



HAYWOOD COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
LONG RANGE PLAN

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# EDC Long Range Plan

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this long-range plan is to establish the goals for defining our market, creating a marketing plan, establishing a timeline and verifying financial projections.

The Haywood County Economic Development Commission (EDC) is a branch of the Haywood County government and is authorized by the County Commissioners. The Executive Director and Administrative Assistant are employed by the county and report to the Economic Development Commission. Our fiscal year runs from July first through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The function of the Economic Development Commission is to encourage and assist business growth in the county through a variety of ways. Our mission statement reads:

**“The mission of Haywood County Economic Development is to foster a healthy and prosperous economy and quality of life for our community through the development of capital investment, job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities while supporting existing business and industry.”**

Our objectives include:

### **Business Development**

#### **Existing Business & Expansion**

- To retain the county’s existing industry base by participating with Haywood Community College in an ongoing existing business visitation program.
- Work with existing employers to identify and resolve issues and circumstances, such as financial assistance (e.g. local and state incentives), workforce training, infrastructure needs and quality of life factors that may inhibit existing business and industry growth.
- Identify and cultivate new business leads generated from the existing business visits.

#### **Business Recruitment**

- Utilize the targeted clusters developed by AdvantageWest to identify prospects and to work with the North Carolina Department of Commerce and CarolinaWest in identifying potential prospects for Haywood County.
- Continue to update and revise the economic development marketing materials and website to include current information and data resources for new and expanding business.
- Participate in key trade missions and statewide networking opportunities with private and public developers, commercial/industrial realtors through the North Carolina Economic Developers Association and the Southern Economic Developers Council.

## **Beaverdam Industrial Park Development**

### ***Strategies***

- For Haywood County to be competitive and to attract potential business opportunities it must increase the supply of ready to build and prepared business/industrial sites.
- To continue efforts to find new land opportunities for economic development.

## **Governance and Accountability**

### ***Strategies***

- The Haywood County Economic Development Commission will serve as the economic development organization and will be responsible for strategic planning, executing the plan and achieving measurable results.
- The Haywood Advancement Foundation, a 501 (c) 3, will continue to serve as the vehicle to increase private sector funding for the Commission's economic development activities.
- Direct public sector funding will continue to be allocated to the Commission
- All funding will be utilized exclusively for the proposed economic development action plan.
- The commission will keep the economic development program on the cutting edge of new ideas and be responsive to economic changes.
- The commission will provide opportunities to involve essential community organizations and stakeholders in the economic development process.

### **Other goals:**

- A Business & Industry Incentive Program was approved by the County Board of Commissioners on May 3, 2004 and is being used to attract new business to the area. (see attached)
- A Renewable Energy Incentive Program was approved by the County Board of Commissioners on April 9, 2009 and is being used to attract renewable energy companies.
- Long-range goals include developing a modern workforce that is technologically current, establishing low-cost broadband internet access, assisting in the creation of affordable workforce housing and assisting in addressing high health care costs.
- Work with Haywood Community College and their Advanced Machinist Training Program.

## **Business Description**

The Haywood County Economic Development Commission (EDC) is a non-profit government service organization created on September 7, 1982 to promote the general welfare and prosperity of the people of Haywood Country through overall economic growth and development, especially the growth of industry and business, by increasing the number and quality of jobs, career opportunities and employment potential, through support of existing business expansion or relocation and new business start-up.

The EDC was reorganized August 4, 2003 from an advisory board to one that has authority to develop priorities, enforce action plans, hold staff accountable and evaluate operating procedures. It is currently housed in office space attached to the Small Business Incubator, governed by the Smoky Mountain Development Corporation and is located in close proximity to the Haywood Community College's Regional High Tech Center at 144 Industrial Park Drive, Waynesville, NC 28786. Office hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

The Commission Board is made up of nine members: two representing the Haywood County Board of Commissioners, one each from the municipalities of Canton, Clyde, Maggie Valley and Waynesville, one representative from Haywood Advancement Foundation, one from the Haywood County Chamber of Commerce and one representative from the Employment Security Commission.

