In 1986, when Brenda Daniels joined ElectriCities as an administrative assistant in the organization’s engineering group, she likely wouldn’t have predicted the lasting impact she’d have on public power communities in North Carolina. But what an impact!

On March 31, 2022, Daniels retires from her role as Manager of Economic and Community Development with 36 years of service under her belt and a valued and valuable economic development department that has brought hundreds of businesses, millions of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of jobs to public power communities in North Carolina.

In 1995, after stints in various roles and departments where she was responsible for tasks such as supporting a load management grant program and completing residential audits to help customers remedy high electric bills, Daniels chose to fill a vacancy in economic development. She soon thought, “There has to be more to this than just responding to RFIs for company locations.”

Of course, there was—a lot more. To find out how much more, she asked questions—a lot of questions. (continued p.4)
ALLIANCE ON A MISSION

The Greenville Eastern North Carolina (ENC) Alliance was founded in 2019 as a public-private partnership focused on economic development across Greenville and Pitt County, North Carolina. The non-profit organization is on a mission to recruit new business, expand and retain existing industries, develop community assets, maximize opportunities for investment, and enhance the quality of life in the region.

Greenville ENC is powered by public entities, including the City of Greenville and Greenville Utilities Commission, as well as the towns of Ayden, Bethel, Farmville, Fountain, and Grimesland, and the Village of Simpson. More than 60 private investors add to that public support, earning tiered member status based on an annual commitment.

“We are honored to have the support of ElectriCities of North Carolina, a Bronze-level member, as we work together to achieve our economic development goals,” said Maria Satira, Director of Marketing and Communications at Greenville ENC Alliance. To learn more about the organization, its mission, and partnership opportunities, visit www.encalliance.com.

Great NEWS

APEX
Florida-based developer Reader Communities filed a master plan with the Town of Apex for a mixed-use project on a 1,067-acre site by U.S. 1 and N.C. 55. Plans call for 4,500 residential units and as much as 4 million square feet of office and retail space.

CONCORD
Eli Lilly, a leading health care and pharmaceutical company, announced it is building a $1 billion manufacturing facility in Concord, creating nearly 600 jobs. The facility will be built at The Grounds at Concord, the former Phillip Morris plant. This is the second-largest economic development announcement in the history of Cabarrus County.

The $46.6 million expansion of Atrium Health Cabarrus hospital, just off Interstate 85 in Concord, calls for 22 medical-surgical beds in an approximately 28,400-square-foot space within the hospital’s heart and vascular tower. Construction is slated to begin in early 2023 and will bring capacity at Atrium Health Cabarrus to 469 beds.

Cincinnati-based Kroger is planning a $100 million fulfillment center in Concord. The site is expected to open in 2024, adding 700 jobs over five years.

FAYETTEVILLE
Amazon plans to construct a 1.3 million-square-foot fulfillment facility in Fayetteville’s Military Business Park, which could add more than 500 full-time jobs and hundreds of part-time positions. The warehousing facility will be located on 94 acres and is projected to launch operations in 2023.

GASTONIA
Construction has begun on Center City Crossings, a new apartment complex in downtown Gastonia. The $25 million project should be completed by early 2023, according to Kuester Development Associates. City leaders consider the six-story, 90-unit apartment complex a game-changer for downtown.

WhiskGars, a cigar and whiskey lounge, opened in downtown Gastonia in late February. Located in the 90-year-old building that once was Gastonia’s main post office, the 1940s and ’50s-themed lounge includes seating for about 80 people and a 36-foot granite-top bar. Annual memberships are $50, while a $1,500 VIP membership allows access to a private area and a personal humidor.

GREENVILLE
Vidant Health and East Carolina University’s Brody School of Medicine have joined forces to create ECU Health. The move comes as Brody is on the cusp of securing long-awaited state budget funding from the legislature to launch major renovations. With rebranding underway, Dr. Jason Higginson, executive dean of Brody, said “The ability to combine academic excellence with high-quality, state-of-the-art health care delivery will elevate care, research, and education opportunities available to the people of eastern North Carolina. We look forward to continuing to work together and introduce ECU Health to the community later this year.”
HIGH POINT
High Point-based vTv Therapeutics, Inc., a pharmaceutical company that focuses on treating metabolic and inflammatory disorders and minimizing long-term complications through advancing clinical drug candidates into medicines, came in at No. 82 on Deloitte’s Technology Fast 500 list with a calculated growth of 2,104% over three years.

