



Economic Development Strategic Plan

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CREATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING, LLC

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Executive Summary

Kings Mountain is well positioned for economic growth. Nearby Charlotte is one of the fastest growing metro areas in the country with an estimated 60 people a day moving to the Queen City. Rather than reactively accepting growth from Charlotte, Kings Mountain wants to proactively shape that growth. The city has goals of higher wage jobs, a diversified retail marketplace, higher-value housing developments, and increased visitor spending. In order to get ahead of the growth and shape it to achieve their goals, the city is preparing to make strategic public investments.

This economic development planning process was sponsored by ElectriCities of N.C., Inc., as part of the economic development services it offers to its member communities. ElectriCities knows that companies and people invest in communities that invest in themselves. This strategic plan supports Kings Mountain making investments that will result in a stronger, more sustainable economy. We heard directly from over 150 citizens that they want the city to invest in streetscape, downtown, and marketing.

The strategic planning process included community engagement, SWOT Analysis, and economic and demographic research. An asset-based approach to strategic planning was used, including building goals, strategies, and action steps around the city's assets and future opportunities. Kings Mountain's strengths include national, state, and local parks, I-85, proximity to Charlotte, Cleveland Community College, five municipal utilities, and quality health care. The city's challenges include a downtown with a tired appearance in need of revitalization, limited retail options, and an abundance of lower-value housing. The most significant opportunity is developing recreational amenities and connecting regional assets to drive more destination tourism. Some of the threats identified are things that Kings Mountain will need to partner with others in order to change, such as lack of skilled workers, but other threats like downtown building disrepair are things the city can influence.

The Kings Mountain Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines strategies in marketing, business development, housing, downtown, and education. 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.

Kings Mountain has a new tax revenue stream that will allow new invest in the city. The city can implement streetscape and capital improvement plans. Aligning the implementation of this economic development plan with other plans and new resources will ensure consistency of vision. Kings Mountain leadership can have confidence that investing in the city is the number one priority of citizens as evidenced through the community engagement of this planning process.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Summary

Goal: Market Kings Mountain as a Destination for Visitors and a Home for New Residents and Businesses

- **Strategy:** Communicate the Kings Mountain Story
- **Strategy:** Create a Comprehensive Tourism Marketing Program
- **Strategy:** Engage Citizens

Goal: Invest in Business Growth and Development

- **Strategy:** Develop Sites to Attract New Business Development
- **Strategy:** Support Entrepreneurs and Small Business Development
- **Strategy:** Create a Nonprofit to Support Development and Redevelopment
- **Strategy:** Create a City Transportation Plan

Goal: Create Destination Recreational Amenities

- **Strategy:** Connect Downtown to Outdoor Assets
- **Strategy:** Invest in Moss Lake as a Recreation Destination
- **Strategy:** Consider Developing and Leasing/Selling City Lakes for Recreation Development and Connection to Crowder's Mountain

Goal: Promote Housing Development

- **Strategy:** Uptown Housing for Young Professionals
- **Strategy:** Define the Need for Market-Rate Housing

Goal: Invest in Appearance and Downtown Revitalization

- **Strategy:** Prioritize Funding for Downtown Revitalization
- **Strategy:** Invest in Enhancing the Appearance of Kings Mountain

Goal: Support Innovation in Education and Workforce Development

- **Strategy:** Leverage the "Charlotte's Backyard" Campaign to Attract People
- **Strategy:** Implement the "Send a Kid to College Program"
- **Strategy:** Investigate a Satellite Campus of Cleveland Community College

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis is used as a foundational building block for the strategic plan. The most effective economic development strategies build upon the assets a community has and the assets they can develop. The SWOT was developed from information gathered during research, interviews, a community input session, and a community survey, and it was then vetted with the leadership team. In total, more than 150 people had input into the SWOT Analysis and the summary reflects their input.

Summary

Strengths

- National, state, and local parks
- Outdoor activities
- I-85 and Hwy 74
- Location, proximity to Charlotte
- Cleveland Community College
- Utility services, infrastructure
- Health care
- Industry, data centers
- Moss Lake

Weaknesses

- Downtown buildings in disrepair
- Retail options
- Low-income housing
- Lack of middle-income housing
- Lack of identity and marketing
- High-paying jobs
- Aesthetics
- Attracting young, talented, skilled workers

Opportunities

- Lake development
- Tourism
- Branding and marketing
- Downtown revitalization
- Housing development
- Passenger train
- Business recruitment
- Workforce development

Threats

- Perception of poor schools
- Perception of crime
- Lack of skilled workers
- Few new business start-ups
- Continued retail leakage
- Lack of strategic plan and consensus
- Further disrepair of buildings
- Stagnant building inventory

STRENGTHS

Strengths are assets that support business development, attract tourists, and provide residents with quality of life. Many assets reported in interviews and the community survey are related to history, recreation, location, proximity to I-85, and affordability. Citizens cited the signature investment made by the city in Patriot Park and amphitheater that has been the impetus of festivals and community gatherings. Utility services are another group of assets - Kings Mountain provides water, sewer, electric, gas, and fiber optic telecommunications.

- ⊙ Quality of life, small town atmosphere, cost of living
- ⊙ Workforce
- ⊙ National, state, and local parks
- ⊙ YMCA and city partnership
- ⊙ Trail system and outdoor activities
- ⊙ City Government
- ⊙ Location, proximity to Charlotte
- ⊙ I-85 and Hwy 74
- ⊙ Land availability
- ⊙ Retail
- ⊙ People committed to the town
- ⊙ Jobs
- ⊙ Affordable housing
- ⊙ Low taxes
- ⊙ History, cultural amenities
- ⊙ Own water supply, reservoir system
- ⊙ Cleveland County Schools
- ⊙ Available commercial property
- ⊙ State-of-the-art infrastructure: water, sewer electric, gas, dark fiber
- ⊙ Utility rates
- ⊙ Industry, data centers
- ⊙ Moss lake
- ⊙ Library provides tools for information, job development, and programs that enhance the community
- ⊙ Hounds Drive-In
- ⊙ Tourism
- ⊙ Small business owners
- ⊙ Hospital, senior center, hospice, adult day care
- ⊙ Low crime
- ⊙ Strong Leadership
- ⊙ Patriot's Park and amphitheater
- ⊙ Availability of rail
- ⊙ Faith community
- ⊙ Healthy living
- ⊙ Cleveland Community College
- ⊙ Train
- ⊙ NTE

WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are obstacles to growth that deter business expansion and negatively impact quality of life. Kings Mountain has weaknesses that are similar to many other small towns: housing inventory, attracting young people, lack of workforce skills, buildings in downtown in disrepair, lack of amenities, and a lack of market identity. The city is often seen as having the same weaknesses as the county and region where sometimes the city is much different. One example is schools, where Kings Mountain High School out performs the county schools. The strategic plan will need to address these and other foundations of economic development.

- ⊙ Retail options
- ⊙ Downtown
- ⊙ Land ready for development
- ⊙ Lack of industry
- ⊙ Lack of connected tourism assets
- ⊙ Lack of identity and marketing
- ⊙ Limited housing available for middle income
- ⊙ Local support of new downtown businesses
- ⊙ Lack of planning for city growth in the past
- ⊙ Battleground Avenue needs a facelift
- ⊙ Need places to eat and hang out
- ⊙ Upscale places to live which would bring in more educated people who could be leaders in the community
- ⊙ Small size
- ⊙ Getting talented, educated people to move in
- ⊙ High paying jobs
- ⊙ Lack of amenities; retail, dining, lodging, entertainment
- ⊙ City cooperation with new businesses
- ⊙ Some in Cleveland County/Kings Mountain with an "anti-change" mindset
- ⊙ Buildings in disrepair
- ⊙ Finding and keeping new industry
- ⊙ Business leakage to surrounding towns
- ⊙ Previous lack of city government resources to invest in the community
- ⊙ Lack of partnerships
- ⊙ Availability of skilled workforce, skilled tradespeople
- ⊙ Public perception
- ⊙ Negative attitude of some in the community
- ⊙ Poor selection in types of shopping and restaurants
- ⊙ Downtown doesn't look great - tarps over business signs, buildings falling in, no nice retail or activity business downtown
- ⊙ Group against the casino
- ⊙ Lack of community involvement
- ⊙ Have to bypass several cities when coming from Charlotte to get to Kings Mountain
- ⊙ Beautification, code enforcement needed
- ⊙ Retention of youth

OPPORTUNITIES

Kings Mountain will experience a significant growth in revenue due to the NTE industry location. For the first time, the city will be in a position to make investments in amenities, infrastructure, and economic development. Citizens and business envision a community with diverse housing, cultural arts facilities, expanded recreation, and space for new and expanding businesses.

- ⊙ Passenger train
- ⊙ Quality of education
- ⊙ Retail shops
- ⊙ Tourism
- ⊙ Brand and market the city
- ⊙ Improve downtown
- ⊙ Better jobs
- ⊙ Renovating older homes and store fronts
- ⊙ Nightlife in downtown area such as monthly music in the park
- ⊙ Infrastructure
- ⊙ Revolutionary history
- ⊙ Nearby parks and trails not far from Charlotte
- ⊙ Develop open land and facilities to attract business
- ⊙ Train young people in the trades
- ⊙ Casino
- ⊙ Spec buildings on commercial LI zoned land as an incubator
- ⊙ Improve downtown businesses and restaurants
- ⊙ Accommodations
- ⊙ Mineral richness
- ⊙ Link downtown shopping with surrounding industry workers
- ⊙ Act now to encourage workforce development and prepare for the future
- ⊙ Sports complex with multi-use fields
- ⊙ Auditorium that will seat over a 1,000 people
- ⊙ Retail, entertainment, and cultural expansion and cultural facilities
- ⊙ Use of downtown to provide apartment living in spaces above current businesses
- ⊙ Strong public schools
- ⊙ Incentives for new/small business owners
- ⊙ Better hospitality venues
- ⊙ Available spaces for businesses
- ⊙ Downtown building owners fix up eyesores and make useable space for small businesses
- ⊙ Youth retention, activities
- ⊙ Attract freelancers and telecommuters
- ⊙ Meeting/conference center space
- ⊙ Lake developments

THREATS

Threats must be identified and mitigated in an economic development strategy. Most of Kings Mountain's threats are common among small towns: workforce, housing, and revitalization. Kings Mountain can influence some threats such as the appearance of downtown, supporting new business start-ups, and transportation.

- ⊙ Perception of poor schools
- ⊙ "Good old boy" attitude preventing change
- ⊙ Crime
- ⊙ Need to keep taxes and utilities affordable to be attractive to business.
- ⊙ Bringing in the wrong kind of businesses
- ⊙ Fewer jobs
- ⊙ Businesses and officials have had trouble working together
- ⊙ Not enough skilled young workers
- ⊙ Lacking various means of transportation
- ⊙ Casino
- ⊙ Lack of opportunity for new business start-ups
- ⊙ Unable to attract a diverse group of people
- ⊙ Not being able to recruit young people to live here
- ⊙ Losing/leaking spending dollars to neighboring communities for retail and restaurants
- ⊙ Rising taxes
- ⊙ Apathy
- ⊙ Lack of a local satellite campus for either Cleveland Community College or Gaston College
- ⊙ Lack of strategic, planned vision and consensus
- ⊙ Not supporting downtown business
- ⊙ State of downtown buildings
- ⊙ State regulated NPDES permit limits on the wastewater treatment plant
- ⊙ City appearance
- ⊙ Look of downtown and all the empty store fronts
- ⊙ Racism, lack of diversity could stall progress
- ⊙ Stagnant building inventory - non-engaged ownership
- ⊙ Regulation

Economic and Demographic Profile

The consulting team analyzed economic and demographic data to get a snapshot of how Kings Mountain is changing. The full data set can be found in Appendix A. The main take-away from this research is that the city needs an aggressive economic development program. Higher paying jobs are needed to raise income, support higher educational attainment, reduce commute times, and drive housing development.

Summary

- ⦿ The 2017 population of Kings Mountain is 11,053. Over the last seven years, the population has grown by 6.85%, faster than Cleveland and Gaston Counties, the region, and state.
- ⦿ The median age in the city has increased from 40.5 to 42.7 from 2010 to 2017, and is above the regional (42) and state (37.8) averages.
- ⦿ Kings Mountain is less racially and ethnically diverse than the county and region. Its figures more closely mirror Cleveland and Gaston Counties than the Charlotte MSA and the state.
- ⦿ Kings Mountain's population has lower educational attainment than Cleveland and Gaston Counties, the region, and the state. Only 83% of the population over age 25 reports having a high school degree or higher. The SAT scores of Kings Mountain High School were 1452 in 2016. That is higher than Cleveland County Schools at 1427, but lower than the state average of 1485. The high school scores were almost equivalent to the national average. Thus, young people are becoming educated but not staying, leading to lower educational averages of the population.
- ⦿ Per capita and median household incomes fall below the regional and state averages. Per capita income was at \$18,510, and median household income at \$37,023 in 2016.
- ⦿ Homes are more affordable in Kings Mountain and Cleveland County than in the region, making Kings Mountain a good location for lower and middle-income home buyers. The housing stock lacks in professional and management level housing.
- ⦿ Cleveland County labor force growth is relatively flat and was at 47,121 in December 2017. Gaston County has shown more growth in the labor force, currently at 108,283. The unemployment rate is declining in both counties, below 5%. The declining unemployment rate is a positive sign of economic growth; however, the rate is so low that many jobs are going unfilled.

