

Rural Infrastructure Authority Awards \$10.8 Million In Grants

By Administrator

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Governor Cooper announced today that the North Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) approved 21 grant requests to local governments totaling \$10,790,000. The requests include commitments to create a total of 1,314 jobs, 515 which have previously been announced. The public investment in these projects will attract more than \$123.7 million in private investment.

“By making strategic investments in rural infrastructure, North Carolina is better positioned for economic growth,” Governor Cooper said. “Rural Infrastructure Authority grants are the seed to grow good jobs and improve all areas of our state’s economy.”

The North Carolina Department of Commerce’s team of economic development professionals supports the RIA’s work. RIA members review and approve funding requests from local communities. Funding comes from a variety of specialized grant and loan programs offered and managed by N.C. Commerce’s Rural Economic Development Division. Grants can support a variety of activities, including infrastructure development, building renovation, expansion and demolition, and site improvements.

“With the projects approved today, rural North Carolina can attract hundreds of new jobs, support business expansion and build healthier communities,” said NC Commerce Secretary Anthony Copeland. “The Rural Economic Development Division at Commerce and the Rural Infrastructure Authority are pleased to be able to partner with local leaders to help our rural areas succeed.”

The RIA approved 16 grants under the state’s Building Reuse Program in three categories:

Vacant Building Category

* Burke County: A \$500,000 grant will support the reuse of a 206,522-square-foot building in Hildebran. SynergyLabs, a developer and manufacturer of pet and veterinary products, plans to move its manufacturing operations from Florida to this location. This project is expected to create 42 jobs and represents an investment of \$12,241,700 by the company.

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* Cleveland County: A \$500,000 grant will support the renovation of a 140,000-square-foot building in Shelby. Greenheck Group, a supplier of air movement, control and conditioning equipment for commercial, institutional and industrial buildings, is locating its operations in the facility. While a total of 403 new jobs are expected to be created by the company with an investment of \$58.8 million, 86 of those jobs and an investment of \$832,100 are tied to this grant.

* Harnett County: A \$500,000 grant will support the reuse of a 59,314-square-foot building in Lillington, which will be occupied by KriGen Pharmaceuticals. The company will manufacture medical IV bags and liquid injectables at the facility. This grant will facilitate the creation of 64 jobs (out of a total of 100 jobs set to be created) and an investment of \$8,017,417 by the company.

* City of Sanford (Lee County): An \$85,000 grant will support the reuse of a 145,636-square-foot building. Triad Corrugated Metal, which provides metal roofing, building systems and accessories to commercial, residential and agricultural customers, will locate in the facility. The project is expected to create 17 jobs and attract \$629,000 in private investment.

* City of Jacksonville (Onslow County): A \$350,000 grant will support the reuse of a 20,389-square-foot building, which will be occupied by The Results Companies (TRC), a call center operation that provides inbound/outbound and back office support. The company expects to create 325 jobs and invest \$311,215 in this project.

* Pasquotank County: A \$400,000 grant will support the reuse of a 25,000-square-foot building in Elizabeth City. Telephonics Corporation, a designer and manufacturer of aerospace radar and communications systems for aerospace, defense and commercial customers, will occupy the facility, creating an expected 50 jobs and investing \$1,639,263.

* City of Archdale (Randolph County): A \$125,000 grant will support the reuse of a 5,782-square-foot building. Hubbell Industrial Controls, an international manufacturer of electrical/electronic products for construction, industrial and utility applications, plans to expand upon its current Archdale operations nearby by locating in this additional facility. The project is expected to create 14 jobs and attract \$130,537 in investment by the company.

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* Rockingham County: A \$500,000 grant will support the reuse of a 160,100-square-foot building in Reidsville. Pella Corporation, a manufacturer of window and door products for residential and commercial use, will locate in the facility, creating 124 jobs and investing nearly \$20 million. Of those totals, 95 jobs and \$2,050,000 in investment are tied to this grant.

* Rutherford County: A \$500,000 grant will support the reuse of a 127,312-square-foot building in Spindale, which will be occupied by Cardinal Tissue. The company, which produces a selection of napkin products, is expected to create 40 jobs and invest \$8,506,584 in this project.

* Rutherford County: A \$225,000 grant will support the reuse of a 66,000-square-foot building in Forest City, which will be occupied by SSD Designs, a plastic recycling company. This project is expected to create 18 jobs and represents an investment of \$375,561 by the company.

Existing Building Category

* Granville County: A \$500,000 grant will support the renovation of a 112,000-square-foot building in Creedmoor occupied by Altec Industries. The company provides products and services to the electric utility, telecommunications, tree care, lights and signs and contractor markets. Its products include aerial devices, digger derricks, truck bodies and related equipment. The company plans to create 72 jobs and invest \$8,245,000 in this project.

