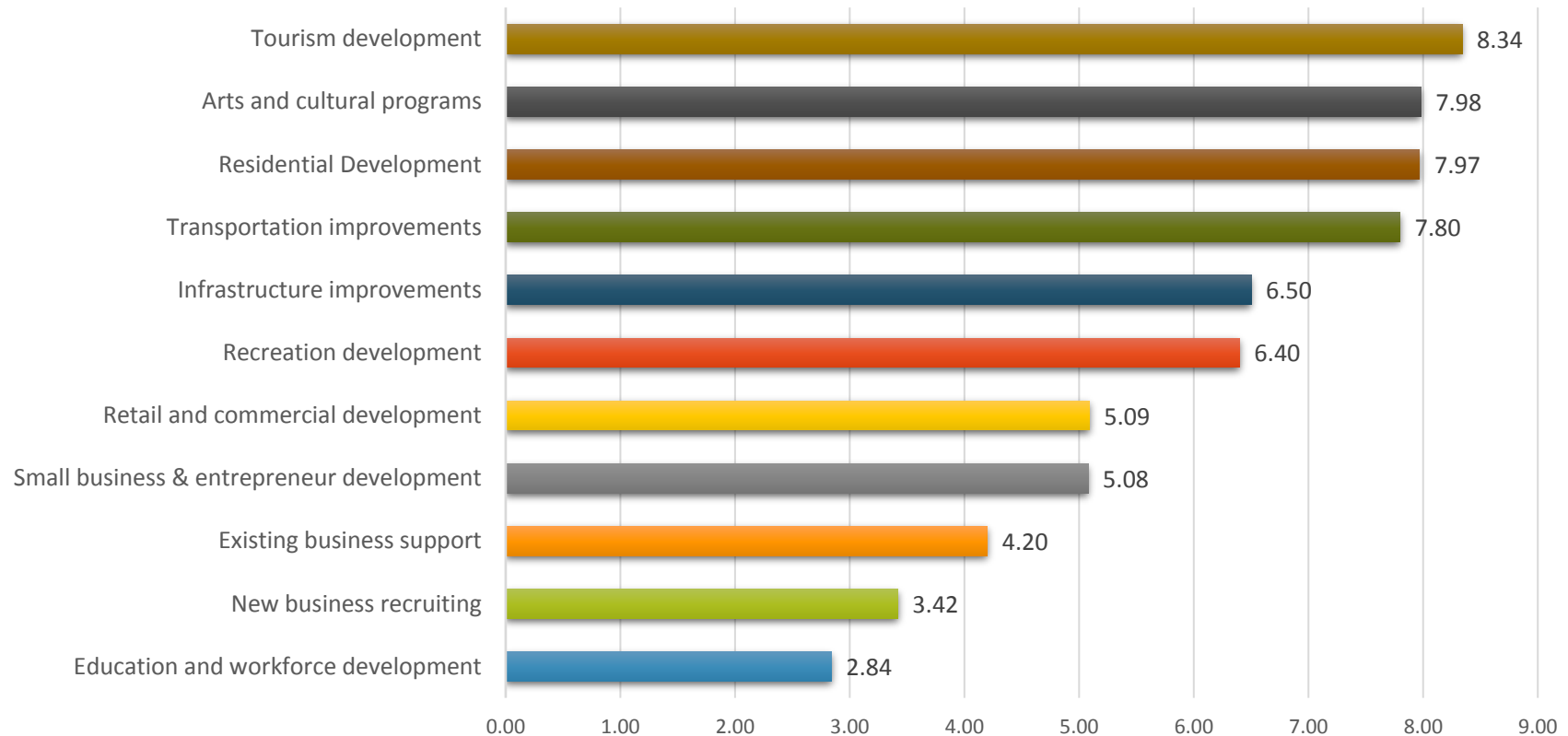
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being highest, how do you rate the current business climate of the area?