The purpose and function of the EDC is to bring together available business properties with those entrepreneurial ventures that would purchase, lease or otherwise make use of that property to grow business, provide jobs and provide a solid tax base for continuing economic growth in the county. Its function is also to provide contacts, information and expertise to existing area businesses that desire to expand in and/or from their current location. This may include workforce training, development of infrastructure, development of broadband internet service, encouraging the growth of affordable housing, increasing public awareness and encouraging like-minded organizations to work together to accomplish common goals.

These functions are accomplished through:

- Partnering our efforts with AdvantageWest and CarolinaWest who are regional and sub-regional organizations with similar functions, as well as the NC Dept of Commerce. These organizations may receive leads, offer grants and/or provide expertise to aid in business development.
- Being involved in meetings as a contributing and voting member to the Haywood Advancement Foundation, and has similar functions. The Executive Director of the EDC is also the Executive Director of HAF.
- Being involved with local government and private entities, i.e. Haywood County Chamber of Commerce, Haywood Community College with its Small Business Center, the Regional High Tech Center, MedWest Health System (Haywood Regional Medical Center), the Tourism and Development Authority and Smoky Mountain Development Corporation, all of whom also make business contacts which may provide leads, as well as providing

services to the community which improve standards of living. The college is involved with work force training efforts.

- Ongoing research and publication of economic indicators, which follow industry trends, so that informed decisions can be made.
- Participation with Marketing Consultants that set appointments on business development mission trips in order to develop sales leads.
- Follow-up on inquiries made directly and indirectly via phone, email, mail, other local business contacts (realtors, local government leaders, other business leaders and private citizens).
- Holding monthly board meetings to make decisions, create policies and take action necessary to complete sales or move forward with necessary programs and issues. This also provides contact with local governments and municipalities to ensure consolidated efforts regarding economic growth.
- Staying in contact with local media to increase public awareness of programs and progress.
- Addressing governmental issues and policies that affect economic development (i.e. tax burden, school start date, zoning, incentives)

### **Funding**

Funding is accomplished through county government and local municipality donations. Staffing is provided through one salaried Executive Director and one hourly Administrative Assistant. Elected county and municipal government officials and local business and agency representatives provide many volunteer hours.

### **Market Trends**

Manufacturing still represents 11.5% of the employment, which has decreased from 16.6% in the year 2000, while at the same time; small businesses are growing and creating more jobs. There is also a demand for a high tech and skilled workforce, available infrastructure and broadband internet access. Affordable workforce housing is a great need to encourage relocation of businesses and employees to this area.

Methods of contacting the market are changing from print advertising and phone contacts to internet and video conferencing. However, one-on-one contacts are still a priority.

### **Business Facilities and Operations**

The EDC is located in two offices with lobby and entryway (approximately 1000 sq. ft.) in a one story metal constructed building built in 1985. The building is centrally located in the county near the intersection of highway 19/23/74 and NC 209, Exit 104, approximately three miles from downtown Waynesville. Physical Address is 144 Industrial Park Drive, Waynesville, NC 28786.

Neighbors include Haywood Community College's Regional High Tech Center; Clark and Leatherwood (general contractors); Smoky Mountain Development Corporation (a small business facilitator of SBA loans, housed in the same offices); as well as several

start-up manufacturing businesses in the attached incubator and other nearby businesses. The area is zoned in Waynesville's extra-territorial jurisdiction (primarily industrial and manufacturing) with the exception of the Regional High Tech Center.

### **Providing Service**

Our marketplace of existing business and industry, as well as potential new business and industry are contacted in several ways:

- Through leads provided by AdvantageWest, CarolinaWest, NC Dept of Commerce, local business and government leaders, private citizens, agencies who set up appointments and other agencies (real estate, HAF, small business lenders) and private developers.
- Advertising and contacts made through the Chamber of Commerce (county and city); Tourism and Development Authority, trade magazines, recruitment videos and websites and media coverage of actions and issues.
- One-on-one meetings with potential developers, prospects, lawyers and businesses who need our services. These meetings can be proactive or reactive.
- Involvement and presence in ED conferences, programs, fundraising events.
- Local networking with government and municipal officials, business and private leaders, utility and infrastructure providers and media contacts.
- Website – Many potential clients research an area via the web before deciding to come to the area or pursue a location. This may be their first method of contact.
- Sales support materials include county profile brochures, economic indicator reports, location maps, certification papers, recruitment videos and available incentive programs.

