
2025

Annual Report



Ferdinand Rouse, CECD - Director

Ryan Shaffer - Economic Development Specialist

A Letter from the Director

Dear Community Members and Partners,

This year has been one of measurable progress and strategic momentum for the Henderson-Vance County Economic Development Commission. Building on the momentum of 2024, we have expanded our reach, deepened partnerships, and continue to position Vance County as a competitive destination for business investment.

This progress is reflected in concrete results: 21 Business Retention and Expansion visits with local employers, 74 industry conferences and regional meetings attended, and targeted marketing campaigns reaching thousands of people. These activities represent more than numbers—they reflect our commitment to understanding the needs of existing businesses and building relationships with site selectors and corporate decision-makers. This engagement ensures Vance County remains visible in a competitive economic development landscape.

A cornerstone of our work this year has been site readiness. We secured \$30,000 in support from Golden LEAF for its site identification program and are working toward generating comprehensive site studies that provide the technical documentation required by corporate site selectors. This allows us to move quickly for prospective companies considering Vance County. In today's economic development environment, shovel-ready sites with completed due diligence are the baseline expectation. Our work this year ensures Vance County can compete effectively when opportunities arise.

Our Business Retention and Expansion program has grown significantly, with twenty-one visits completed this year. These visits allow us to understand firsthand the challenges facing local manufacturers and employers, connect them with resources such as Vance-Granville Community College's workforce training programs and NCWorks, and demonstrate the County's commitment to their continued success. Business retention remains a strategic priority, as research shows that 80% of job growth in any community comes from businesses already located there.

Strategic partnerships have been essential to our progress. Our membership in the Research Triangle Regional Partnership has provided access to marketing platforms and site selector networks. Active participation in Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments initiatives has strengthened our voice in regional transportation planning, workforce development, and infrastructure investments. We have also cultivated relationships with key state partners including the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Golden LEAF Foundation, and the North Carolina Railroad Company.

Marketing and communication efforts have reached thousands of people. Our website attracted 29,000 active visitors from seven countries, through SEO improvements and targeted ad campaigns. These campaigns generated over 750,000 impressions and 41,000 clicks, while LinkedIn campaigns generated an additional 9,000 impressions among business decision-makers. These digital efforts complement our in-person presence at 74 industry conferences and meetings throughout the year, as we spread the message of Vance County's strategic advantages.

cont. on next page

cont. Letter from Director

We have also strengthened our role as a convener and resource for the local business community. The Commission hosted five economic development groups and programs in 2025, including visits from the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina and the Golden LEAF Foundation, as well as Leadership Vance participants and a Business Roundtable for local manufacturers. These events build champions for Vance County while providing valuable networking opportunities for local employers.

The successes of 2025 highlight our alignment with the goals established in our Economic Development Strategic Plan—attracting new investment, retaining and expanding local businesses, fostering regional partnerships, and positioning Vance County as a preferred location for both enterprises and residents. As we move into 2026, we are positioned to continue this momentum with enhanced marketing capabilities, investment-ready sites, and the relationships necessary to convert opportunities into announcements.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to build a more prosperous City of Henderson and Vance County.

Sincerely,

Ferdinand Rouse, CEcD

Economic Development Director

Henderson-Vance County Economic Development Commission

Office: (252) 492-2094 | Cell: (252) 820-0041



PROJECT *Highlights*

SYNTEC PRECISION TECHNOLOGY | Project Pinpoint

Announced February 2025

\$10 million investment

60 jobs to be created

In February, the State of North Carolina announced that Syntec Precision Technology selected Vance County for its new facility, bringing 60 jobs and a \$10 million investment to the community. Vance County was chosen over competing sites in South Carolina, Georgia, and Illinois.

Since the announcement, the Commission has maintained close contact with Syntec leadership as renovations progress. The company has partnered with Vance-Granville Community College to develop workforce training pipelines in preparation for hiring.



INVEST IN THE TRIANGLE | Regional Summit



In September, the Commission participated in Invest in the Triangle, a regional summit hosted by the Research Triangle Regional Partnership. The event brought together dozens of real estate investors, site selectors, and commercial realtors to learn about opportunities across the region.

