

**Collaboration for Prosperity Zones Annual Report and
Report on Performance Metrics for Community Planners**

Citation of Law or Resolution:	S.L. 2017-57
Section Number:	Sections 15.10.(a) and 15.10.(b)
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Receiving Entities:

The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources
The Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee
The Fiscal Research Division

Submitting Entity:

N.C. Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division, Main Street & Rural Planning
Center



**NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE**
RURAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

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August 1, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources
The Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee
The Fiscal Research Division

FROM: Elizabeth H. Parham, Director
NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center

SUBJECT: Collaboration for Prosperity Zones Annual Report and Report on Performance Metrics for Community Planners – Fiscal Year 2025
Citation of Law: S.L. 2017-57
Section Number: Sections 15.10.(a) and 15.10.(b)

BACKGROUND

As stated in Part III, Section 3.1, of North Carolina Session Law (S.L.) 2014-18, the intent of the General Assembly when it created the State's eight Collaboration for Prosperity Zones through North Carolina General Statute (G.S.) 143B-28.1 was, to "... establish geographically uniform zones in this State to facilitate collaborative and coordinated planning and use of resources, to improve cooperation with other governmental and nonprofit entities at the local and regional level, to facilitate administrative efficiencies within State government, to receive advice on economic development issues by local boards established by a North Carolina nonprofit corporation with which the Department of Commerce contracts, and, to the extent feasible, to establish one-stop sources in each region for citizens and businesses seeking State services at a regional level."

For each Collaboration for Prosperity Zone established by G.S. 143B-28.1, Sections 15.10.(a) and 15.10.(b) of North Carolina Session Law 2017-57 require that the N.C. Department of Commerce submit to the North Carolina General Assembly Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources, the Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee, and the Fiscal Research Division, an annual report that outlines performance on the following criteria:

- (1) Jobs anticipated to result from efforts of the employees, including the name and contact person for each company creating new jobs in the zone.
- (2) The location of each project, including the development tier designation of the location.
- (3) Project leads that were not submitted to the Department for possible discretionary incentives pursuant to Chapter 143B of the General Statutes.
- (4) Proactive local government outreach to share information and planning services that are available.
- (5) Coordination of regular meetings with Prosperity Zones agency representatives to increase collaboration of services and resources to local communities.

- (6) Completion of strategic economic development plans, downtown revitalization project plans, implementation services, market studies, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and assistance with development policies for local governments that can be measured for economic impact, including investment, business growth, and jobs as a result of the planning effort.
- (7) Existing business expansion activities, service requests, and number of contacts and inquiries.
- (8) New business location activities and number of contacts and inquiries.

PROSPERITY ZONE PERFORMANCE – FISCAL YEAR 2025

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center in the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development (Rural) Division, prepared this report with data and information provided by the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) and the Rural Division. The report addresses the performance criteria for the Prosperity Zones for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.

Performance Criteria 1, 2, and 3

- (1) Jobs anticipated to result from efforts of the employees, including the name and contact person for each company creating new jobs in the zone.
- (2) The location of each project, including the development tier designation of the location.
- (3) Project leads that were not submitted to the Department for possible discretionary incentives pursuant to Chapter 143B of the General Statutes.

Note: The information in the tables below reflects work performed by and data reported by the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

North Central Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
54	Science Corporation	Dave Efird	Durham	3	No
204	Morinaga	Toshiaki Fukunaga	Orange	3	Yes
67	Ripe Revival Produce LLC	Will Kornegay	Nash	1	No
289	Reckitt Benckiser plc	Marc Littlewood	Wilson	1	Yes
0	Rooms To Go	Will Martin	Harnett	2	Yes
13	Cashion Fishing Rods	Matthew Cashion	Lee	2	Yes
627 Jobs	6 Companies				

Northeast Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
21	Christeyns	Josh Lilley	Pitt	1	Yes
25	Attindas Hygiene Partners	Taylor Oswald	Pitt	1	Yes
20	Agape Metropolitan Community Health Services Inc.	Michael McDuffie	Beaufort	1	No
155	Provalus -- HQ	Will Ruzic	Chowan	2	Yes
35	STRUCTURAL COATINGS HERTFORD, LLC	Ray Hales	Hertford	1	Yes
256 Jobs	5 Companies				

