



THE GROWING EDGE

Economic Development News from Greater Statesville

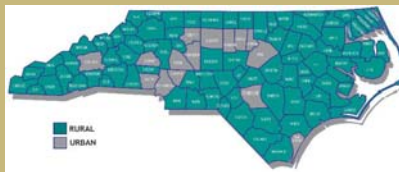
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Greetings!

What exactly does it mean to be "rural?" That's a question we've been asking a lot recently at the Greater Statesville Development Corporation. In October we participated in the Charlotte Regional Partnership's industrial broker event for rural counties. Iredell County is somewhat unusual in that it consists of a relatively urbanized southern half and a relatively rural northern half. The majority of Statesville and Mooresville residents probably would not describe their communities as being rural, but that is exactly how the State of North Carolina characterizes them.



Trying to define what "rural" is, in a state of such diverse geography, can be a daunting task; and the concept of the term can be a bit ambiguous and vague. Particularly, in this age of instant communication, when a Wilkes County farmer can access the New York stock market quotes from his laptop - miles from the nearest town - defining rural becomes more of a subjective term. For purposes of classification, however, North Carolina considers any county with a population density of less than 250 people per square mile to be rural. Eighty-five of the state's 100 counties meet this definition. Some of the counties which do not, and are classified as "urban," are a little surprising. Catawba, for instance, is considered an urban county, as is Rowan.

Being classified as a rural county provides Iredell with opportunities that can sometimes be an advantage in recruiting and retaining business. The North Carolina Rural Center, for instance, offers several economic development programs specifically for rural counties. These

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include business development training and consulting programs for agriculture, entrepreneurship and microenterprise; and grant programs for building reuse, water & sewer and workforce development. The Charlotte Regional Partnership also offers special services and events - like thebroker event - for its rural counties.

Best regards,

John B. Marek

As always, feel free to email us with news about your company's events, awards, new products, honors, etc. and I will include them in an upcoming issue of *The Growing Edge*.

jmarek@greaterstatesville.org



In the News

Iredell County unemployment nears single digits, according to this recent article in the Charlotte Business Journal.

[Iredell Unemployment Drops to 10.5%](#)



Iredell-Statesville Schools Superintendant Brady Johnson Addresses Committee of 100 at Fall Luncheon

Successes abound, but many challenges ahead

The guest speaker for the Committee of 100 Fall luncheon, held October 20th at the Civic Center, was Brady Johnson, Superintendent of Iredell-Statesville Schools. Mr. Johnson has a rather unique perspective on the school system, having been born and raised in Iredell County and having spent his entire career with Iredell-Statesville Schools. His presentation focused on some of the recent success stories, but also on some of the looming challenges.



Overall, academic performance continues to be among the best in the region. I-SS's academic rank places it 29th out of 115 school systems in the state, and its 82.7% graduation rate is the 17th best in the state. The average SAT score of 1031 is well above both the state and national average, ranking 20th in North Carolina,

Still, with all the apparent success, a potential crisis looms just over the horizon. I-SS has been required to make relatively few personnel and service cuts as the result of budgetary shortfalls attributed to the decline in the economy over the past two years. Part of this has been sound fiscal management, but part of it has been the buoying effect of Federal AFFA funds, otherwise known as "the stimulus." County funding has decreased by 11% over the past two years - from more than \$38 million to less than \$34 million - and state funding has decreased by 10.4% - from more than \$110 million to less than \$101 million. During this time, the AFFA funds helped supplement these shortfalls with \$8.6 million last year and \$9.7 million this year. The AFFA money runs out in June of 2011, and at this point, it is not entirely clear how the school system will go about replacing or cutting that \$9,000,000.

Greater Statesville Development Corporation

Participates in Rural Update for Real Estate Community

Charlotte Regional Partnership-sponsored networking event

On Thursday, October 7th, the Charlotte Regional Partnership held a "Rural Update for the Real Estate Community" at the Hilton Center City in uptown Charlotte. The event provided an update on the region's rural areas and the opportunities they present to the real estate community and an opportunity for economic developers from Charlotte's rural counties to meet with some of the top real estate developers and industrial brokers in the region.



The Greater Statesville Development Corporation was represented at the event by C. Michael Smith, Executive Director and John B. Marek, Director of Business Expansion/Retention and Marketing.

After a brief welcoming and introductions session, a panel of regional development leaders spoke of the importance of rural development to the region. One of these panelists, Alan Lewis of the Keith Corporation, made specific mention of Statesville and the positive activity we have had in regard to our shell building at the Statesville Business Park. Other panelists spoke of the importance of rail sites and utilities in place at industrial sites.

