

AHOSKIE ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Prepared by the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center Staff



High performing organizations are those that learn to anticipate and adapt to change by creating value for those served, and motivation and meaning for those who serve them. The best tool for accomplishing these objectives is strategic planning.

In February 2018, Ahoskie requested the North Carolina Rural Development Division, Rural Planning Center help the Town prepare an economic development strategic plan for the area. A planning committee was formed and began meeting in March 2018. The committee met over 3 weeks and discussed the issues facing Ahoskie, regarding economic development.

The committee articulated a vision for the future of Ahoskie and addressed many issues in developing a strategic vision/economic positioning statement:

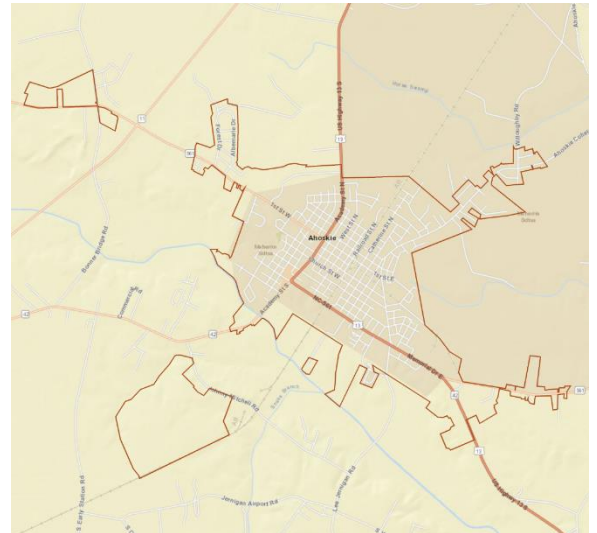
Ahoskie, rediscover the heart of Hertford County, from Main Street to our comprehensive medical services, shopping, dining, and recreation

The planning process included the identification of Ahoskie's assets, including economic, cultural, natural resources/recreation, institutional, community/human resources, and governmental assets. Next, the committee was asked to identify the economic drivers for Ahoskie. Finally, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) were listed. Also, a market snapshot of Ahoskie's retail potential was presented.

Then they began the difficult task of identifying major issues, strategies, and setting measurable objectives to implement the plan's vision. Finally, they developed a system to monitor progress of the plan and to inform changes to the action plan and renewal of vision.

This document is the culmination of their efforts.

The Action Plan is composed of the following elements: *Goals, Objectives, Actions, and Tasks*. The Time Horizon of the vision/economic positioning statement is 5 years, with 1 Year Implementation Plans updated annually.



Pictures courtesy of www.google.com

The *goals, objectives, actions* and *tasks* refer to the following definitions:

Goals...

...are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve – they are usually long-term and represent global visions, such as “grow the local economy”

Objectives...

...define strategies or implementation steps to attain the identified goals. Unlike goals, objectives are specific, measurable (number, timeframe, percentage), and may have a defined completion date

Actions...

...often, each objective is associated with a series of actions. Therefore, implementing a strategic goal typically involves implementing a series of actions along the way

Tasks...

...a step by step list that will help you accomplish each action, usually achievable in 1 year

Ahoskie Economic Development Implementation Plan 2018-2019 (draft 04.10.18 v1)

Economic Positioning/Vision: *Ahoskie, rediscover the heart of Hertford County, from Main Street to our comprehensive medical services, shopping, dining, and recreation*

PROMOTION / MARKETING	DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION
<p>Goal: Market Ahoskie's assets and develop a "shop locally" initiative</p> <p><i>Objective: Increase number of visitors to the Town, increase investment in buildings/businesses, increase number of calls to Chamber of Commerce</i></p>	<p>Goal: Attract more business downtown</p> <p><i>Objective: Increase the number of businesses in the downtown area, increase investment in downtown buildings</i></p>
<p>Action: Develop a Visitors' Center</p> <p>Task: Put together a "Welcome Team" that contacts new residents/business owners</p>	<p>Action: Put together a list of incentives</p> <p>Task: Work with County Economic Development and NC Economic Development Partnership to determine what incentives are available</p>
<p>Action: Pursue marketing events through the Tourism Development Authority</p> <p>Task: Work with Tourism Development Authority to fund marketing efforts</p>	<p>Action: Work with downtown building owners on façade improvement</p> <p>Task: Revisit the Façade Improvement Program</p>
<p>Action: Develop a marketing campaign that identifies Ahoskie as "the heart of Hertford County"</p> <p>Task: Highlight Ahoskie's role as a regional medical, shopping, dining, and recreation hub</p>	<p>Action: Work with NC Main Street on developing a downtown organization</p> <p>Task: Work with NC Main Street Eastern Representative on an assessment of downtown options</p> <p>Task: Explore a Merchants' Association</p> <p>Task: Consider funding a part-time position with the Chamber of Commerce to develop/promote events</p>

