

## 2020 Economic Development Strategic Plan

SPONSORED BY: ELECTRICITIES OF NC, INC.  
CREATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING, LLC  
JUNE 2020

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary ..... 2

Cherryville Economic Development Strategic Plan ..... 3

Implementation Plan ..... 15

Measuring Success ..... 16

Appendix A: SWOT Analysis..... 17

Appendix B: Economic and Demographic Profile .....23

Appendix C: Community Survey.....49

Study Sponsor and Consultant .....56

# Executive Summary

Cherryville is “Where Life Blossoms.” The city attracts people interested in living, working, and playing in a small town that is close to the big-city amenities of the Charlotte region. Cherryville’s downtown is under revitalization and the city is investing in the future. This strategic plan aligns the city’s overall goals with strategies to grow and develop its downtown, businesses, the arts, and leadership.

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 Cherryville to make investments that result in a stronger, more sustainable economy. Cherryville can access several support programs from ElectriCities to assist with implementation of the strategic plan.

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 Cherryville’s assets and future opportunities. Cherryville’s strengths include location near Charlotte, small-town charm, a downtown under revitalization, and quality schools. The city’s challenges include an aging and slow-growing population, small industry and business base, dilapidated buildings, and very limited public resources for investment. The most significant opportunity is the revitalization of downtown and a potential new industry location on the horizon. Most of the threats identified are things that most small towns struggle with - small leadership group, lack of jobs to attract young professionals, and housing.

The strategic planning process was started in 2019, well before the COVID-19 pandemic. This report was finalized in June of 2020; therefore, the full economic effects of the pandemic are not known at this time. Short-term strategies were updated to address recovery and resiliency. Generally, long-term strategies remain unchanged as the fundamentals of the regional and state economy are strong.

Cherryville has a history of resiliency. For decades the town benefitted from the economic activity of Carolina Freight. When the facility closed in the mid-1990s, the city had to pivot. The immediate effect was that the jobs went away. Slowly, the wealth has gone away. Once a city with one of the highest per capita income rates in the state, it now struggles to finance projects and finds its citizens commuting outside the area for high-paying jobs. Even among the trials of the last 25 years, Cherryville has shown it is a place of strong foundations on which a new, more resilient economy is being built.

The Cherryville Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines strategies in downtown development, sites and buildings, marketing, the arts, and leadership development. 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.



# Cherryville Economic Development Strategic Plan

The Cherryville vision statement is “The City of Cherryville will be a transparent model of excellence that upholds high ethical standards and nurtures opportunities for current and future generations to live, work, play and conduct business while maintaining our small-town character and heritage.” The strategic plan goals support that vision statement, especially the part about living, working, playing, and conducting business while maintaining the small-town character.

Investing in a vibrant downtown includes financial investments, policies, and general support of business and entrepreneurs. It also includes attracting people to downtown to live, shop, and work. Businesses need a home, so we recommend Cherryville develop a range of sites and buildings for industry, commercial, and retail uses. Marketing and promoting Cherryville will ensure the Cherryville story reaches audiences internally and externally. Cherryville needs cheerleaders, and it starts with locals sharing the same wonderful stories about the city. Art could be an economic driver for Cherryville as well as impact the image and streetscape. The goal on regionalism connects Cherryville to partners who can be team players in the city’s economic development efforts. Finally, but most importantly, is leadership development. Cherryville, like most small-town governments, will face significant leadership turnover as baby boomers retire. Developing the next generation of leaders is critical.

## Strategic Economic Development Goals

1. Develop Quality Business Sites and Buildings
2. Invest in a Vibrant Downtown
3. Market and Promote Cherryville
4. Embrace Regionalism
5. Support the Arts as an Economic Driver
6. Develop Leaders for the Future

## Goal: Develop Quality Sites and Buildings Ready for Development

As companies diversify the supply chain and create domestic redundancies, economic forecasts anticipate an increase in manufacturing, distribution, and logistics expansions. With a recent project announcement on Cherryville's best industrial site, identifying, qualifying, and marketing new industrial sites is important.

### Strategy: Leverage partners in site and building development

#### Action Steps:

- Continue to work with Gaston County EDC to complete the project on the water tower site.
- Enhance existing business development sites.
  - Work with owners of the former Carolina Freight property to maintain the parking area and enhance the entrance with signage.
  - Review Hickory's landscape matching grant program to encourage the beautification of business properties.
- Use the expertise of Gaston County EDC to determine new site development opportunities with a review of potential rail sites. Include an assessment of the West Academy property owned by Gardner-Webb University.
  - Another resource is the new ElectriCities SiteAssit program that helps cities identify the best site for industrial or commercial development.
  - Through these partners, identify a few sites for a future business park development. The property could be small, less than 50 acres, and could accommodate several small businesses. The park could be developed with flex space for small businesses such as machining, construction trades, small manufacturers, and other industries.
    - Use drones to create videos of sites. More site visits will be done virtually, even post-pandemic, to reduce project cost.
  - There will likely be new federal and state funding for economic resiliency due to COVID-19 that could be used for infrastructure projects that support site development.
- Encourage office space development in the next redevelopment project in downtown. The City of Gastonia offers a good example of a partnership for office and incubator space in the Louray Mill redevelopment project. The city guaranteed to lease some space to support the project and ensure office space was developed.





- Consider locating the chamber and economic development program in a redevelopment project to act as a catalyst.

### Strategy: Promote available properties in Cherryville

#### Action Steps:

- Maintain an inventory of available buildings to include industrial, commercial, and retail. Post the inventory on the city's website and link to the inventory from the chamber website. Consider adding drone/aerial flyover imagery on buildings.
- Send e-communications to a database of contacts highlighting an available building or site each quarter with a link to the online inventory. Include in the database partner agencies such as the EDC, Chamber, and Small Business Center along with chamber members, other businesses, regional real estate professionals, and ElectriCities economic development staff.
  - Properties that are ready to go will be the most sought after in the economic recovery.
  - Most buildings are purchased/rented by businesses already in the region. Market to existing businesses for expansion.

### Strategy: Promote available properties for residential development

#### Action Steps:

- Seek a grant from the National Association of Realtors to conduct a housing study. This could be in partnership with Gaston County. Burke County completed a similar housing study in 2019. It quantified the gap in housing over the next three years. This information can be used to show developers the potential market.
- Identify in-fill properties ideal for residential development. The city could offer additional support for residential development on in-fill properties such as fee waivers.
- Review Shelby's proactive policy in eliminating vacant and dilapidated housing structures so the sites can be redeveloped. The city demolishes approximately 10 houses a year.
- Identify properties for new residential developments.
  - Promote to regional realtors and residential developers.
  - Consider city investment in residential developments such as roads, infrastructure, and fee waivers.

### Strategy: Align site and building development with the city's 2020 Strategic Plan

#### Action Steps:

- Complete the list of needed infrastructure upgrades, then prioritize, integrate with the Main Street Project, analyze cost, and identify and seek funding for infrastructure projects that support business development and the long-term growth of the city. There will be new federal and state funding available for these projects associated with the economic recovery.

## Goal: Invest in a Vibrant Downtown and City Amenities

Small businesses will need an increased level of support following the COVID-19 crisis. In addition to federal and state support programs, many communities are creating local support services.

### Strategy: Support small business growth and entrepreneurial start-ups in downtown

#### Action Steps:

- Survey local businesses about their needs immediately and conduct follow up surveys every month for the next few months. Use this information to inform local public policies, legislative agendas, and funding programs. After the COVID-19 crisis passes and we move into recovery, the surveys can be decreased to twice a year, then annual.
- Create and maintain an information page on the city's website for business support programs, agencies, and information. This is an expansion of the current PDF document linked from the home page.
- Implement the FY21 downtown development plan for the Main Street Program. It includes building signage, tax-credit expertise, façade grants, advertising, and promotion of downtown as a business location. Now more than ever, downtown investment is needed.
- Explore a vacant building revitalization grant based on net new taxable investment. This incentive costs nothing upfront as the grant is paid after the business pays its property taxes. It works similarly to an industrial incentive grant, which is typically a percentage of net new investment.
  - An example is Columbia, SC, which had a successful vacant building revitalization grant program in the past.
- Host small business and start-up seminars and classes from Gaston College Small Business Center in downtown.
  - Explore a downtown location for a satellite office of the Small Business Center, Gardner-Webb University, Belmont Abbey, or other institution of higher learning in the region. For example, a college could be a lead tenant in a redevelopment project that includes office space. The first step may be hosting small business classes in a city location.
  - Host a class on how to expand your business online. The retail market in Cherryville is small and may have longer lasting effects from the closures during the pandemic. For some businesses, expanding to online sales is one way to increase the market.
  - Another informational class idea is social media training so businesses can extend their marketing presence.



- Share retail leakage information with small businesses, encouraging them to expand inventory. The report in Appendix B shows leakage in furnishings, building materials, and clothing. The leakage may not be enough to warrant a new store, but it could encourage an existing business to expand inventory in these areas.
- As the economic recovery turns to economic expansion, recruit new businesses to downtown.
  - Target businesses in neighboring markets to open a second location. Identify businesses that would be a good fit for Cherryville in Lincolnton, Shelby, Gastonia, and other cities in the region and promote Cherryville as an ideal second location.
- Explore a retail incubator concept. Start-up retailers could begin in “booth” type space in a building downtown. They would receive management training and share management of the incubator. After two to three years, they would graduate out of the incubator into a space in downtown. This concept is similar to a retail location with several vendors in booth space, the difference is training, managing support, and expected graduation out of the space.

## Strategy: Spark revitalization in downtown through city investments and policies

### Action Steps:

- Complete the downtown streetscape project, leveraging private sector contributions. Move forward with the bond referendum to fund the streetscape improvement. Sanford, NC, is a good example of a bond referendum for streetscape and enhancements to downtown.
  - Ensure the alleyway project comes to fruition. Citizens discussed the need for lighting, façade improvements on the rear of buildings, and art to enhance the visual of the alleyway.
- Invest in gateways into Cherryville. The current entrance sign could be replaced, but in the short-term, enhance landscaping to make the sign stand out. Landscaping could be in partnership with a garden club or high school horticulture program. Cherryville has several entry points and each needs a gateway.
- Support downtown residential development with additional incentive grants. The grant could be based on net new taxable investment; thus, costing the city nothing up front.
- Continue to work with the UNC Development Finance Initiative to help property owners understand the financing tools available for building redevelopment.
- Review city ordinances for ways to encourage downtown activity. Some communities have active storefront ordinances to limit warehouse use of buildings. Wilson used to have an incentive to encourage pedestrian-oriented businesses.
  - Get tough on code enforcement. Press city leaders to be aggressive in code enforcement and allocate more funding for code enforcement.



- In the future, activate downtown spaces by holding city meetings at restaurants, meeting spaces, and in shops downtown. For example, one city council meeting a year could be held at a local business. Encourage city committees to meet in downtown spaces.
- Use city maintenance staff to lead teams of volunteers from local organizations to clean up downtown regularly. Due to the pandemic, visitors want to see clean spaces. Clean up initiatives could include downtown streets, alleyways, and open spaces.

**Strategy: As the economy turns to economic expansion, position Cherryville to attract more visitors**

*Action Steps:*

- Through the chamber, organize Food Truck Fridays once a month in the summer to bring people downtown.
- Host live music events in downtown once a month. Different retail stores and restaurants could host the music.
- Add an event for teenagers. Wilkesboro does a great job with Teens on the Green, an event organized by and for teenagers. It includes music, activities like large bounce houses, and food. Marketing for the event specifically says to leave your little brothers and sisters at home.
- Continue with movies in the park, Small Business Saturday, and other events already established.
- Use social media, noted below, to highlight downtown stores and restaurants.

## Goal: Market and Promote Cherryville

Strategy: Develop external and internal communications tools to connect the community

### Action Steps:

- Update Cherryville's website to include sales messages and information to attract business.
  - Add a page for links to the business resources that currently reside at the bottom of the Chamber webpage. Include local business resources like Gaston College Small Business Center, Chamber, Gaston County EDC, Gardner-Webb University, as well as regional and state resource partners. Duplicate this information on the Chamber website.
    - Include the aforementioned page on resources for economic resiliency at the county, state, and federal levels.
  - Add a Business Menu on the home page.
  - Move the links to the Chamber and Economic Development from the Government Menu to the Business Menu.
  - Post the site and building inventory on the Business Menu. Link to the inventory from the Chamber website.
  - Post information on Cherryville incentives such as business attraction incentive program, façade grant, and others. Link to the incentive information from the Chamber website.
  - Add a news section to website that links to recent articles about Cherryville. This could be managed by the new marketing and communications staff person described above.
  - As events begin to be rescheduled, add a calendar of events section to the home page. The section on the home page could include two to three upcoming events with a link to a full calendar. This could be a Google calendar which the city could give access to partners to help with data entry. For example, the Chamber could have a login to the calendar and include Chamber events. The new Arts Guild (described below) could also have login credentials to populate the calendar. The Chamber could also post this calendar to their website.
- Have one person, for consistency, regularly post content on social media platforms.
  - In the short-term, focus social media on community resiliency, community resources, connecting people, and Cherryville's brand.
  - Use Facebook and Instagram to attract visitors and people.
  - Use LinkedIn and Twitter for business content.



- Create City of Cherryville social media platforms. The ones easily found now are for the Chamber and the fire department.
- Post content that showcases the stories of people – entrepreneurs, young people that returned to live in Cherryville, business owners, volunteers, teachers, and anyone who espouses the love they have for Cherryville. Be sure to include diversity in the profiles – age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic, profession, and all walks of life.
  - Focus on the resiliency of businesses post COVID-19. Share stories of how businesses pivoted and innovated.
- Post short videos of events. These do not have to be professionally produced if you are posting to social media. Professional videos are more important for a website where the shelf-life is longer.
  - Create a YouTube channel to house all of the videos now online.
- Leverage the social media content of partners such as GO Gaston by liking, sharing, and reposting.
- Look into the Social Toaster app that allows people to be ambassadors by amplifying the social media message of the city.
- Develop a marketing and communications plan for the city. The marketing plan should include:
  - Revisit the Cherryville brand. We recommend keeping the cherry blossom theme and even the tagline “Where Life Blossoms.” The presentation of the theme and tagline, a refresh to the brand image, could update it. ElectriCities may be able to provide some support for the brand refresh.
  - Staff support for marketing and communications.
    - Short-term plan to assign marketing and communications to an existing staff position or contractor. Communications will be critical during the ongoing crisis and then recovery phase post-pandemic.
    - Long-term plan to add a city staff position for marketing and communications, targeted for FY22.
  - Development of key messages for business attraction, visitors, and residents.
    - Business attraction competitive position statements: downtown under revitalization with available properties, quick connections to Lincolnton, Shelby, and Gastonia, retail market, and available industrial sites.
    - Visitor attraction statements: unique small-town shopping, historic destinations, and quaint festivals and events.
    - Resident attraction statements: affordable housing, good schools, and small-town lifestyle with proximity to urban market.
    - Electric utility rates were a hot topic at every point of engagement for this study. Develop key messages resulting from the rate study underway and include in communications, especially social media.
  - Tap into the talent at ElectriCities’ communications department to support the development of city marketing materials.

## Goal: Embrace Regionalism

### Strategy: Leverage regional partnerships

#### *Action Steps:*

- Continue to leverage Gaston County Economic Development Commission for support with land development, business recruitment, and business retention and expansion.
  - Share the Cherryville Economic Development Strategic Plan with the EDC.
  - Meet at least twice a year with the EDC to review Cherryville's development opportunities.
- Continue to be an active partner in the GO Gaston campaign, a countywide, large marketing campaign to bring more visitors and residents to Gaston County.
- Strengthen ties with Gaston County by holding a joint meeting annually. The meeting can rotate years in Cherryville and Gastonia.
- Keep connected to Charlotte regional planning organizations such as the Charlotte Regional Transit Authority and regional connecting organizations like the Carolina Thread Trail.
- Continue to build stronger partnerships with Lincoln and Cleveland Counties and the municipalities of Lincolnton and Shelby.
- Continue the regular regional Mayors and Managers Meetings and look for regional project opportunities.
  - Identify a regional project that Cherryville and neighboring municipalities could work on together. Examples could be infrastructure, education partnerships, and marketing campaigns. It could be a joint grant application for an economic recovery project.
- Beyond the immediate region, Cherryville leaders will benefit from experiencing best practice communities.
  - Until widespread travel resumes, virtually visit/tour best practice communities through webinars and promotional videos.
  - Organize intercity visits with communities (include elected officials) that have good examples of downtown revitalization (Shelby), public art (Lexington), industrial development (Statesville), and other programs of interest to the city.