KINSTON
Pennsylvania-based West Pharmaceutical will expand its presence in Kinston through a $70 million investment, expecting to add over 70 people to the current workforce of 500. The expansion will add warehouse and distribution space as well as increased production value. The expansion is expected to have a $3.4 million impact through payroll jobs each year.

Indiana-based MasterBrand Cabinets, one of the largest cabinet manufacturers in North America, will expand its operations in Kinston through a $13.5 million investment, adding over 40 people to the current workforce of 450. The expansion will add warehouse and distribution space as well as increased production value. The expansion is expected to have a $2.5 million impact through payroll jobs each year.

LAURINBURG
North Carolina Organics Recycling (NCOR) plans to invest $6 million and employ 43 people over the next five years, establishing its first North Carolina facility in Southeast Regional Airport Authority industrial park in Laurinburg. NCOR’s parent company, American Complete Organics Recycling, is a leader in recycling organic waste materials.

LEXINGTON
To mitigate future supply chain disruptions, Egger Wood Products is investing $50 million in additional production capacity at its particleboard manufacturing and laminating plant near Lexington in Davidson County. The new investments will create 35 to 40 new jobs, adding to its current 450.

MORGANTON
Vanguard Furniture bought a former Drexel Furniture manufacturing plant in Morganton with plans to create 150 jobs there. The 163,000-square-foot factory will be restored and refurbished, and operations are scheduled to begin in April. Conover-based Vanguard has six plants and employs more than 600 people.

STATESVILLE
Keselowski Advanced Manufacturing (KAM) is investing nearly $4.8 million to expand its operations in Statesville. Founded and owned by NASCAR driver Brad Keselowski, KAM’s factory is adjacent to Statesville Regional Airport and began operations in late 2018.

The Sherwin-Williams Company is expanding its architectural paint and coatings manufacturing capacity and establishing a larger distribution facility in Statesville. Sherwin-Williams plans to invest a minimum of $300 million in the project and add 183 full-time jobs at the site over the next three years, doubling the existing workforce. The project includes a 36,000-square-foot extension of its existing 200,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, the addition of four new rail spurs, and construction of a new 800,000-square-foot distribution and fleet transportation center, which has another 200,000 square feet available for future expansion.

Motorsports legend Richard Petty and Maury Gallagher, owner of GMS Racing and majority owner of Richard Petty Motorsports, have created Petty GMS. The organization will field two full-time NASCAR Cup Series entries in 2022 with drivers Ty Dillon and Erik Jones and be housed at GMS Racing’s multibuilding complex in Statesville.
She joined the North Carolina Economic Development Association (NCEDA). She knew that to help ElectriCities member communities grow their electric load, she needed to get them in front of the important people, such as site selectors and developers. She contacted the N.C. Department of Commerce to see how they did things, and she reached out to area electric co-ops and investor-owned utilities.

She saw the value that municipal-owned utilities could provide businesses. Along with providing customers with reliable electricity and superior customer service, having a locally owned and operated electric system often means locally owned and operated gas, water, and sewer. And she saw that bringing a business to a public power community means much more than an increased electric load. It means investment in the local economy.

That local connection is key, and it resonates with business leaders, Daniels says. She tells people who are considering locating in a North Carolina public power community, “You've got local contacts, and that local connection is part of the value being here provides your company.”

Daniels created grant programs—Smart Communities Grants and Downtown Revitalization Grants—to help spark economic development in ElectriCities member cities and towns. She created site identification and readiness programs—SiteAssist and Smart Sites—to simplify the process of locating in a public power community. She added retail recruiters to her team and partnered with a strategic retail planning company, Retail Strategies, to aid ElectriCities members.