Monitoring and Evaluation

Constant evaluation of the goals, objectives and action steps in this plan, via regular review sessions with the Strategic Planning team and other community leadership, is critical to ensuring it remains a viable, living document. Ahoskie will continually monitor progress on how well and successful the region is at managing projects, meeting deadlines, communicating internally and to multiple external audiences, and utilizing the resources available.

The Ahoskie Economic Development Strategy is a living document used to prioritize the needs of the community and outline the region's objectives. The value of the plan lies with the ability of Ahoskie to set realistic goals — and implement innovative strategies — against which progress can be measured. It also allows the community to gauge the ongoing product of its local government.

Implementation, evaluation and modification will be continuous for the plan and Ahoskie to remain relevant, responsive and proactive. This strategic effort will provide greater accountability and represents an organization-wide approach to the preservation and enhancement of the quality of life our very special community enjoys.

The most successful strategic planning efforts approach implementation from a network-based model, versus a more traditional hierarchical model (top-down approach). An Implementation Committee should be appointed to oversee the Town's efforts and to reach out to partners. By working with economic partners such as NC Department of Commerce, Hertford County, and the Albemarle Commission, Ahoskie's economic development strategy can leverage resources and capacity. The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center (NC MS&RPC) division of NC Department of Commerce has yearly Actions & Tasks templates to assist the area in measuring progress, and the Implementation Committee should reach out to the Community Economic Development Planner (NC Commerce) once a year to help evaluate success.

The Implementation Committee will revisit the plan twice yearly (at budget time, and in November) to mark progress and amend the plan as necessary.

Are we getting there?



- Check measurements
- Implementation and monitoring
 - Committee reviews the plan twice a year and modifies if necessary every year

Appendix: Market Snapshot

Table 1: Top 10 Employers in Ahoskie

Company Name	Employees
Vidant	625
Berry Plastics	200
Hertford County High School	155
Bearfield Primary School	150
Guardian Care of Ahoskie	150
Carolina's Home Care	140
Roanoke-Chowan Community College	106
Freeman Metal Products	100
Ahoskie Elementary School	90
Home Life Care	86
Rose Brothers Paving	80

Table 2: Where Ahoskie Residents Work

	Count	Share
Ahoskie, NC	430	11.8%
Greenville, NC	99	2.7%
Murfreesboro, NC	78	2.1%
Elizabeth City, NC	53	1.5%
Windsor, NC	45	1.2%
Roanoke Rapids, NC	33	0.9%
Aulander, NC	30	0.8%
Raleigh, NC	30	0.8%
Williamston, NC	27	0.7%
Winton, NC	26	0.7%
All Other Locations	2,790	76.6%
Total All Jobs	3,641	100.0%

Table 3: Where Ahoskie Residents Commute To

	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	3,641	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	1,169	32.1%
10 to 24 miles	856	23.5%
25 to 50 miles	634	17.4%
Greater than 50 miles	982	27.0%



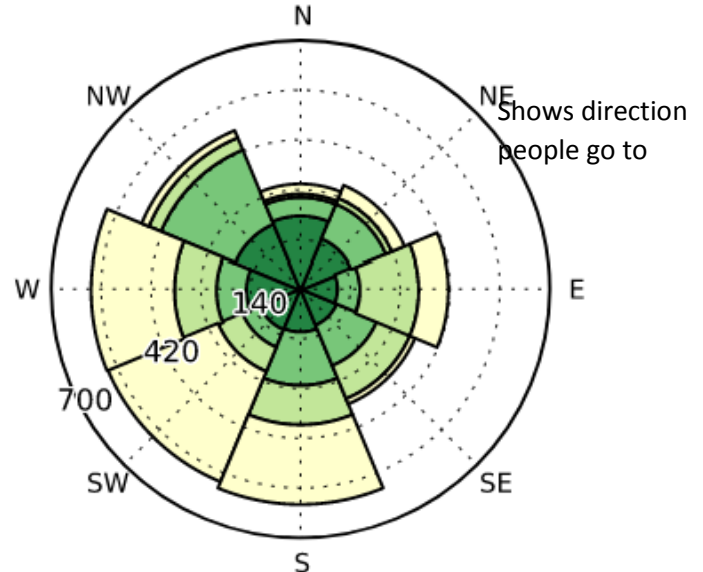
Map 1: Study Area / Inflow Outflow Analysis