### **Management and Personnel**

Executive Director and Administrative Assistant salaries, accounts payable, accounts receivable and all budget and expense issues are handled through the Haywood County Finance Department at the county courthouse. The Executive Director and Administrative Assistant are considered to be county employees with the same rights, duties and privileges as other county employees. (See Employee Handbook)

### **Staffing**

The EDC Board has the authority to hire, supervise, discipline and terminate the Executive Director, who in turn, shall be authorized to employ additional employees as budget provides. The commission members are not entitled to compensation; they are appointees who take an oath to serve. However, expenses incurred while performing their duties are reimbursed from appropriated funds.

## **Professional Services**

As a county government organization, an annual budget is presented each year to the county for approval. The fiscal year runs from July to June. Legal services are provided by County Attorney, Chip Killian, while accounting services are provided by the County Finance Department.

## **Future Staffing Needs**

The current staffing (one Executive Director and one Administrative Assistant, plus the EDC board) is sufficient for the present workload. However, as activity increases in the future additional staffing may be needed. The salary and hours for this added position will be stipulated by county personnel policy and EDC Board approval.

## **Market Analysis**

### Our Customer

- Businesses and Industries looking for a place to grow and expand
- Start-up business entrepreneurs
- Local business employers, employees and citizens of Haywood County
- 74% of jobs created come from existing business. Most leads for new business come from local job developers. (Per NCDOC)

### Our Target Market

- Haywood County – local businesses that are growing and expanding

We target all businesses with 10 or more employees from outside our county in:

- North Carolina
- Florida
- Georgia
- New York
- Texas
- Europe
- Canada
- Remaining states of USA

Our concentration falls in the following industry clusters:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Vehicle Parts Assembly
- Transportation, Shipping Logistics
- Life Sciences & Agribusiness
- Business Support Services
- Healthcare Services
- Recreation and Tourism
- Chemicals & Plastics
- Communication Services & Software

- Information Technology & Instruments
- Pharmaceutical & Medical Technology
- Food Products

### Market Demand

There is a demand for our service to maintain and grow our economy. Underemployment has created the need for new business in the area and, since the demand is not being met, our recruitable labor is commuting to nearby counties for employment.

We are in a highly visible tourist area and this provides a boost to the economy but it needs to be nurtured and protected. Bringing new tourist attractions and related businesses to the area is a current demand.

Calls have been received for small business start-up space, which suggests expansion of the incubator, as well as updating the county with availability of broadband internet access. There is also a need for retraining of the workforce to keep up with current business technology.

### Market Conditions

The annual average unemployment rate for 2009 was 9.8%. This rate has increased over the last few years due to the national economy. Tourism income is seasonal with higher volumes experienced June thru October than the rest of the year.

There is an increasing demand for broadband internet access availability, lower health care costs and a skilled workforce in modern technology. The demand for affordable workforce housing in this county shows a need.

Our incentive program has been revised to keep up with the market competition.

Available land requires preparation for site development and there is a need for more available commercial and manufacturing space.

### Factors Influencing Sales

- **Business Economy** – There is a reluctance to spend dollars and grow business when there is a depressed economy and decreased demand for product. The opposite is also true: In a prosperous economy, businesses are more willing to take the risk to spend and expand, expecting a higher demand for their product.
- **When Unemployment Is High** – This provides an available workforce but slows down consumer-driven economy.
- **Bad Press** – Negative media coverage deters the desire to come to the area.
- **Environmental** contamination and poor air quality also deter this desire.
- **Availability of**
  - flat land ready for building
  - shovel ready sites
  - infrastructure
  - broadband internet access
  - affordable workforce housing

- competitive corporate tax rates
- competitive incentives
- **Ease of dealing** with local government and municipal officials, as well as construction and utility providers
- **Competition**
- **Accessibility** to airports and major highways
- **Health care costs**

### Our Strengths

Haywood County has the advantage of being within a day's drive of 50% of the US population. Knoxville, TN, Atlanta, GA, Charlotte, NC, Greenville/Spartanburg, SC and Greensboro, NC are all within a 3-hour drive. We have a nearby airport, ready access to major interstates, access to railway service, freight service and the beauty of The Great Smoky Mountains National Park with its surrounding tourist attractions, fertile valleys and rolling foothills. It is the most visited National Park. We have an abundant number of golf courses, a skilled workforce, low wages, high tech capabilities and a point-of-presence for broadband internet service.

