



Grow North Carolina's Statewide Economy Through State Investments and Coordinated Efforts with County Economic Development Services

NCACC Advocacy Brief

Seek legislation to grow North Carolina's statewide economy through state investments, including technical assistance, public infrastructure funding, increased competitive incentives, state economic development grant programs and coordinated efforts with county economic development services.

Issue At-A-Glance

- North Carolina continues to rank at or near the top of list after list of states to do business in the nation.
- State law allows counties to make appropriations for economic development purposes. This goal seeks to support state funding for local industrial site development, funding which is utilized to further local development.
- A greater investment in public infrastructure, particularly related to transportation and broadband, will ensure North Carolina continues to attract business development and ensure North Carolina continues to be one of the top states in the nation to do business.

Issue Background

North Carolina continues to rank at or near the top of list after list of states to do business in the nation. As North Carolina's economy continues to grow and improve, counties need additional economic development incentives in order to adapt to the changing needs of those wishing to make private investment in North Carolina.

Although North Carolina and its economy is continuing to grow, not all areas of North Carolina are seeing economic gains, projects, and impact. Greater state investment in infrastructure funding, particularly that related to transportation and broadband access, will drive additional economic development in all areas of the state. Additional funding in programs such as local site development and State Rural Grants can help spread economic growth and projects across all of North Carolina.

In 2021, the General Assembly provided NCACC with \$10 million in non-recurring funds to assist counties with guidance and technical assistance in county use of ARPA funds received.

With these funds NCACC created a new entity, Strategic Member Services (SMS), which employs staff (Strategic Project Coordinators) who are deployed to work directly with counties throughout the state. SMS is evolving to additionally provide assistance to counties in spending opioid settlement dollars which continue to flow into counties.

Access to broadband and water/wastewater service and capacity are essential to grow local economy. Many counties do not have the staffing or employee capacity to go after various state and federal grants, such as those related to water/wastewater among others. SMS Coordinators are already spread thin in assisting counties with ARPA compliance. A recurring appropriation to NCACC to hire additional SMS Coordinators could expand SMS' reach and ability to help counties apply for these and other grants, other future available monies at the State and Federal level, while continuing to provide technical assistance regarding ARPA and opioid settlement funds.

County Recommendation

Grow North Carolina's statewide economy through state investments, including technical assistance, public infrastructure funding, increased competitive incentives, state economic development grant programs and coordinated efforts with county economic development services.