Northwest Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
47	MillerKnoll	Todd Johnson	Burke	2	Yes
18	Nutra Meltz Supplements	Suresh Kolla	Caldwell	2	Yes
10	Herbal Ingenuity	Chris Kull	Wilkes	1	Yes
150	Provalus -- HQ	Will Ruzic	Wilkes	1	Yes
85	Hodges Agriculture Farm, LLC	Dan Hodges	McDowell	2	No
150	Paradigm Energy & Storage, LLC	Chris McKendree	Yancey	2	No
460 Jobs	6 Companies				

Piedmont-Triad (Central) Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
108	Cosmetics & Cleaners International, LLC	Andy Boutros	Guilford	2	Yes
18	Sandvik Coromant Americas	Tom Humphrey	Alamance	2	Yes
0	NCFI Polyurethanes	Justin Swain	Surry	2	No
9	Maryland and Virginia Milk Producer's Cooperative Association	Peter Bishop	Guilford	2	No
20	Mitchell's Meat Processing, LLC	Carl Mitchell	Stokes	2	No
165	FOSTER-CAVINESS COMPANY INC	Keith Purvis	Forsyth	2	Yes
22	Strobels Supply, Inc.	Kevin Conklin	Davidson	2	Yes
109	IQE North Carolina	Rina Pal-Goetzen	Guilford	2	Yes
37	Gilero (Injection Molding)	Wade Stauffer	Guilford	2	Yes
50	Wieland Copper Products LLC	Michael Viscariello	Stokes	2	Yes
44	Unilin NA/Mohawk Laminate	Robert Chase	Davidson	2	Yes
28	Polyvlies Usa, Inc.	Garret Owens	Forsyth	2	No
23	Cascade Die Casting Group Inc	Jason Antis	Guilford	2	Yes
633 Jobs	13 Companies				

Sandhills (South Central) Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
10	Veloce Planes	Jamie Fettig	Columbus	1	No
32	Reliance Packaging, LLC	Satish Sharma	Moore	3	Yes
124	Campbell Soup Supply Company LLC	Jennifer Sweeney	Robeson	1	Yes
56	Atlantic Packaging	Misty Flowers	Columbus	1	No
81	Phinite Inc.	Jordan Phasey	Sampson	1	Yes
123	Mandich Group	Michael Mandich	Robeson	1	Yes
217	Pennsylvania Transformer Technology, Inc.	Dianne Jones	Hoke	1	Yes
151	Barrier Fencing Products	Brenden Powell	Columbus	1	Yes
12	Robeson Health Care Corporation	Perry Holden	Robeson	1	No
806 Jobs	9 Companies				

Southeast Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
5	Johnson Breeders	Jantzen Brantley	Duplin	1	No
0	Cardinal Foods LLC	Corey Barnhill	Pender	3	No
50	Protocase Inc.	Doug Milburn	Brunswick	3	No
168	Honsoar International Ltd.	Tom Boyda	Duplin	1	Yes
0	Tidewater Grain Co.	Tommy Wheeler	Pamlico	2	No
50	Mount Olive Pickle Co Inc	Dan Bowen	Wayne	1	No
150	Chatsworth Products Inc	Richard Hunter	Craven	2	Yes
330	Prolec GE Waukesha (former SPX)	Benjy Woodard	Wayne	1	Yes
239	BSH Home Appliances Corp	Alicia Cafferty	Craven	2	Yes
992 Jobs	9 Companies				

Southwest Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
15	Pietrucha ESC Inc	Robert Kurowski	Iredell	3	No
13	Sofidel	Jonathan Will	Cleveland	2	Yes
34	Utz, formerly Evans Food Group	Brian Gaia	Cleveland	2	No
216	RXO	Dianne Jones	Mecklenburg	3	Yes
10	Global Packaging Solutions, Inc.	Jim Anderson	Stanly	2	Yes
60	Groninger USA LLC	Taylor Oswald	Mecklenburg	3	No
7	Our Home Snacks	Todd Burgess	Lincoln	3	Yes
80	Odyssey Logistics & Technology	Hans Stig Moller	Mecklenburg	3	Yes
71	Southern Electrical Equipment Company (SEECO)	Christie Panto	Union	3	No
506 Jobs	9 Companies				