*Population
Increasing* ↑
*faster than
region*

*Lower
educational
attainment
than County and
Region but
higher SAT
scores*

*Homes
More
affordable*

- ⦿ Most people are employed in Manufacturing, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, and Education and Health Services. The highest paying sectors are Information, Manufacturing, and Natural Resources. It is important to note that only one of the largest employment sectors is also a high paying sector - Manufacturing. The average weekly wage in Cleveland County is \$784.77.
- ⦿ Approximately 83% of all Cleveland County businesses have less than 10 employees, making small business development an important part of the economic development strategy.
- ⦿ Retail sales and collections of sales and use tax have been increasing. The retail leakage report shows there is significant leakage in Automobile Dealers, Automotive Parts, General Merchandise, and Department Stores. There is leakage, albeit smaller, in other sectors as well. The largest retail sectors are Automotive related, Grocery Stores, Gasoline Stations, and General Merchandise stores. Overall, though, Kings Mountain attracts more outside dollars to flow into the city.
- ⦿ People in Kings Mountain have a significant commute. Around one-fourth commute 45 – 59 minutes, likely to Charlotte. Approximately 34% commute less than 14 minutes.
- ⦿ The index crime rate in Kings Mountain has fluctuated but remains below regional peer cities. Cleveland County's index crime rate has been decreasing since 2012, 50% over the five-year period.

\$784.77
avg. weekly
wage

Crime Rate ↓

For the full economic analysis, see Appendix A.

Economic Development Strategic Plan

Kings Mountain is poised for economic growth. Its location on I-85, proximity to a fast-growing metro area, increasing population, and utility capacity indicate the city will continue to see economic expansion. The key to Kings Mountain's future will be ensuring that growth aligns with citizen goals. Citizens (150+ participated) want a revitalized downtown, more local jobs to reduce the high rate of out-commuting, and a diverse retail market. When citizens were asked what public investments the city should make, they answered:

1. Downtown development
2. Business recruitment
3. Recreation amenities
4. Infrastructure
5. Economic diversification
6. Entrepreneur support
7. Beautification
8. Cultural amenities
9. Existing business support
10. Transportation

These goals and public investments informed the development of the strategic plan. They translate to a stronger downtown development program, city investment in public amenities, and enhanced business recruitment and development. The strategic plan includes six goals for Kings Mountain's economic development efforts:

Market Kings Mountain as a Destination for Visitors and a Home for New Residents and Businesses

Invest in Business Growth and Development

Create Destination Recreational Amenities

Promote Housing Development

Invest in Appearance and Downtown Revitalization

Support Innovation in Education and Workforce Development

Goal: Market Kings Mountain as a Destination for Visitors and a Home for New Residents and Businesses

Kings Mountain has a good story to tell. It is a story of history, livability, and connectivity. Lacking a comprehensive marketing strategy, a few nonprofits and the city have pieced together short-term marketing projects. We recommend the city take the lead in forming an overall strategy which partners can leverage.

Strategy: Communicate the Kings Mountain Story

Effective marketing is delivering a consistent message over a long period of time. The city should take the lead in developing key messages to share with partners to use in their marketing efforts to ensure a consistent message. The Kings Mountain story can include key messages such as:

- Gateways to the outdoors and trails
- History
- Vibrant market
- Affordable home market – cost of housing in Cleveland County is 49% lower than the national average
- Quality healthcare
- Local events at Patriot's Park and amphitheater
- Quick access to Charlotte, Asheville, and Greenville/Spartanburg
- All utilities bundled with the city

Action Steps:

- Create a Public Information Officer or Marketing Director position with the city. This person will be responsible for developing a comprehensive marketing strategy and disseminating the Kings Mountain message through all marketing media, including social media.
 - With input from partners like the chamber, trails organization, downtown, and others, create a marketing plan for Kings Mountain and integrate the marketing efforts of partners.
 - This position will oversee Kings Mountain social media platforms.
 - Distribute key messages to partners asking them to integrate into their marketing program.
- Make presentations to partners and allies on Kings Mountain's economic development goals and strategic plan. Include Cleveland County, Gaston County, economic development agencies, the small business center, Community College, and others.

- Create a welcome package for new residents. Ask companies to distribute to new employees and ask the Chamber to promote it.
- Use KingsMountainEvents.com to promote events and communicate to the public.
- Organize FAM (familiarization) Tours for people on the front-line of engagement with visitors and potential residents: realtors, hospitality workers, and tourism venues (state parks).
- Complete an electric rate study to communicate the value of the electric utility system.
- Break out the small amount of tourism information on the city's website, now listed under "Our Community," and create a new "Visiting" menu tab and page with more information. Keep the citizen information section under the "Our Community" page.
 - The new website will have a community calendar.

Strategy: Create a Comprehensive Tourism Marketing Program

This could be led by the Public Information Office/Marketing Director in partnership with tourism allies and made a part of the overall marketing strategy.

Action Steps:

- Bring together all of Kings Mountain's tourism assets to create an inventory. Share the inventory with partners, especially front-line hospitality businesses and downtown merchants – they are the ones that get asked, "What is there to do in this town?"
 - Don't overlook the South Carolina assets. Be sure to include South Carolina town and county counterparts when creating the inventory.
- Create one e-brochure that shows trails, parks, historic sites, museum, downtown, and arts and cultural venues. This can be the primary marketing brochure used by the chamber, hotels, state park, museum, and others to showcase Kings Mountain. Send to your South Carolina partners, too.
- Create tourism itineraries. Give visitors a reason to stay overnight or to come back. Itineraries such as "what to do in one day" and "what to do in a weekend" are popular.
- Promote the "Charlotte's Backyard" marketing campaign and slogan. Pull from this campaign key marketing messages. Cleveland County is heavily invested in this campaign, so leverage it. Kings Mountain is showcased as the "gateway to the outdoors."
- Leverage the Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce:
 - Ensure local events are on the Calendar of Events.

- Regularly review the pages for Accommodations, Dining, Attractions, Facilities, Golf, and others to keep Kings Mountain information up to date.

Strategy: Engage Citizens

A community with engaged citizens has a much better chance of economic sustainability than a city with disengaged citizens.

Action Steps:

- Reach out to “unusual suspects” to serve on committees and advisory boards. Pledge to recruit at least one person under the age of 40 for each board/committee.
- Communicate the city's goals, capital improvement plans, and accomplishments via the town newsletter or on the website. See WhatsUpInElkinNC.com as an example.
- Host an annual State of the City meeting to inform citizens of all of the wonderful things happening in Kings Mountain.
- A common calendar of events, promoted to citizens, is another communications tool.
- Review the book *This is Where You Belong* by Melody Warnick for examples of how to fall in love with a city. One example is to outfit a trailer with everything needed for a block party and loan it to neighborhoods.

Goal: Invest in Business Growth and Development

Kings Mountain has become home to several data centers and large manufacturers because of its location on I-85 and its utility infrastructure. In addition to large companies, it is also home to a strong small business base. Approximately 83% of all businesses in Cleveland County employ less than 10 people. Kings Mountain has an opportunity to attract new industry, help small businesses grow, and entice new entrepreneurs to start-up.

Strategy: Develop Sites to Attract New Business Development

Kings Mountain has limited opportunities to develop large industrial sites inside the city limits. While continuing to identify properties in town, it should also continue its partnership with Cleveland County on industrial sites that will use city utilities and/or provide jobs for citizens.

In general, the area from Industrial Drive through Kings Mountain Corporate Center and Canterbury Road, and across the interstate to the area near the end of Floyd Street have industrial development potential.

Action Steps:

- Utilize the ElectriCities Smart Sites Program to pre-qualify industrial sites for development. The program assesses the ability to develop property and the cost, and lowers the risk for the investor.
- Create a site development plan for the NTE 100-acre site including utilities. This site may be a candidate for the Smart Sites Program.
- In partnership with the county, continue development of the Kings Mountain Corporate Park (Canterbury Road) that has 300 acres along I-85. Industrial development potential is near the Sara Lee site/access. The area near the Holiday Inn is ideal for retail, restaurant, or commercial development. Seek NC Site Certification for the industrial part of the park. This could be a good location for a spec building development.
- Industrial Drive sites need an entrance sign to enhance curb appeal. This area is ideal for a graded site and eventually a spec building through a city-county developer partnership. Seek the public-private partnerships that Catawba County has put together for its last two spec buildings.
- Search for potential sites in the newly formed federal Opportunity Zone. This a new federal program that encourages investment in distressed areas.
- The area near Ingles is ideal for retail/residential mixed use.

Strategy: Support Entrepreneurs and Small Business Development

Action Steps:

- Leverage the Certified Entrepreneurial Community® Program designation obtained by Cleveland County in 2017.
 - Note the recognition in marketing and promotional materials. It will help Kings Mountain stand out.
- Share the retail leakage report in this study with the Cleveland Community College Small Business Center. Their staff can counsel would-be entrepreneurs of market opportunities and small business owners on expansion. One example is expanding sporting goods, clothing, and general merchandise offerings.
- Work with the Small Business Center to host seminars for small business owners on topics such as how to attract the Millennial market, e-commerce, accessing financing for growth, succession planning, etc.
- Seek grant funding to start a revolving loan fund for small businesses. The Small Business Center can assist with best practices with revolving loan programs. Lee County has a good example.
- Explore involvement in the InnovateNC initiative to spur innovation capacity building.

Strategy: Create an Economic Development Nonprofit

Action Steps:

- Create a 501(c)3 nonprofit economic development organization to own and develop property, apply for foundation grants, accept private donations, and perform other tasks more suitable to a public-private partnership organization rather than a city government.

Strategy: Create a City Transportation Plan

Action Steps:

- Create a three- to-five-year city transportation plan that aligns with the city's overall strategic plan and this economic development plan.
- Include plans for pedestrian and biking transportation and connectivity with trails and downtown.
- Review Morganton and Burke County's pilot public bus transportation program as a best practice.

Goal: Create Destination Recreational Amenities

Kings Mountain has recreational assets about which most communities could only dream, and the assets are near a major transportation corridor and fast-growing metro area. Two state parks, a national park, trails, lakes, and greenspace make this a unique recreation destination. Kings Mountain should invest in connecting these assets and adding amenities that will people to enjoy them.

Strategy: Connect Downtown to Outdoor Assets

Action Steps:

- Crowders Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain National Military Park, Moss Lake, Patriot's Park, and Kings Mountain Gateway Trail/Carolina Thread Trail could all be accessed from downtown. Continue to invest in the trail system that will allow people to walk and bike from downtown Kings Mountain to Crowders Mountain, which has a trail system that connects the Military Park and Kings Mountain State Park. There is only a small section of trail, 0.5 miles, needed for the connection.
- Incorporate wayfinding signage along trails that direct people to downtown.

Strategy: Invest in Moss Lake as a Recreation Destination

Moss Lake is an untapped recreational amenity. Investing in visitor amenities, while maintaining the lake as the city's water supply, will add another recreation destination and a reason for visitors to stay a while longer.

Action Steps:

- Moss Lake can be re-opened for swimming, have camping areas added, and be enhanced with visitor services like a restaurant, boat dock, and marina.
 - Visit other towns with lake amenities to learn best practices in development and public-private partnerships.
 - Develop a design concept for the lake development.
 - Solicit developers to partner with the city to implement the design concept.

Strategy: Consider Development and Leasing/Selling City Lakes for Recreation Development and Connection to Crowders Mountain

Action Steps:

- City Lakes is not needed for the city's water supply. It could be developed for recreation with connections to Crowders Mountain State Park. Follow the same action steps as with Moss Lake above – develop a design concept and solicit developer partners.

Goal: Promote Housing Development

Strategy: Uptown Housing for Young Professionals

Action Steps:

- Explore new incentives offered by the City of Morganton for downtown housing development. The city is offering low-interest loans to developers of market-rate, second story, downtown residential units.
- Use the Community Planning and Economic Development Department staff to help developers understand historic tax credits to redevelop housing for young professionals.
- Explore assistance through the UNC Development Financing Initiative and use their expertise to counsel developers and property owners. The City of Albemarle has used the UNC program to spur downtown development.

Strategy: Define the Need for Market-Rate Housing

Action Steps:

- Conduct a housing inventory and needs assessment. Burke County recently did this and found a gap of over 2,000 units over three years. Use the data to pitch the Kings Mountain market to developers.
 - Consider partnerships with developers like the City of Shelby's program of partial reimbursement for paving in residential neighborhoods.