Representatives from each of the Kerr-Tar region's five counties delivered presentations highlighting available properties and strategic community assets. For Vance County, the summit provided direct access to decision-makers actively seeking investment opportunities—the kind of exposure that broadcasts Vance County's core messages of strategic location and cost advantages.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- **106** Phone inquiries fielded by EDC staff
- **21** Business Retention and Expansion visits completed
- **58** Industry conferences and regional meetings attended
- **5** Economic development groups and programs hosted

SITE READINESS & DEVELOPMENT

- **\$30,000** Golden LEAF Site Identification Grant secured
- **2** Comprehensive due diligence studies in pipeline
- **9** Industrial and commercial properties actively marketed

MARKETING & OUTREACH

- **29,000** Active website visitors from around the globe
- **67,000** Page views on vancecountyedc.com
- **753,000** Google Ads impressions generated through targeted campaigns
- **41,000+** Clicks from Google advertising campaigns
- **9,000** LinkedIn advertising impressions with 186 clicks

LOOKING AHEAD

The EDC is continuing to position Vance County as a competitive destination for business investment through enhanced marketing capabilities, shovel-ready sites, and strengthened regional partnerships.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Reaching Decision-Makers Where They Are

Effective economic development requires visibility among the site selectors, corporate real estate professionals, and business executives who make location decisions. In 2025, the Commission significantly expanded its marketing reach through strategic digital advertising campaigns, enhanced website functionality, and consistent engagement across multiple platforms.

Digital Advertising Campaigns

The Commission executed targeted digital advertising campaigns designed to reach business decision-makers actively searching for industrial locations and economic development resources. A Google Ads campaign running primarily in June and July generated over 753,000 impressions and 41,000 clicks, driving significant traffic to information about available properties and business resources. The campaign resulted in 11 conversions.

A complementary LinkedIn advertising campaign generated 9,000 impressions and 186 clicks, specifically targeting site selectors and corporate real estate professionals. The LinkedIn campaign focused on highlighting the 100 Comfort Drive property, a newly available industrial facility marketed in partnership with CBRE.

These campaigns represent a strategic investment in reaching audiences beyond traditional economic development channels. Unlike passive marketing approaches, targeted digital advertising places Vance County directly in front of decision-makers at the moment they are actively researching locations. This upcoming year, the EDC aims to improve its marketing efforts through multiple tailored campaigns to tourists, work-from-home professionals, site selectors, and industry leaders.

Newsletters and Direct Outreach

The Commission launched two newsletter initiatives in 2025 to maintain consistent communication with key audiences. A quarterly site selector newsletter targets corporate real estate professionals and economic development consultants with updates on available properties, recent developments, and business resources. A quarterly local industry newsletter keeps existing employers informed about workforce programs, incentive opportunities, and regional economic development activities. These newsletters complement the EDC's digital advertising through direct outreach to decision-makers.



Inaugural Business Roundtable Brings Local Leaders Together



The EDC's first Business Roundtable on August 29th was a resounding success, bringing together local business leaders from across Vance County at Henderson Country Club. The event connected manufacturers, logistics companies, and service providers with valuable state and regional resources in an environment focused on collaboration and growth.

Featured speaker Melissa McGurk, Senior International Trade Manager at the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), shared insights on international market opportunities available to North Carolina businesses. Attendees also connected with representatives from NC State's extension programs, Vance-Granville Community College's workforce development team, and the regional workforce development board.

The networking conversations and resource connections made during this inaugural event demonstrate the strong business community we have in Vance County. Based on the positive response, we're planning to make this a regular quarterly gathering for local business leaders.

North Carolina Tourism Hits Record \$36.7 Billion in 2024



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT of COMMERCE

New data from the N.C. Department of Commerce shows visitor spending reached a record \$36.7 billion statewide in 2024, with 71 of the state's 100 counties seeing increased tourism revenue, including Vance County! The growth shows ripple effects that benefit local businesses across industries.

Tourism growth in the region creates opportunities for Vance County businesses in hospitality, retail, dining, and services as visitors explore areas within driving distance of major destinations. The industry's success also reinforces North Carolina's overall economic strength and business-friendly environment that continues to attract both visitors and new businesses to the state.

[Read the full press release](#)

A portion of the September edition of *The Local Impact Newsletter* by the Henderson-Vance County Economic Development Commission is pictured above.