## Goal: Support the Arts as an Economic Driver

Strategy: Support the creation of arts organizations, events, and programs

### Action Steps:

- Support the development of a Cherryville Arts Guild. Such an organization could infuse the downtown with art, organize art events, and raise awareness of Cherryville as an arts city.
  - The city's initial support could be allowing the use of city space for Guild meetings and space for Guild events.
  - Guild members could lead the way painting the cherry blossom sculptures described below.
  - Encourage the Guild to have as a long-range goal a co-op art gallery. It could be staffed by volunteer artists.
- Support the arts by investing. One example is an art plan for Main Street. The art plan could include murals, public art, and wayfinding.
  - Cherry blossoms could be painted on the street as an art walk/trail leading to a series of murals and public art.
  - Seek grants for a public art program. Public art could include small sculptures around the city. Envision a series of unique portrayals of cherry blossoms. This could be like the painted pigs in downtown Lexington or Hokie birds in Blacksburg, VA. The city could provide the basic form, such as concrete, metal, or plaster forms, and local artists would turn them into a work of public art. This theme could be topped off with a 25-foot tall cherry blossom placed in a minipark in downtown. It could become an Instagram destination. Unique and eye-catching sculptures draw people.
    - The city could engage school children to participate in public art. For example, they could paint drop-down ceiling tiles in city facilities, storm drains, manhole covers, and other unique surfaces.
    - Check out the pressure wash art in Gastonia. The city adhered a template/stencil to an area slated for pressure washing. After washing the template was removed so what remained was a dark outline of an art scene.
    - The City of Asheville has a model public art program.
  - The public art program could also include matching grants, offering city space for art, and maintenance of art spaces by city maintenance staff.





## Goal: Develop Leaders for the Future

### Strategy: Invest in Future Leaders

#### *Action Steps:*

- Organize an effort to recruit someone under the age of 40 to serve in leadership roles.
  - Set the example by recruiting young people to serve on city committees, commissions, and advisory boards.
  - Ask ally organizations to pledge to recruit people under the age of 40: chamber, civic clubs, nonprofit organizations, etc.
  - Lean on partners like schools to target young teachers for leadership roles.
- Re-establish the Cherryville Citizens Academy program to develop new civic leaders. Citizens' academies typically provide training in local government policies and regulatory process, public safety, utilities, planning and development, and leadership development. The goal is to develop future leaders who are prepared and have the skills to take on civic, elected, and nonprofit leadership roles in the city. This aligns with the 2020 strategic plan "to better educate citizens about city services, policies, and procedures."
  - Most programs meet one day a month for 4-6 months. Each session focuses on a different aspect of local government.
  - With the small size of Cherryville, the academy may operate every other year.
  - Have a goal that at least 25% of the academy class be under the age of 40.
  - Set diversity goals to ensure the academy reflects the diversity of Cherryville citizens.
- Encourage Cherryville citizens to participate in Leadership Gaston. Consider offering a scholarship or other support from the city. The scholarship could be targeted to a young professional under the age of 40.
- Encourage new citizen engagement in the city. Expand city committees and commissions by recruiting new citizens, diverse groups, and the "unusual" suspects, people not typically engaged with the city.
  - Consider placing the responsibility of volunteer coordinator with an existing staff position or bringing on board someone with AmeriCorps or an intern to establish the database and a template for communications.
- Develop a succession plan for city staff leadership. As with every other industry, local government is facing the Silver Tsunami and needs to prepare for widespread leadership transition in the face of a high number of retirements in a short period of time. There may be assistance and resources available from the League of Municipalities and the UNC School of Government to assist with succession planning.



- City staff and elected leaders should participate in as many League of Municipalities, UNC School of Government, and other professional development and training programs as possible. UNC offers an Essentials of Economic Development Program which is a good primer for elected officials.
  - Participate in the ElectriCities Annual Meeting and include as many elected officials as can go. The programming is always informative and is another way to find best practices and participate in professional development.
  - Another good program is the NC Rural Center's Rural Economic Development Institute.
- Explore the Send a Kid to College program in nearby Kings Mountain. The city offers an optional donation through utility billing to raise scholarship funds for local high school graduates to attend college. Cherryville could do something similar, using the funds to send high school graduates to Gaston College.

### Strategy: Align leadership development programs with the city's 2020 strategic plan

#### *Action Steps:*

- Complete the salary/classification study to ensure Cherryville can recruit and retain professional staff.

# Implementation Plan

Cherryville citizens prioritized economic development strategies in an online survey. The rankings show that people are supportive of industrial site, downtown, and small business development. They are also supportive of promoting the city to businesses, visitors, and new residents. Undergirding the economic development plan is an investment in leadership development to ensure Cherryville continues to have strong leadership in the future.

Site & Building Development	Downtown Revitalization	Market & Promote	Arts Development	Regionalism
<div><div></div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop industrial sites and buildings</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Space for small businesses</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Infill, redevelopment, underutilized properties</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote available properties</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Residential development</li></ul>	<div><div></div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Support small businesses</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Policy and regulatory change to support business</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Direct city investments</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Attract more visitors</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Beautifying downtown</li></ul>	<div><div></div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> External marketing</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Internal communications</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Brand awareness</li></ul>	<div><div></div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Arts organization to lead programming</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Art plan for Main Street</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Public art program</li></ul>	<div><div></div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Leverage partners</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen ties with Gaston County and region</li></ul>
<div><div>Future Leaders</div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage young people</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Citizen's Academy</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Gaston participation</li></ul></div>				

# Measuring Success

We recommend cities track a range of data points to measure progress and success. There are a few metrics that are used to track economic development activity. Other data points are used to see trends in overall economic health and well-being.

## Economic Development Metrics

- New business locations, expansions, and start-ups
- Vacancy of industrial and commercial buildings
- Business inquiries and support assistance
- Marketing Contacts - eblast opens, website analytics, social shares and likes, etc.
- Property and sales tax revenue trends

## Economic Health and Well-Being Measures

- Per capita income
- Median household income
- Wages
- Median home value
- Educational attainment
- Industry sector diversity

We also suggest a citizen survey every two to three years to measure safety, recreation and wellness, community engagement, mobility, and economic security. The City of Greer, SC has a very good example.

## Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis is the cornerstone of an asset-based approach to economic development. We used input from the Steering Committee, citizen focus group, and interviews with community and business leaders to compile the SWOT Analysis. Cherryville has growth opportunities in downtown redevelopment, tourism, housing development, and the arts. Citizens and city leaders are making progress toward capturing those opportunities along with others. They face significant hurdles in crumbling infrastructure, limited resources, and a small business base to pull in outside dollars. The SWOT Analysis shows the challenges the city is facing but also the strong foundation upon which it is building.



## SWOT Analysis Summary

### Strengths

- Public schools
- Proximity to Charlotte
- Small town quality of life
- Public safety
- Downtown
- Available sites and buildings
- Museum, history
- Health care
- City management

### Weaknesses

- Perception of utility rates
- 4-lane highway
- Retail leakage
- Restaurants, entertainment
- Water and sewer infrastructure
- Aging population
- Housing inventory
- Community communications channels

### Opportunities

- Lithium facility
- Downtown revitalization
- Investments in downtown
- Infrastructure improvements
- Housing development
- Tourism destinations
- Entrepreneurs
- Potential casino in Kings Mountain
- Regionalism

### Threats

- Water supply
- Aging infrastructure
- Revenue fund balance
- Cost of electricity
- Competition with neighboring cities
- Lack of shoppers and foot traffic on Main Street
- Aging population
- Aging commercial and industrial buildings,
- Insular and cliquey community
- Resistance to change

## Strengths

Strengths are assets that support business development, attract tourists, and provide residents with quality of life. Cherryville has many assets common to small towns like quality of life, safety, and connectivity. Its downtown is under revitalization through private and public sector investments. Cherryville draws visitors to festivals and events like the Cherry Blossom Festival, and the city's good schools encourage visitors to become residents.

- Public schools - people move to Cherryville for the schools
  - Education Foundation
- Proximity to Charlotte, airport, and western metrolina area
- Charlotte Area Transit System is nearby, including future of light rail
- Sense of community and strong sense of place
- Quality of life, small town living
- Safety, public safety departments
- Small-town feel and friendliness
- Class 2 ISO fire district rating
- Iconic downtown with walkable neighborhoods near downtown
- Available sites and capacity for industrial development, Sunbeam Site
- Local, iconic restaurants and diners
- Biggest little baseball town, well-known players come out of Cherryville, five state championships
- C Grier Beam Truck Museum
- Cherryville Heritage Park
- The name Cherryville carries marketing value (250 trees planted)
- Symbolism-iconic clock
- Open rural areas support equestrian living, farms, and recreation
- Rich in history, family heritage, events: New Year's Shooters, Cherry Blossom Festival
- Part of NC Main Street Program, received accolades and national accreditation
- Local hospital and CaroMont Health system
- Wineries in area
- Strong churches
- Affordable homes
- Affordable downtown buildings
- Cherryville Golf and Country Club, including meeting facilities
- Recreation programs
- Industrial base
- City management focus on asset development

## Weaknesses

Weaknesses are obstacles to community well-being that deter business expansion, negatively impact quality of life, and discourage new residents. Cherryville faces the same weaknesses as many small towns in North Carolina: infrastructure investment needs, aging population, difficulty attracting and retaining young people, and housing availability. Cherryville also has some specific challenges such as being less welcoming to newcomers, citizen apathy, and fewer restaurant and entertainment options. It also must continue to overcome a negative perception of city government due to mismanagement in past years.

- Perception of high power rates, too high for residential and business development
- Lacking 4-lane interstate connectivity
- Citizen apathy, many are satisfied with status quo
- Struggle to get residents to shop local, retail dollars leak to neighboring communities
- No fine dining, late night restaurants, or restaurant serving alcoholic beverages
- Water and sewer infrastructure is crumbling and needs substantial investments, cost of repairs is significant
- Fund balance has been improving after being too low
- Perceived as a very conservative community
- Perceived as unwelcoming to newcomers
- High rate of senior citizens and fewer young people
- Lack of young professionals
- Lack of racial and ethnic diversity in leadership positions (private, public, civic, nonprofit, etc.)
- Few job opportunities for young workers
- Lack of developed industrial sites and buildings
- Landowners unwilling to develop property, redevelop buildings
- Lack of entertainment opportunities for all age groups, especially young people
- Lack of housing for middle and upper management
- Improving but still lacking collaboration at a regional level
- Past city mismanagement continues to taint current perceptions of city government
- Lack of common calendar of events, ways to promote local happenings

## Opportunities

Many of the opportunities noted by citizens are in downtown Cherryville. It is the heartbeat of the city. Citizens see a future where the downtown has more and a wider variety of businesses; the arts are infused into the downtown scene; and people are living and working in downtown. Leveraging regional collaborations such as the GO campaign and transportation connectivity will be needed to realize the opportunities of downtown. Cherryville has a good start on the resources needed to capture opportunities through benefactors investing in downtown.

- Potential lithium processing facility will significantly boost tax base, jobs, and business opportunities
- Opportunity Zone
- Historic downtown district
- Investments in Main Street through benevolent benefactor
- Investor buying buildings for downtown revitalization and residential development
- A destination for tourism - wineries, history museum, senior tour groups
- Water/sewer improvements – capacity, quality, meet state mandates
- Capture retail leakage
- Housing development and redevelopment
- Develop baseball facilities to attract tournaments
- Develop historical tourism destinations like reenactments
- Exploit Cherryville's location between Gaston, Cleveland, and Lincoln Counties
- Attract, develop, and support specialty businesses
- Leverage entrepreneurial base
- Develop an incubator in downtown
- Potential of existing industry growth and expansion:
  - Growth opportunities
  - Leverage large existing industry to attract suppliers
  - Automotive supplies
  - Spin off developments
- Potential of casino development in Kings Mountain
- Improve access to I-85 and US 321
- Leverage the momentum of development from the Charlotte metro area
- Piggy-back on the GO campaign of Gaston County
- Arts development in downtown; arts guild to develop the arts as an economic driver
- Competitive utility rates
- Gateway improvements and streetscape plan

## Threats

Threats must be identified and mitigated in an economic development strategy. Some threats such as aging population are common among small towns in North Carolina. Cherryville has some unique threats in infrastructure, fund balance, insular community dynamics, and stigma of higher utility rates.

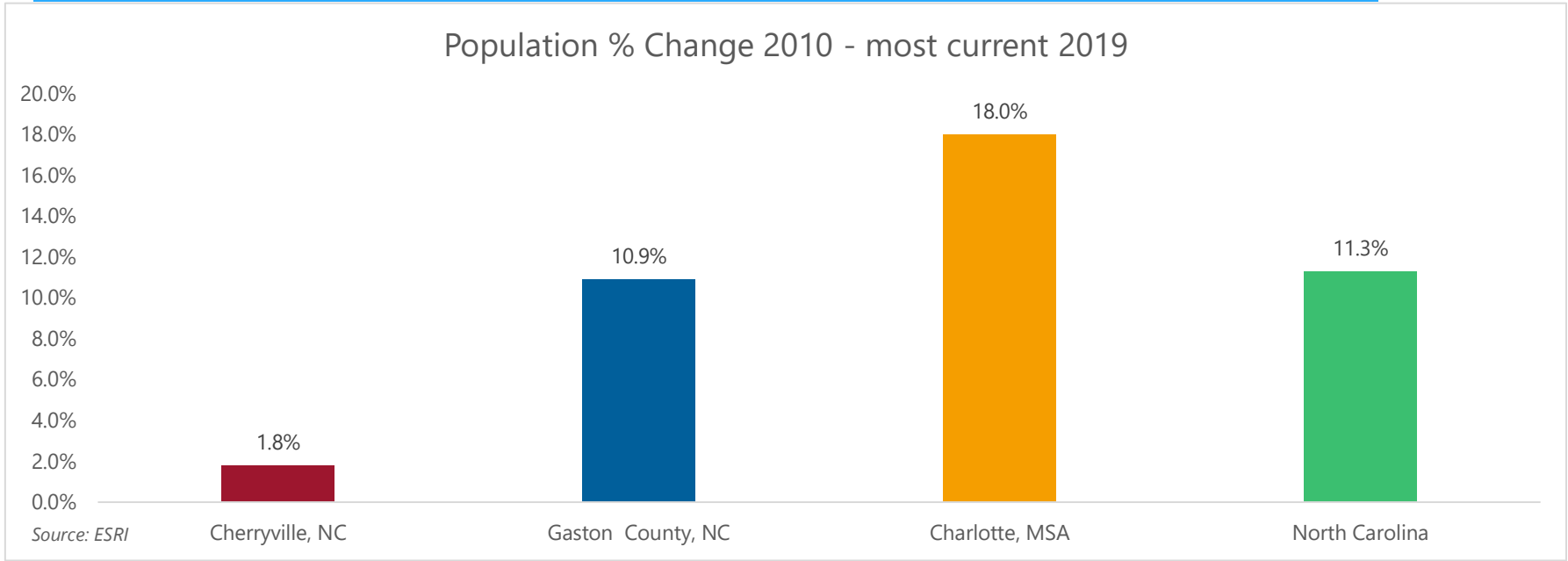
- Water supply, now under restrictions
- Aging infrastructure, water and sewer
- Revenue fund balance
- Cost of electricity and stigma of utility rates
- Competition with neighboring cities for residents, businesses
- Lack of shoppers and general foot traffic on Main Street
- Aging population
- Aging commercial and industrial buildings, housing stock
- Insular and cliquey community
- Resistance to change in the city, county, and citizens
- Gaston County image as a blue collar community