Haywood Regional Medical Center, part of MedWest Health System and affiliated with Carolinas Healthcare System is highly respected in the area and Haywood Community College is one of the finest 2-year institutions in the country. We are 30 minutes east of Western Carolina University and 30 minutes west of the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

We have a strong support system for small business with the combined efforts of the Small Business Incubator (inexpensive space for start-up businesses), the Small Business Center at the High Technology Center and small business loans through Smoky Mountain Development Corporation.

### Goals

Haywood County Economic Development goals include:

- Developing prepared building sites, including Beaverdam
- Recruiting new business
- Address affordable workforce housing
- Address health care costs
- Developing existing business and expansion
- Developing economic and accessible broadband internet service
- Address corporate tax rates
- Address ease of new business start-up process
- Developing more workforce training in areas of high technology

Achieving these goals will help us succeed in the marketplace in competition with surrounding counties and other states.

## Marketing Strategy

### Existing Business Support

1. **Show concern and appreciation for existing industries.**
2. **Make relationship building a priority between county organizations, private and public.**
3. **Establish an entrepreneurial incentive and assistance program.** The current small business incubator is one way we are currently meeting this need.
4. **Maintain an existing industry and business database.** A data base is available through various software programs we have subscribed.
5. **Work with the Haywood County Chamber of Commerce and Haywood Community College's Small Business Center.** Continue the efforts of the Business Plan Contest to development new entrepreneurs.

### New Businesses Recruitment

1. **Establish broadband internet access availability.** In partnership with the Haywood Advancement Foundation, the EDC is currently involved with efforts to use the current WynnCom fiber optic network in Waynesville, to build a network of "ribs" available for new and existing businesses to access. In addition, working with MCNC to provide connection to the West and East of Haywood and to provide necessary redundancy to the system. Government organizations are being kept abreast and involved as necessary in the process. Current efforts should develop this for use in the next couple of years.
2. **Identify additional industrial sites,** and prepare sites for potential users. Dependant upon inquiries from developers and potential clients, funds would need to be accumulated to prepare any future sites and to certify any additional sites.
3. **Increase presence on the World Wide Web** by improvement of our website. The Website has been updated and will continue to be updated on a regular basis. Further updates and improvements have been made by the designer of our website.
4. **Partner with AdvantageWest and CarolinaWest** to develop client leads, participate in business development missions and receive studies that support Haywood County Economy. This is currently in process. The Executive Director of the EDC has already participated in trips to Dallas, Atlanta, Charlotte, & New York to meet with identified prospects.
5. **Affordable Workforce Housing** – This can be addressed by collaborating with Haywood County Homebuilders Assoc., Board of Realtors and the County Planning Department to develop criteria for attracting quality, affordable housing. Suggestions are also being made to prospective developers interested in the area.
6. **Revise Article 3J** to make it more likely that industry will move into rural areas like Haywood County. The present tier system needs to be changed by adding an earned income per capita rating and by deleting the adjusted property tax base per capita so the economic health of counties like Haywood is not negatively influenced by its higher percentage of property values from second

homes. These revisions require active involvement with the NC General Assembly who established the guidelines and Department of Commerce representatives. No timeline has been set to accomplish this.

7. **Develop a Modern Workforce** to increase technology and literacy skills to meet the demands of the current workforce. There is also a need to increase the level of work ethics of students and future employees. This can be done through public awareness provided by the public schools, colleges and universities, as well as government and community leaders. A-B Tech's Biotechnology program is also geared to this end. Other forums may be developed in the future.
8. **Address High Cost of Healthcare.** The EDC can facilitate development of a partnership between healthcare providers and the business community to curb healthcare costs.
9. **Address lack of affordable childcare.** The EDC can support efforts through Mountain Projects Head Start Program, Southwestern Child Development, HCC's Model Child Development Center and Smart Start to increase available options.

### **Funding/Financial Projections**

The County budgets a set number of dollars each year to fund the Economic Development effort. The four municipalities assist in allocating funds for the Economic Development effort.