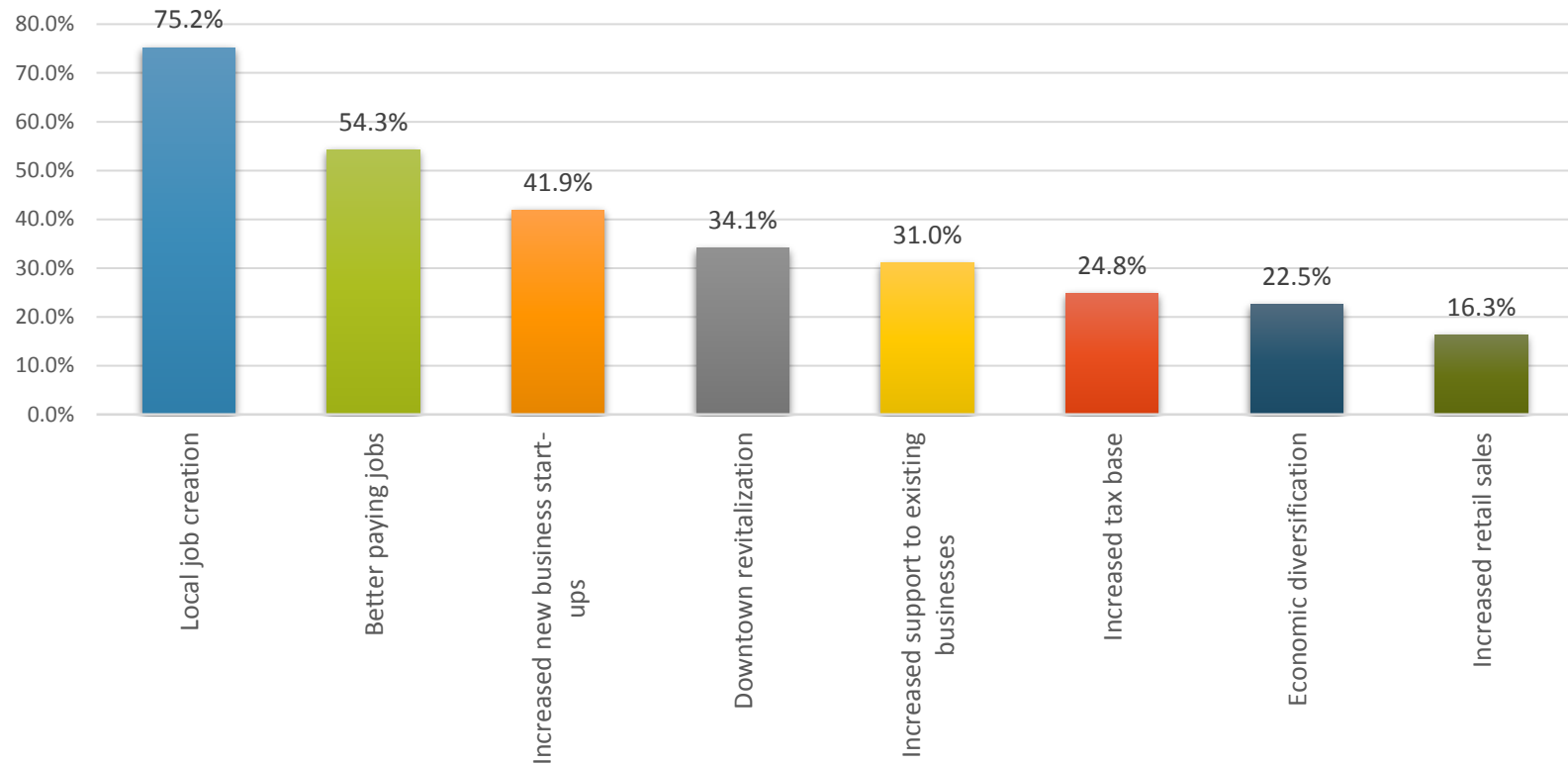
Rate the following as an asset supporting economic development or a weakness hindering economic growth or neither.