3,211 people
come to Ahoskie

1,090 residents
leave Ahoskie
for work

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2015
All Workers



Retail Marketplace Profile

Retail Leakage indicates an unmet demand in the trade area. This suggests the possibility the community can support additional retail for that business type. Residents within these primary trade areas are purchasing products outside of these trade areas, indicating opportunities to capture these dollars within the study area from either a specific trade area with the most leakage or multiple areas within a reasonable distance of Ahoskie. (**Leakage is shown as a positive value in green when reviewing the actual ESRI data.**)

Retail Surplus means the community's trade area is capturing the local market plus attracting non-local shoppers. Surplus doesn't necessarily imply that the community can't support additional businesses, but rather the community has possibly developed strong clusters of retail including eating and drinking establishments that have broad geographical appeal. (**Surplus is shown as a negative value in red when reviewing the ESRI data.**)

Before drawing conclusions about potential business expansion or recruitment opportunities, qualitative considerations, such as additional sources should be more closely studied. This could be additional information from ESRI data or sources that the county or regional economic development office may have. This report is based on the data collected and should serve only as a starting point.

Map 2: 10, 20, and 30 Minute Drive Times to Ahoskie

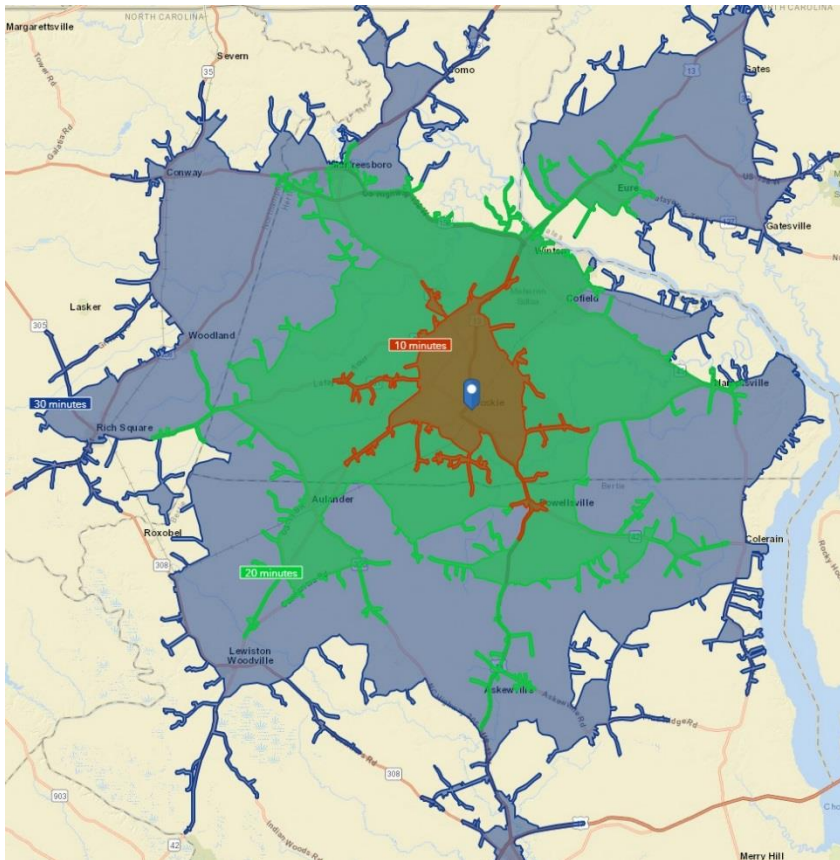


Table 4: Shown in Drive Times for 10, 20, and 30 Minutes from Downtown Ahoskie

	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap Surplus / Leakage
10 Minutes	\$76,212,066	\$147,098,502	-\$70,886,436
20 Minutes	\$204,088,162	\$234,143,176	-\$30,055,014
30 Minutes	\$416,992,649	\$333,183,793	\$83,808,856

Table 5: Summary Demographics and Retail Leakage for 10 Minute Drive Time from Downtown Ahoskie