Goal: Invest in Appearance and Downtown Revitalization

Citizens ranked beautification above existing business support, transportation, and arts and cultural programs.

Appearance was a hot topic in the community focus group. We often use the phrase in economic development:

"companies invest in communities that invest in themselves." Kings Mountain businesses and citizens understand this and want the city to invest in itself.

Strategy: Prioritize Funding for Downtown Revitalization

Action Steps:

- Implement the city's streetscape plan.
 - Round 1 projects include: updates to the zoning ordinance, professional development administration, remove abandoned structures, restore empty buildings, sewer extension policy, down-zoning of undeveloped commercial properties, and up-zoning of strategic properties.
- Implement a wayfinding program to direct people and improve the appearance of the city.
- Inventory city-owned properties in downtown. Determine highest and best use. Consider selling non-critical parcels to developers.
 - Specifically discuss with developers the types of businesses needed to "round-out" downtown such as pubs, restaurants, and specialty retail.
- Maintain an inventory of available buildings in downtown with lease rates in order to market available properties. Post the inventory on the website.
- Activate the Patriot Park and amphitheater space.
 - Work with the downtown merchants group to organize "pop-up" events that will bring more people to downtown. Example pop-ups are food truck and al fresco dining events.

- Engage nonprofit partners to use the space for outdoor events – drama, movie nights, festivals, etc.
- Support development of the Joy Performance Center and Kings Mountain Little Theater through city marketing of events.
 - Hold city events in these and other spaces to “activate” them and bring awareness to unique spaces.
- As stated above - investigate the City of Morganton's new residential incentive program aimed at encouraging downtown residential development over retail space.

Strategy: Invest in Enhancing the Appearance of Kings Mountain

Action Steps:

- Promote the façade grant program and encourage building owners to adhere to a standard design theme.
- Develop a public art program. Look into the Lincolnton program of sponsoring barn quilts or the Lexington program of painted pigs. Asheville also has a long-standing public art program.
- Review zoning ordinances for changes that will enhance appearance. Visit cities that citizens noted in this strategic plan as being a model city. Examples: Belmont and Hendersonville.

Goal: Support Innovation in Education and Workforce Development

Kings Mountain has a lower educational attainment than the county, region, and state. Only 83% of the population over 25 has a high school degree or higher. However, SAT scores of Kings Mountain High School exceed the county school system average and are on par with the national average. This shows that Kings Mountain should continue placing an emphasis on K-12 education that over time will improve overall educational attainment. A city government has limited impact on education systems, but there are a few things Kings Mountain can do.

Strategy: Leverage the “Charlotte’s Backyard” Campaign and Attract People

Kings Mountain wants to change its market profile in order to attract more upper-end retail, restaurants, and housing developers. The way to do that is to attract people with more disposable income and spending patterns that support retail development.

Action Steps:

- Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership is heavily invested in the Charlotte’s Backyard talent recruitment program. Leverage the new website which has great marketing content and information.

- Link the site <https://charlottesbackyardnc.com/> from the city's website.
- Use the content in key messages for marketing.
- Review the Kings Mountain information on the "communities" page for updates.
- Offer to pay to have extra marketing brochures printed for Kings Mountain use. Distribute the brochures to realtors and others that come into contact with would-be residents.
- In marketing materials, promote telecommuting to people who now out-commute to Charlotte. Telecommuting just one or two days a week will make a difference – people will shop locally on those days and have more time to volunteer in the community.
 - The state of Vermont now offers a \$10,000 incentive grant for telecommuters who locate in the state. Ask Cleveland County EDP to include messages about Charlotte telecommuters relocating to the county. The relocation of professionals will boost demographics and home sales.

Strategy: Implement the "Send a Kid to College Program"

Action Steps:

- Mayor Neisler developed the concept of offering a donation option on the city's monthly electric bill. Donations would go into a "Send a Kid to College" fund that would provide scholarships to Kings Mountain High School graduates to attend a college of their choice.
 - Seek out best practices from other communities that have "College Promise" programs: Greenwood County, SC; Wythe County, VA; Alleghany County, NC.
 - Either create a nonprofit to act as fiscal agent for the fund or use an existing nonprofit with an educational mission.

Strategy: Investigate a Satellite Campus of Cleveland Community College

Action Steps:

- Working with the college, identify how many people from Kings Mountain now go to the main campus. Research business use for training. Determine if there is a growing or declining need for local classes.
- Start with classes offered locally at the library or senior center. A partnership with the Small Business Center could bring more classes for entrepreneurs and small business owners. Classes most needed by Kings Mountain top employers (safety, MS Office, leadership development) could be the next step.

Implementation Guide

This strategic plan is meant to be implemented over a three- to five-year period. Each year, we recommend Kings Mountain identify a few action steps to work on. We also recommend that the city revisit the strategic plan annually to update and make course corrections. Below is a suggested outline for implementation of action steps.

01

- PIO/Marketing Director
- Marketing plan
- Welcome packet
- Presentations to allies
- Website updates
- NTE site plan
- Moss Lake development design
- Inventory city-owned parcels in downtown
- Promote facade grant program
- Leverage "Charlotte's Backyard"
- Pop-up events in Patriot Park
- Kings Mountain Comprehensive Strategic Plan

2-3

- FAM tours
- Electric rate study
- Tourism marketing program
- Certify Corporate Center
- Small Business Center seminars
- Uptown housing assistance
- City Lakes development design
- Housing inventory and needs assessment
- Implement streetscape plan
- Review zoning ordinances
- Promote telecommuting to attract residents
- Send a Kid to College program
- Transportation plan
- Nonprofit corporation

4-5

- Wayfinding
- Spec building development
- Enhancements to Industrial Drive
- Revolving loan fund
- Downtown trail connections
- Residential incentives
- UNC Development Finance Initiative
- Public art program
- Satellite CCC campus

Metrics

The Kings Mountain strategic plan focuses on community development, marketing, and business retention and expansion. We recommend the following metrics be used to track progress on the strategic plan. These few measurements can be reported in a dashboard to the board at every meeting.

- Number of certified and/or shovel ready sites
- Results of marketing efforts:
 - Web analytics
 - Clicks/likes/retweets of social media and e-marketing
- Number of existing businesses visited/assisted
- Number of market-rate homes/housing
- Number of visitors/visitor spending
- New business starts, locations, and expansions
- Numbers and changes in leads, prospects, and projects

Beyond tracking progress of the organization, we recommend the city track the overall economic health of the economy (example data points below). The trends will show if the city is headed in the right direction.

- Per capita and median household income
- Wages
- Labor force, employment, and unemployment
- Educational attainment, SAT scores
- Population and age distribution
- Median home value

Appendix A: Economic and Demographic Profile

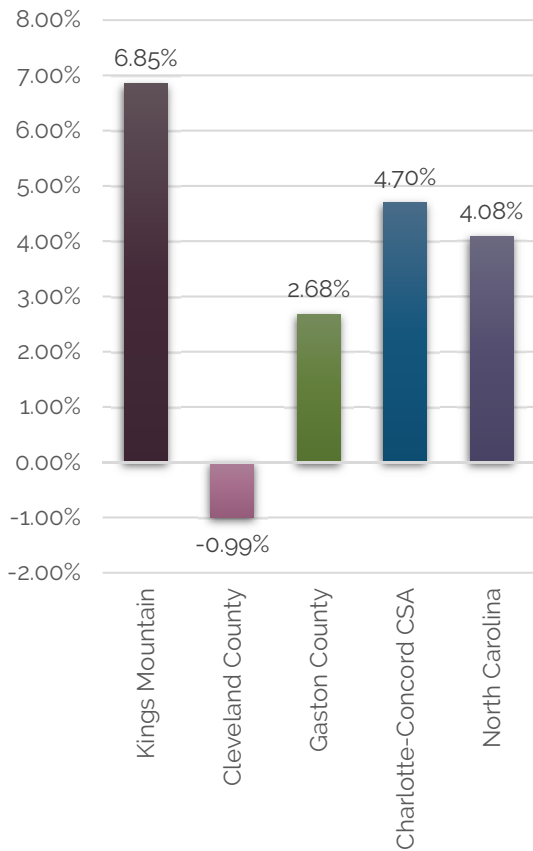
The economic and demographic profile paints a quantitative picture of how Kings Mountain is growing and changing. We researched City of Kings Mountain data, where available, and county data.

Population	2010	Most current 2017	% Change 2010 - most current
Kings Mountain, NC	10,296	11,053	6.85%
Cleveland County	98,078	97,113	-0.99%
Gaston County	206,086	211,753	2.68%
Charlotte-Concord CSA	2,419,520	2,583,875	4.7%
North Carolina	9,535,483	9,940,828	4.08%

Age	Kings Mountain		Cleveland County		Gaston County	
	2010	2016	2010	2016	2010	2016
Age Groups						
Total population	10,631	11,053	97,786	97,113	202,642	211,753
Under 5 years	6.34%	6.34%	6.01%	5.58%	6.39%	6.09%
5 to 9 years	6.84%	7.40%	6.63%	6.45%	6.79%	6.38%
10 to 14 years	7.64%	7.45%	6.80%	6.21%	6.67%	6.66%
15 to 19 years	4.91%	6.98%	7.57%	6.84%	6.95%	6.35%
20 to 24 years	5.82%	6.62%	5.86%	6.75%	5.77%	6.14%
25 to 34 years	10.73%	10.60%	11.14%	10.90%	12.16%	12.08%
35 to 44 years	14.40%	12.7%	13.97%	12.01%	15.35%	13.58%
45 to 54 years	15.69%	13.01%	14.76%	14.46%	14.86%	14.70%
55 to 59 years	7.57%	6.92%	6.82%	7.11%	6.50%	6.88%
60 to 64 years	5.78%	6.96%	5.88%	6.59%	5.58%	6.12%
65 to 74 years	8.23%	7.61%	8.25%	10.17%	7.19%	8.90%
75 to 84 years	4.18%	5.61%	4.74%	4.90%	4.24%	4.37%
85 years and over	1.86%	1.86%	1.58%	2.02%	1.56%	1.74%
Median Age	40.5	42.7		42		40

Source: www.census.gov

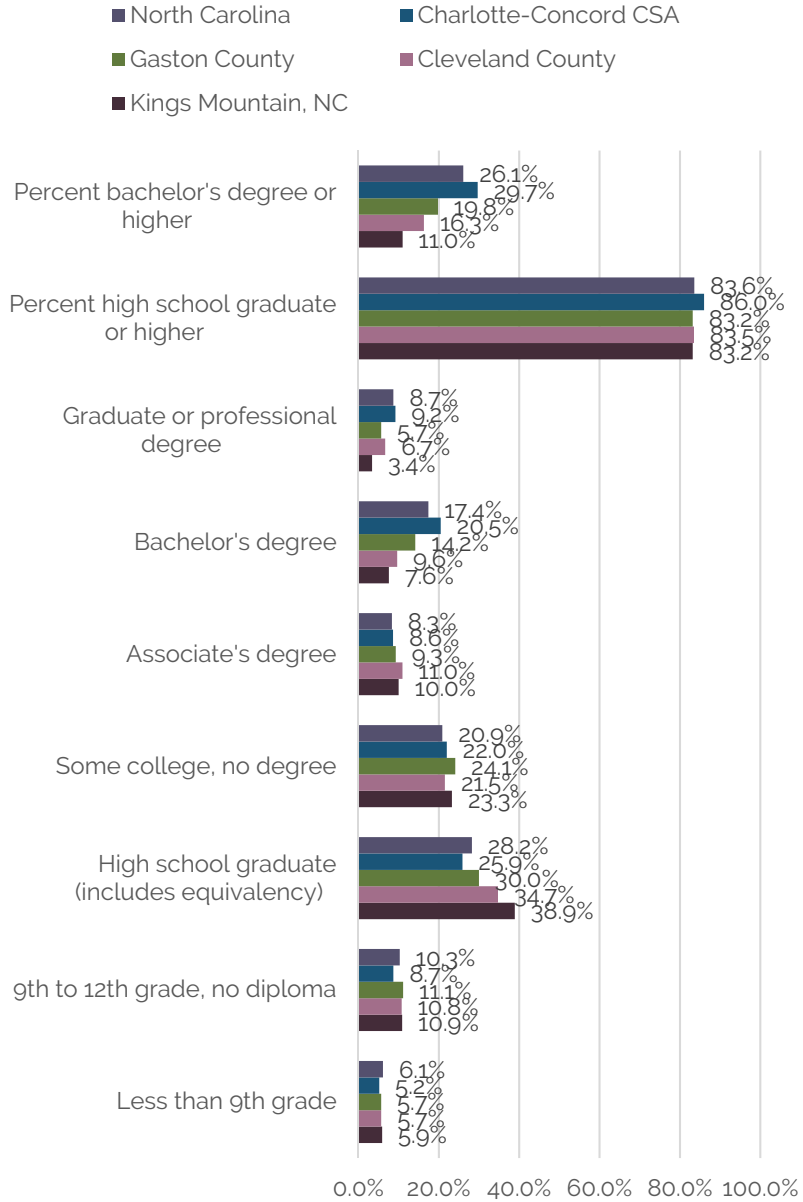
Population Change from 2010-most current