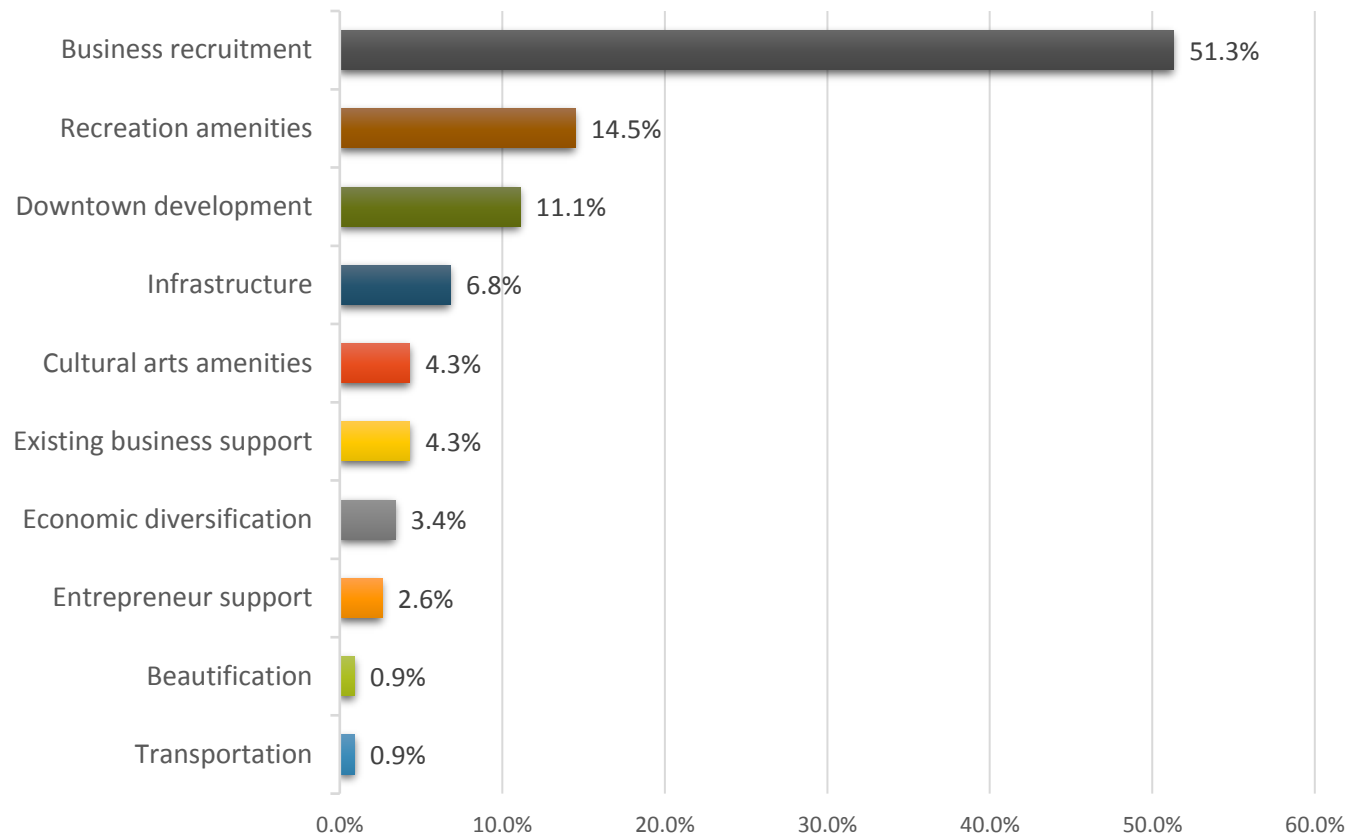
Rank order the following economic development strategies in order of importance with 1 being the most important.



What should be the top three goals of the city's economic development strategic plan?



What is the most important investment the city could make to ensure long-term, sustainable economic growth?



Appendix C: Study Sponsor and Consultant



ElectriCities of N.C. Inc. sponsored the City of Laurinburg Economic Development Strategic Plan. ElectriCities economic development department offers a variety of services to promote NC Public Power communities to businesses and economic developers. It helps communities recruit business and industry by providing:

- ⊙ Target Marketing
- ⊙ Marketing/Collateral Assistance
- ⊙ Aerial Photography
- ⊙ Proposals for Prospects/Clients
- ⊙ Advertising Opportunities
- ⊙ Target Sectors
- ⊙ Trade Show Opportunities
- ⊙ Direct Marketing
- ⊙ Retail/Commercial Developments

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