Western Prosperity Zone					
Number of Jobs (Net New)	Company	Contact	County	Tier	Submitted for Incentives
3	Flavor Full Slices	Dale Nix	Henderson	3	No
5	WrenchBox Inc	Doug Roberts	Graham	1	No
10	C. W. Williams and Company LLC	Alan Langley	Transylvania	2	Yes
325	Pratt & Whitney	Raj Varma	Buncombe	3	Yes
20	Advanced Biogas Systems	Steve Allman	Madison	2	Yes
28	Nature Trails, LLC	Matt Malone	Transylvania	2	Yes
391 Jobs	6 Companies				

All Prosperity Zones	Number of Jobs	Number of Companies
Total	4,671	63

Performance Criterion 4

- (2) Proactive local government outreach to share information and planning services that are available.

Community Planners with the N.C. Department of Commerce's Rural Division, also known as Rural Planners, are based in and serve each Prosperity Zone. Performance measures for Rural Planners include a requirement to communicate with local units of government and economic development partners within or associated with their assigned Prosperity Zone at least ten times per year. They must also update their Prosperity Zone contact lists at least four times per year. Rural Planners conduct outreach to local governments primarily by visiting counties and municipalities to meet with local officials and staff, making presentations at local and regional meetings, and sharing information via email about existing programs and services, upcoming training events, and available grants and resources. The NC Rural Planning Program, part of the Rural Division's NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, has had a Facebook page since 2024 (www.facebook.com/ncruralplanning/) that the Program uses to build awareness of Rural Planners' services. The site also highlights rural communities and their economic assets and opportunities, projects, and success stories. The Program also uses it to share information and resources with local governments, economic development organizations, and other partners.

Performance Criterion 5

- (3) Coordination of regular meetings with Prosperity Zones agency representatives to increase collaboration of services and resources to local communities.

Since 2014, Prosperity Zone agency representatives have maintained partnerships to increase collaboration of services and resources to benefit communities. Initially, representatives from the EDPNC, N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT), and N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) worked together to establish a presence in each Prosperity Zone. The group of Prosperity Zone agency representatives has since grown to include NC Community College System (NCCCS) staff, NCWorks (N.C. Department of Commerce) staff, Rural Planners (N.C. Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division), local school administrative unit or Department of Public Instruction designees (N.C. State Board of Education), North Carolina State University Industry Expansion Solutions (NCSU – IES) staff, and a variety of local partners. The N.C. Department of Commerce maintains contact information for the principal Prosperity Zone agency representatives on its website. The Department updates the list periodically to account for changes in personnel assigned to the Prosperity Zones.

PROSPERITY ZONE COLLABORATION MEETINGS

Rural Planners and other Prosperity Zone agency representatives (partners) in each region communicate and/or meet regularly. Prosperity Zone partner meetings typically provide opportunities for partners to share information and resources, discuss economic development initiatives and projects, and receive general updates from each other regarding activities in the regions they serve. In addition to Rural Planners, Prosperity Zone partner meetings usually include representatives from EDPNC, NCCCS Regional Directors of Customized Training, NCCCS Apprenticeship NC staff, NCWorks Regional Operations Directors, NCDEQ Regional Managers, NCSU – IES staff, and NCDOT staff.

The Rural Planner for the Northwest Prosperity Zone helps to organize quarterly meetings of Prosperity Zone partners which are held in different locations around the region. For example, in February 2025, the Northwest Prosperity Zone partners met at Catawba Valley Community College

(CVCC) in Hickory. After the meeting, the group toured the CVCC Furniture Academy that trains students for high demand jobs in the area's furniture industry. The group learned about the Furniture Academy's new workforce development program that CVCC created in partnership with the Catawba Correctional Center to prepare offenders for quality jobs as they return to the community.

Performance Criterion 6

- (4) Completion of strategic economic development plans, downtown revitalization project plans, implementation services, market studies, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and assistance with development policies for local governments that can be measured for economic impact, including investment, business growth, and jobs as a result of the planning effort.

Note: The FY 2025 performance metrics for work completed by Rural Planners are shown below, followed by some examples of programs and services they offered.