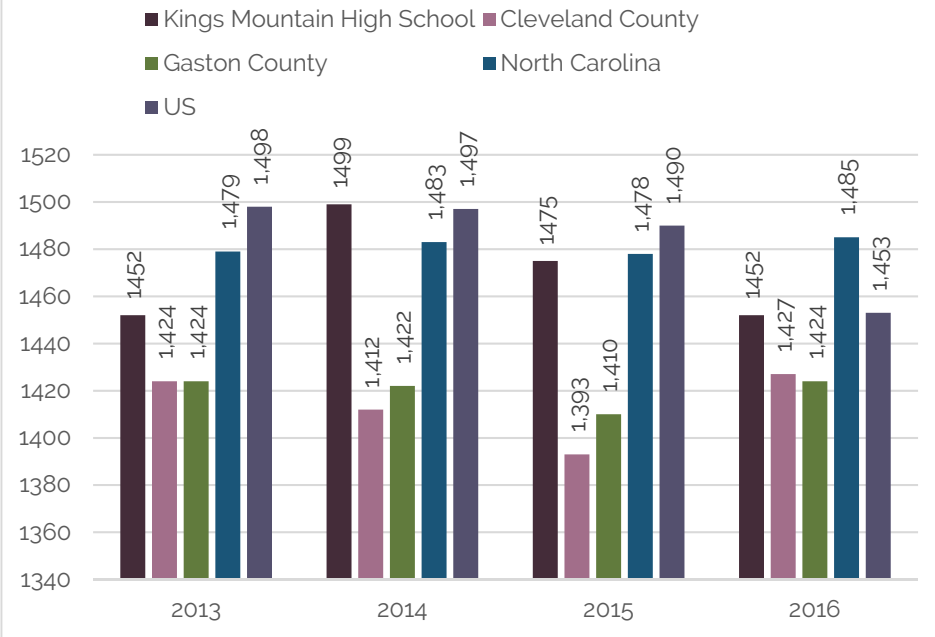
Source: www.census.gov

Race	Kings Mountain	Cleveland County	Gaston County	Charlotte MSA	North Carolina
Race	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
White Alone	75.3%	75.5%	76.8%	70.4%	65.3%
Black Alone	19.0%	20.8%	15.4%	21.7%	21.2%
American Indian Alone	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	1.1%
Asian Alone	0.4%	1.0%	1.5%	2.8%	2.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	1.4%	1.1%	3.7%	2.8%	0.2%
Two or More Races	3.7%	1.1%	2.2%	2.0%	1.6%
Hispanic Origin	2.9%	3.2%	6.4%	8.9%	8.4%
Source: www.census.gov					

2016 Educational Attainment 25 Years & Older

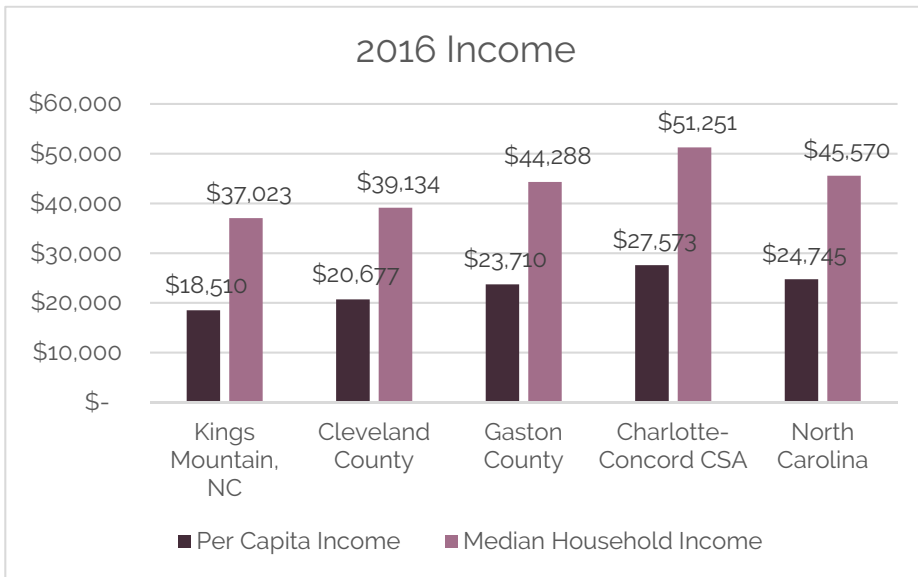


SAT Scores

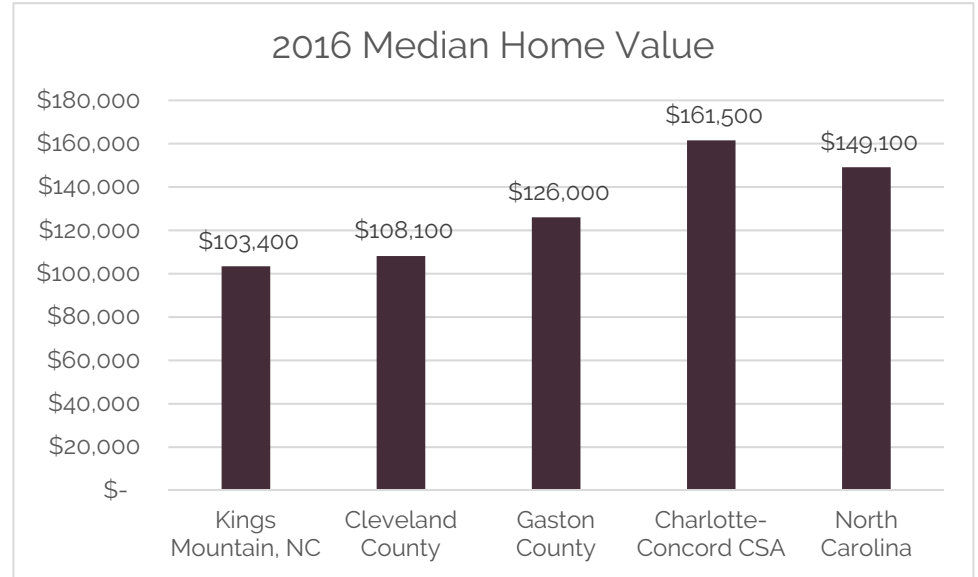


Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

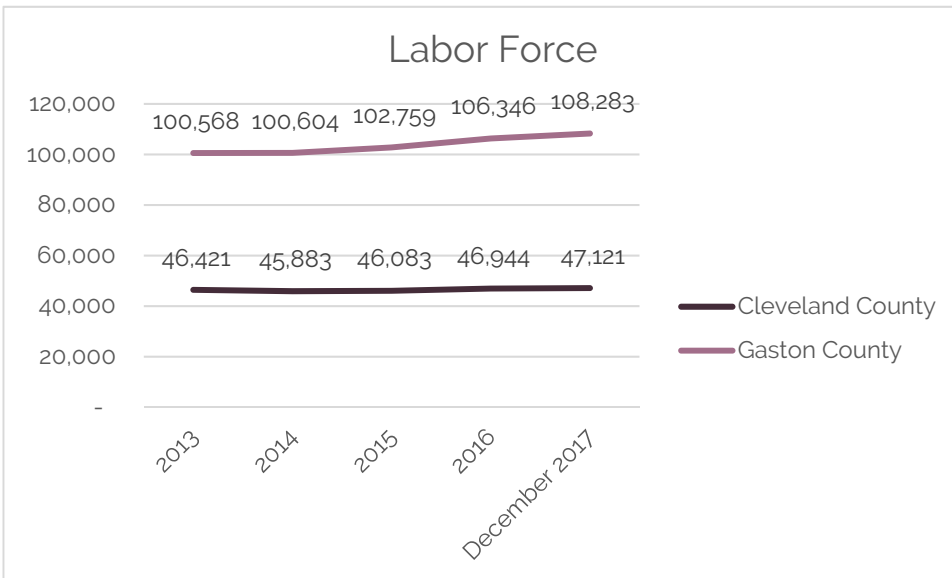
Source: www.census.gov



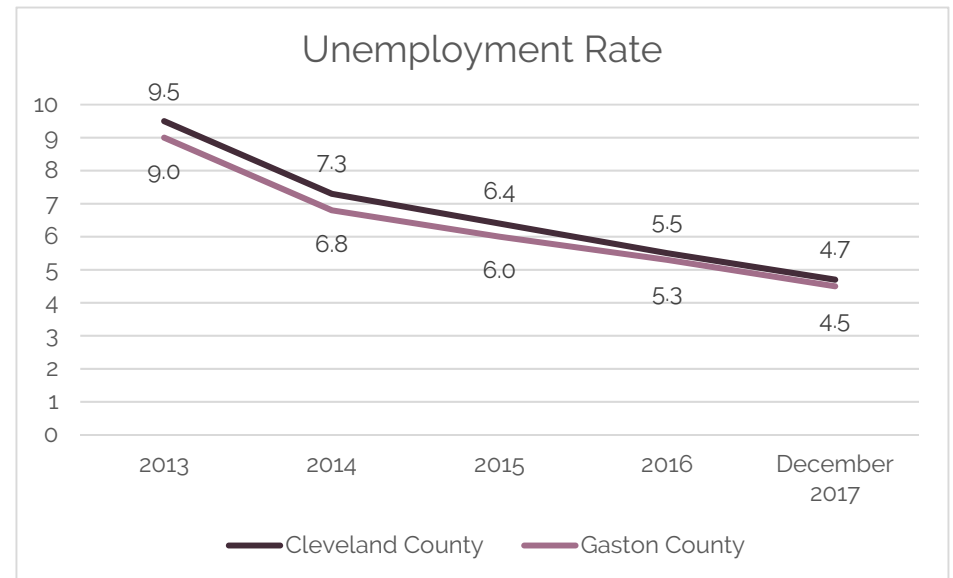
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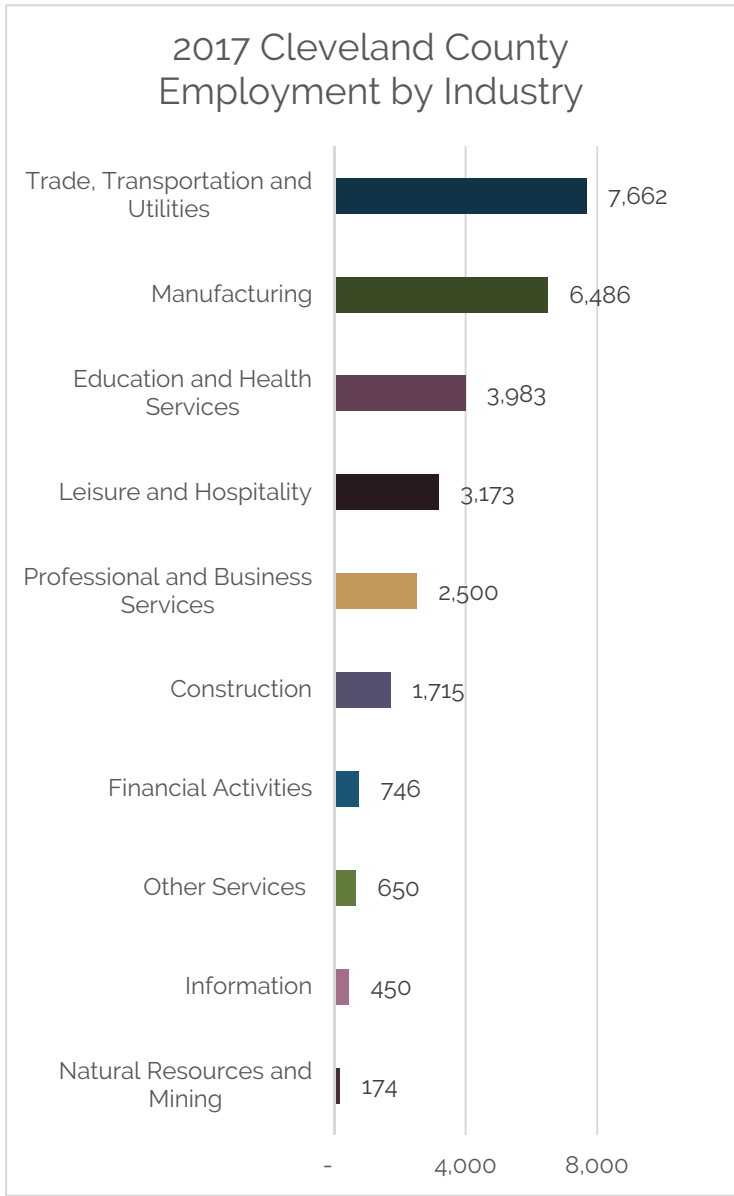
Source: www.census.gov



