



Community Economic Recovery and Resiliency Initiative (CERRI) Quarterly Impact Report #5

2022 Quarter 1 (January - March) Activities

CERRI Activities in 2022, Quarter 1 All CERRI Communities (Initial + New)

Economic recovery plans of work adopted	3
Local work group meetings facilitated by RPP	17
RPP meetings with local coordinators/partners	14
RPP presentations to governing boards*	13
Hometown Strong Action Team visits	1
Training opportunities provided/promoted	6

*Includes presentations made in late 2021 to new CERRI communities.

Mars Hill CERRI Is Underway

The Town of Mars Hill's CERRI project is focused on small business assistance and downtown development. Ann Bass, ARC Planner and RPP team leader for the Mars Hill project, led CERRI work group meetings in February and March 2022. According to Ann, "The high-powered work group is taking very seriously the need to ensure the success of Mars Hill University, the town's largest business, Main Street property owner and community icon."

The work group has already identified critical redevelopment projects. It has also proposed the formation of a committee of town and university leaders to discuss how the resources of both could best be used to address priority needs and improve the quality of life for all in Mars Hill.

Warren County Adopts CERRI Report & Plan

In March 2022, Warren County's Board of Commissioners adopted a CERRI Report and Economic Recovery Work Plan: products of a strategic planning process RPP Planner Bruce Naegelen facilitated with a local CERRI work group. The plan contains two strategies for Warren County: being THE place for creative business and innovative industry, and improving the quality of life for all county residents.

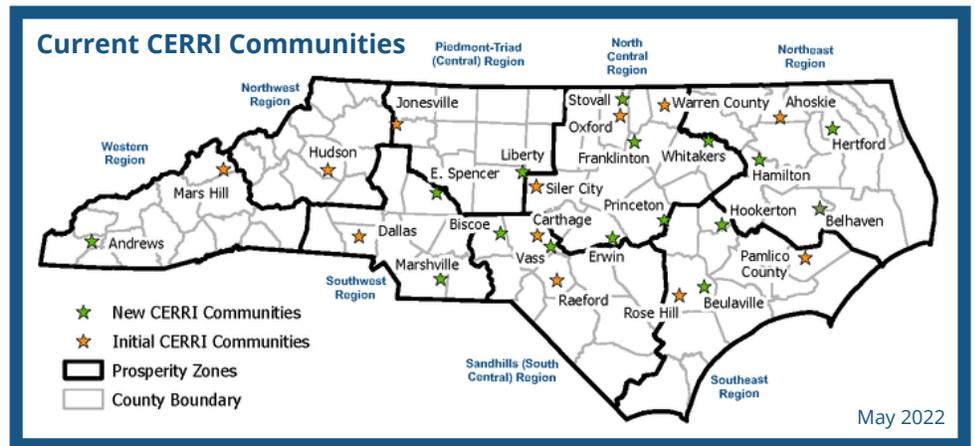
The report contains 14 recommendations to support small businesses and build economic resiliency, some of which apply countywide, while others focus on the towns within the county. Proposed projects include developing plans for branding and marketing, workforce housing, and outdoor recreation; establishing a wayfinding signage system; and creating a new business start-up guide.



North Main Street - Mars Hill

What Is CERRI?

The Rural Planning Program (RPP) launched CERRI in 2021 to help small towns and rural communities respond to economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The RPP works with CERRI communities to develop economic recovery plans that support small businesses and build economic resiliency. RPP partners provide CERRI communities with project assistance, training, and other resources. The RPP has engaged 28 communities in CERRI: 12 in 2021 and 16 in 2022.



For more information, contact:

Darren Rhodes, Rural Planning Program Manager | NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center
drhodes@commerce.nc.gov | (336) 618-5117 mobile