FY 2025 PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR RURAL PLANNERS

PROJECTS/SERVICES COMPLETED	PROSPERITY ZONES								Totals
	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Piedmont-Triad (Central)	Sandhills (South Central)	Southeast	Southwest	Western	
Strategic Plans	2	0	2	2	3	3	2	2	16
Downtown Revitalization Plans	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Implementation Services	71	59	36	42	34	15	26	90	373
Market Studies	11	3	5	6	6	2	2	1	36
GIS Mapping	17	6	9	5	6	3	6	2	54
Development Policy Assistance	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	101	68	52	57	50	23	36	95	482

CREATING OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMIES (CORE) PROGRAM

Since 2023, the Rural Division's Creating Outdoor Recreation Economies (CORE) program has offered strategic planning and technical assistance to help communities leverage the state's abundant outdoor recreation assets to support local economic growth. Thirty-four local governments are engaged in the program, which is funded by a U.S. Economic Development Administration State Tourism Grant.

Rural Planners facilitate strategic planning processes with CORE communities to identify outdoor recreation assets that present economic growth opportunities and to create strategies to develop them. Strategies focus on actions and projects to increase tourism, encourage small business development, enhance residents' quality of life, plan for asset and infrastructure development, and/or position themselves to grow and attract outdoor gear manufacturing industries. CORE also provides technical assistance and training to help communities implement their strategies. In FY 2025, 10 local governments adopted CORE strategic plans. The CORE program collaborates with four UNC System partners to assist communities with plan implementation projects. Partners completed seven projects

for local governments in FY 2025, including an economic impact analysis of a lake, a design study for water access improvements at a park, and marketing plans and tools for communities and businesses.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY HURRICANE HELENE

Rural Planners from all Prosperity Zones joined other Rural Division staff in fall 2024 to support communities in western North Carolina devastated by the physical and economic impacts of Hurricane Helene. Immediately after the storm, staff began a comprehensive community outreach effort to establish contact with local governments in the counties covered by the federal disaster declaration. Staff created a disaster recovery webpage, established a recovery database, and regularly shared resources and funding opportunities with leaders of impacted communities. Staff also developed the *Western North Carolina Economic Recovery and Rebuilding Services* initiative to provide community engagement, economic recovery planning, resource identification, and direct, ongoing support that local governments might need to help their economies recover. By the end of FY 2025, Rural Planners had discussed the initiative with four rural communities interested in economic recovery assistance.

Performance Criterion 7

(5) Existing business expansion activities, service requests, and number of contacts and inquiries.

Note: The information in the tables below reflects work performed by and data reported by the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

FY 2025 - EXISTING INDUSTRY

Prosperity Zone	Direct Account Interactions	Unique Companies Supported
North Central	175	147
Northeast	183	154
Northwest	151	120
Piedmont-Triad	155	130
South Central	174	145
Southeast	180	138
Southwest	166	137
Western	184	163
Total	1,368	1,134

FY 2025 - INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Prosperity Zone	Requests for Assistance	Unique Companies Supported
North Central	330	143
Northeast	41	31
Northwest	53	22
Piedmont-Triad	189	94
South Central	61	26
Southeast	51	26
Southwest	196	86
Western	46	20
Total	967	448

FY 2025 – EXISTING INDUSTRY & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

All Prosperity Zones	Requests for Assistance	Unique Companies Supported
Total	2,335	1,582

Performance Criterion 8

- (6) New business location activities and number of contacts and inquiries.

Note: The information in the tables below reflects work performed by and data reported by the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

FY 2025 - EXISTING INDUSTRY

Prosperity Zone	Direct Account Interactions	Unique Companies Supported
North Central	117	117
Northeast	70	70
Northwest	82	82
Piedmont-Triad	101	101
South Central	91	91
Southeast	74	74
Southwest	114	114
Western	134	134
Total	783	783

FY 2025 - INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Prosperity Zone	Requests for Assistance	Unique Companies Supported
North Central	165	119
Northeast	17	15
Northwest	40	34
Piedmont-Triad	107	81
South Central	53	39
Southeast	36	31
Southwest	146	102
Western	29	22
Total	593	443

FY 2025 – EXISTING INDUSTRY & INTERNATIONAL TRADE

All Prosperity Zones	Requests for Assistance	Companies Supported
Total	1,376	1,226