Website Traffic and Global Reach

The EDC website attracted 30,000 active users in 2025, generating 69,000 page views. Website visitors came from seven countries, with significant traffic from India (23,000 users), the United States (5,000 users), China (1,500 users), Singapore (736 users), Germany (169 users), Ireland (82 users) and Canada (47 users). This international reach demonstrates awareness of Vance County among global businesses and reflects the increasingly international nature of corporate site selection.

The most-viewed website pages included business expansion resources, regional demographics, county demographics, and industrial property listings. Average engagement time per active user was 35 seconds, with users exploring multiple pages during their visits. Website updates completed in 2025 included SEO improvements, downloadable business resource brochures, and dedicated webpages for featured properties.

Traffic Sources and Digital Strategy

Website traffic came primarily through Google paid advertising (23,000 users), direct navigation (2,400 users), and organic Google search (1,200 users). Referral traffic from vancecounty.org and other partner websites contributed an additional 500+ users. This traffic mix reflects the impact of the paid advertising campaigns while also demonstrating growing organic awareness of the EDC's online presence.

The Commission's digital strategy prioritizes meeting potential investors where they conduct research. Corporate site selectors and business executives increasingly begin location searches online, and communities without strong digital presence are often eliminated before any personal contact occurs. The Commission's investment in digital marketing ensures Vance County remains visible throughout the site selection process.

HENDERSON VANCE COUNTY
Economic Development Commission

**Lower Costs Quality of Life
Trained Workforce**

Just north of the Research Triangle, Vance County delivers strategic location advantages with 50-minute access to RDU Airport and direct connections to I-85 and US-1 - all at a lower cost!

frouse@vancecounty.org | 252.492.2094 | vancecountyedc.com

A print advertisement that ran in *Business North Carolina's* 2026 Economic Development Guide.

30,000
Active Users

69,000
Page Views

You're invited to our inaugural
BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE
August 29 | Noon to 2 p.m. | Henderson Country Club

Featured Speaker
Melissa McGurk
Senior International Trade Manager
EDPNC

presented by
HENDERSON VANCE COUNTY
Economic Development Commission

**LUNCH PROVIDED
NO COST TO ATTEND**

DETAILS

DATE: August 29
TIME: 12 - 2 pm
LOCATION: Henderson Country Club

Register by August 25
limited seating available



An invitation to local businesses and resource partners for the EDC's first Business Roundtable, held August 29.

METAL MAKERS GROW HERE VANCE COUNTY, NC

Join innovative companies in metal fabrication, medical device manufacturing, and transportation solutions. Benefit from nation-leading workforce training programs, robust utilities, and unbeatable access to major markets.

Start Building

HENDERSON VANCE COUNTY

A digital advertisement that ran on the national industry news site *Expansion Solutions Magazine* from May to October, generating more than 300,000 impressions.

2025 DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOT

Commercial permit activity in 2025 reflects steady investment from Vance County's private sector. Between January and November, the County issued 236 commercial permits and conducted 827 inspections across a range of businesses and industries.

Major employers continued to invest in their local operations. Mars Petcare, one of the county's largest manufacturers, pulled multiple permits for facility improvements at its Commerce Drive location. Maria Parham Health undertook renovations to its Emergency Department and reopened its radiation oncology services, signaling continued investment in local healthcare capacity. Walmart's distribution center on Martin Creek Road completed upgrades to its fire safety systems.

Retail activity included upfits and new signage for tenants along the Dabney Drive and Ruin Creek Road commercial corridors, with businesses such as Cracker Barrel, Hibbett, and Fast Pace Health making visible investments in their storefronts.

Telecommunications providers also expanded infrastructure across the county, with 24 cell tower permits issued to carriers, including T-Mobile. These investments improve connectivity for residents and businesses alike.

The breadth of permit activity—from manufacturing facilities to healthcare to retail—demonstrates continued private sector confidence in Vance County.

236

Commercial
Permits Issued

827

Inspections
Completed

Jan.-Nov. 2025



EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

Expanding Vance County's Reach

Economic development increasingly requires strategic partnerships and collaboration across boundaries. In 2025, the Commission participated in 81 conferences, meetings, and engagements across four key areas: industry conferences, regional partnerships, business development, and local community involvement.

Regional Planning and Infrastructure

The Commission participated in regular NCDOT Division 5 Technical Coordinating Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meetings to advocate for transportation infrastructure improvements that impact economic development.