Industry leaders took notice. Daniels and team have won several awards from industry publications and organizations, including the Southeast Economic Development Council. For the past five years, Business Facilities magazine has named ElectriCities a Top Utility for its success in offering innovative programs and expert assistance to attract businesses to North Carolina’s public power cities and towns.

Daniels was named NCEDA Economic Developer of the Year in 2002 and was recently included on Business North Carolina’s inaugural Power List for Economic Development.

What Daniels is most proud of is helping ElectriCities member cities and towns get where they need to be—“getting them on the map,” she says. “We look at each city and town differently to figure out what each one needs.”

Stand-out projects include helping Hookerton establish and move into their new town hall, helping bring a Target distribution center to Newton, helping recruit PenCell Plastics to Rocky Mount, and helping bring Sysco Foods to Selma.

“It’s so rewarding to see projects come to fruition once you go through everything,” Daniels says. “It takes several months—and sometimes years—to find the right location and get everything right with the city or town. Then the company is there and hiring people, and everything it took to get to that point was worth it.”
ECONOMIC IMPACT (continued)

“Making member communities happy has always been my goal, and I think I was able to do that,” she says.

Daniels’ first order of post-retirement business: Going on a cruise with her husband. She also plans to spend a lot more time with her family.

Stepping into the role of Manager of Community and Economic Development is ElectriCities’ Senior Economic Developer, Carl Rees. Before joining ElectriCities in 2015, Rees served as Economic Development Manager and Senior Urban Planner for the public power City of Greenville, North Carolina, spearheading efforts that led to hundreds of millions of dollars in public and private investment.

“Carl is the perfect person to carry on what we’ve established,” Daniels says. “I’m looking forward to seeing what new programs he’s going to come up with.”

“Even before working with Brenda, I knew her reputation as a consummate economic development professional. It’s well known throughout North Carolina’s public power cities and towns,” Rees says.

“Making member communities happy has always been my goal...”

—Brenda Daniels

“What is less known about Brenda, and what I have come to know about her over the last six years, is how deeply she cares for our state—in particular, North Carolina’s rural communities.”

Rees says whether Daniels is supporting a bird sanctuary in Scotland Neck, converting a historic property into a new town hall in Hookerton, or repurposing abandoned mill facilities in piedmont towns like Lexington, she harnesses her passion to bring positive change to public power communities.

“Although her name may not be found on a plaque or monument in any of these places,” Rees says, “Brenda’s legacy as a champion of public power communities is forever inscribed on the history of these cities and towns.”

ABOVE: Daniels and family in Paris, 2018. MIDDLE RIGHT: Daniels’ most recent professional portrait. FAR RIGHT: IEDC board chair Tom Kucharski, Daniels, and Rees accepting Excellence in Economic Development Awards from the International Economic Development Council. Photo courtesy of IEDC.
Appalachian State University has purchased the former Corning Optical Communications headquarters building in Hickory to create a campus in Catawba County. At 225,800 square feet, it’s larger than any Appalachian State building in Boone, Chancellor Sheri Everts said. Hickory has been the largest North Carolina metro area without a UNC System campus.

North Carolina State University plans to add 2,000 undergraduate and 2,000 graduate students in engineering and computer science programs over the next five years to meet employment needs in the area. The move will increase the state’s largest public university student population to more than 40,000. Engineering North Carolina’s Future, a state legislative initiative, will provide $20 million to hire faculty and staff to support the increase in students.

Business Facilities magazine has named ElectricCities a 2021 top utility. In an article announcing the Top Utilities 2021, Business Facilities staff acknowledged the role utilities play in economic development and wrote, “These power providers are among the most successful in offering innovative programs and expert assistance to attract businesses.”

A 30% federal tax credit for offshore wind projects has been extended through 2025, a move that comes as the North Carolina’s Bureau for Ocean Energy Management prepares to put a second tract of the state’s coastline up for lease. To decarbonize the nation’s electricity grid, the Biden administration established a goal of having 30 gigawatts of offshore wind operating by 2030.

The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale has confirmed the speed record that Rolls-Royce’s Spirit of Innovation electric-powered aircraft set in November 2021, officially making it the fastest electric plane. “The advanced battery and propulsion technology developed for this program has exciting applications for the advanced air mobility market,” said Rolls-Royce CEO Warren East.