# Appendix B: Economic and Demographic Profile

Population	2010	2019	2024	% Change 2010 - most current 2019
Cherryville, NC	5,760	5,866	5,948	1.8%
Gaston County, NC	206,086	228,556	240,576	10.9%
Charlotte, MSA	2,217,012	2,616,243	2,852,069	18.0%
North Carolina	9,535,843	10,609,155	11,226,048	11.3%
Source: ESRI				

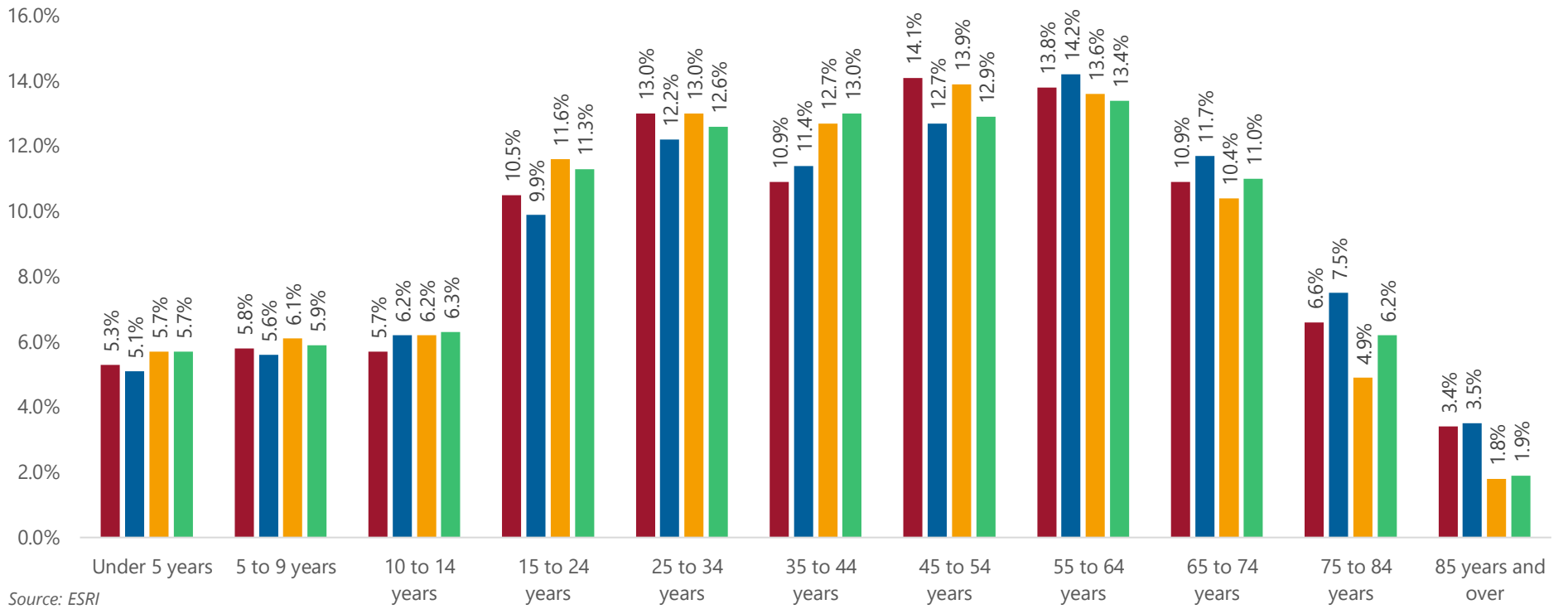
Population % Change 2010 - most current 2019



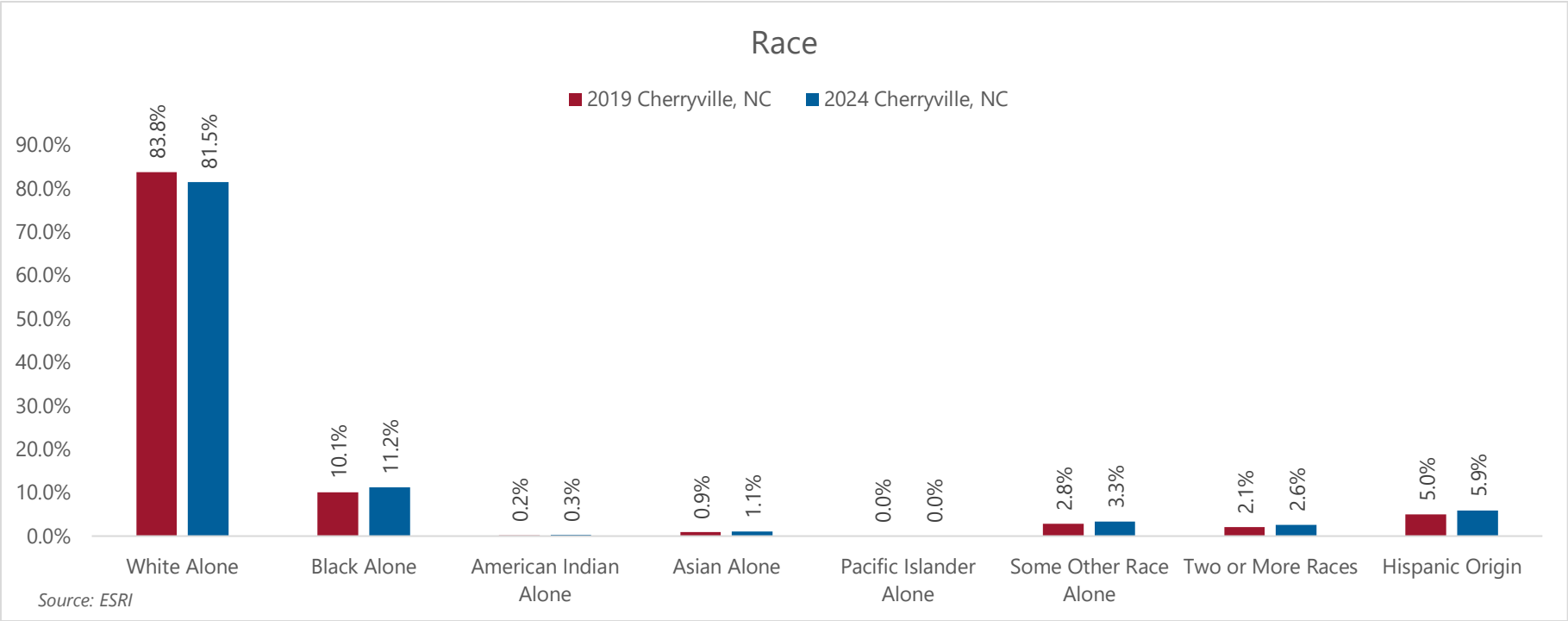
Age % 2019				
Age Groups	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC	Charlotte MSA	North Carolina
Total population	5,866	228,556	2,616,243	10,609,155
Under 5 years	5.3%	5.7%	6.3%	6.0%
5 to 9 years	5.8%	6.1%	6.6%	6.2%
10 to 14 years	5.7%	6.2%	6.8%	6.3%
15 to 24 years	10.5%	11.6%	12.5%	13.0%
25 to 34 years	13.0%	13.0%	14.0%	13.5%
35 to 44 years	10.9%	12.7%	13.7%	12.7%
45 to 54 years	14.1%	13.9%	13.7%	12.9%
55 to 64 years	13.8%	13.6%	12.4%	13.0%
65 to 74 years	10.9%	10.4%	8.6%	9.9%
75 to 84 years	6.6%	4.9%	3.9%	4.6%
85 years and over	3.4%	1.8%	1.4%	1.8%
Median Age	44	40.7	37.7	38.9
Source: ESRI				

## Age

■ 2019 Cherryville, NC ■ 2024 Cherryville, NC ■ 2019 Gaston County, NC ■ 2024 Gaston County, NC



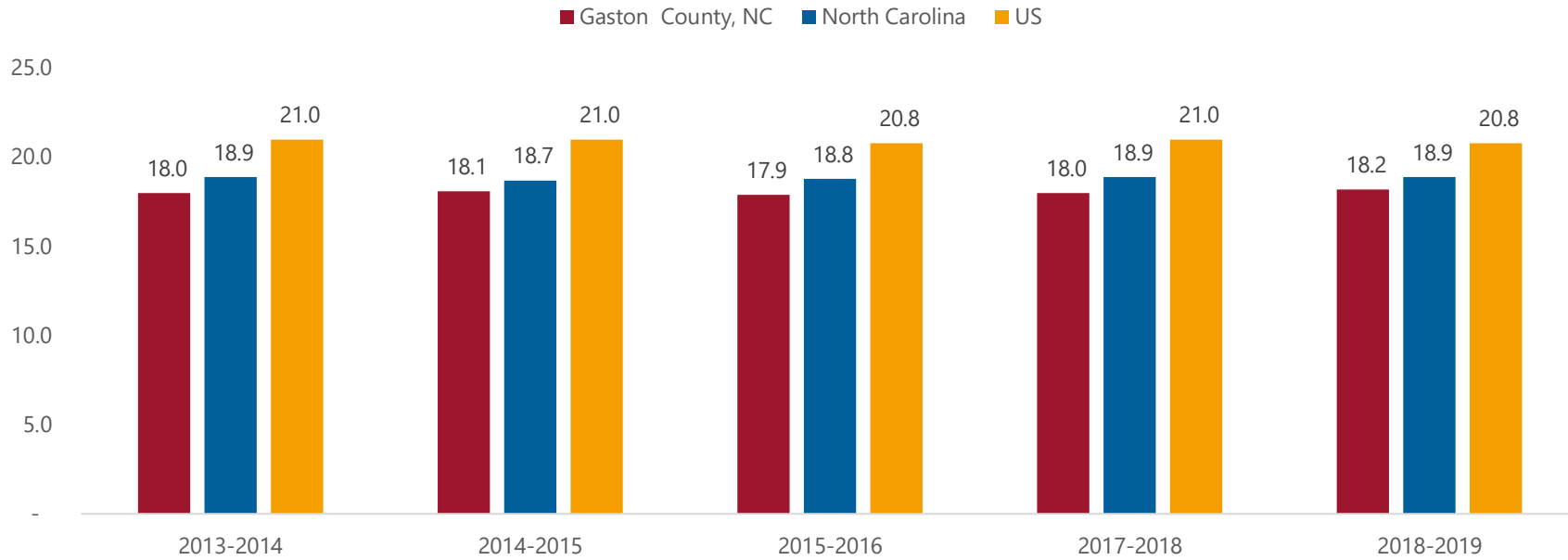
Race % of Population		2019		
	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC	Charlotte MSA	North Carolina
White Alone	83.8%	74.2%	64.6%	66.0%
Black Alone	10.1%	17.2%	22.9%	21.7%
American Indian Alone	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	1.3%
Asian Alone	0.9%	1.7%	3.9%	3.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Some Other Race Alone	2.8%	3.9%	5.4%	5.0%
Two or More Races	2.1%	2.5%	2.7%	2.7%
Hispanic Origin	5.0%	7.5%	10.6%	9.8%
Diversity Index	39.8	50.0	61.8	60.1
Source: ESRI				





Educational Attainment %		2019		
	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC	Charlotte MSA	North Carolina
Less than 9th grade	4.0%	4.7%	3.9%	4.3%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	9.1%	9.7%	6.5%	7.4%
High school graduate	25.9%	23.9%	20.1%	21.5%
GED/Alternative Credential	5.4%	6.3%	3.5%	4.1%
Some college, no degree	26.5%	23.0%	20.8%	21.1%
Associate's degree	9.0%	9.9%	9.0%	9.5%
Bachelor's degree	15.2%	15.8%	24.2%	20.6%
Graduate or professional degree	5.0%	6.6%	11.9%	11.5%
Percent high school graduate or higher	87.0%	85.5%	89.5%	88.3%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	20.2%	22.4%	36.1%	32.1%
Source: ESRI				