Active engagement with the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments strengthened Vance County's voice in regional decision-making through participation in the annual banquet, regional summit, housing initiatives, and tourism planning efforts. These partnerships provide access to regional grant opportunities and foster collaboration with neighboring counties on shared priorities. In 2026, the EDC looks forward to hosting the annual regional conference.

State Partnerships and Resources

Membership in the Research Triangle Regional Partnership (RTRP) expanded Vance County's marketing reach and provided access to site selector networks and collaborative opportunities. The RTRP platform extends the marketing capacity of the two-person EDC team by connecting Vance County to a broader audience of corporate decision-makers.

The Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) visited in March to tour county assets and strengthen the partnership with the state's primary business recruitment organization. The Golden LEAF Foundation visited in May following its \$30,000 Site Identification Grant award. Partnerships with the North Carolina Railroad Company, NC State Industry Expansion Solutions, and other state agencies provided technical assistance, grant funding, and specialized expertise.

Events & Engagements by Category

Industry Conferences & Professional Development	10
Regional & State Partnerships	37
Local Community, Education & Workforce	18
Business Development & Site Visits	21
TOTAL	86



Dozens of real estate investors and site selectors attended the EDC's *Invest in the Triangle* event focused on highlighting the Kerr-Tra region's strategic assets. (Sept. 16, 2025)

2025 Highlight



Business Roundtable

The EDC hosted its first Business Roundtable on August 29, 2025. The convened local manufacturers and regional resource partners to build relationships and stimulate conversation. The Roundtable featured EDPNC's Melissa McGurk, whose presentation focused on international trade and EDPNC's STEP funding program.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal 1: Attract, Retain, and Foster Start-Up Businesses

- Completed 21 Business Retention and Expansion visits with local employers, up from 5 in 2024.
- Announced Syntec Precision Technology's selection of Vance County, bringing 60 jobs and \$10 million in investment.
- Fielded 106 phone inquiries and maintained active engagement with existing businesses.

Goal 2: Make Vance County a Choice Location

- Secured and completed \$30,000 Golden LEAF Site Identification Grant to advance site readiness.
- Received \$40,000 from North Carolina Railroad Company for due diligence studies at Henderson-Vance Industrial Park.
- Actively marketed 9 industrial and commercial properties with comprehensive marketing materials.

Goal 3: Develop and Retain Talent

- Strengthened partnerships with Vance-Granville Community College to align workforce training with employer needs.
- Participated in Manufacturing Roundtable and connected businesses with Kittrell Job Corps and NCWorks resources.

Goal 4: Strengthen Local and Regional Connections

- Participated in 81 conferences, meetings, and regional engagements across industry and partnership organizations.
- Maintained active membership in Research Triangle Regional Partnership and Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments.
- Engaged in NCDOT planning processes and S-Line Coalition advocacy for infrastructure improvements.

Goal 5: Strengthen the Henderson-Vance County EDC

- Increased website traffic to 30,000 visitors, up from 5,647 in 2024, with 69,000 page views.
- Launched quarterly newsletters for site selectors and local industry stakeholders.



Looking Ahead to 2026

Building on 2025's momentum, the Commission is positioned to advance priorities that will strengthen Vance County's competitive position and convert opportunities into announcements.

Site readiness remains a top priority. The Commission will update its comprehensive marketing packages for properties that have completed due diligence studies in 2026 and pursue additional grant funding for infrastructure improvements and due diligence work.

The Business Retention and Expansion program will continue to expand, with facility visits reaching additional employers across target sectors. The Commission will host and sponsor business engagement events including Manufacturing Week activities and industry roundtables that connect local employers with resources and foster collaboration.

Marketing efforts will build on successful 2025 initiatives by expanding the quarterly site selector newsletter, enhancing digital advertising campaigns, and maintaining consistent visibility at key industry conferences. Regional partnerships through the Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Kerr-Tar Council of Governments, and S-Line Coalition advocacy will continue to amplify Vance County's voice and access to resources.

The Henderson-Vance County Economic Development Commission remains dedicated to implementing the Strategic Plan and fostering economic growth in partnership with county leadership, local employers, and regional allies.





CONTACT US

326 S Garnett Street
Henderson, North Carolina 27536
(252) 492-2094
www.vancecountyedc.com