Boeing has invested $450 million in new funding in Wisk Aero, an electric air taxi startup. Analysts predict that the market for flying taxis could grow to $150 billion in revenue by 2035, and Wisk says it will use the funds to boost its workforce and improve its manufacturing with the aim of being commercially viable within five years.

Trinity Capital Advisors is partnering with Clarion Partners to develop Edgewood85 Commerce Park in Gaston County, a speculative project that will include four industrial buildings totaling around 1 million square feet. The site is roughly 20 miles from Charlotte-Douglas International Airport and 30 miles west of downtown Charlotte, with convenient access to Interstate 85.
Good TO KNOW

Brad Hufford
Vice President of Business Development
Greenville ENC Alliance

My favorite movies are: “Star Wars” original trilogy; auteur director films

The three things I can’t live without are: Music, travel, ECU athletics

When I welcome a visitor to my town, I always take them to:
Dickinson Avenue Public House

The most memorable places I’ve visited are:
Tokyo and Atlantic Beach, North Carolina

Finish the sentence: North Carolina is ... the Best State in the Union.
QSR Spotlight

Chipotle Opens New Concept: CHIPOTLANE DIGITAL KITCHEN

Responding to the increasing demand in digital-only ordering, Chipotle Mexican Grill has opened its first Chipotlane Digital Kitchen in Ohio.

Instead of dining indoors, customers pick up their orders at the fast-casual restaurant chain’s Chipotlane drive-thru window or walk-up window. Chipotle’s Chipotlane digital order pickup lanes have performed well since their launch in 2018. In a press release, the company said, “New restaurants featuring a Chipotlane open with approximately 15% higher sales compared to non-Chipotlanes opened during the same period.”

Without an indoor dining room, the Chipotlane Digital Kitchen concept has a much smaller footprint than a traditional Chipotlane store. Outdoor patio seating enables customers to enjoy their meals onsite.

The company said its new digital-only concept is focused on accelerating the digital business in non-traditional locations. The concept also allows Chipotle to enter more urban areas that wouldn’t support a full-size restaurant, providing flexibility with future locations.

Chipotle Typical Trade Area Criteria

- Strong urban and growing suburban areas with high residential and daytime population.
- Preferred colocation factors include residential, office, retail, university, recreation, and hospitals.
Seeking New Sites!

Our sources tell us companies are on the hunt for the sites below. For more information, contact Carl Rees, Manager of Community and Economic Development at ElectriCities.

Company Name: Withheld; Contact us
Type: Medical; Walk-in clinic, urgent care, labs
Target Territory: Eastern N.C.
Site Requirements: .75 acre or 3,200 to 3,600 sq. ft.
Lease or Purchase: Prefer purchase
Stand Alone or Outparcel: Outparcel within a daily needs and/or grocery anchored center
Population: Minimum 30,000
Income: Minimum $55,000
Traffic Count: Minimum 20,000 VPD
Planned Number of New Locations: 7

Company Name: Withheld; Contact us
Type: Breakfast quick-serve restaurant
Target Territory: Southeast U.S.
Site Requirements: 2,800 to 3,200 sq. ft.
Lease or Purchase: Prefer lease
Stand Alone or Outparcel: Outparcel within a daily needs and/or grocery anchored center
Population: Minimum 120,000 within 5 miles
Income: Minimum $80,000 median household income
Traffic Count: Minimum 25,000 VPD
Planned Number of New Locations: 25-30

Company Name: ModWash
Type: Car wash concept
Target Territory: Nationwide
Site Requirements: .65 to 1 acre
Lease or Purchase: Prefer purchase
Stand Alone or Outparcel: Outparcel within a daily needs and/or grocery anchored center
Population: Minimum 20,000 within trade area

Huntersville Welcomes New Type of Lowes Foods

Congratulations to the public power town of Huntersville on the recent opening of Lowes Foods’ newest concept grocery store. At 25,000 square feet, the store has a smaller footprint than a traditional Lowes Foods store but, according to the company, will provide everything customers want plus a few new nontraditional features.