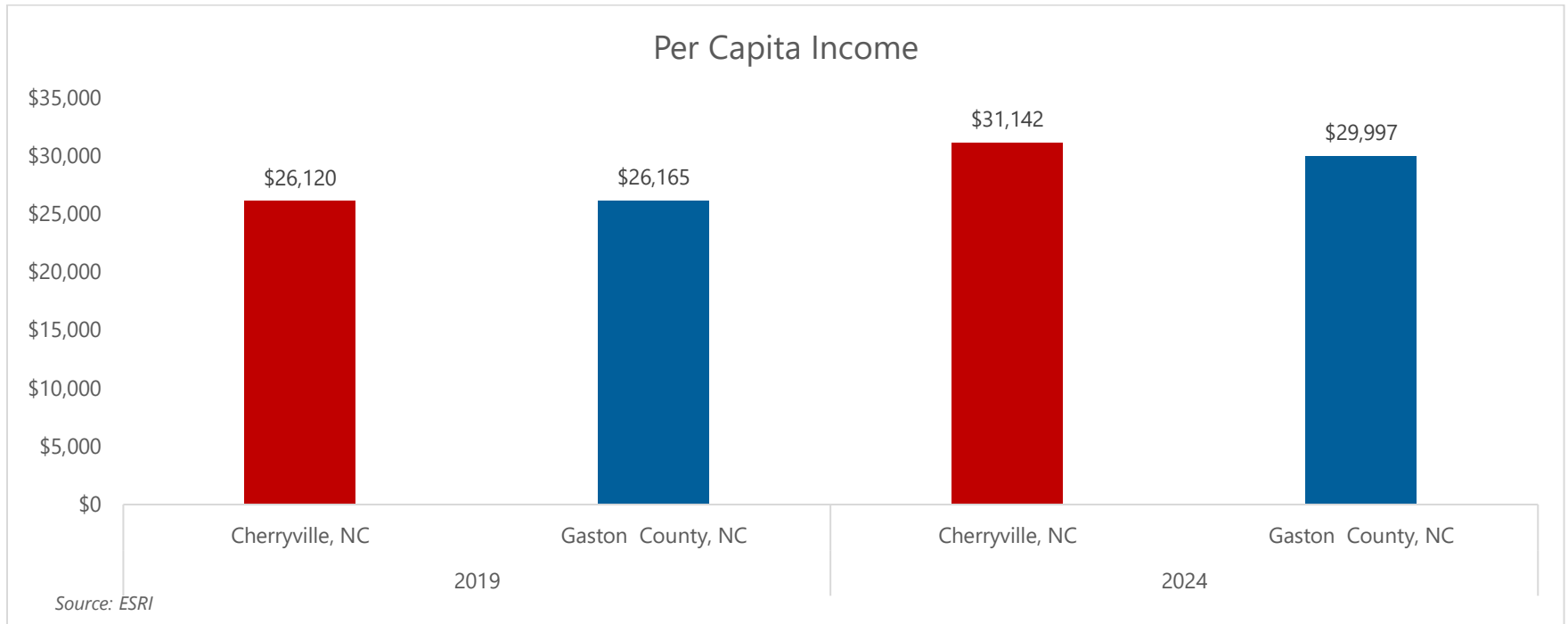
## ACT Scores

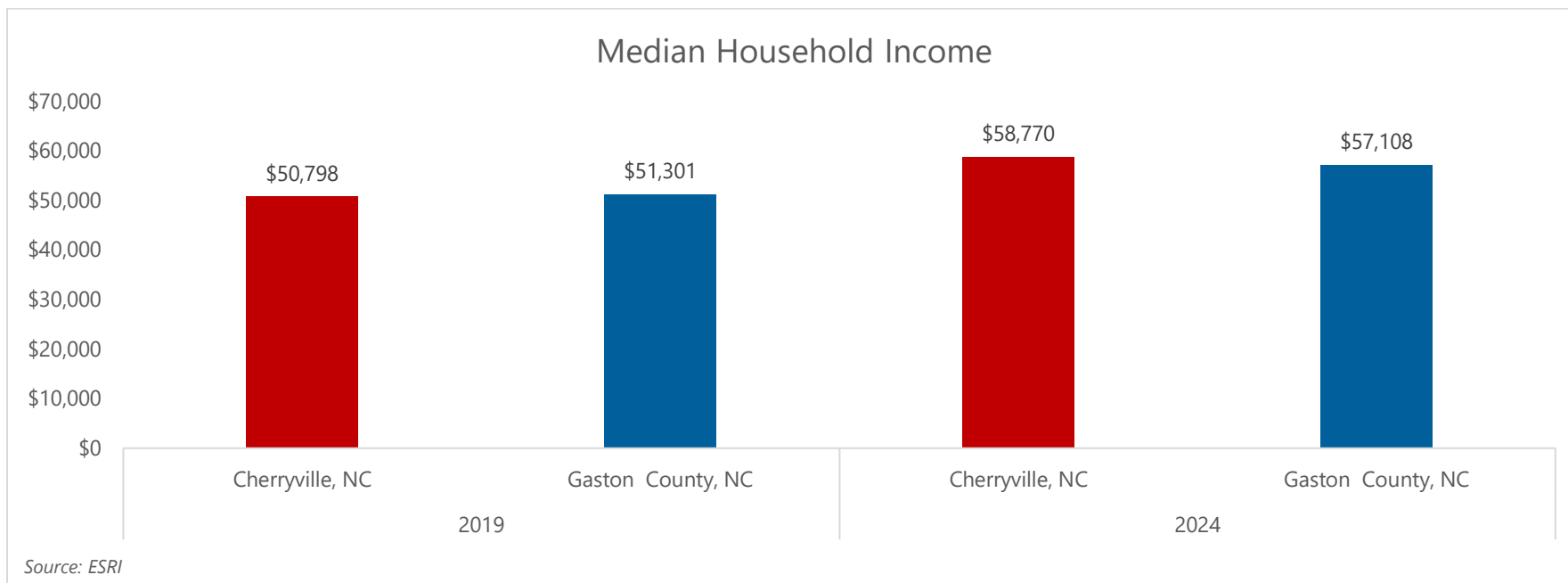


Source: N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction

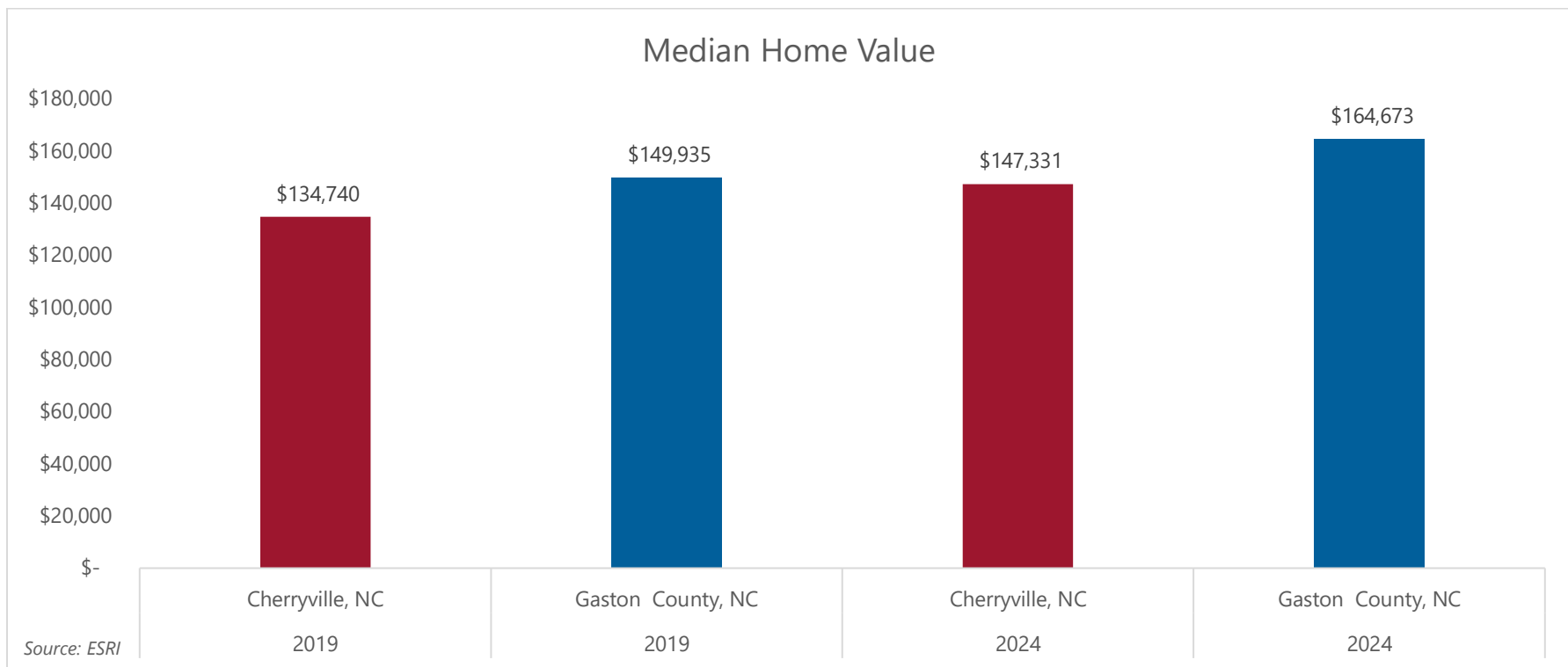
Income		2019			2024	
	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC	Charlotte, MSA	North Carolina	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC
Per Capita Income	\$26,120	\$26,165	\$33,849	\$30,207	\$31,142	\$29,997
Median Household Income	\$50,798	\$51,301	\$62,323	\$54,138	\$58,770	\$57,108

Source: ESRI

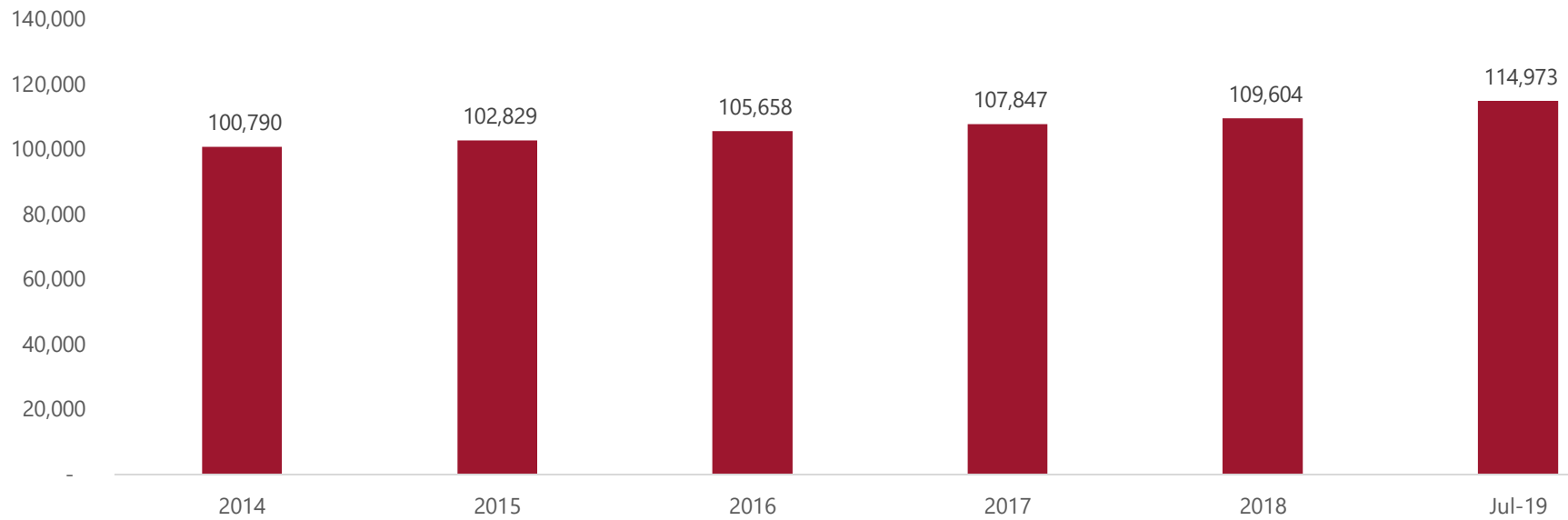




Median Home Value		2019		
	Cherryville, NC	Gaston County, NC	Charlotte, MSA	North Carolina
Median Home Value	\$134,740	\$149,935	\$216,143	\$188,612
Source: ESRI				