2017 Population			7,188
2017 Households			2,909
2017 Median Household Income			\$32,752
2017 Average Household Income			\$48,391
2017 Per Capita Income			\$20,335
2017 Median Disposable Income			\$28,283
Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Leakage
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$16,057,343	\$22,976,163	-\$6,918,820
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$2,338,115	\$7,263,716	-\$4,925,601
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$1,808,022	\$564,511	\$1,243,511
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$5,112,759	\$5,810,656	-\$697,897
Food & Beverage Stores	\$12,021,739	\$17,620,292	-\$5,598,553
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$4,588,204	\$15,262,280	-\$10,674,076
Gasoline Stations	\$8,009,554	\$10,439,438	-\$2,429,884
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$2,788,525	\$3,038,737	-\$250,212
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$1,658,954	\$1,023,766	\$635,188
General Merchandise Stores	\$10,862,062	\$34,712,640	-\$23,850,578
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$3,290,092	\$11,512,417	-\$8,222,325
Nonstore Retailers	\$1,218,549	\$5,927,233	-\$4,708,684
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$6,458,147	\$10,946,653	-\$4,488,506
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$6,015,606	\$10,901,608	-\$4,886,002
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$76,212,066	\$147,098,502	-\$70,886,436

Table 6: Summary Demographics and Retail Leakage for 20 Minute Drive from Downtown Ahoskie

2017 Population			18,936
2017 Households			7,784
2017 Median Household Income			\$33,414
2017 Average Household Income			\$46,995
2017 Per Capita Income			\$19,319
2017 Median Disposable Income			\$28,804
Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Leakage
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$43,921,717	\$31,831,966	\$12,089,751
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$6,062,667	\$7,263,716	-\$1,201,049
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$4,656,341	\$789,651	\$3,866,690
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$14,042,883	\$6,873,250	\$7,169,633
Food & Beverage Stores	\$32,008,279	\$31,944,447	\$63,832
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$12,349,972	\$23,111,926	-\$10,761,954
Gasoline Stations	\$21,779,002	\$19,960,915	\$1,818,087
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$7,195,555	\$4,596,842	\$2,598,713
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$4,344,116	\$2,144,461	\$2,199,655
General Merchandise Stores	\$28,718,590	\$60,850,067	-\$32,131,477
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$8,990,244	\$20,508,526	-\$11,518,282
Nonstore Retailers	\$3,256,229	\$6,449,291	-\$3,193,062
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$16,762,568	\$17,818,118	-\$1,055,550
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$15,662,249	\$17,368,875	-\$1,706,626
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$204,088,162	\$234,143,176	-\$30,055,014

Table 7: Summary Demographics and Retail Leakage for 30 Minute Drive from Downtown Ahsokie

2017 Population			39,428
2017 Households			15,888
2017 Median Household Income			\$33,541
2017 Average Household Income			\$47,000
2017 Per Capita Income			\$19,379
2017 Median Disposable Income			28,814
Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Leakage
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$89,911,414	\$46,346,245	\$43,565,169
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$12,375,385	\$7,263,716	\$5,111,669
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$9,486,388	\$2,176,419	\$7,309,969
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$28,916,539	\$9,731,504	\$19,185,035
Food & Beverage Stores	\$65,274,286	\$64,845,751	\$428,535
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$25,246,966	\$32,927,619	-\$7,680,653
Gasoline Stations	\$44,418,889	\$32,862,812	\$11,556,077
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$14,655,330	\$5,244,974	\$9,410,356
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$8,876,028	\$3,184,939	\$5,691,089
General Merchandise Stores	\$58,589,943	\$71,535,661	-\$12,945,718
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$18,376,540	\$24,767,355	-\$6,390,815
Nonstore Retailers	\$6,678,610	\$6,771,322	-\$92,712
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$34,186,331	\$25,525,477	\$8,660,854
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$31,944,544	\$24,856,700	\$7,087,844
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$416,992,649	\$333,183,793	\$83,808,856

Table 8: Income Comparisons

	10 Minute	20 Minute	30 Minute	North Carolina	United States
Population	7,188	18,936	39,428	10,273,419	325,719,178
Households	2,909	7,784	15,888	4,031,256	123,158,887
Median Household Income	\$32,752	\$33,414	\$33,541	\$48,918	\$56,124
Average Household Income	\$48,391	\$46,995	\$47,000	\$69,520	\$80,675
Per Capita Income	\$20,335	\$19,319	\$19,379	\$26,779	\$31,128
Median Disposable Income	\$28,283	\$28,804	28,814	\$40,095	\$46,430

For more information about the Main Street and Rural Planning Center, contact:
www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street/rural-planning-program