* Montgomery County: A \$500,000 grant will support the renovation of a 120,000-square-foot building in Troy occupied by AmeriQual Aseptic, a food processing company that specializes in the development, processing, packaging and distribution of shelf-stable foods. The project is expected to create 76 jobs with an investment of \$23,315,327 by the company, as it adds a new product line.

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Rural Health Category

* Camden County: A \$50,000 grant will support the reuse of a 2,600-square-foot building in Camden, where Chesapeake Regional Medical Center plans to open a facility that will provide primary care services and lab services. The project is expected to create 5 jobs and attract \$313,271 in private investment.

* Town of Scotland Neck (Halifax County): An \$80,000 grant will support the renovation of a 217,800-square-foot building occupied by Our Community Hospital/Bryan Health & Rehabilitation Center. The 80-bed skilled nursing facility provides 24-hour nursing care. This renovation project is expected to add 8 jobs and attract \$302,150 in private investment.

* Rutherford County: A \$270,000 grant will support the new construction of a 27,900-square-foot facility in Lake Lure by Affinity Living Group, an assisted living provider offering Alzheimer's and memory care and senior housing throughout the southeastern United States. The company expects to create 27 jobs and invest \$10,956,607 in the project.

* Scotland County: A \$125,000 grant will support the reuse of a 4,500-square-foot building in Laurinburg. Carolina Hearts Home Care, which provides in-home aide services to Scotland County and surrounding counties, plans to locate in the facility, while creating 15 jobs and investing \$175,500.

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The Building Reuse Program provides grants to local governments to renovate vacant buildings, renovate and/or expand buildings occupied by existing North Carolina companies, and renovate, expand or construct health care facilities that will lead to the creation of new jobs in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties and in rural census tracts of Tier 3 counties.

The RIA approved four requests under the state's federally-funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Economic Development program:

* Halifax County: A \$750,000 grant will support major renovations to an existing industrial building in Weldon, to include construction of a mechanical tower, electrical improvements, construction of company offices, and mechanical and plumbing improvements. JBB Packaging, LLC, a plastic packaging manufacturer, plans to create 50 jobs at the facility, while investing \$11,900,000 in the project.

* Town of Four Oaks (Johnston County): A \$1 million grant will support the extension of public water and sewer infrastructure to an industrial site to meet sewer and fire protection needs for Broad River Retail, LLC, an Ashley HomeStore licensee. The company will locate a distribution center, retail store and corporate learning center at the site. The project is set to result in the initial construction of a 182,300-square-foot facility, the creation of 102 jobs and an investment of \$16 million by the company. Overall, the new location is projected to create 161 jobs.

* Town of North Wilkesboro (Wilkes County): A \$580,000 grant will support the construction of a 500,000-gallon water tank for increased water supply and fire suppression at the North Wilkesboro location of Jeld-Wen, Inc., a manufacturer of specialty doors. The company is expected to create 29 jobs and invest \$8 million in this project.

* City of Wilson (Wilson County): A \$750,000 grant will support major interior improvements and renovations to an industrial building that will be occupied by CleanAire, LLC, an air filtration manufacturing company that will service retail, wholesale, commercial and industrial markets.

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The company plans to create 305 jobs and invest \$10 million at the site, with 179 of those jobs and \$9,851,500 worth of investment tied to this grant.

The Community Development Block Grant program is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program administered in part by N.C. Commerce. CDBG's economic development funds provide grants to local governments for creating and retaining jobs. Project funding is based on the number of jobs to be created and the level of economic distress of applicant communities.

The RIA approved one request under the state's Industrial Development Fund - Utility Account program:

* Town of Oakboro (Stanly County): A \$2.5 million grant will help the Town extend water and sewer infrastructure to support a site for industrial development.

The Industrial Development Fund – Utility Account provides grants to local governments located in the 80 most economically distressed counties of the state, which are classified as either Tier 1 or Tier 2. Funds may be used for publicly-owned infrastructure projects that are reasonably expected to result in new job creation. The IDF – Utility Account is funded through a process tied to the state's signature Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) program. When JDIG-awarded companies choose to locate or expand in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 county, a portion of that JDIG award is channeled into the Utility Account.

In addition to reviewing and approving funding requests, the N.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority formulates policies and priorities for grant and loan programs administered by N.C. Commerce's Rural Economic Development team. Its 16 voting members are appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House and Senate President Pro Tem. The North Carolina Secretary of Commerce serves as a non-voting member of the Authority.

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