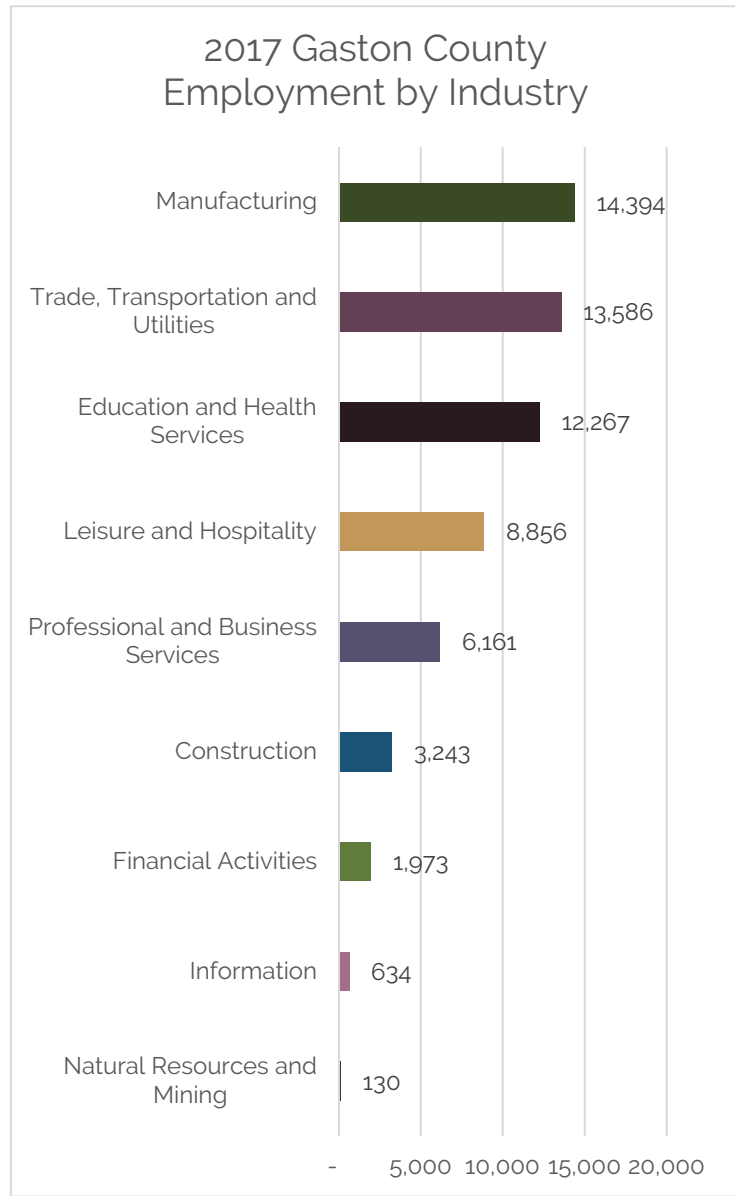
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



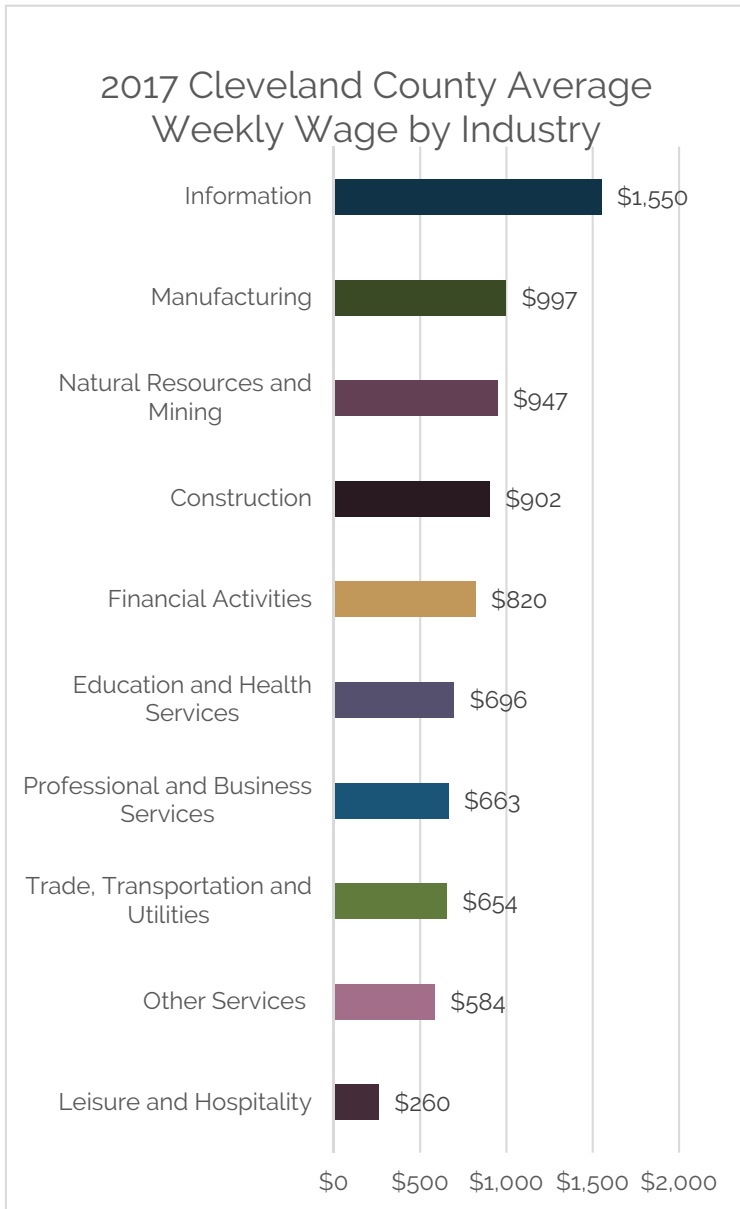
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



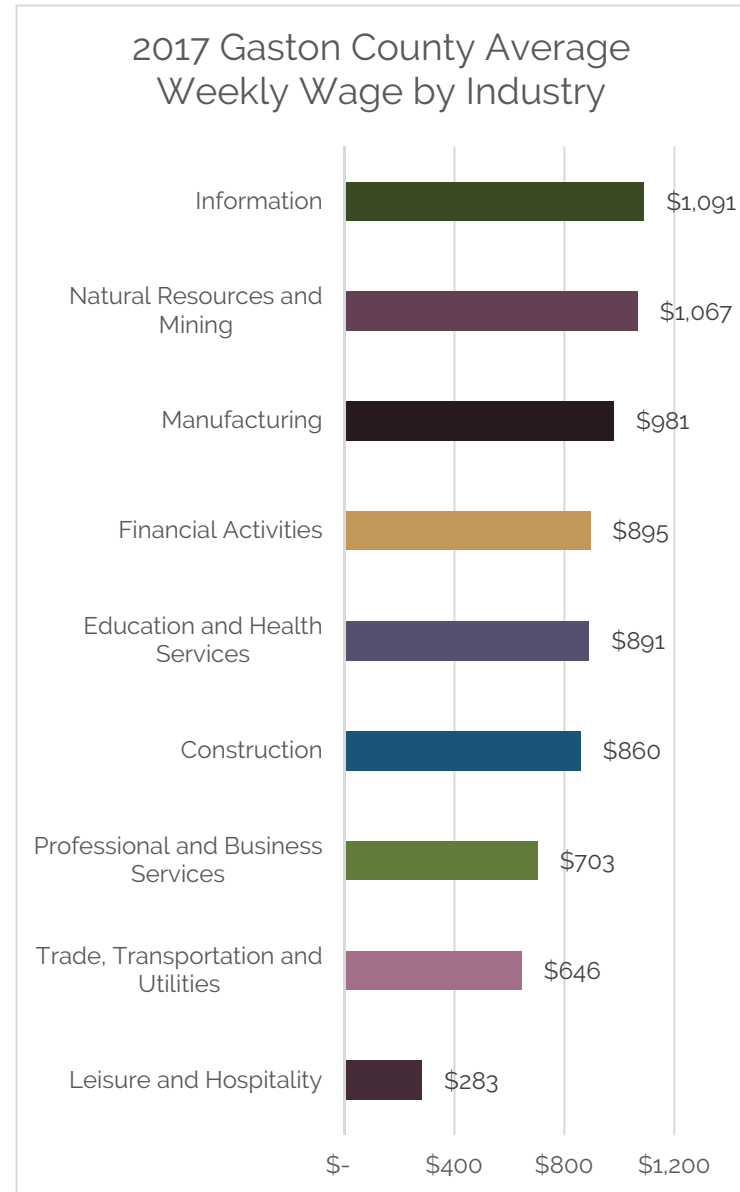
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

A location quotient is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region “unique” in comparison to the national average. Greater than one means a greater concentration than the national average. Thus, Cleveland and Gaston Counties have strong location quotients for utilities and manufacturing. Cleveland County stands out in warehousing and Gaston County in health care.

Location Quotients		
NAICS Sector	Cleveland County	Gaston County
Utilities	2.12	1.95
Construction	1.13	1.07
Manufacturing	2.53	2.53
Wholesale trade	0.54	0.83
Retail trade	1.32	1.5
Transportation and warehousing	2.04	0.61
Information	0.53	0.28
Finance and insurance	0.18	0.22
Real estate and rental and leasing	0.37	0.72
Professional and technical services	0.22	0.26
Management of companies and enterprises	0.04	0.42
Administrative and waste services	0.87	0.81
Educational services	1.48	0.7
Health care and social assistance	0.7	1.54
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0.3	0.41
Accommodation and food services	0.84	1.21
Other services, except public administration	0.64	0.88

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

ESRI, a private data source often used in industrial and commercial development, segments communities into “tapestries.” Tapestry segmentation provides an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods. U.S. residential areas are divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition—then further classified into LifeMode and Urbanization Groups segments. Below are the predominant Kings Mountain tapestry segments.

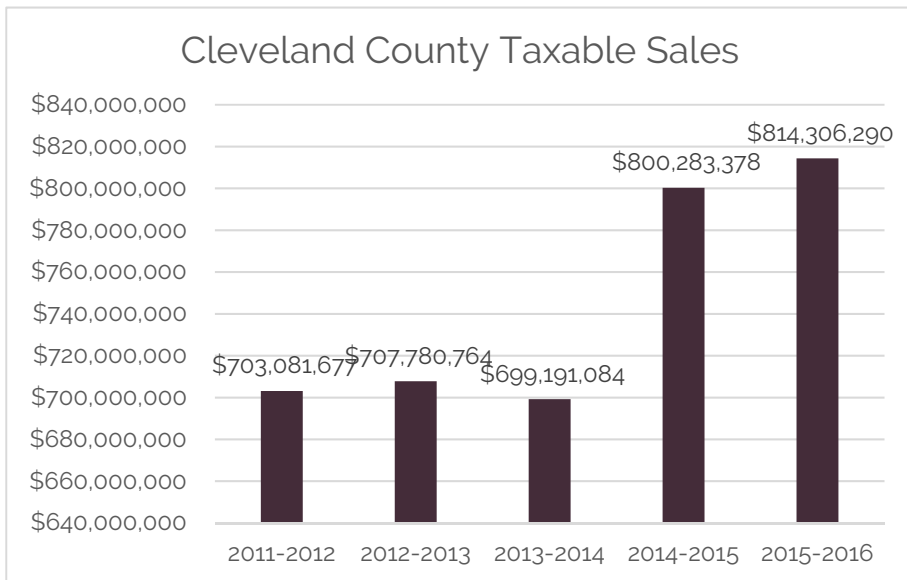
Tapestry Segment	Percent Kings Mountain Households	Percent US Households	Summary
Heartland Communities	26.30%	2.30%	Well settled and close-knit, Heartland Communities are semirural and semiretired. These older householders are primarily homeowners, and many have paid off their mortgages. Their children have moved away, but they have no plans to leave their homes. Their hearts are with the country; they embrace the slower pace of life here but actively participate in outdoor activities and community events. Traditional and patriotic, these residents support their local businesses, always buy American, and favor domestic driving vacations over foreign plane trips.
Salt of the Earth	25.90%	2.90%	Salt of the Earth residents are entrenched in their traditional, rural lifestyles. Citizens here are older, and many have grown children that have moved away. They still cherish family time and also tending to their vegetable gardens and preparing homemade meals. Residents embrace the outdoors; they spend most of their free time preparing for their next fishing, boating, or camping trip. The majority has at least a high school diploma or some college education; many have expanded their skill set during their years of employment in the manufacturing and related industries. They may be experts with DIY projects, but the latest technology is not their forte. They use it when absolutely necessary, but seek face-to-face contact in their routine activities.
Small Town Simplicity	23.90%	1.90%	Small Town Simplicity includes young families and senior householders that are bound by community ties. The lifestyle is down-to-earth and semirural, with television for entertainment and news, and emphasis on convenience for
			both young parents and senior citizens. Residents embark on pursuits including online computer games, renting movies, indoor gardening, and rural activities like hunting and fishing. Since 1 in 4 households is below poverty level, residents also keep their finances simple—paying bills in person and avoiding debt