“Our new Huntersville store is like a food hall that will also serve as a community hub for morning coffee, family dinner on the go, beer with a friend, picking up groceries curbside, or a complete grocery shopping experience,” Lowes Foods CEO Tim Lowe said. Based in North Carolina, Lowes Foods operates 81 full-service supermarkets and employs nearly 9,000 people.

ModWash (continued)
Income: Minimum $50,000 median household income
Traffic Count: Minimum 15,000 ADT
Planned Number of New Locations: 73

Company Name: Withheld; Contact us
Type: National private preschool
Target Territory: Nationwide
Site Requirements: 1.5 to 2 acres
Lease or Purchase: Prefer purchase
Stand Alone or Outparcel: Prefer stand-alone building
Population: Minimum 2,500 ages 0-4 within 2 miles of proposed site
Income: Minimum $75,000 median household income
Traffic Count: Varies per market
Planned Number of New Locations: 45

For information on ElectriCities and economic development, contact Carl Rees at 800-768-7697 ext. 6315 or crees@electricities.org.
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<th>LOCATE SITES</th>
<th>LOCATE BUILDINGS</th>
<th>LOCATE US</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GREENVILLE SMART SITE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Indigreen Corporate Park&lt;br&gt;Greenville, NC 27833&lt;br&gt;Available Acreage: 102 acres&lt;br&gt;Sale Price: $30,000/acre</td>
<td><strong>FORMER SEARS BUILDING IN GREENVILLE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Within Fresh Market Shopping Center&lt;br&gt;3600 S. Memorial Drive&lt;br&gt;Greenville, NC 27834&lt;br&gt;Total Available (sq. ft.): 65,710&lt;br&gt;For Sale</td>
<td><strong>Aero/ Defense Supplier Summit</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 11</td>
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<td><strong>MORGANTON SMART SITE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Burke Business Park&lt;br&gt;Morganton, NC 28655&lt;br&gt;Available Acreage: 83 acres&lt;br&gt;Sale Price: $40,000/acre</td>
<td><strong>INDUSTRIAL SPACE IN CONCORD</strong>&lt;br&gt;Concord Airport Business Park&lt;br&gt;1000 Derita Rd, Concord, NC 28027&lt;br&gt;Total Available (sq. ft.): 511,642&lt;br&gt;Lease Price: $4.25/sq. ft.</td>
<td><strong>NC Airport Association</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 20</td>
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<td><strong>COMMERCIAL SITE IN KINGS MOUNTAIN</strong>&lt;br&gt;Crown Village&lt;br&gt;606 Waco Road&lt;br&gt;Kings Mountain, NC 28086&lt;br&gt;Available Acreage: 46 acres</td>
<td><strong>INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, FLEX SPACE IN WAYNESVILLE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Warehouse, production, clean room, and offices&lt;br&gt;56 Scates Street, Waynesville, NC 28786&lt;br&gt;Total Available (sq. ft.): 80,351&lt;br&gt;Sale Price: $6,200,000</td>
<td><strong>NC League Annual Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 20</td>
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<td><strong>NextGen Talks: Food/ Beverage</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 24</td>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
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<td><strong>IAMC Spring Forum</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 30</td>
<td>Ft. Lauderdale, FL</td>
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<td><strong>Consultant Connect Summit</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 19</td>
<td>Norfolk, VA</td>
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<td><strong>ICSC RECon</strong>&lt;br&gt;May 22</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
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<td><strong>NCEDA Annual Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;June 14</td>
<td>Wrightsville Beach, NC</td>
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<td><strong>Consultant Connect Summit</strong>&lt;br&gt;August 4</td>
<td>Winston Salem, NC</td>
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<td><strong>ElectriCities Annual Conference</strong>&lt;br&gt;August 8-10</td>
<td>Cherokee, NC</td>
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<td><strong>IBIE Baking Show</strong>&lt;br&gt;September 17</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
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While we constantly monitor the status of events due to COVID-19, we are always conducting virtual meetings. To see what services we have to offer right now, contact Carl Rees to schedule a virtual meeting. To see a full list of upcoming events: https://www.electricities.com/services/economic-development/.