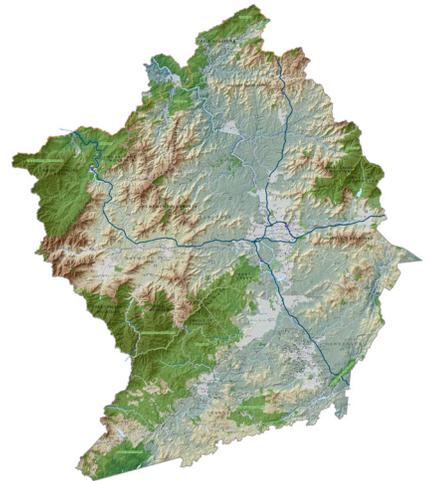


**A Region with a Diversity of Industries.** From entrepreneurs to agribusiness operations and high-tech manufacturers, our strength lies in the ability to support knowledge-based businesses of any size and sector. Craft brewers, clean energy companies, nutraceutical operations and recreational goods manufacturers all find a place to grow and thrive in our five counties.

**A Thriving Workforce.** An innovative, entrepreneurial and creative workforce drives our diverse economy. A rich culture, unparalleled natural amenities, traditional and holistic health care options and an accessible community college and university system foster productivity in our five counties and contribute to a highly desirable place to live, work and grow.

**Hitting Our Targets.** The key to unlocking economic prosperity in the region is matching industries that have the most potential for growth (local specialization, adding jobs, and gaining market share) with what makes most sense given local resources and community values. By focusing on the region's assets and best opportunities for growth, we can maximize local opportunities within each of the following target sectors.



**Advanced Manufacturing.** The manufacturing industry continues to evolve and diversify. Metal products and machinery operations have a long history of success in the mountains and continue to locate here because of the skilled workforce and efficient transportation system. New entrants such as recreational products, energy components and nutraceutical manufacturers, find operational efficiencies by being able to source and test products locally.

**Target Industry:**

- Medical devices
- Metal products
- Natural products
- Recreational sporting goods
- Wood products
- Aerospace
- Electronic components
- Plastic products
- Biotechnology
- Energy components
- Automotive products
- Digital media

**Agribusiness and Forestry Operations.** Agriculture continues to be a mainstay of the region's economy. Fueled by demand for natural products and the local food movement, operations such as craft brewers and bio-fuel growers continue to find markets both locally and for export. In addition, innovative partnerships such as Blue Ridge Food Ventures support specialty producers in niche markets.

**Target Industry:**

- Crop production
- Agriculture support services
- Speciality producers
- Forestry and logging
- Natural products
- Commercial gourmet foods

**Tourism and Outdoor Recreation.** For generations, tourism has fueled the region's economy. Visitors have long been drawn to the peaks of the Appalachians and the banks of the French Broad. People will continue to visit our region, spend money in our shops and restaurants and experience our numerous natural and cultural assets. Recently, large scale movie productions such as the Hunger Games have added a new dimension to the industry by offering tours of production location sites.

**Target Industry:**

- Motion pictures
- Arts
- Lodging and hospitality
- Entertainment and recreation
- Museums, parks and historic sites
- Heritage tourism

**Health Care.** The region continues to be a destination for retirees and second home owners. As this population ages more health care facilities are needed to meet the growing demand.

**Target Industry:**

- Nursing
- Residential care services
- Ambulatory health care services

**Potential Strategies.** Economic opportunity will continue by working together to ensure that, as conditions change, we rise to meet the needs of our local employers, entrepreneurs and target industries. By leveraging GroWNC we can build on existing efforts to support and expand existing businesses and recruit compatible businesses. The following is a preliminary and partial set of recommended strategies:

- Conduct a manufacturing value chain and supply chain analysis (similar to the Renewable Energy Supply Chain work completed by AdvantageWest) to maximize the region's competitive advantages.
- Work with existing partners such as community colleges and the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board to support a regional workforce fund to enhance current workforce development efforts and support innovative workforce partnerships.
- Similar to Appalachian Grown Local Food initiative, work to promote local businesses through regional branding initiative(s).
- Develop a regional certified sites redevelopment program to promote sites that meet a regional set of standards to compete more effectively for target industries.
- Conduct a regional water and wastewater study to identify issues and gaps and find innovative solutions, particularly for rural areas.
- Identify funding sources for technical assistance for entrepreneurs and businesses, such as filing for patents and assisting with legal and other start-up costs.
- Encourage more venture capital and crowdfunding investment.

**Performance Measures.** Economic prosperity and success can be measured in a variety of ways. Performance measures, such as the examples listed below, can help us monitor our progress.

- Number of new business start-ups
- Number of new jobs created
- Number of new patents to the region
- Amount of venture capital and/or crowdfunding capital invested in the region
- Commercial loan value to target industries
- Number of clean-energy start-ups
- Percent jobs in agriculture and forestry economy
- Percent jobs in cultural resources economy (arts, heritage, history)
- Business receipts from tourism industry
- Employment growth in existing firms
- Number of new jobs created in target industries
- Percent of local jobs filled by region's graduates
- Workforce development program placement rates
- Number of firms relocating to or opening operations in the region
- Dollar value of locally produced goods
- Graduation and enrollment rates in area universities and colleges



**Share Your Ideas.** We value your input and participation and hope that you are willing to share your ideas with us. Please visit the GroWNC website at [www.gro-wnc.org](http://www.gro-wnc.org) for additional information.

- Attend meetings: [www.gro-wnc.org/events](http://www.gro-wnc.org/events)
- Answer the survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LFCF5PW>
- Email us: [GroWNC@landofsky.org](mailto:GroWNC@landofsky.org)



Jobs/Economic Dev.



Land Use



Natural Resources



Cultural Resources



Housing



Health



Transportation



Energy

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Information presented is based on analyses conducted by BBP and LandDesign, members of the GroWNC team, and with data gleaned from the following plans: Asheville 5X5, Henderson County Economic Development Master Plan, Haywood County Economic Development Commission Long Range Plan, Madison County Comprehensive Plan, 2010-2012 Transylvania County Economic Development Strategic Plan, Five Year Vision Plan for the AdvantageWest Region 2004-2009, 2007 Growing Local Plan