Tapestry Segment	Percent Kings Mountain Households	Percent US Households	Summary
Middleburg	9.90%	2.90%	Middleburg neighborhoods transformed from the easy pace of country living to semirural subdivisions in the last decade, when the housing boom reached out. Residents are conservative, family-oriented consumers. Still more country than rock and roll, they are thrifty but willing to carry some debt and are already investing in their futures. They rely on their smartphones and mobile devices to stay in touch and pride themselves on their expertise. They prefer to buy American and travel in the U.S. This market is younger but growing in size and assets.
Rural Bypasses	8.80%	1.30%	Open space, undeveloped land, and farmland characterize Rural Bypasses. These families live within small towns along country back roads and enjoy the open air in these sparsely populated neighborhoods. Their country lifestyle focuses on the outdoors, gardening, hunting, and fishing. They are more likely to own a satellite dish than a home computer. Although a majority of households do have a connection to the Internet, their use is very limited. Those who are not yet retired work in blue collar jobs in the agriculture or manufacturing industries.
Subtotal	94.80%	11.30%	
Southern Satellites	3.70%	3.10%	Southern Satellites is the second largest market found in rural settlements but within metropolitan areas located primarily in the South. This market is typically nondiverse, slightly older, settled, married-couple families, who own their homes. Two-thirds of the homes are single-family structures; almost a third are mobile homes. Median household income and home value are below average. Workers are employed in a variety of industries, such as manufacturing, health care, retail trade, and construction, with higher proportions in mining and agriculture than the US. Residents enjoy country living, preferring outdoor activities and DIY home projects.
Traditional Living	1.40%	1.90%	Residents in this segment live primarily in low-density, settled neighborhoods in the Midwest. The households are a mix of married-couple families and singles. Many families encompass two generations who have lived and worked in the community; their children are likely to follow suit. The manufacturing, retail trade, and health care sectors are the primary sources of employment for these residents. This is a younger market—beginning householders who are juggling the responsibilities of living on their own or a new marriage, while retaining their youthful interests in style and fun.
Subtotal	5.10%	5.00%	
Total	100%	16.30%	
<i>Source: ESRI</i>			

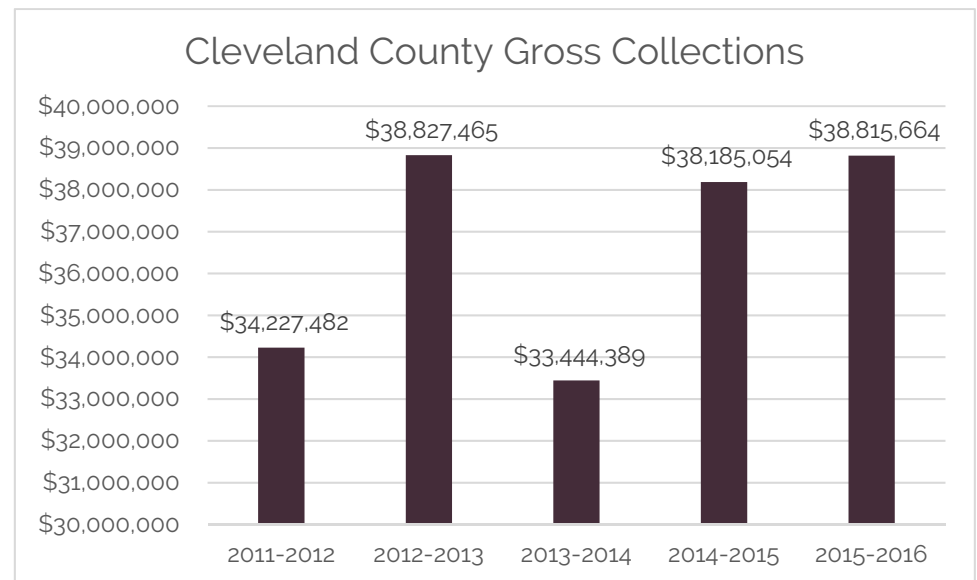
Cleveland County Top Employers			
Rank	Company Name	Industry	Employment Range
1	Cleveland County Board of Education	Education & Health Services	1000+
2	Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital	Education & Health Services	1000+
3	Wal-Mart Associates Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1000+
4	County of Cleveland	Public Administration	1000+
5	Gardner-Webb University	Education & Health Services	500-999
6	Hanesbrands, Inc	Manufacturing	500-999
7	Ingles Markets Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	500-999
8	Ppg Industries Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
9	Baldor Electric Company	Manufacturing	250-499
10	Cleveland Community College	Education & Health Services	250-499
11	Eaton Corporation	Manufacturing	250-499
12	City of Shelby	Public Administration	250-499
13	S T I	Manufacturing	250-499
14	Greenheck Fan Corporation	Manufacturing	250-499
15	White Oak Manor Inc	Education & Health Services	250-499
16	Firestone Fibers & Textiles LLC	Manufacturing	250-499
17	Curtiss Wright Flight Systems Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
19	Telerx Marketing Inc	Professional & Business Services	250-499
19	Cleveland County Family Ymca Inc.	Leisure & Hospitality	250-499
20	Wipro Us Branch It Services	Information	250-499
21	Talentforce	Professional & Business Services	250-499
23	Personnel Services Unlimited	Professional & Business Services	250-499
23	Gemma Power Systems Llc	Construction	100-249
24	Parker Hannifin Corporation	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	100-249
25	Gca Services Group Inc	Professional & Business Services	100-249
<i>Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce</i>			

Cleveland County 2012-2016 Employment Stages				
ESTABLISHMENTS	2012	% of TOTAL	2016	% of TOTAL
ALL	6,000	100	5,345	100
Self-Employed (1)	702	11.7	662	12.4
Stage 1 (2-9)	4,416	73.6	3,773	70.6
Stage 2 (10-99)	820	13.7	850	15.9
Stage 3 (100-499)	60	1	58	1.1
Stage 4 (500+)	2	0	2	0

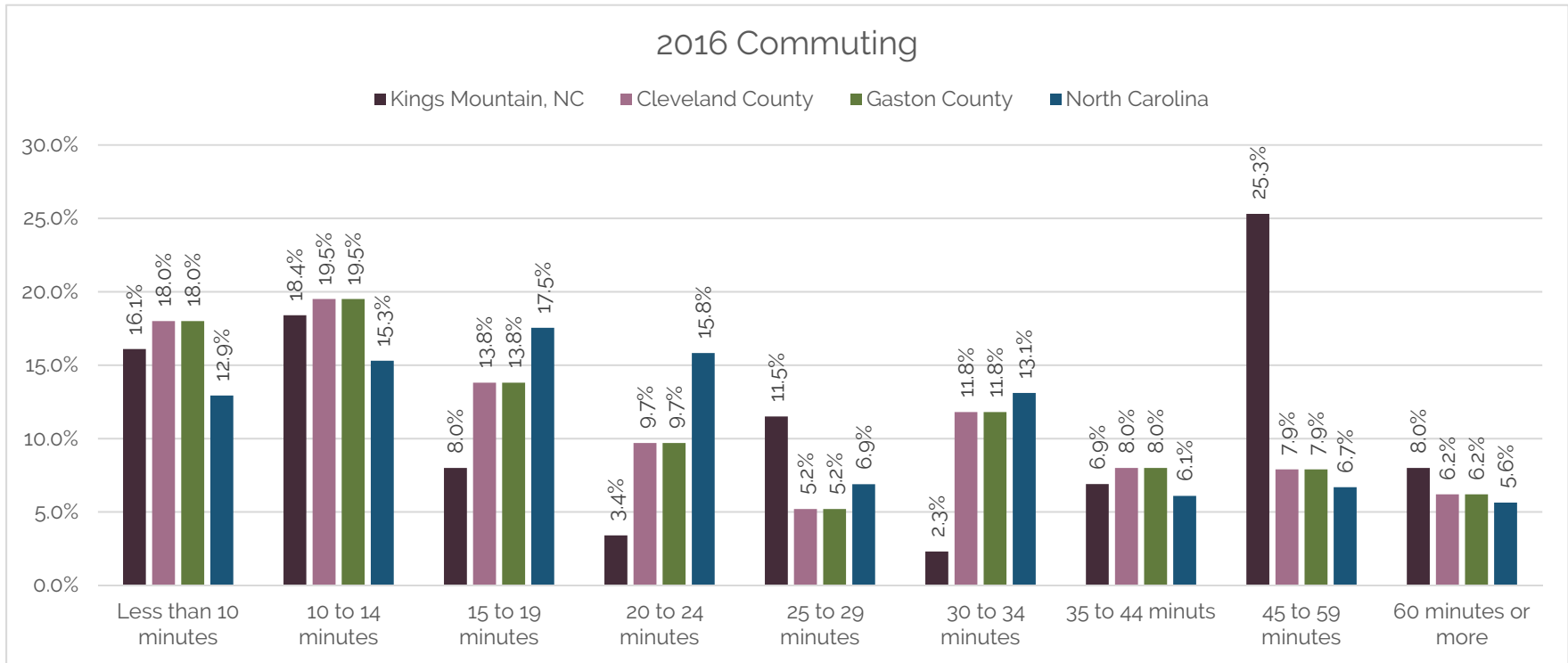
Source: Your Economy Data



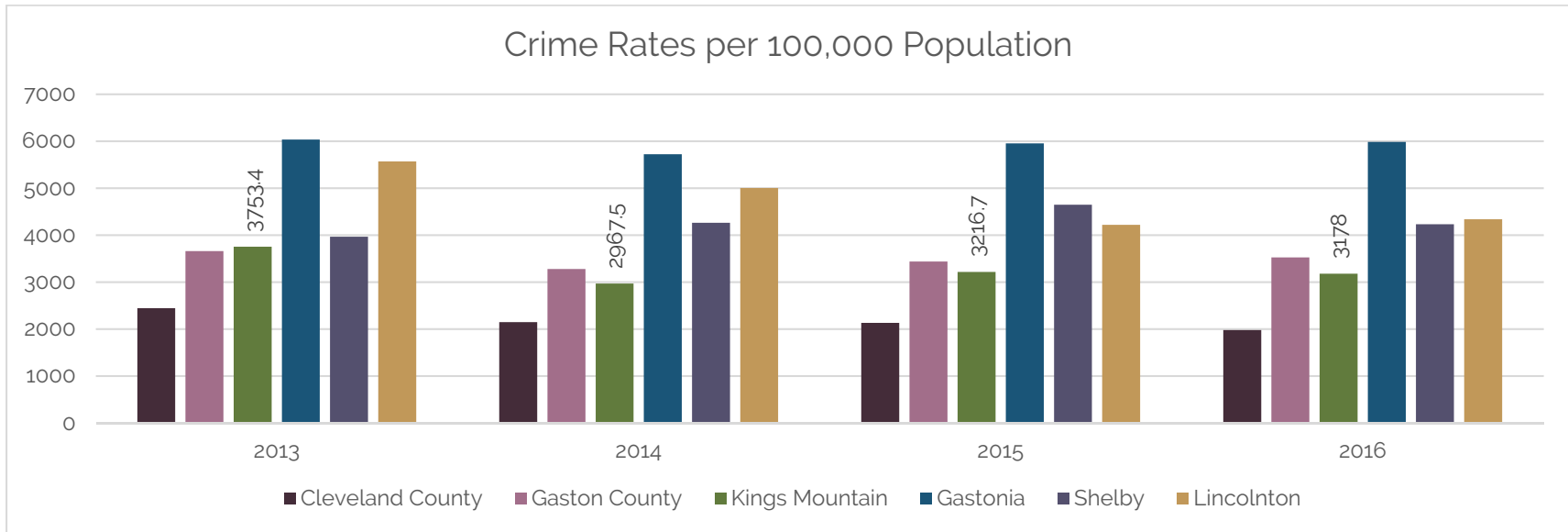
Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue



Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue



Source: U.S. Census



Source: North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation

Kings Mountain Retail Market Place Profile

This report shows retail leakage in Kings Mountain. Overall, Kings Mountain attracts more buyers, supplying more retail goods, food, and drink than citizens alone could consume. There is leakage in specific sectors like automobile dealers, clothing stores, and electronics.