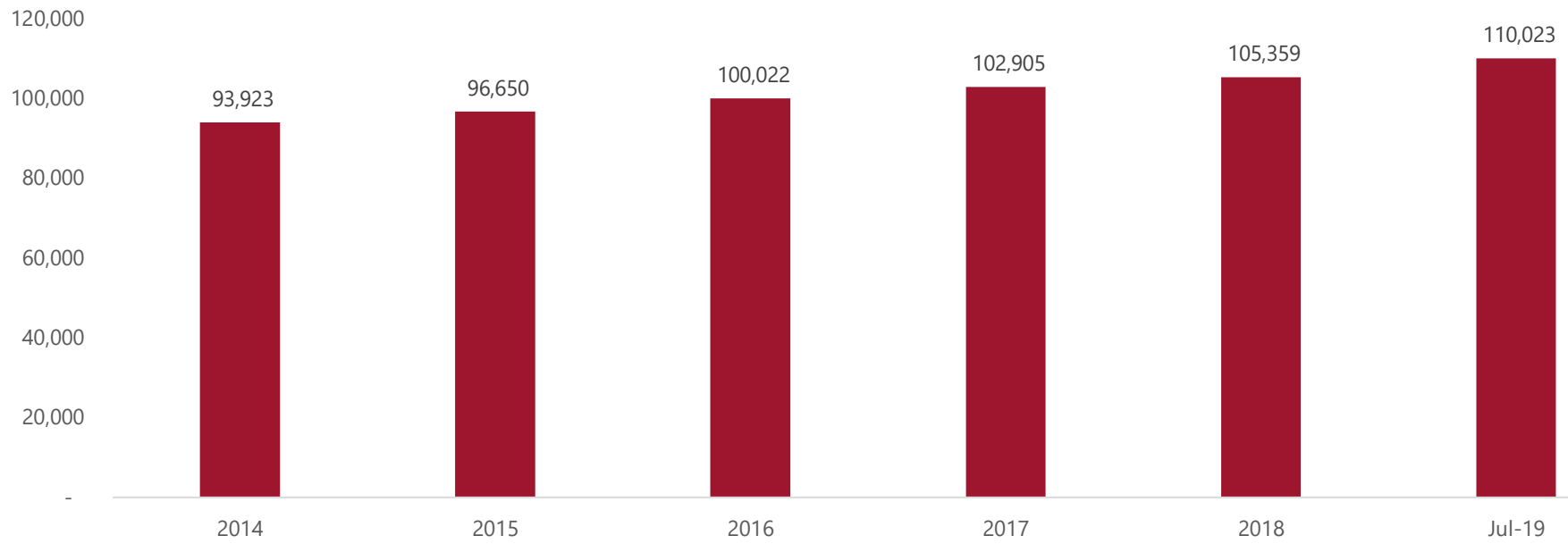


## Labor Force Gaston County, NC



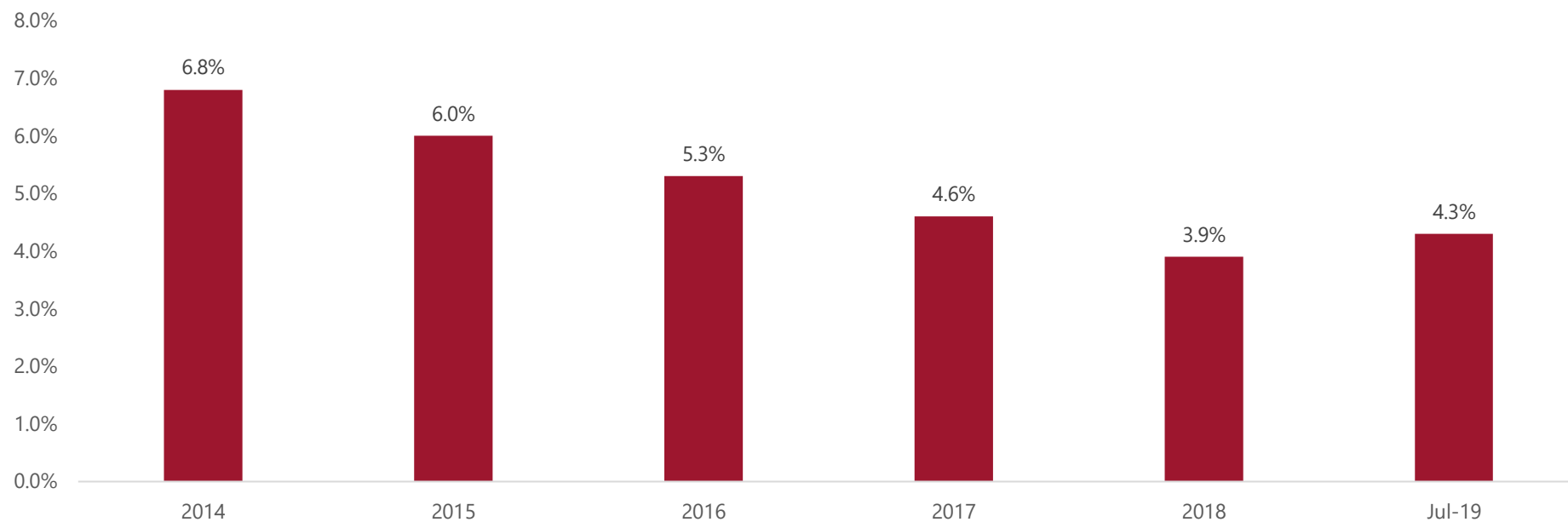
Source: N.C. Dept. of Commerce

## Employment Gaston County, NC



Source: N.C. Dept. of Commerce

## Unemployment Rate Gaston County, NC

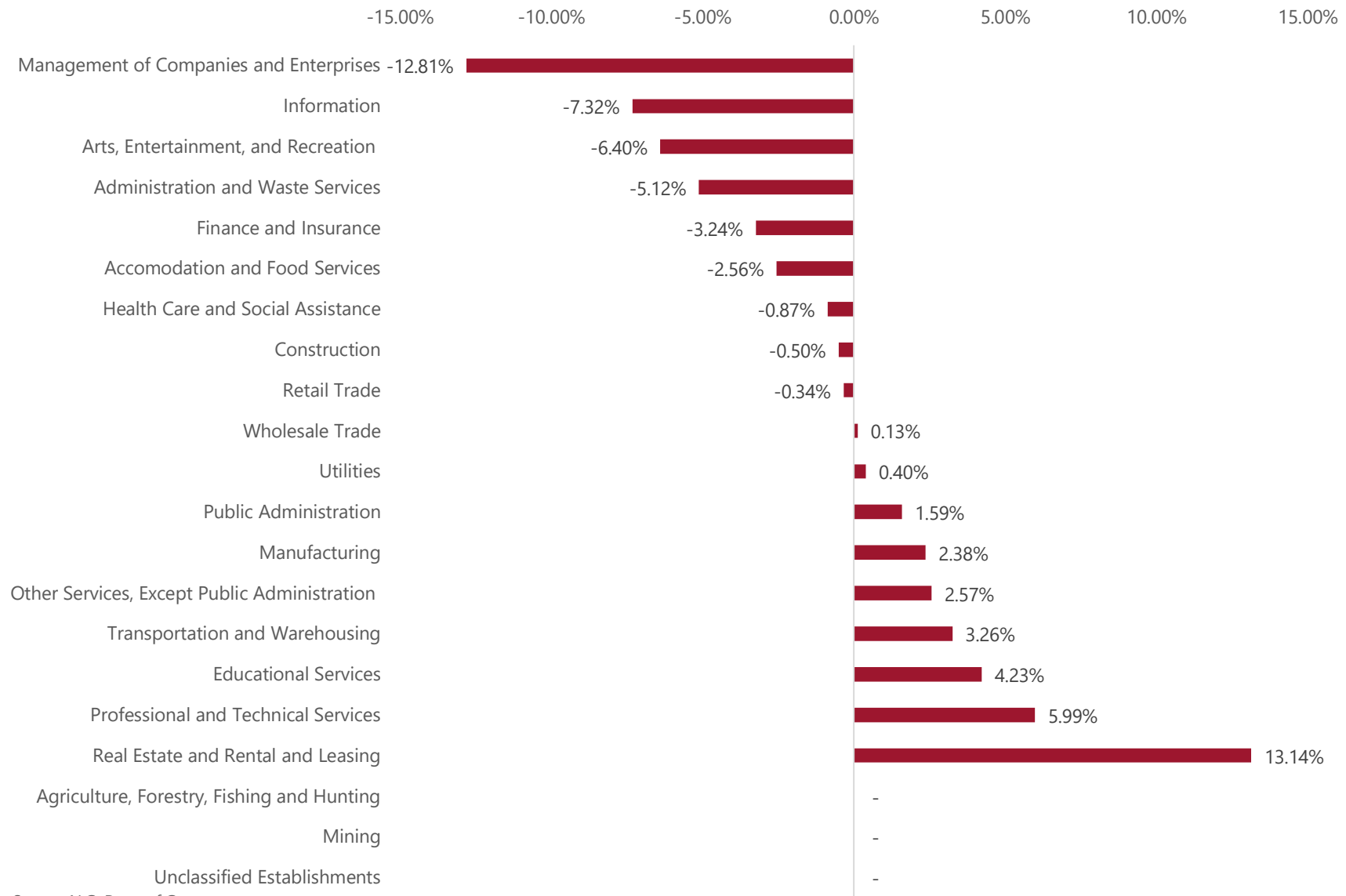


Source: N.C. Dept. of Commerce



<b>Employment by Industry Gaston County, NC</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019 Q1</b>
<b>Total, All Industries (000000)</b>	70,056	70,094	71,968	74,551	74,870
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</b>	26	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Mining</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Utilities</b>	490	485	471	500	502
<b>Construction</b>	2,634	2,939	3,165	3,604	3,586
<b>Manufacturing</b>	15,036	14,219	14,345	15,767	16,151
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	2,560	2,295	2,308	2,281	2,284
<b>Retail Trade</b>	9,574	9,614	9,757	9,786	9,753
<b>Transportation and Warehousing</b>	1,345	1,460	1,484	1,722	1,780
<b>Information</b>	619	666	637	601	560
<b>Finance and Insurance</b>	1,172	1,156	1,043	1,020	988
<b>Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</b>	838	914	968	866	997
<b>Professional and Technical Services</b>	1,265	1,415	1,597	1,726	1,836
<b>Management of Companies and Enterprises</b>	387	442	387	414	367
<b>Administration and Waste Services</b>	3,952	3,588	4,090	4,067	3,869
<b>Educational Services</b>	5,913	5,944	5,999	6,043	6,310
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	11,151	11,373	11,631	11,945	11,842
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</b>	453	781	860	915	860
<b>Accommodation and Food Services</b>	6,952	7,284	7,602	7,663	7,472
<b>Other Services, Except Public Administration</b>	1,950	1,687	1,657	1,630	1,673
<b>Public Administration</b>	3,751	3,808	3,850	3,900	3,963
<b>Unclassified Establishments</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Source: NC Department of Commerce</i>					

## Gaston County % Change Employment by Industry 2018-2019 Q1

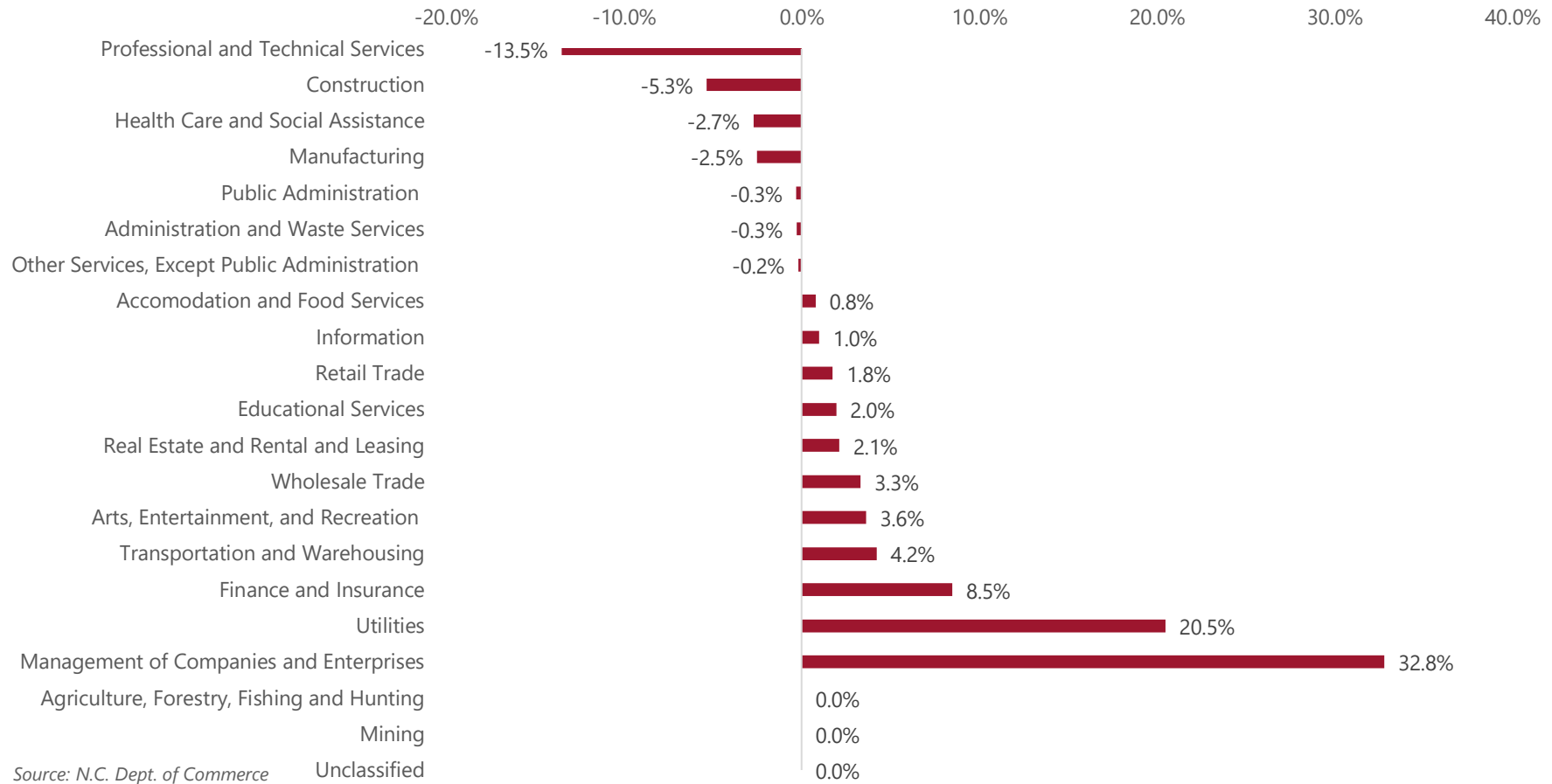


Source: N.C. Dept. of Commerce

<b>Gaston County Wages by Industry</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019 Q1</b>
<b>Total, All Industries (000000)</b>	\$741.02	\$741.24	\$763.55	\$796.75	\$798.21
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</b>	\$491.74	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>Mining</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>Utilities</b>	\$1,542.42	\$1,666.80	\$1,637.25	\$1,633.09	\$2,053.33
<b>Construction</b>	\$797.24	\$843.98	\$882.23	\$928.25	\$881.22
<b>Manufacturing</b>	\$941.80	\$924.98	\$975.41	\$1,023.75	\$998.69
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	\$1,000.07	\$987.87	\$1,039.15	\$1,124.57	\$1,163.25
<b>Retail Trade</b>	\$491.39	\$496.25	\$497.98	\$515.01	\$524.19
<b>Transportation and Warehousing</b>	\$919.90	\$883.72	\$911.13	\$892.16	\$931.58
<b>Information</b>	\$990.46	\$1,054.60	\$1,080.05	\$1,056.05	\$1,066.57
<b>Finance and Insurance</b>	\$1,042.01	\$1,029.75	\$1,060.58	\$1,117.32	\$1,220.83
<b>Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</b>	\$759.91	\$756.04	\$794.32	\$854.59	\$873.17
<b>Professional and Technical Services</b>	\$943.55	\$960.58	\$960.29	\$989.50	\$871.85
<b>Management of Companies and Enterprises</b>	\$1,581.70	\$1,481.78	\$1,669.67	\$1,766.66	\$2,628.34
<b>Administration and Waste Services</b>	\$519.93	\$556.89	\$551.07	\$543.94	\$542.39
<b>Educational Services</b>	\$695.22	\$705.74	\$722.52	\$744.56	\$759.41
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	\$871.54	\$868.11	\$899.47	\$920.53	\$896.23
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</b>	\$329.02	\$244.72	\$243.16	\$251.04	\$260.50
<b>Accommodation and Food Services</b>	\$278.21	\$287.81	\$292.01	\$304.87	\$307.28
<b>Other Services, Except Public Administration</b>	\$490.46	\$562.72	\$617.45	\$617.29	\$616.20
<b>Public Administration</b>	\$850.22	\$859.43	\$886.20	\$922.69	\$919.98
<b>Unclassified</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

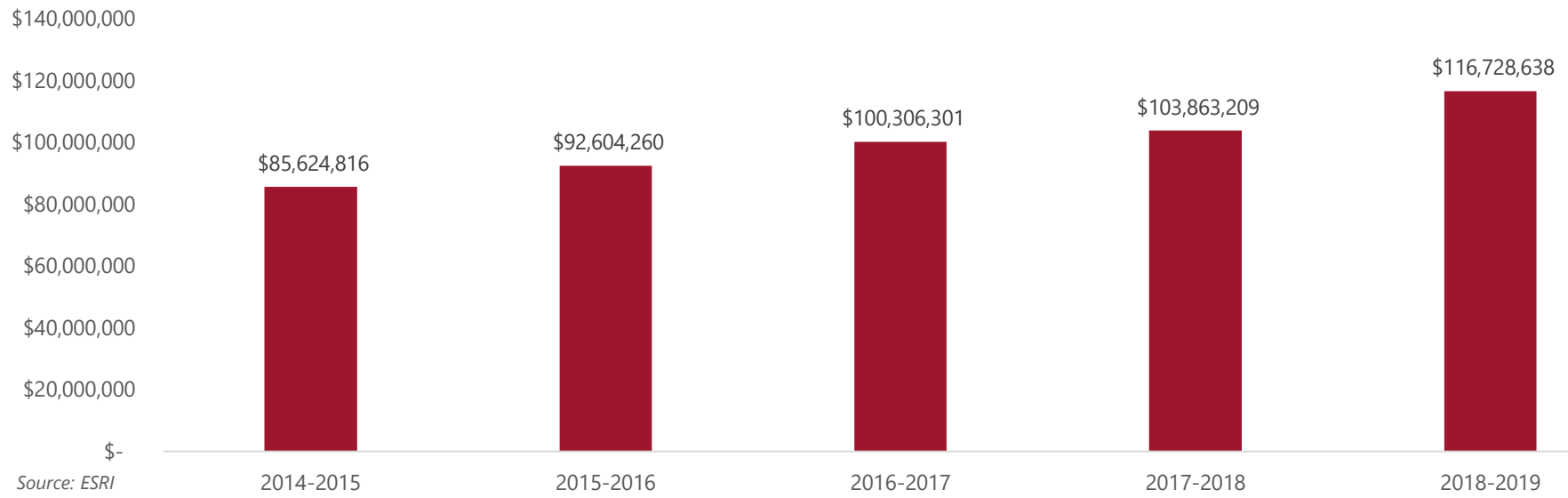
Source: NC Department of Commerce

## Gaston County % Change Wages by Industry 2018-2019Q1

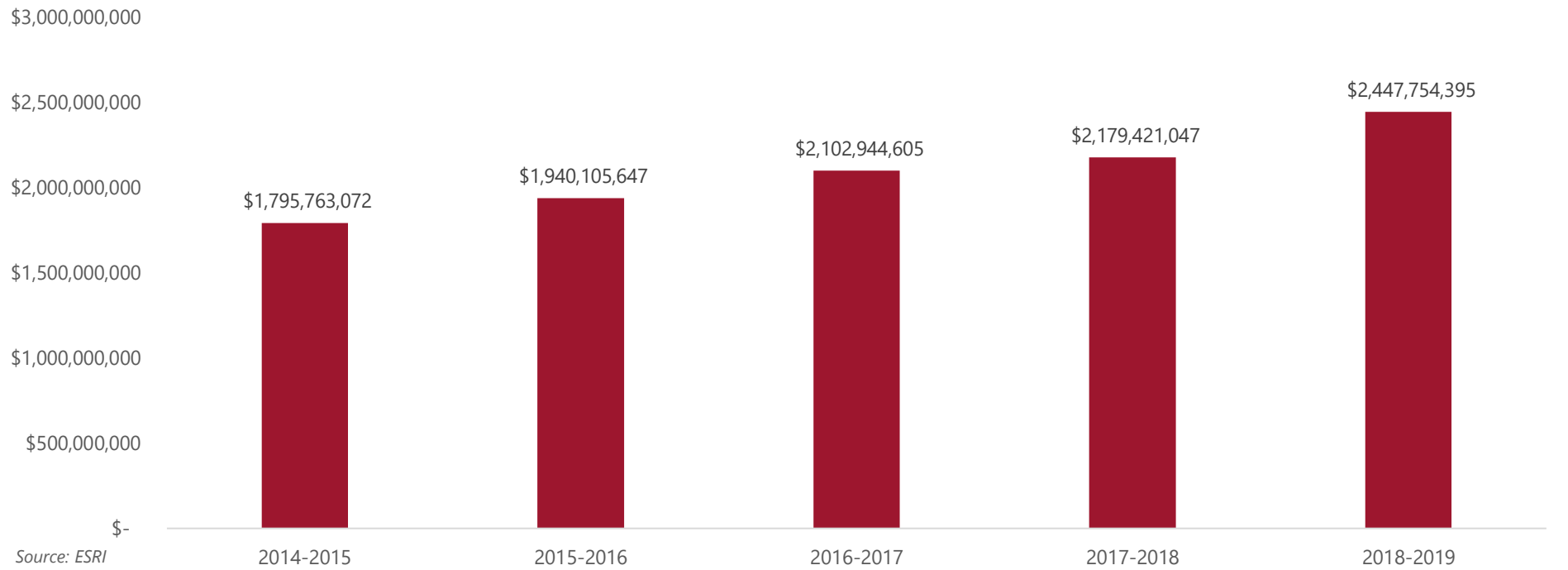


Top 25 Employers - Gaston County, NC			
Rank	Company Name	Industry	Employment
1	Gaston County Schools	Education & Health Services	1000+
2	Caromont Health (A Corp)	Education & Health Services	1000+
3	Freightliner Corp	Manufacturing	1000+
4	County of Gaston	Public Administration	1000+
5	Wal-Mart Associates Inc.	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1000+
6	American & Efird LLC	Manufacturing	1000+
7	Mann+hummel	Manufacturing	1000+
8	Trion Solutions li Inc	Professional & Business Services	500-999
9	City of Gastonia	Public Administration	500-999
10	Pharr Yarns Inc	Manufacturing	500-999
11	Bud Antle Inc	Manufacturing	500-999
12	Gaston College	Education & Health Services	500-999
13	Food Lion	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	500-999
14	Industrial Fabricators Inc	Manufacturing	500-999
15	Adecco USA Inc	Professional & Business Services	500-999
16	Gaston Family Health Services, Inc.	Education & Health Services	250-499
17	N C Advance Stores Co Inc Advance A	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	250-499
18	Gaston County Family YMCA	Leisure & Hospitality	250-499
19	Lowes Home Centers Inc	Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	250-499
20	Buckeye Fire Equipment Co (A Corp)	Manufacturing	250-499
21	Holy Angels Inc	Education & Health Services	250-499
22	Belmont Abbey College	Education & Health Services	250-499
23	Stabilus Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
24	Beverly Knits Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
25	GMRI Inc	Leisure & Hospitality	250-499
Source: NC Department of Commerce			