After the panelists had spoken and taken questions from the audience, each of the local economic developers was given the opportunity to make a pitch for their county. Mike Smith spoke of the many success stories in our area over the year and that the Greater Statesville region currently features more than 2 million square feet of available industrial and warehouse space ready for immediate occupancy, and 2 thousand acres of utility-served industrial sites. He also noted that Statesville-Mooresville has been Site Selection magazine's #1 Micropolitan (Small City) for new and expanding industry 7 of the last 8 years.

At the conclusion of the event, the developers met with local economic officials on a on-to-one basis. At least one of the developers committed to making a visit to each of the counties represented at the event by the end of the year.

North Carolina Department of Commerce Launches New Website

New brand statement "Thrive in North Carolina" touts business-friendly environment

The North Carolina Department of Commerce recently unveiled it's new business recruiting website www.thrivenc.com. The site aims to be a "one-stop-shop" for companies looking to relocate to or do business in the state. It features facts, rankings and geographic information; a listing of available industrial properties around the state; resources for small business; information on available grants and incentives and a



summary of key industries and industrial sectors. The site is specifically designed to be easy to navigate and to encourage the visitor to explore and while providing comprehensive data and resources for site selectors and corporate relocation professionals.

The new website was prompted by the the department's strategic marketing plan, which provides a framework for positioning and presenting the state to prospective employers and investors.

Statesville Community Branding Effort Nearing "Finish Line"

Hundreds of Statesville residents provide feedback.

Statesville has embarked on an effort to create a graphic identity and marketing strategy to promote the community and its partners. This project began with a series of preliminary meetings in early September. In early October, the consulting group which is assisting the branding effort, Arnett Muldrow, spent a week in Statesville, meeting with a variety of different "focus groups" and holding a public meeting on October 5th. More than 75 attendees packed the Civic Center for this meeting, and a lot of very good, positive ideas were discussed.



On October 27th and 28th, Arnett Muldrow returned to Statesville for some additional research and to show some preliminary concepts to the steering committee.

While some final work still needs to be done, the project is progressing at the anticipated pace, with the expectation of some final draft ideas by the end of November.

Manufacturing Makes It Real Tour Crosses North Carolina

NCSU-sponsored event celebrates manufacturing

During the month of October, the North Carolina State University Industrial Extension Service Manufacturing



Makes It Real tour crisscrossed the state with a busload of business and political leaders to celebrate manufacturing; culminating with a manufacturing rally at the Capitol.

A tractor-trailer accompanied the bus at each stop to collect items manufactured in North Carolina. The tractor-trailer itself is a North Carolina product, generously loaned by Martin Marietta, who made the advanced composite-material trailer, and Freightliner, who made the tractor.

Stops along the tour included: [RLCB](#) in Raleigh, [Thomas Built Buses](#) in High Point, [PolyChem Alloy](#) in Lenoir, [ArvinMeritor](#) in Fletcher, [National Gypsum](#) in Mount Holly, [Scott Health & Safety](#) in Monroe, [Elastic Therapy](#) in Asheboro, [Saab-Barracuda](#) in Lillington, [Flow Sciences](#) in Leland, [Moen](#) in New Bern and [PCB Piezotronics](#) in Halifax.

Although no Greater Statesville companies were included in this year's tour, we have already contacted the IES about opportunities to participate in next year's event.

Just for Fun

8th Annual Crossroads Pumpkin Fest

8th Annual Crossroads Pumpkin Fest
Saturday, November 6, 2010
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
in Historic Downtown Statesville, North Carolina



Highlights of the 2010 Festival:

- Festival Kid Zone
- Games, Rides and Activities such as Pumpkin Bowling, Pumpkin Painting and even Pumpkin Smashing
- Over 60 Art and Craft Exhibitors
- A Variety of Tantalizing Food Booths
- Three Entertainment Stages
- Cornhole Tournament
- Pumpkin Pie Eating Contest
- YMCA Pumpkin Fest 5K Race & Fun Run/Walk
- WSIC Biggest Pumpkin Contest

For further information contact:
Crossroads Pumpkin Fest
704-878-3436



The Greater Statesville Development Corporation (GSDC) is a public-private partnership of local governments and business leaders. Our purpose is to promote the industrial and commercial development of the City of Statesville, the Town of Troutman and the surrounding area of upper Iredell County, North Carolina. We provide a variety of services and assistance to help locate, maintain and expand new and existing businesses and industries in our area.

View available [sites and buildings](#).

View [resources](#) for existing industry.

Learn more about the [Committee of 100](#).