



## RURAL FOCUS

# Building Reuse Grows Jobs & Communities

In today's fast-paced economy, it doesn't take long for a once-modern industrial building to become obsolete. But companies and communities looking to update older buildings can tap state support through the **Building Reuse Grant Program**.

Administered by the Rural Economic Development Division of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the program provides matching funds to property owners and tenants for modernization of electrical systems, plumbing, lighting, HVAC, security features and more.

The result is not just better buildings, but permanent jobs for rural communities. Thus far in 2015, the program has awarded a total of more than \$7.35 million across 30 projects.

Among the recipients is Huntington House Furniture, a manufacturer of fabric and leather furnishings in Taylorsville. Building Reuse funds are helping the firm renovate a vacant 150,000-sq.-ft. building constructed in 1985. "The process has been a lot simpler than we anticipated," said Corey Teague, president of the family-owned company. Huntington House will add 40 workers to its Alexander County operations upon completion of the project at the end of the year. "It's been smooth, and we're actually running ahead of schedule," Teague said.



Building Reuse proposals can be submitted during six grant cycles throughout the year. The next application deadline is September 8. To explore ways this innovative program can spur job growth in your community, visit [nccommerce.com/rd](http://nccommerce.com/rd).



*N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla at this summer's Paris Air Show*

## Secretary Skvarla to Welcome Aerospace Suppliers at Summit Event

North Carolina Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla III is scheduled to welcome company executives and others attending the 2015 North Carolina Aerospace Supplier and Advanced Manufacturing Summit being held in Concord this week.

The conference kicks off Wednesday August 5 with an evening networking event. Secretary Skvarla will open the conference Thursday August 6 ahead of a full day of speakers, networking sessions and trade show activities.

Other speakers scheduled to appear include:

- Rear Admiral Paul Sohl, Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers
- Rick O'Donnell, Director of Aftermarket Supply Chain, UTC Aerospace Systems
- Bruce Springs, Military Business Development, UTC Aerospace Systems
- Amy Cowder, VP of Supply Chain Management, Lockheed Martin
- Charlie Lilli, Deputy Commander, Defense Logistics Agency Aviation

More information about the summit and its agenda is available on the [conference website](#). Registrations to attend are [still being accepted](#).



(Left-right) Dr. John Hardin, Executive Director of the N.C. Office of Science, Technology & Innovation and Anita Brown-Graham, Director of the Institute for Emerging Issues discuss the InnovateNC program on the 'North Carolina Now' television program.

## Communities Can Strengthen Innovation

The North Carolina Board of Science, Technology and Innovation is a key partner in a new initiative to build and sustain local innovation in communities outside of the Triangle and Charlotte.

InnovateNC: A Cross-City Learning Collaborative will be an intensive, two-year collaborative allowing up to five North Carolina communities to build and sustain their local innovation ecosystems based on a new economic development model. By actively sharing best practices and then widely disseminating results, InnovateNC intends to help scale innovation gains to other North Carolina communities.

Communities interested in applying to participate in the program have until August 17 to [complete and submit their proposal](#).

In addition to the Institute for Emerging Issues at N.C. State University and the Board of Science, Technology & Innovation, other partners include Forward Impact; the University of North Carolina system; Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy; UNC-Chapel Hill's Kenan Institute for Private Enterprise; RTI International; UNC-TV; the Council for Entrepreneurial Development; and the Research Triangle Foundation.

[\[Video\] Dr. Hardin on North Carolina Now](#)

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## Economic Dynamism in North Carolina's Cities

*Asheville, Greenville, Jacksonville and Wilmington Highlighted*

Three of North Carolina's largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, Raleigh, and Durham-Chapel Hill receive frequent attention for being great places to find jobs, driving innovation through excellent universities, rebounding well since the Great Recession, and attracting company expansions. But some of North Carolina's smaller communities have shown strong growth in recent years as well, adding both people and jobs.

In an article posted in [The LEAD Feed](#), a web publication from NC Commerce's Labor & Economic Analysis team, the economic dynamism of smaller communities in the state is explored.

Asheville, Greenville, Jacksonville, and Wilmington have all experienced fast-growing populations over the last decade. In fact, these four MSAs (which are made up of eight counties in total) accounted for 12 percent of the state's net population growth from 2005 to 2014.

All four have also seen faster job growth than the state as a whole. In total, these metros gained more than 23,000 jobs over the last decade, accounting for 14 percent of the state's net job growth over that time.

[Read the entire article at The LEAD Feed](#)

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## N.C. in the News

- [Cheers! Beer industry has \\$7.8B impact on N.C. economy](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - July 30)
- [North Carolina in the Top 10 on New Business Climate Ranking](#) (*Business Facilities* - July 30)
- [Raleigh slips slightly from No. 1 spot on Forbes' 'Best Places for Business and Careers'](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - July 29)
- [Commerce chief goes 'Under the Dome'](#) (*StarNews Online* - Wilmington - July 24)
- [FDA gives Biogen the nod to manufacture](#)



(Left-right) Donny Hicks, Executive Director, Gaston County Economic Development Commission; N.C. Representative John Torbett; N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla

## Skvarla Tours Industrial Facilities in Gaston County

N.C. Commerce Secretary John Skvarla visited Gaston County last week to discuss local economic development issues and tour two manufacturing facilities in the region.

Skvarla paid a visit to Daimler Truck's facilities on July 31. Daimler, a major employer in the region, builds Freightliner's full line of medium-duty Business Class M2 models at the Mount Holly factory.

Later in the day, the Secretary visited Dixon Valve and Coupling, a state-of-the-art manufacturer located in Dallas.

Skvarla also spoke at a gathering of county leaders, providing an update on North Carolina's economic incentive programs and negotiations concerning those programs currently under way at the General Assembly.

[MS drug in Durham](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - July 24)

- [Report: Which N.C. counties are bringing in the most investments?](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - July 8)

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