## Gaston County Gross Collections

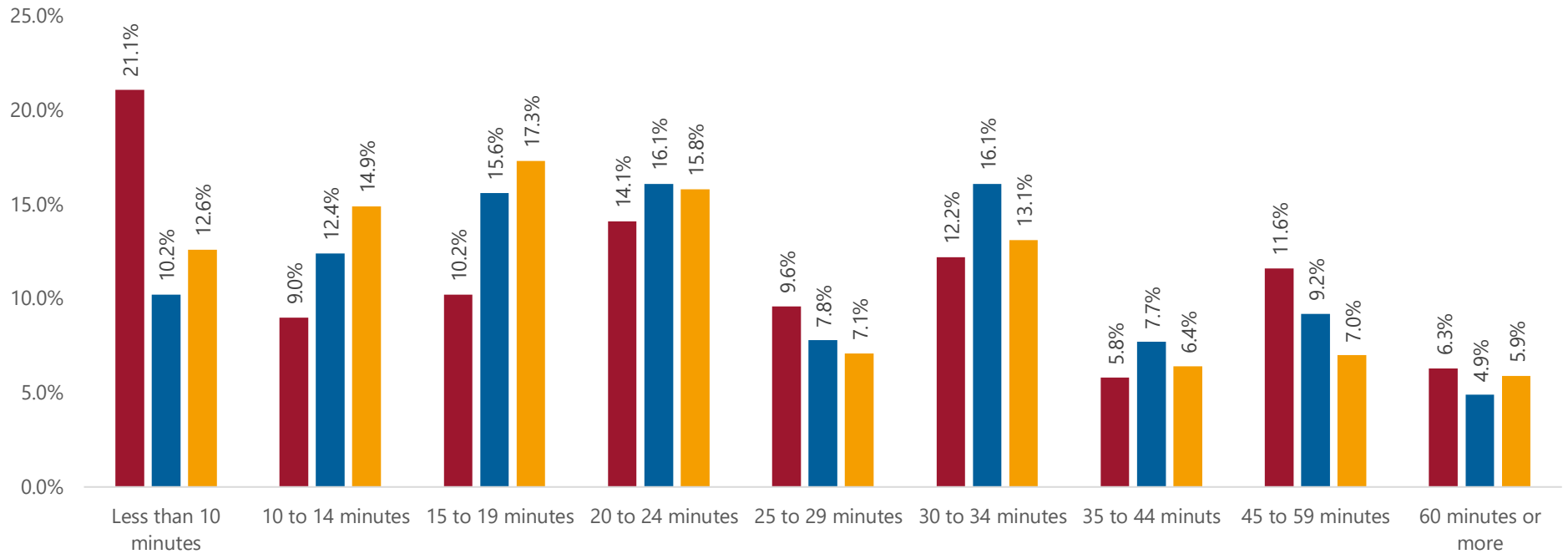


## Gaston County Taxable Sales



## 2017 Commute

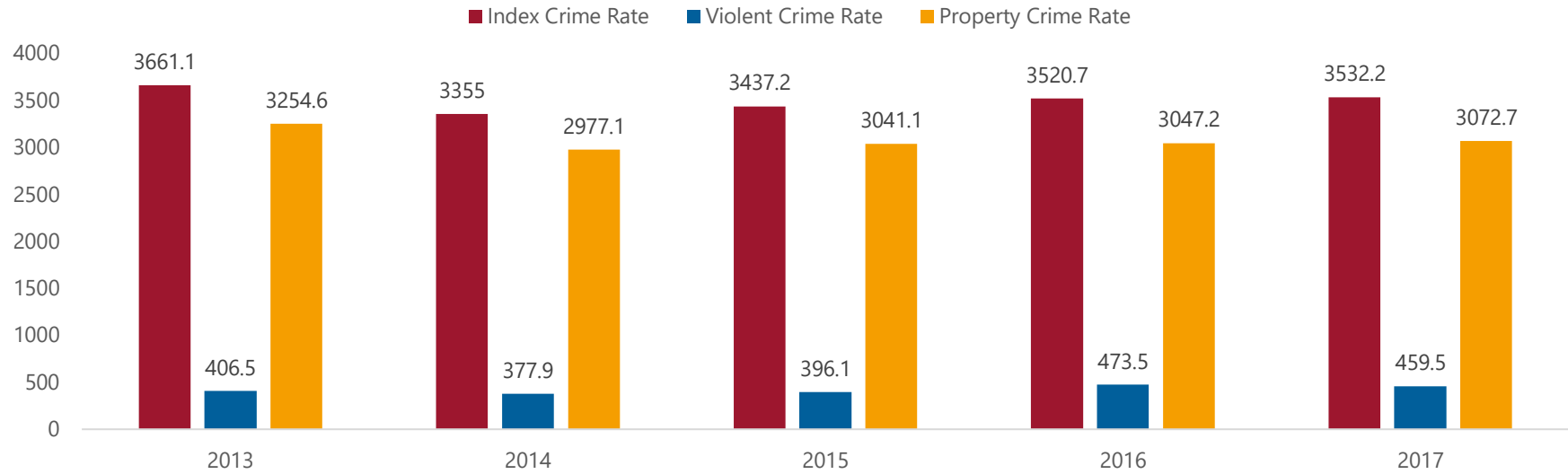
Cherryville, NC Gaston County, NC North Carolina



Source: U.S. Census

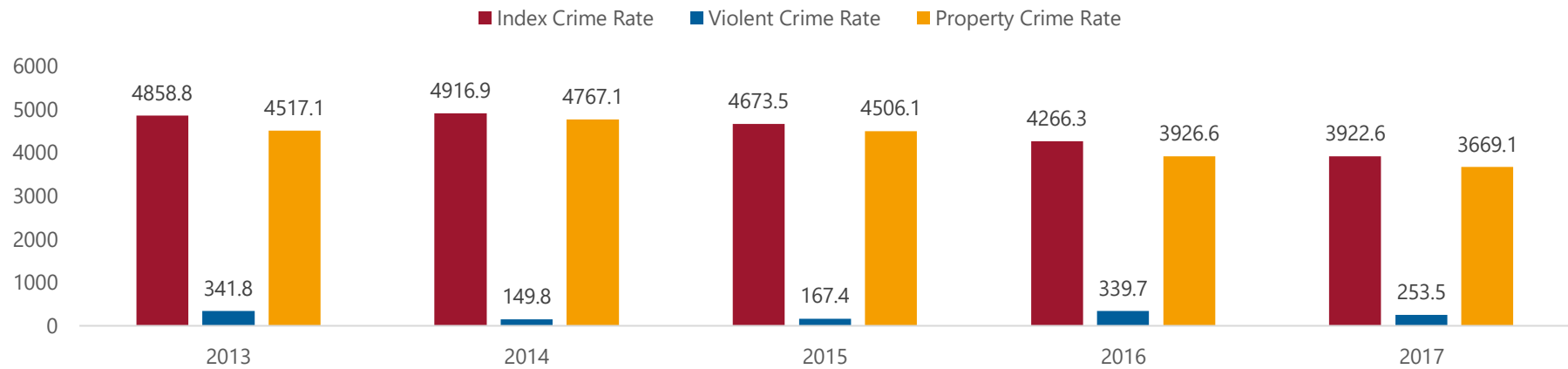


### Gaston County Crime Rates per 100,000



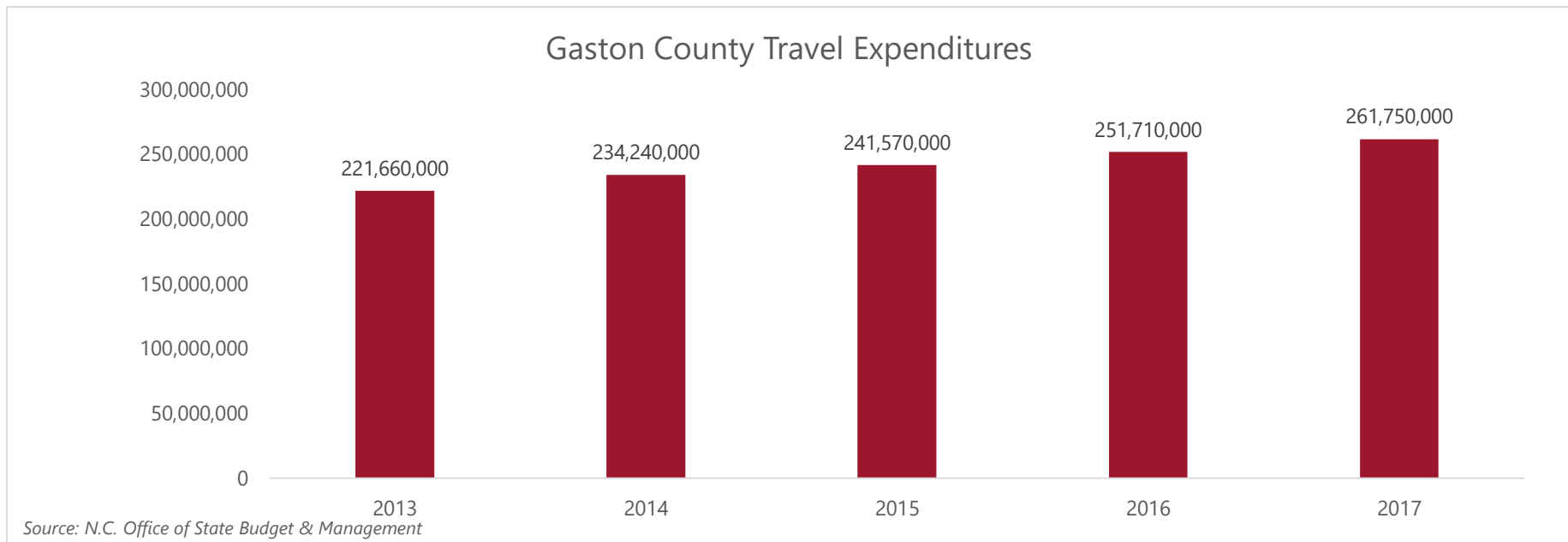
Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation

### Cherryville Crime Rates per 100,000

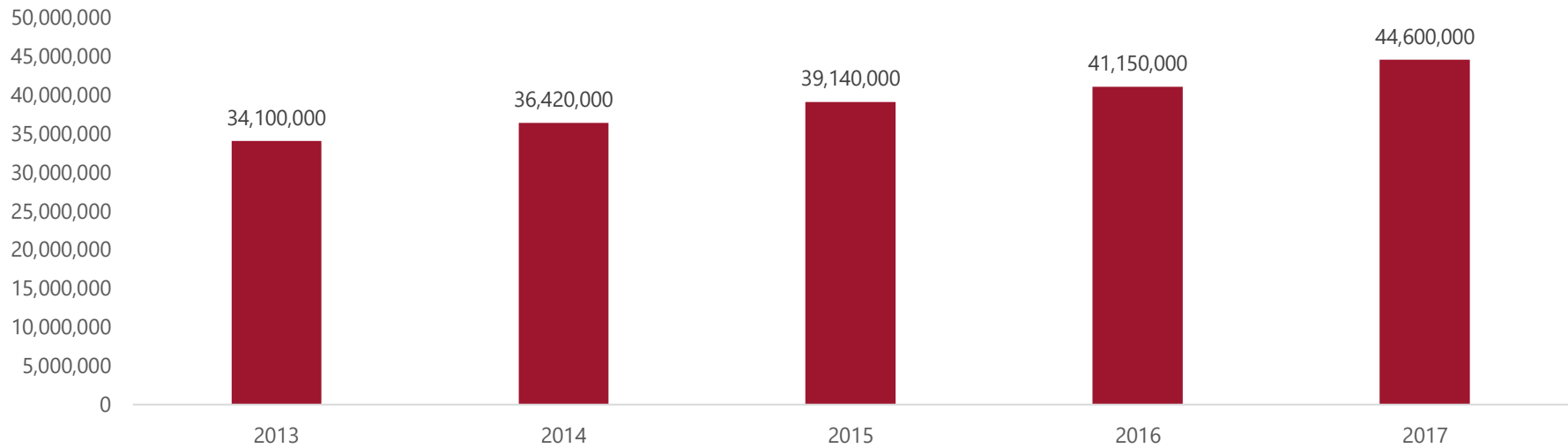


SourceSource: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation

Gaston County 2014-2018 Employment Stages				
ESTABLISHMENTS	2014	% of TOTAL	2018	% of TOTAL
ALL	8,208	100	9,239	100
Self-Employed (1)	982	12	1272	13.8
Stage 1 (2-9)	5,740	69.9	6,418	69.5
Stage 2 (10-99)	1,369	16.7	1425	15.4
Stage 3 (100-499)	109	1.3	117	1.3
Stage 4 (500+)	8	0.1	7	0.1
Source: Your Economy Data				