Summary Demographics

2017 Population	19,355
2017 Households	7,460
2017 Median Disposable Income	\$26,187
2017 Per Capita Income	\$18,793

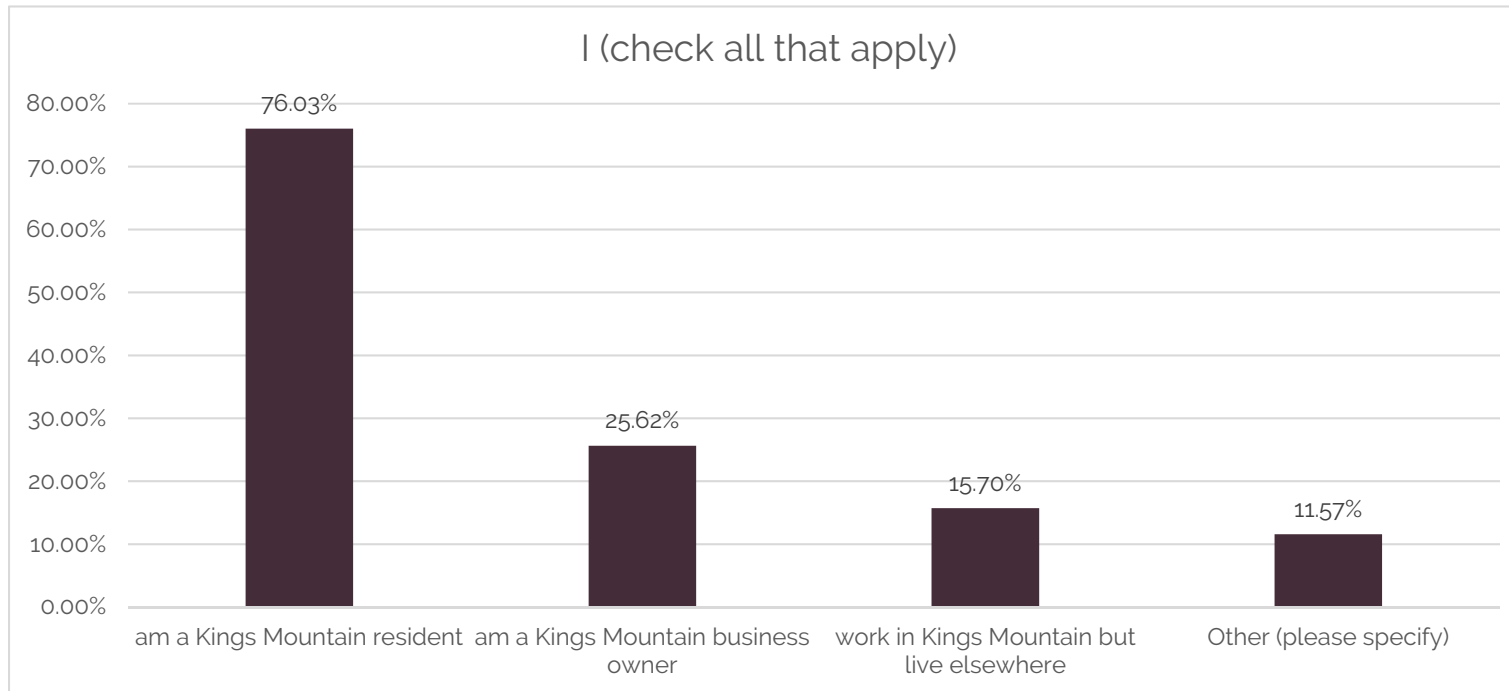
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage / Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$121,354,059	\$159,483,263	-\$38,129,204	-13.6	116
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$110,563,499	\$140,338,503	-\$29,775,004	-11.9	84
Total Food & Drink	722	\$10,790,560	\$19,144,760	-\$8,354,200	-27.9	32
NAICS Industry Group		Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage / Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$24,864,361	\$14,566,101	\$10,298,260	26.1	14
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$20,449,223	\$1,387,855	\$19,061,368	87.3	4
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$2,089,509	\$8,511,613	-\$6,422,104	-60.6	2
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$2,325,629	\$4,666,633	-\$2,341,004	-33.5	8
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$3,929,400	\$4,224,190	-\$294,790	-3.6	4
Furniture Stores	4421	\$2,380,588	\$1,581,109	\$799,479	20.2	2
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$1,548,812	\$2,643,081	-\$1,094,269	-26.1	2
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$3,007,039	\$2,477,998	\$529,041	9.6	3
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$8,278,563	\$12,287,196	-\$4,008,633	-19.5	11
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$7,715,812	\$12,147,284	-\$4,431,472	-22.3	10
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$562,751	\$139,912	\$422,839	60.2	1
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$19,035,412	\$45,327,799	-\$26,292,387	-40.9	13
Grocery Stores	4451	\$17,742,408	\$43,631,730	-\$25,889,322	-42.2	10
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$695,503	\$432,992	\$262,511	23.3	2
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$597,501	\$1,263,077	-\$665,576	-35.8	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$7,153,920	\$24,520,252	-\$17,366,332	-54.8	9
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$12,248,320	\$24,137,865	-\$11,889,545	-32.7	10
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$4,674,137	\$1,793,476	\$2,880,661	44.5	3
Clothing Stores	4481	\$3,121,366	\$836,377	\$2,284,989	57.7	2
Shoe Stores	4482	\$756,728	\$0	\$756,728	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$796,043	\$957,099	-\$161,056	-9.2	1
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$2,765,297	\$219,650	\$2,545,647	85.3	2
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$2,349,681	\$219,650	\$2,130,031	82.9	2
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$415,616	\$0	\$415,616	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$17,586,678	\$9,623,213	\$7,963,465	29.3	7
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$12,489,682	\$4,387,531	\$8,102,151	48.0	1
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$5,096,996	\$5,235,682	-\$138,686	-1.3	6

Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$5,046,666	\$1,160,763	\$3,885,903	62.6	8
Florists	4531	\$160,910	\$92,205	\$68,705	27.1	1
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$940,790	\$85,959	\$854,831	83.3	1
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$501,780	\$725,216	-\$223,436	-18.2	5
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$3,443,186	\$257,383	\$3,185,803	86.1	1
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$1,973,706	\$0	\$1,973,706	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$1,303,959	\$0	\$1,303,959	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$102,833	\$0	\$102,833	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$566,914	\$0	\$566,914	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$10,790,560	\$19,144,760	-\$8,354,200	-27.9	32
Special Food Services	7223	\$105,683	\$191,938	-\$86,255	-29.0	1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$685,921	\$175,167	\$510,754	59.3	1
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$9,998,956	\$18,777,655	-\$8,778,699	-30.5	30

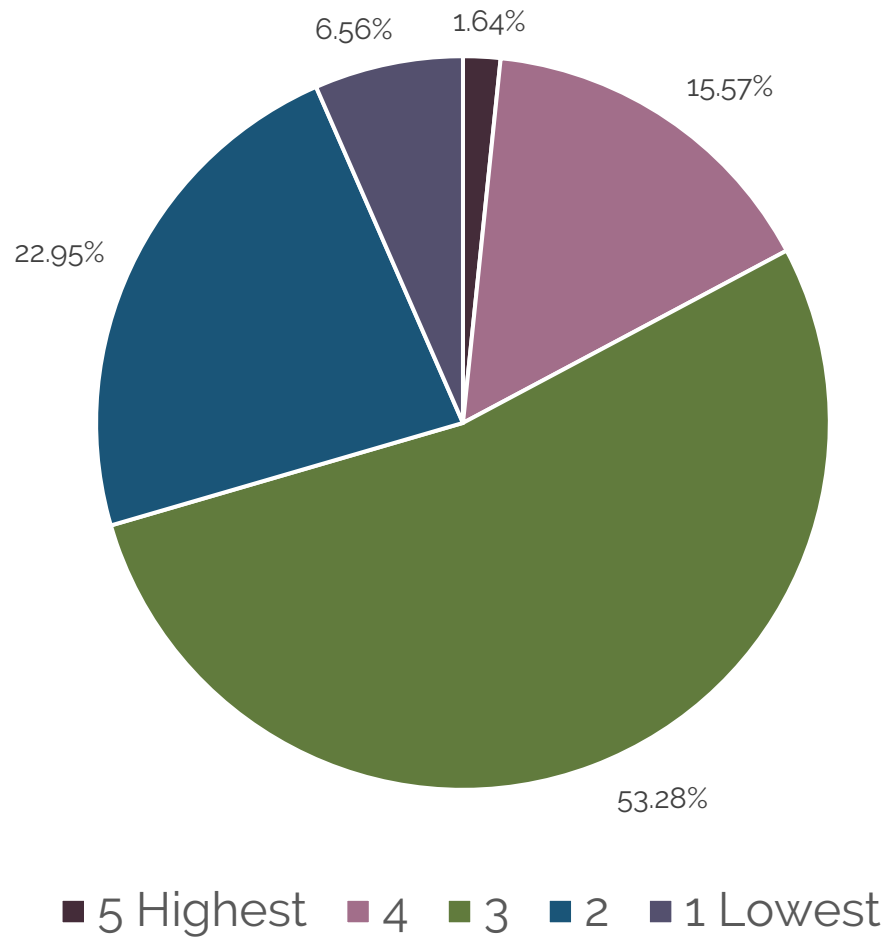
Source: Esri and Infogroup. Retail MarketPlace 2017. Copyright 2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

Appendix B: Community Survey Results

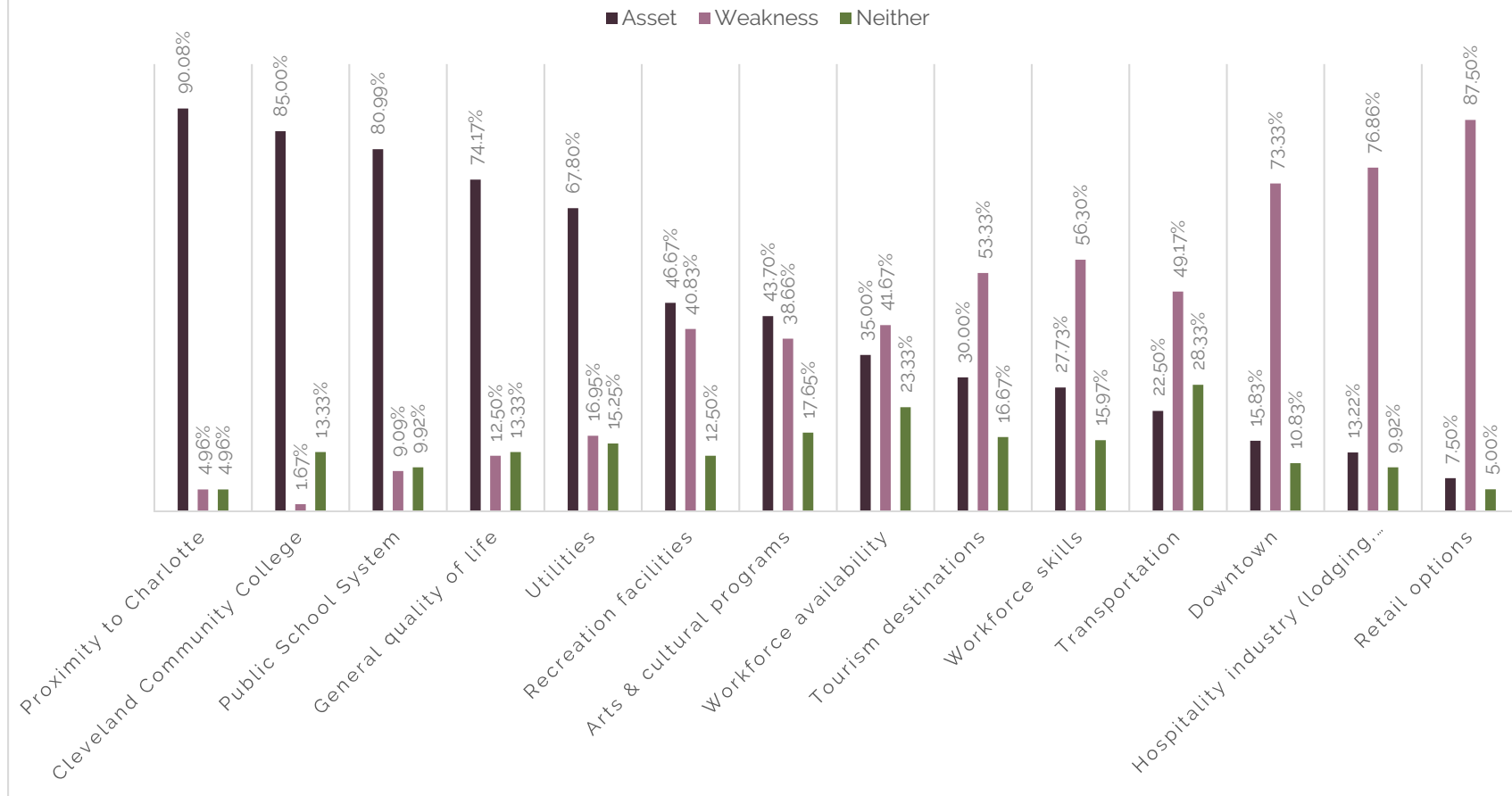
122 citizens responded to the online survey. Most are Kings Mountain residents, and about one-fourth are business owners. The survey information informed the SWOT Analysis and was used in the development of the strategic plan. In addition to the survey, we interviewed approximately 15 people and another dozen participated in a focus group, equally more than 150 citizens participated.



