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Governor Cooper announcing Project Big Boy on July 1. The announcement was held virtually.

Governor Cooper Announces Over 3,000 New Jobs as Centene Corporation Selects Charlotte for Major Regional Headquarters

Governor Roy Cooper announced July 1 that Centene Corporation, a Fortune 50 provider of managed care services for public and private health plans, will create an East Coast regional headquarters and technology hub in Charlotte. This move will bring 3,237 new jobs to North Carolina and an investment of \$1,034,900,790 by 2032.

Centene's 3,237-job commitment makes the company's new Mecklenburg County campus the largest job creation project in the 18-year history of the Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) program.

"Centene's investment here is great for the Charlotte area and our whole state," **Governor Cooper** said. "Centene knows that North Carolina has a resilient economy, ready workforce, livable communities and a host of other assets that make our state a leading destination for forward-thinking businesses."

Centene Corporation provides high-quality health and wellness services for individuals covered by private health insurers, Medicare, Medicaid and government-sponsored plans for military personnel, veterans and correctional facilities. Founded in 1984, the company currently serves more than 23 million Americans across all 50 states. Centene also operates overseas, with patient-centered services offered through



North Carolina Main Street Communities Receive National Accreditation For 2020

The N.C. Main Street Center & Rural Planning Center at the N.C. Department of Commerce announced that 48 North Carolina communities have been designated as a 2020 Accredited Main Street America™ program. Accredited status is Main Street America's highest tier of recognition, signifying a demonstrated commitment to comprehensive commercial district revitalization and showcasing a proven track record of successfully applying the Main Street Approach.

"North Carolina's accredited Main Street programs have worked diligently to meet the standards established by the National Main Street Center, and we are pleased to see them recognized on a national level for their achievement," said **Anthony M. Copeland, N.C. Secretary of Commerce**. "Local Main Street programs across our state work every day to bring jobs and businesses to their downtowns, which strengthens the overall economy of their communities and, in turn, that of our entire state."

The North Carolina Main Street communities that have earned accreditation for their 2019 performance are Albemarle, Belmont, Bessemer City, Burlington, Cherryville, Clinton, Concord, Eden, Edenton, Elizabeth City, Elkin, Elon, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Goldsboro, Hendersonville, Hickory, Kings Mountain, Lenoir, Laurinburg, Lexington, Marion, Monroe, Morehead City, Morganton, New Bern, Newton, North Wilkesboro, Oxford, Reidsville, Roanoke Rapids, Roxboro, Rutherfordton, Salisbury, Sanford, Shelby, Smithfield, Spruce Pine, Statesville, Sylva, Tarboro, Tryon, Wake Forest, Washington, Waynesville, Waxhaw, Williamston, and

programs in Spain, the United Kingdom and Slovakia. Headquartered in St. Louis, Mo., the company reported nearly \$75 billion in revenue for 2019, a 24.2 percent increase from the prior year.

"We chose Charlotte as the home to our East Coast headquarters because we believe it will enable us to continue our strong growth and our mission to serve the most vulnerable populations," said **Michael F. Neidorff, Chairman, President and CEO of Centene**. "We look forward to our future in Charlotte and intend to be a strong part of the community, as we are in all of the places where we have business operations."

The North Carolina Department of Commerce led the state's efforts to attract Centene's regional headquarters and I/T center. Its expanded workforce will include allied health professionals, data analysts, information-technology specialists, administrators and others. Centene's new positions will offer salaries that average \$100,089 annually, creating a regional payroll impact of nearly \$324 million per year. Mecklenburg County's overall average annual wage is currently \$68,070.

"The choice of our state for this game-changing investment is evidence that companies view North Carolina not only as the ideal backdrop for their business plans, but a safe location for their employees," said **Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**. "Today's announcement adds Centene's name to an elite list of visionary businesses that continue to make North Carolina their base for expansion strategies that span generations."

Centene's project in North Carolina will be facilitated, in part, by a transformative JDIG approved by the state's Economic Investment Committee, the first JDIG of this classification ever awarded. The project is estimated to grow the state's economy by \$29.5 billion over 39 years, the time period the grant could be active. Using a formula that takes into account the new tax revenues generated by the 3,237 new jobs, the JDIG agreement authorizes the potential reimbursement to the company of up to \$387,890,250. This potential payment would also be spread over 39 years.

Like all grants from the JDIG program, any state payments only occur following performance verification each year by the departments of Commerce and Revenue that the company has met its incremental job creation and investment targets.

Because Centene chose a site in Mecklenburg County, classified by the state's economic tier system as Tier 3, the company's JDIG agreement calls for moving as much as \$50.7 million into the state's Industrial Development Fund – Utility Account. The Utility Account helps rural communities finance basic infrastructure upgrades necessary in attracting businesses. Even when new jobs are created in a Tier 3 county such as Mecklenburg, the new tax revenue generated through JDIG grants helps economically challenged communities elsewhere in the state.

The North Carolina General Assembly introduced the Transformative project classification to the JDIG program in 2017. Economic development projects from companies that invest more than \$1 billion and create more than 3,000 jobs can qualify for the special grant classification, which alters certain parameters of the program such as the length of time the grant can be active and the percentage of state tax withholdings that can be used to fund the grant.

In addition to the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General](#)

Wilson.

"The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center is proud of this year's accredited communities," said **Liz Parham, Director of the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center**. "These communities have worked hard to build sustainable organizations, which are able to create vibrant downtowns that can pivot quickly during a crisis like COVID-19. We commend these communities and their volunteers on these accomplishments and look forward to seeing their continued success."

Since 1980, The North Carolina Main Street program has generated \$3.25 billion in private and public investment. In 2019, North Carolina Main Street downtown districts generated 345 net new businesses, 148 expansions of existing businesses, 2,211 net new jobs, 378 façade rehabilitations, 297 building rehabilitations, and logged more than 150,000 volunteer hours.

"We are proud to recognize this year's Nationally Accredited Main Street America programs that have dedicated themselves to strengthening their communities," said **Patrice Frey, President & CEO of the National Main Street Center**. "These Accredited Main Street programs have proven to be powerful engines for revitalization by sparking impressive economic returns and preserving the character of their communities. During these challenging times, these Main Street programs will be key to bringing economic vitality back to commercial districts and improving quality of life during the recovery process."

Nationally, Main Street America communities generated \$6.45 billion of public and private reinvestment, helped open 6,466 net new businesses, facilitated the creation of 32,316 net new jobs, and supported the rehabilitation of 10,412 buildings in 2019.

For more information, contact Liz Parham, director of the N.C. Main Street Center at (919) 814-4658.

On Our Radar

- [NC Biotech exec Randall Johnson is named new president of NCEA](#) - (WRAL TechWire) - July 6
- [North Carolina Ports Executive Director Retiring. Chief Operating Officer to take the Helm](#) - (NC Ports) - June 25

N.C. in the News

- [Losing pipeline project a 'huge blow' to eastern NC, economic developers say](#)

[Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Mecklenburg County](#), the [City of Charlotte](#), the [Charlotte Regional Business Alliance](#), [University City Partners](#), and [Duke Energy](#).

(*Triangle Business Journal* - July 7)

- [Companies cancel the Atlantic Coast Pipeline that would have run through Eastern NC](#) (*News & Observer* - July 5)

About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

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