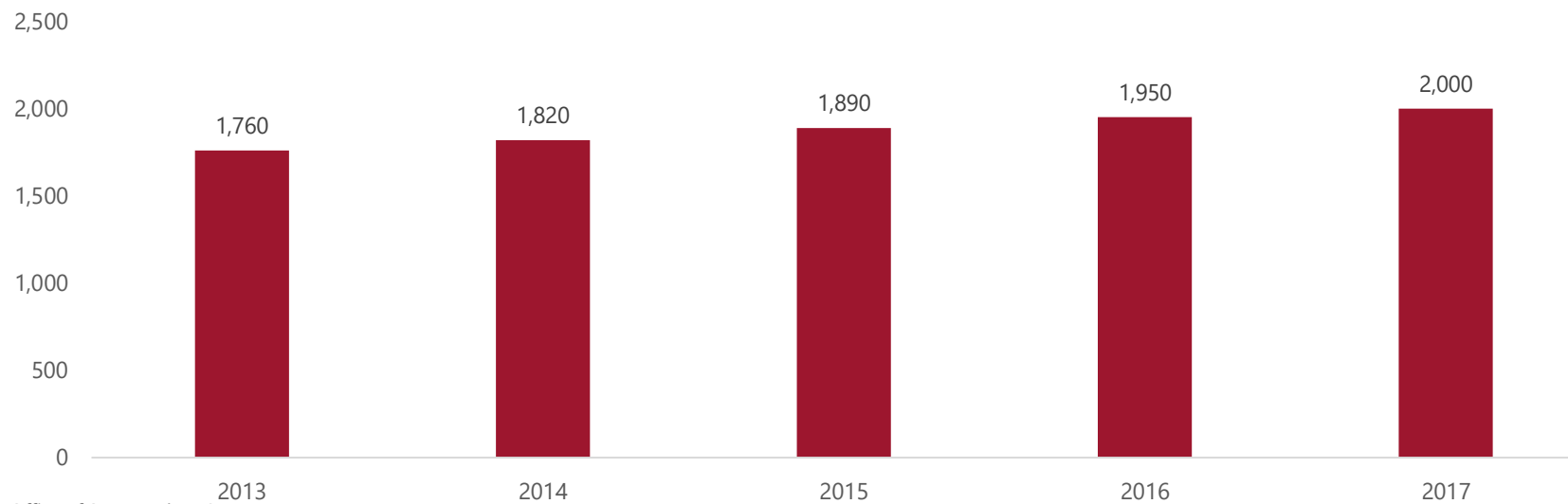


### Gaston County Travel Payroll



Source: N.C. Office of State Budget & Management

### Gaston County Travel Employment



Source: N.C. Office of State Budget & Management

# Cherryville Retail MarketPlace Profile

## Summary Demographics

2019 Population	5,865
2019 Households	2,361
2019 Median Disposable Income	\$41,678
2019 Per Capita Income	\$26,120

	NAICS	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus	Number of	
2017 Industry Summary		(Retail Potential)	(Retail Sales)		Factor	Businesses	
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45	722	\$72,789,972	\$100,587,330	-\$27,797,358	-16.0	64
Total Retail Trade	44-45		\$66,341,511	\$89,666,329	-\$23,324,818	-15.0	40
Total Food & Drink	722		\$6,448,461	\$10,921,001	-\$4,472,540	-25.7	24
	NAICS	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus	Number of	
2017 Industry Group		(Retail Potential)	(Retail Sales)		Factor	Businesses	
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$14,953,833	\$4,811,411	\$10,142,422	51.3	7	
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$12,301,400	\$2,316,850	\$9,984,550	68.3	1	
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$1,258,918	\$0	\$1,258,918	100.0	0	
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$1,393,515	\$2,494,561	-\$1,101,046	-28.3	6	
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$2,357,716	\$708,998	\$1,648,718	53.8	3	
Furniture Stores	4421	\$1,424,364	\$234,715	\$1,189,649	71.7	1	
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$933,352	\$474,283	\$459,069	32.6	2	
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$1,795,878	\$1,845,484	-\$49,606	-1.4	1	
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$5,019,417	\$1,493,603	\$3,525,814	54.1	1	
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$4,677,160	\$1,493,603	\$3,183,557	51.6	1	
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$342,257	\$0	\$342,257	100.0	0	
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$11,382,417	\$10,939,160	\$443,257	2.0	4	
Grocery Stores	4451	\$10,610,329	\$10,761,839	-\$151,510	-0.7	3	
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$415,717	\$0	\$415,717	100.0	0	
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$356,371	\$177,321	\$179,050	33.5	1	
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$4,303,755	\$9,757,749	-\$5,453,994	-38.8	3	
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$7,335,129	\$7,968,763	-\$633,634	-4.1	7	
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$2,792,910	\$246,305	\$2,546,605	83.8	1	
Clothing Stores	4481	\$1,863,878	\$246,305	\$1,617,573	76.7	1	
Shoe Stores	4482	\$451,627	\$0	\$451,627	100.0	0	
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$477,405	\$0	\$477,405	100.0	0	
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$1,654,971	\$3,822,092	-\$2,167,121	-39.6	1	
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$1,408,429	\$3,822,092	-\$2,413,663	-46.1	1	
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$246,542	\$0	\$246,542	100.0	0	
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$10,528,770	\$46,728,129	-\$36,199,359	-63.2	4	
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$7,477,504	\$44,905,263	-\$37,427,759	-71.5	1	
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$3,051,266	\$1,822,866	\$1,228,400	25.2	3	
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$3,032,120	\$1,344,635	\$1,687,485	38.6	8	
Florists	4531	\$97,602	\$97,257	\$345	0.2	1	
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$563,663	\$226,936	\$336,727	42.6	2	
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$300,473	\$530,591	-\$230,118	-27.7	3	
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$2,070,382	\$489,851	\$1,580,531	61.7	2	
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$1,184,595	\$0	\$1,184,595	100.0	0	
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$782,531	\$0	\$782,531	100.0	0	
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$61,461	\$0	\$61,461	100.0	0	
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$340,603	\$0	\$340,603	100.0	0	
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$6,448,461	\$10,921,001	-\$4,472,540	-25.7	24	
Special Food Services	7223	\$63,130	\$0	\$63,130	100.0	0	
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$409,721	\$157,993	\$251,728	44.3	1	
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$5,975,610	\$10,763,008	-\$4,787,398	-28.6	23	

**Source:** Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2019 Updated Demographics. Esri 2017 Retail MarketPlace. Copyright 2019 Esri. Copyright 2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved

# Gaston County Retail MarketPlace Profile

## Summary Demographics

2019 Population	228,556
2019 Households	88,388
2019 Median Disposable Income	\$41,814
2019 Per Capita Income	\$26,165

## 2017 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	\$2,625,826,426	\$3,044,225,351	-\$418,398,925	-7.4	1,367
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$2,377,009,883	\$2,789,332,217	-\$412,322,334	-8.0	1,020
Total Food & Drink	722	\$248,816,543	\$254,893,134	-\$6,076,591	-1.2	347

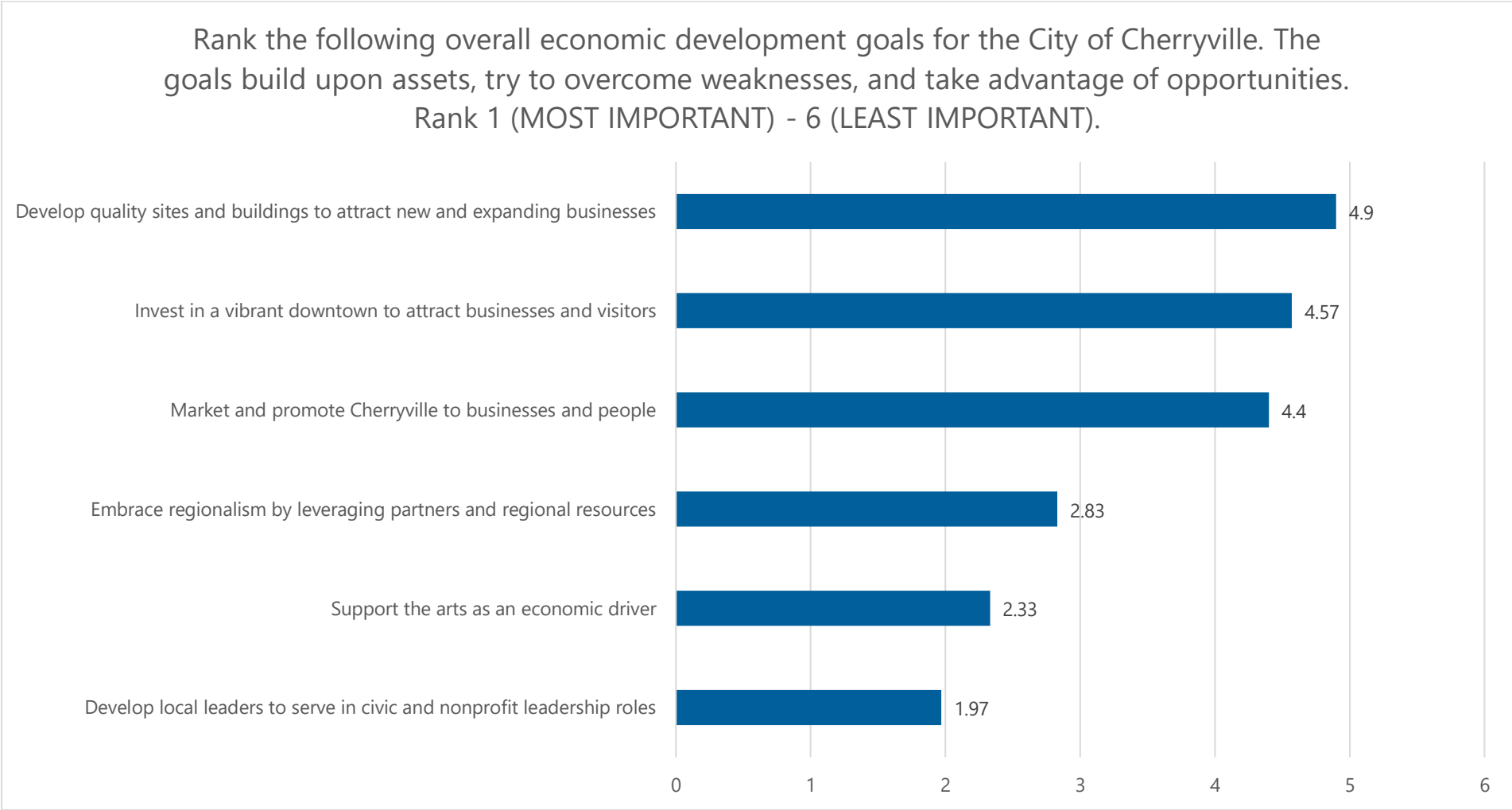
## 2017 Industry Group

	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$516,503,544	\$1,038,793,600	-\$522,290,056	-33.6	167
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$424,089,140	\$976,222,343	-\$552,133,203	-39.4	84
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$42,019,791	\$13,720,780	\$28,299,011	50.8	17
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$50,394,613	\$48,850,477	\$1,544,136	1.6	66
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$90,555,165	\$35,026,571	\$55,528,594	44.2	60
Furniture Stores	4421	\$54,866,407	\$13,759,267	\$41,107,140	59.9	27
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$35,688,758	\$21,267,304	\$14,421,454	25.3	33
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$69,339,754	\$66,529,163	\$2,810,591	2.1	50
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$172,828,258	\$102,643,674	\$70,184,584	25.5	69
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$161,851,775	\$97,802,541	\$64,049,234	24.7	58
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$10,976,483	\$4,841,133	\$6,135,350	38.8	11
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$411,594,131	\$366,821,751	\$44,772,380	5.8	114
Grocery Stores	4451	\$382,537,407	\$362,327,013	\$20,210,394	2.7	96
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$15,037,327	\$3,209,186	\$11,828,141	64.8	9
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$14,019,397	\$1,285,552	\$12,733,845	83.2	9
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$150,736,300	\$197,904,303	-\$47,168,003	-13.5	78
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$257,021,767	\$224,242,417	\$32,779,350	6.8	92
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$110,108,651	\$79,994,668	\$30,113,983	15.8	115
Clothing Stores	4481	\$72,511,190	\$56,342,688	\$16,168,502	12.5	78
Shoe Stores	4482	\$17,618,943	\$13,601,567	\$4,017,376	12.9	13
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$19,978,518	\$10,050,413	\$9,928,105	33.1	24
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$62,272,738	\$58,964,960	\$3,307,778	2.7	48
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$52,704,114	\$54,547,899	-\$1,843,785	-1.7	45
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$9,568,624	\$4,417,061	\$5,151,563	36.8	3
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$390,978,884	\$536,376,262	-\$145,397,378	-15.7	77
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$281,416,479	\$402,108,601	-\$120,692,122	-17.7	19
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$109,562,405	\$134,267,661	-\$24,705,256	-10.1	58
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$104,087,870	\$75,350,329	\$28,737,541	16.0	140
Florists	4531	\$3,531,563	\$1,746,514	\$1,785,049	33.8	21
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$21,366,511	\$12,618,903	\$8,747,608	25.7	32
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$11,800,744	\$12,289,976	-\$489,232	-2.0	38
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$67,389,052	\$48,694,936	\$18,694,116	16.1	49
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$40,982,821	\$6,684,519	\$34,298,302	72.0	10
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$28,757,316	\$5,076,743	\$23,680,573	70.0	4
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$2,240,362	\$405,755	\$1,834,607	69.3	3
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$9,985,143	\$1,202,021	\$8,783,122	78.5	3
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$248,816,543	\$254,893,134	-\$6,076,591	-1.2	347
Special Food Services	7223	\$2,328,688	\$407,465	\$1,921,223	70.2	3
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$16,937,753	\$6,935,992	\$10,001,761	41.9	16
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$229,550,102	\$247,549,677	-\$17,999,575	-3.8	328

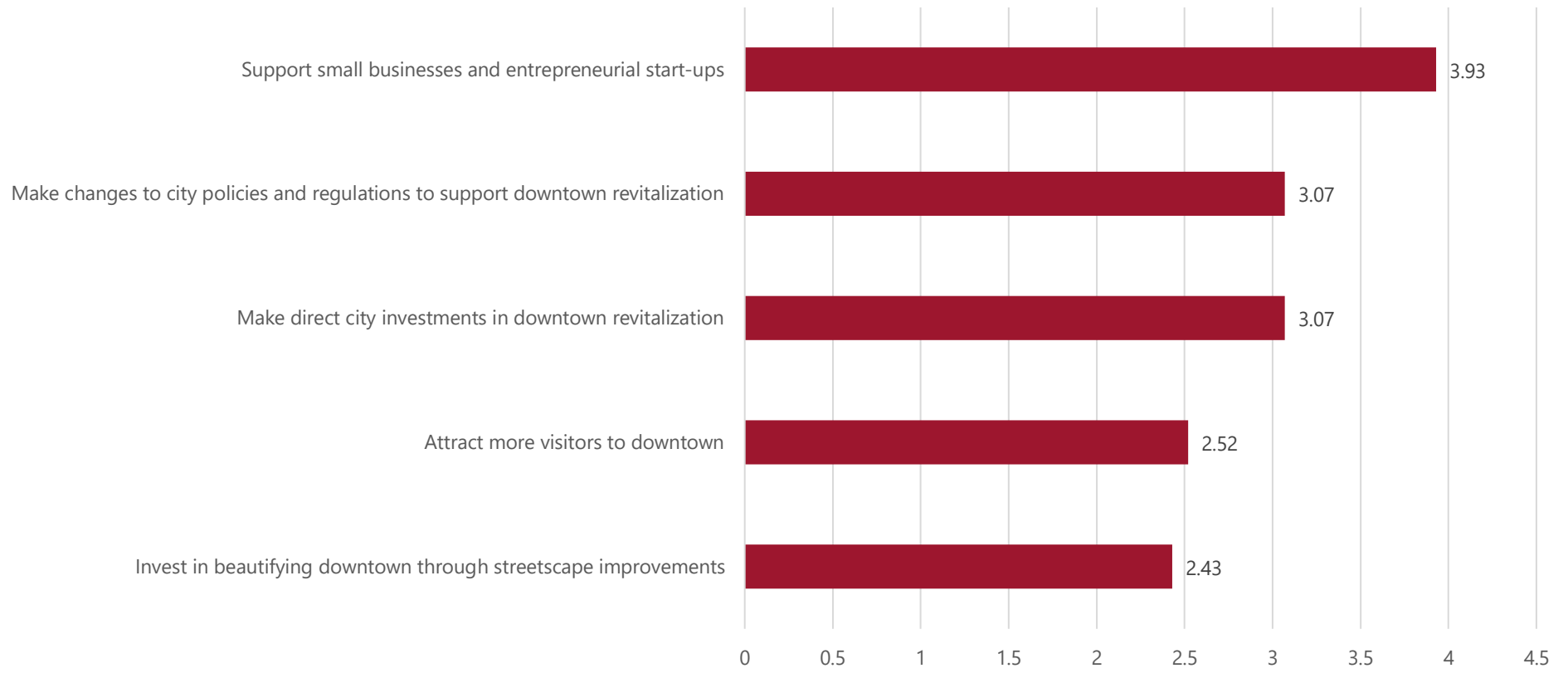
**Source:** Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2019 Updated Demographics. Esri 2017 Retail MarketPlace. Copyright 2019 Esri. Copyright 2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved

# Appendix C: Community Survey

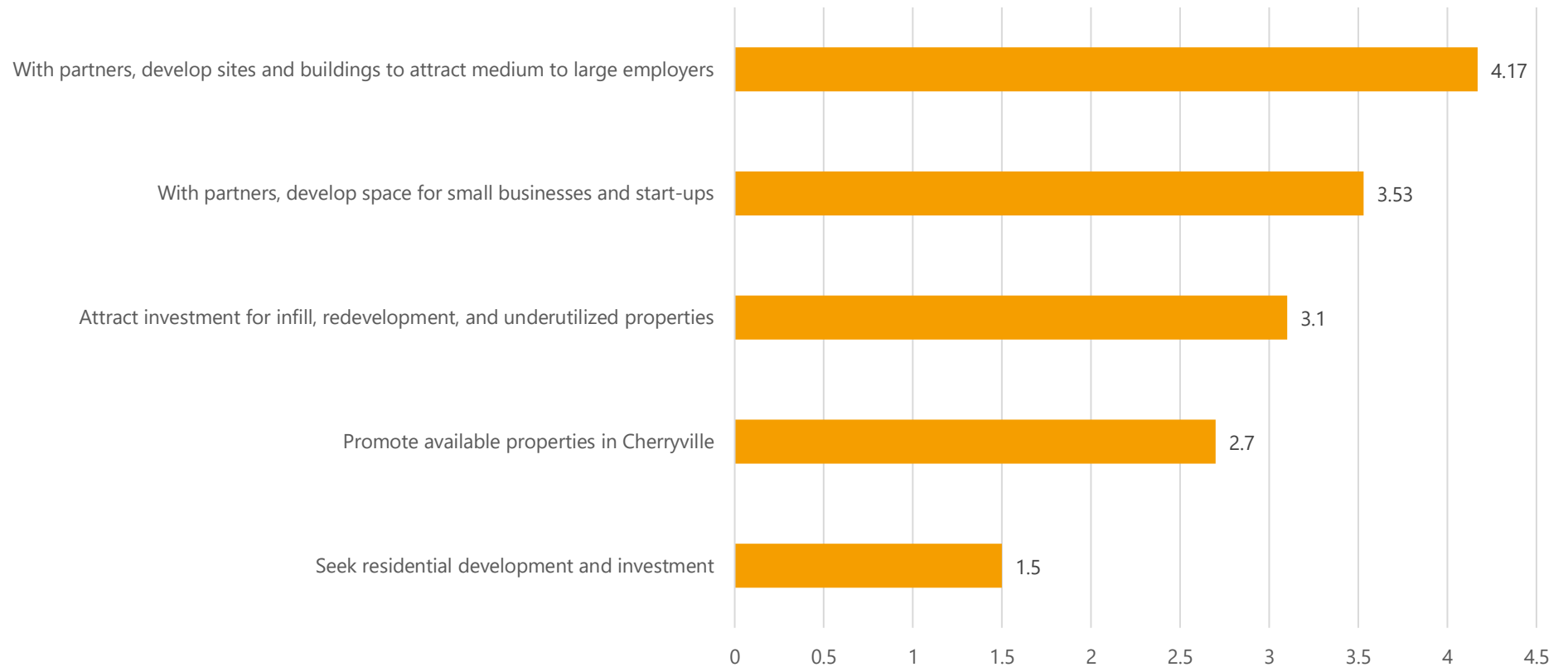
There were 30 citizen responses to the community survey. The survey was sent to the Chamber of Commerce database and made available via social media.



Rank the following approaches to downtown revitalization. The City's role could be facilitating partnerships, seeking grants and other funding sources, and changing public policies that help make the project happen. Rank the importance of the strategies f

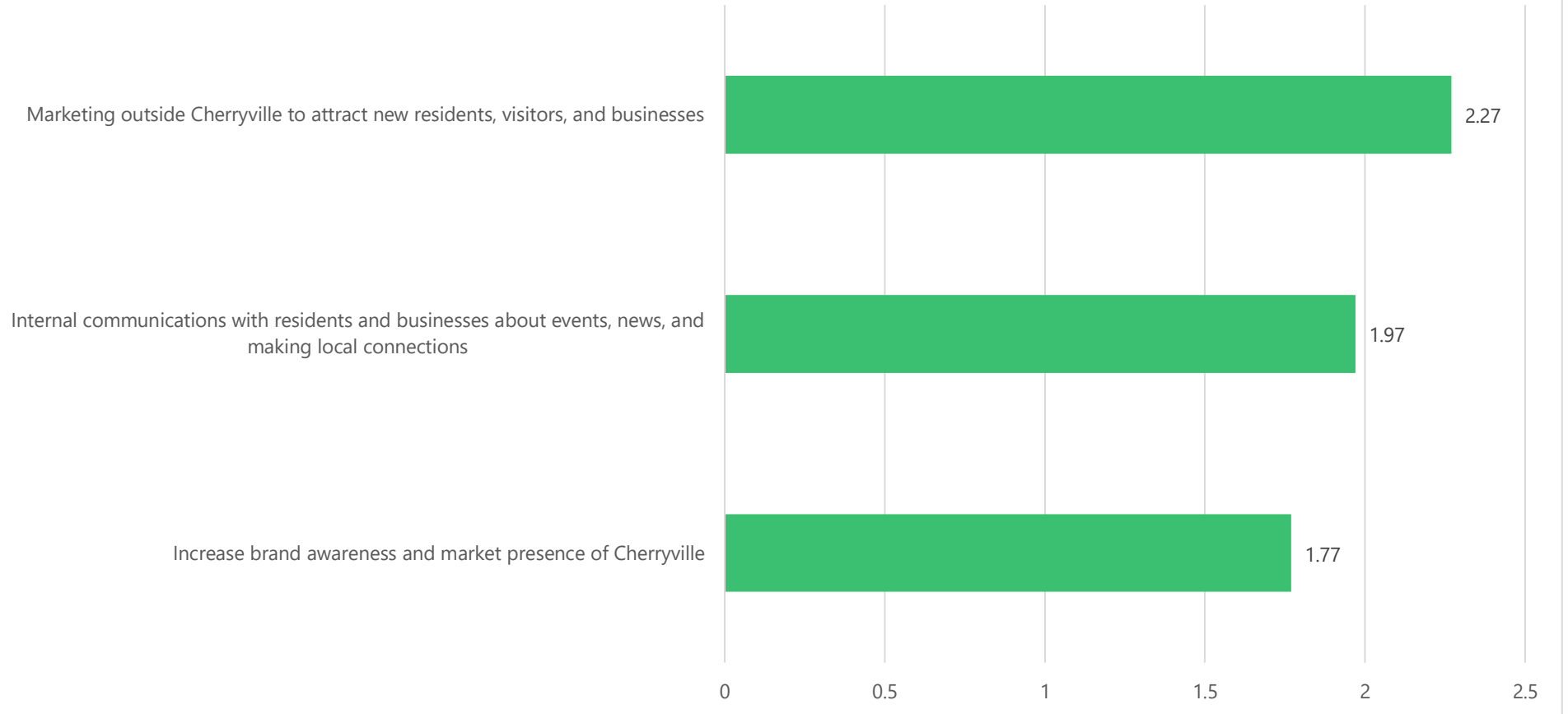


Rank the following approaches to site and building development and redevelopment.  
Cherryville's role could be developing partnerships with the private sector and regional partners and marketing. Rank the importance of the projects from 1 (MOST IMPORTANT)

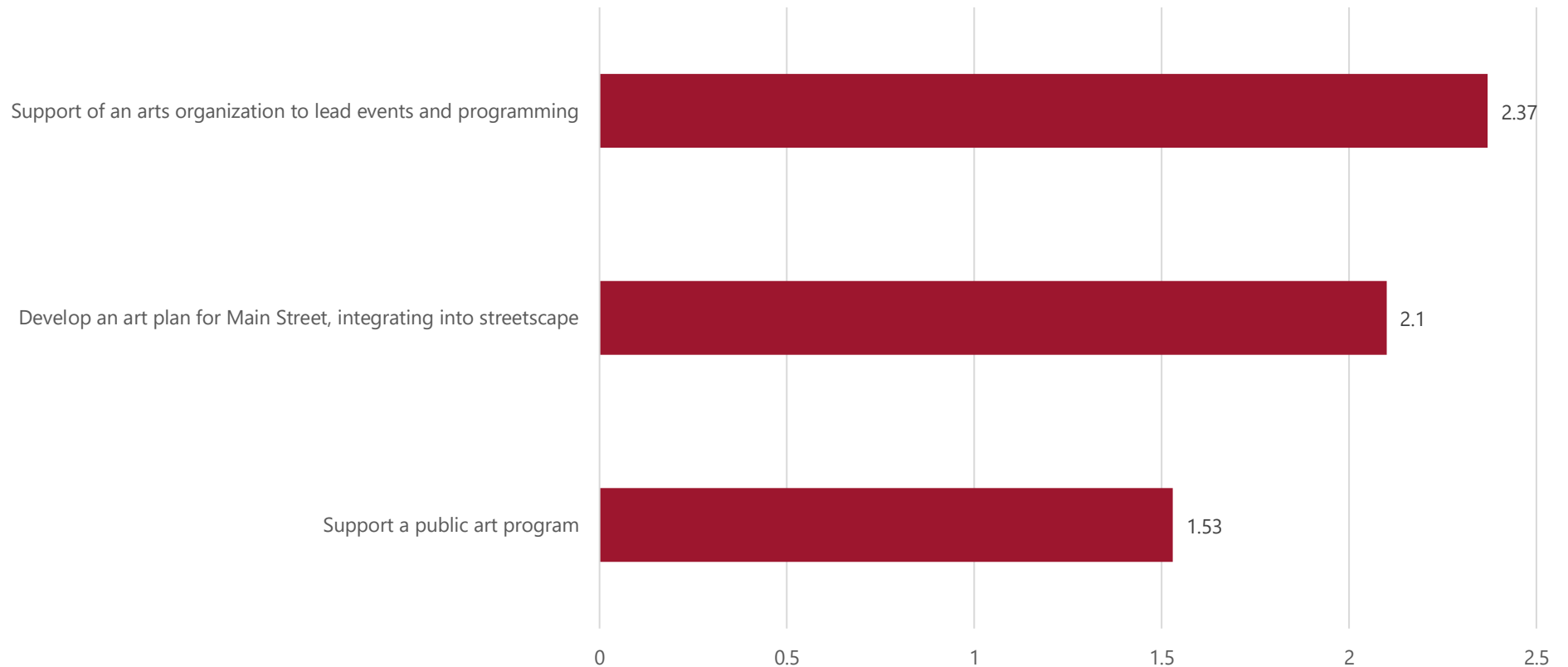




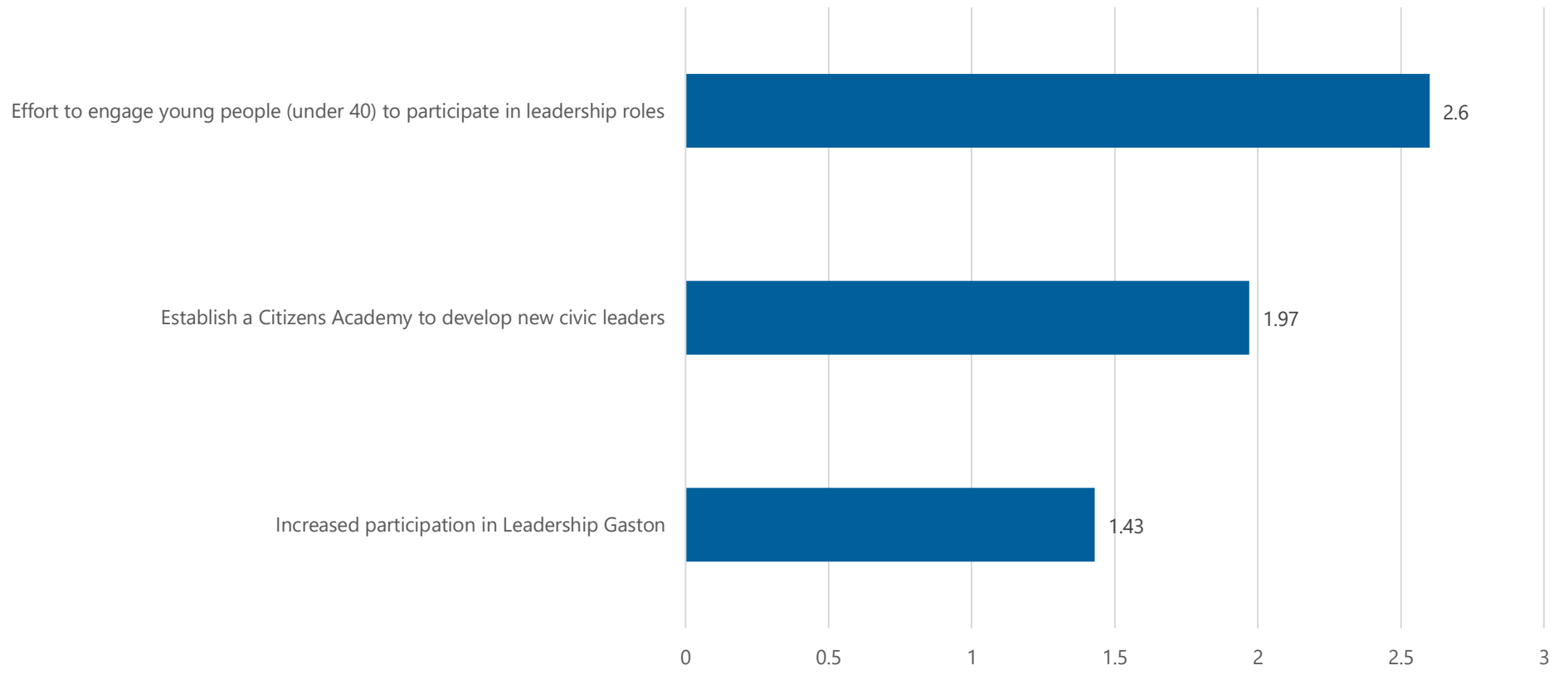
Rank the priorities in marketing and promoting Cherryville to both internal and external audiences. Rank the importance from 1 (MOST IMPORTANT) to 3 (LEAST IMPORTANT).



The following are economic development strategies that would develop the arts as an economic driver. The City's role could be identifying funding sources, seeking private partnerships, and marketing and promotion to make the projects successful. Rank the



The following are strategies to develop future leaders in Cherryville who will take on civic and nonprofit leadership roles. Rank the importance of the projects from 1 (MOST IMPORTANT) to 3 (LEAST IMPORTANT)



**Thank you for participating in the survey. Please leave any comments for the strategic planning committee here.**

Cherryville needs new blood. The employees who matter aren't doing their jobs. They're just drawing a paycheck.

I think promoting Cherryville's participation in greater Gaston County leadership events, trainings, etc., is a great direction to go in! The help of the whole county will trickle down into our neck of the area.

I would much rather see investment into new areas of the town and less focus on the "beautification of Main Street." Hwy 150 is the busiest street in the town, and I think investment along this road will bring greater return from the investment. Hwy 279 is a dead-end road with very little traffic.

There are several good restaurants in Cherryville, but they look run down and sad. I don't want to take visitors there. Is there a way to "require" better curb appeal and help fund it?

The city of Lincolnton seems to have a thriving uptown area. Even though our town is significantly smaller, maybe speaking to leadership in Lincolnton to gain some input. Also, we have a beautiful little uptown area!

Be open to having residents that are not from Cherryville be on committees that promote Cherryville.

We need to bring in a large business to create jobs. Give tax breaks to attract companies that will create jobs. Also, we need a parks and recreation department. Most towns that are in this developmental stage have parks and recreation. If I am a business owner, I want the town to offer this amenity. People want to work and play in the same town. Having to work all day and then drive 20 minutes so your family can enjoy sports activities is not attractive to a business owner. Go talk to Lincolnton or Belmont's park and rec director. Also, try and get a better YMCA. Things like this will get community involvement also. I understand these things just don't happen, but at least you have to try. The old way isn't working. You can only have so many barber shops downtown.

The city needs new ideas and open up to more businesses. Quit listening to the local burger shop owners saying they will leave if a chain comes to town. If they aren't about growth in the city, then maybe they need to leave. Also quit trying to be a bed and breakfast town and start attracting business. It's time to quit padding the pockets of the "local boys," it's not working. Just look at other towns and cities around at the growth.

# 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

[www.electricities.com](http://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. [www.creativeedc.com](http://www.creativeedc.com)