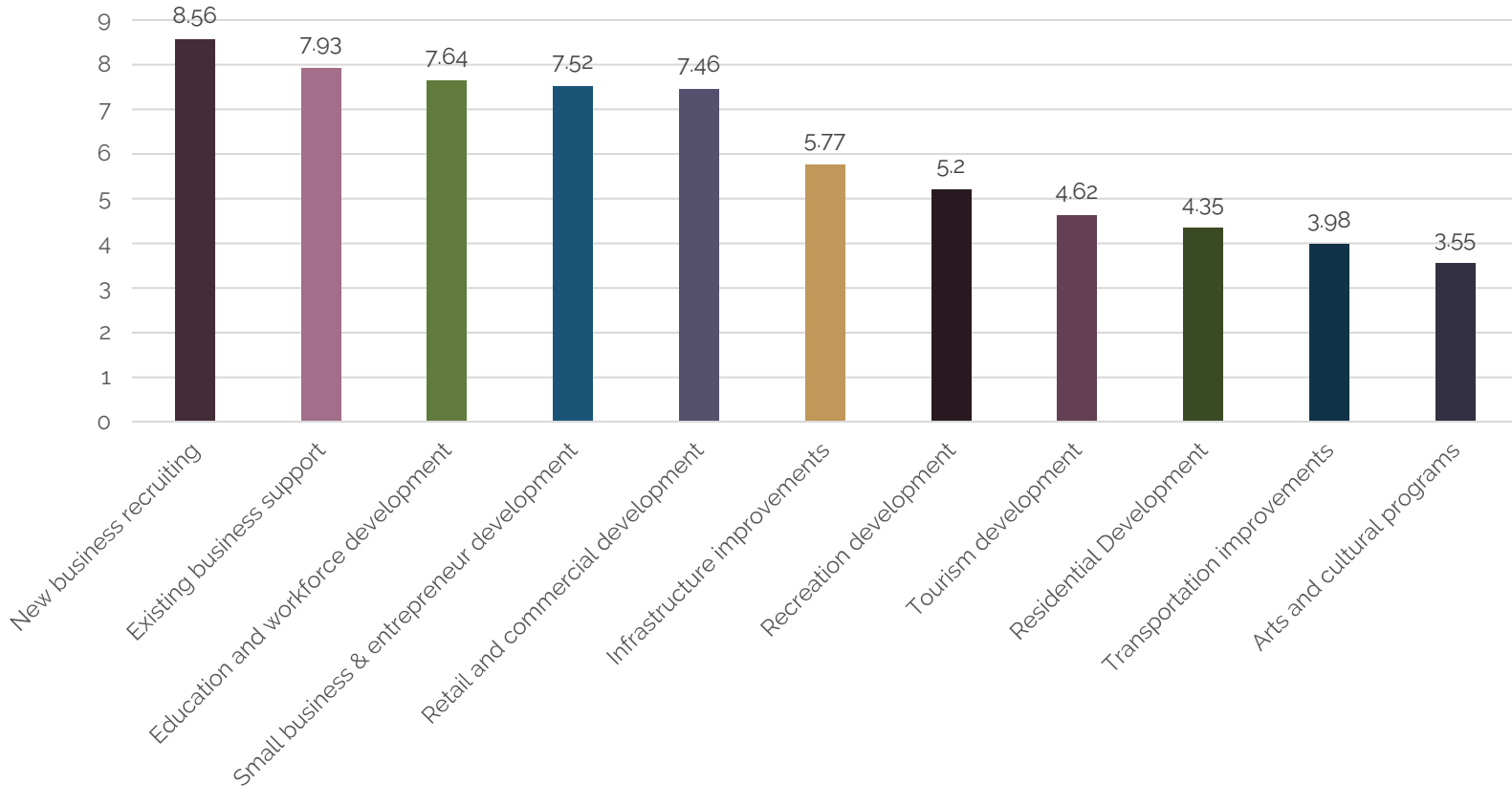
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being highest, how do you rate the current business climate of the area?



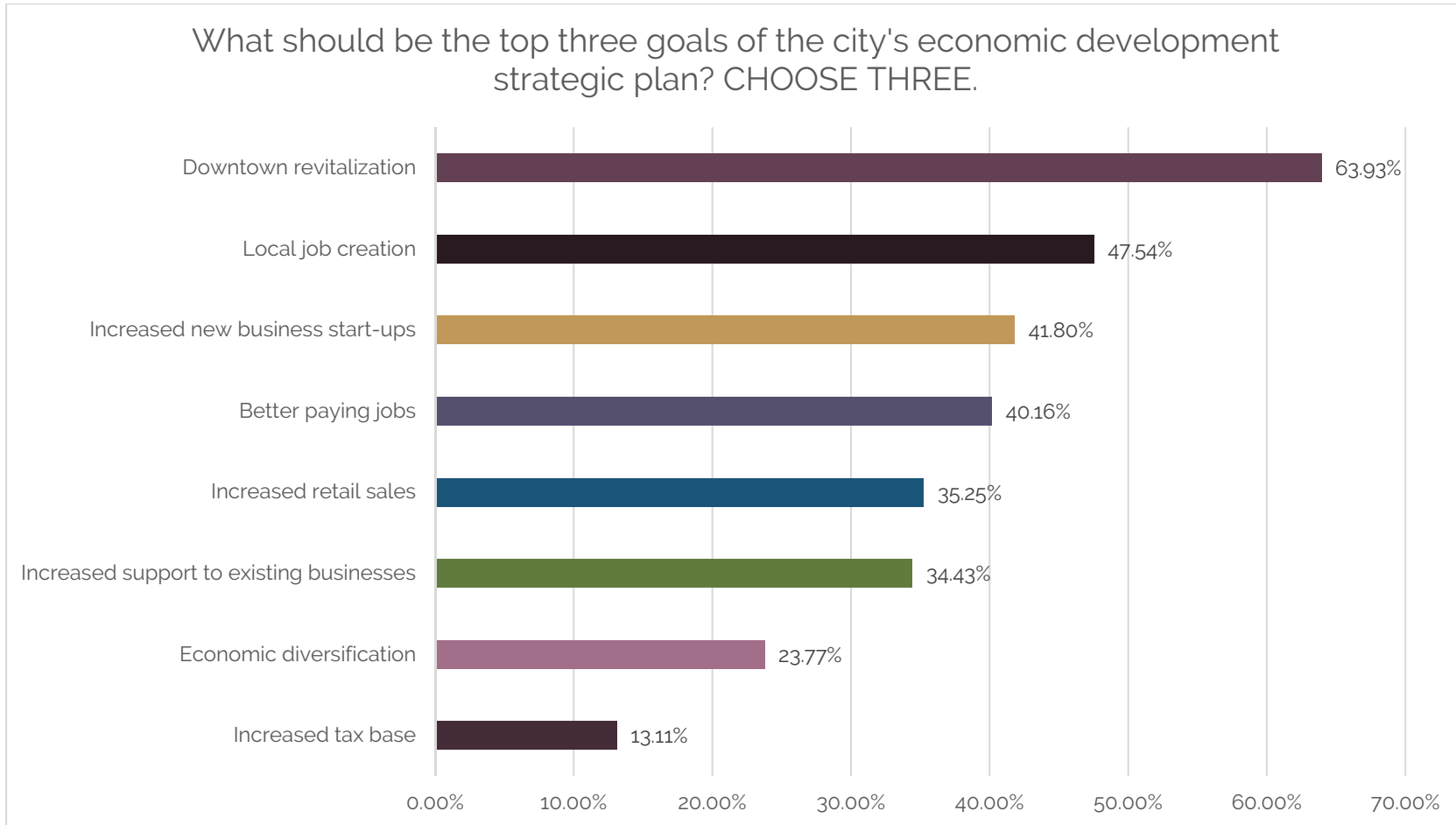
Rate the following as an asset supporting economic development or a weakness hindering economic growth or neither.



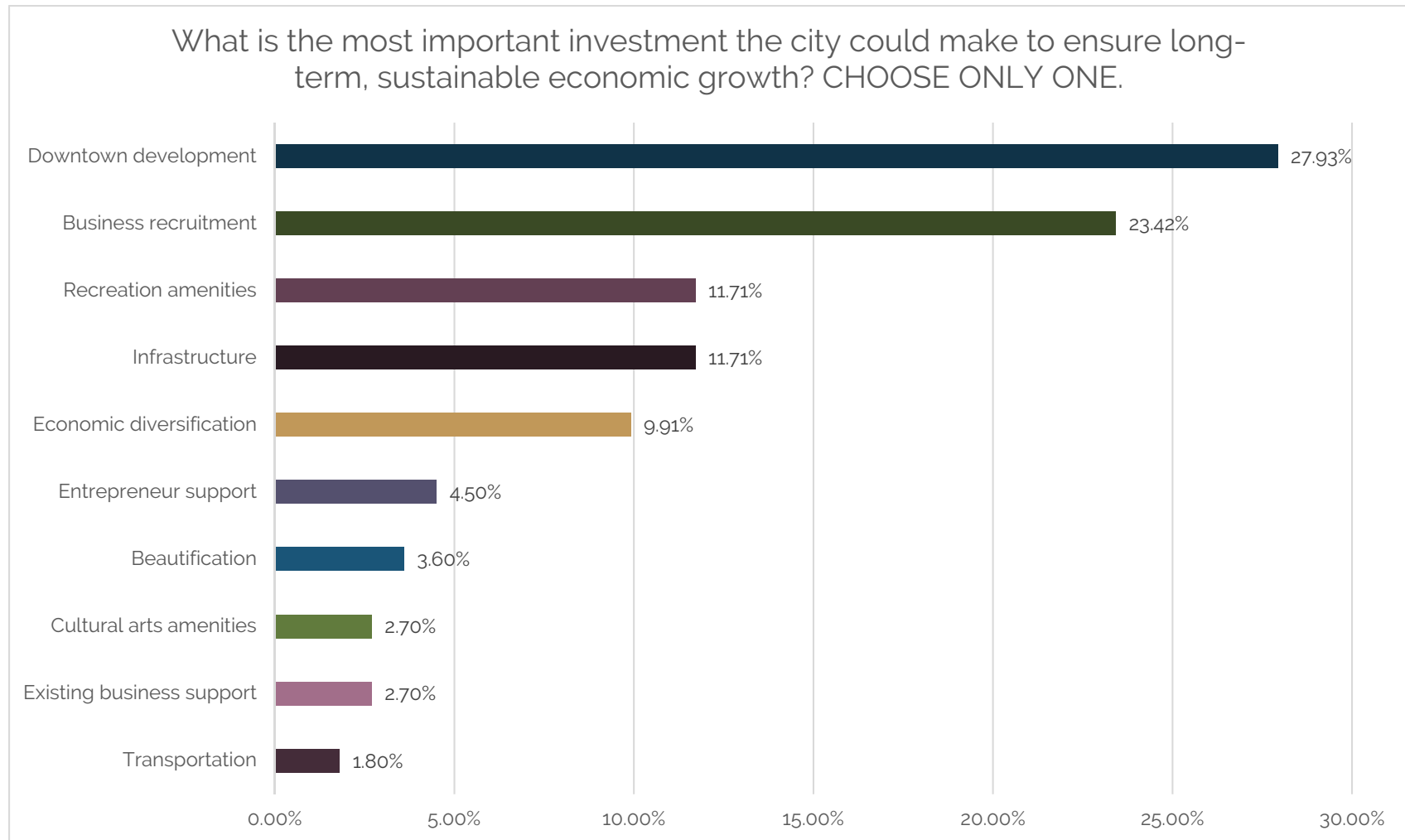
Rank order the following economic development strategies in order of importance. Note: The list will re-order as you rank.



When this question was asked in the community focus group, in addition to these goals they also talked about gateways, accountability, beautification, and strategic plan implementation.



We asked a similar question at the community focus group. The answers there were similar: code enforcement, downtown redevelopment, marketing/communication, education, support existing businesses.



Appendix C: Study Sponsor and Consultant



ElectriCities of N.C. Inc., supported the City of Kings Mountain Economic Development Strategic Plan. ElectriCities offers a variety of services to promote NC Public Power communities to businesses and economic developers. They help 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

www.electricities.com



Creative Economic Development Consulting, LLC, provides strategic planning, product development, organizational development, social media, and economic impact analysis services to communities. Creative EDC is an innovative firm that owns three proprietary programs: Certified Entrepreneurial Community®, CreativeSiteAssessment.com, and Certified Industrial Buildings. Creative EDC supports ElectriCities' strategic planning and Smart Sites initiatives.

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