



9815 David Taylor Drive | Charlotte, NC 28262
Centralina Economic Development District
CEDS Steering Committee Meeting

MINUTES: March 17, 2022 4-6:00 pm Virtual
MEETING CALLED BY: Chairman Mile Atkins
PREPARED BY: Connor Choka
IN ATTENDANCE: **CEDS Steering Committee Members**
Leigh Altman
Miles Atkins
Melinda Bales
Jenn Bosser
Mark Brady
Michelle Brock
Cliff Brumfield
Astrid Chirinos
Devin Collins
Corey Correll
Mike Downs
Danielle Frazier
Donny Hicks
Alan Kathman
Patrick Mumford
Panico Peres
Christina Thigpen
Bill Thunberg
Melanie Underwood

Centralina Regional Council Staff
Connor Choka
Christina Danis
Geraldine Gardner- Ex-officio

Guests
N/A

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM

DISCUSSION

Welcome & Committee Introductions

Warm Up: Prosperity for Greater Charlotte CEDS & the Update Process

Geraldine Garner, President & COO, gave a presentation that covered the components of the 2022 CEDS update process and the role of the CEDS Steering Committee members. The CEDS Steering Committee Members engaged in an active poll everywhere exercise to evaluate the current CEDS vision statement, see result below.

Currents CEDS Vision

The current CEDS Vision "The Charlotte region invest together to enforce its position as a global leader in business, innovation and talent." was determined by participants to be **82% Relevant** and **18% Very relevant**.

The next interactive activity conducted by the CEDS Steering Committee Members was a poll related to the Current CEDS Goals and Tactics. The results of the poll are summarized below.

Current CEDS Goals and Tactics Overview

The following table summarizes the participants CEDS goals ranking of progress for the associated tactics (#), Rank 1 (most progress) to Rank 3 (least progress)

Goal	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
1. Create and maintain a globally competitive region	Attract more industries to the region (2)	Develop the region's international competency (3)	Boost entrepreneurial development (1)
2. Develop, retain and attract talent with critical in demand competencies and education	Increase collaboration between educational institutions (1)	Create awareness of the value of lifelong learning (3)	Improve understanding of all ethnic cultures that live/ work within or visit the region (2)
3. Improve and modernize infrastructure to maintain a competitive advantage for domestic and international commerce	Coordinate regional growth plan that ensures sufficient shovel-ready sites and business parks (1)	Promote transit planning to move people throughout the region (3)	Support implementation of greater Charlotte regional freight mobility plan (2)
4. Foster continued development of the region's lifestyle amenities and attributes	Promote community design for healthier lifestyles (2)	Advocate for continued investment in regional amenities (1)	Promote the role of the Centralina Economic Development District and implement the CEDS plan (3)

CEDS Reflections About Top Economic Success And Threats To Regional Prosperity

Geraldine Gardner led the CEDS Steering Committee through a conversation about the current economic conditions as related to regional prosperity. The following reflects a matrix of the conversation and the relationship of the outcomes to the 2017-2022 CEDS SWOT Priorities.

See attached results.

What We Heard: Key Themes from Pre-CEDS Activities

Geraldine Gardner shared both the technical documents and engagement processes for updating the region’s CEDS, an overview of preparatory activities that the district has participated to prepare for this year’s CEDS update, see power point slides 17-22. Topic areas that were discussed include Industry Clusters, Supply Chain Survey, AI/ Automation Assessment and Equity & Resilience.

What We Heard: Key Themes County EDC Interviews

Geraldine Gardner introduced key themes and takeaways from the Regional Dialogues Series (RDS) and County EDC interviews.

The RDS affirmed critical regional issues: supporting balanced growth, expanding housing and mobility choice and infrastructure to support growth. The focus groups identified other important issues to be addressed in the CEDS: economic recovery and resilience, education and workforce development and bridging divides (geographic, political, race, gender and more.)

The County EDC interviews revealed key insights into the importance of regionalism and the uniqueness of each county, need for a focused rural strategy, identifying a regional agenda that resonates and that the Economic Development Commissions are key to existing industry, see slides 27-28.

Prosperity for All Framework: Group Discussion

Geraldine Garner presented on the new EDA Economic Resilience CEDS requirement. The EDA offers two approaches to building resilience: steady-state and response initiatives. Steady-state initiative are long-term efforts to bolster the community or region's ability to withstand or avoid a shock. To plan and invest in a way that does not restore or replicate pre-shock inequities. This process to grow inclusively and strive for equitable outcomes inherently builds economic resilience, see slides 31-36. The group then conducted a mural exercise to examine economic resilience and vulnerability, see results at this link: [Centralina CEDS Steering Committee 03172022 Mural](#).

Regional Highlights Peer Sharing

A feature of each CEDS Steering Committee meeting agenda will be an opportunity to learn from each other about regional economic development initiatives in support of the CEDS update process. During this meeting we heard from Jenn Boss, EDC President of Iredell EDC and Christina Thigpen, Deputy Director of Economic Development at the City of Charlotte.

Wrap Up & Next Steps

Project timeline, see slide 41.

Meeting Schedule, see slide 42.

Homework Assignment

As the CEDS community ambassadors we need your help with moving the region forward together. In support of the April 21st meeting, the homework assignment is to bring to the next steering committee meeting details regarding the following two questions. Please ask 5 people from your network that reflect voices that were not part of the conversation the following questions:

Q1: Tell me what you believe is the greatest threat(s) to our region's prosperity and what may be needed to address this threat?

Q2: Please share a regional economic success story that you experienced, or observed, over the past five years and explain why it was successful. It may be pre- or post-covid. (Success stories that reflect post-covid learning opportunities are particularly of interest)

Links to Previous Centralina EDD CEDS Documents

- [Centralina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022](#)
- [Centralina Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017, Executive Summary](#)

CEDS Reflections about Top Economic Success and Threats to Regional Prosperity Results

Business Climate/ Innovation/ Entrepreneurship

The Good		
I77 business growth		3.17 meeting
Successful expansion of product		3.17 meeting
New opportunities		3.17 meeting
Employer Attraction and Entrepreneurial Development		3.17 meeting
New local industry initiative		3.17 meeting
Diversified industry growth		3.17 meeting
Pro-business Climate		CEDS 2017-22
Low Corporate Taxes		CEDS 2017-22
International Airport		CEDS 2017-22
Desirable area with amenities		CEDS 2017-22
Strong regional partnerships and industry organizations		CEDS 2017-22
The Bad		
Small business challenges		3.17 meeting
Managing misinformation		3.17 meeting
Fragmented Entrepreneurial efforts		CEDS 2017-22
Lack of civic collaboration		CEDS 2017-22
Limited access to public and private funding		CEDS 2017-22
Threats to innovation/small business growth		CEDS 2017-22
What needs to be done		
Participate in Research and Development		3.17 meeting
Collaboration		CEDS 2017-22

Infrastructure

The Good		
UNCC and Blue Line extension		3.17 meeting
Geographic location		CEDS 2017-22
Superior air and rail service		CEDS 2017-22
The Bad		
Lack of regional coordination		3.17 meeting
Congestion		CEDS 2017-22
Lack of affordable housing near employment centers		CEDS 2017-22
Lack of funding for water projects		CEDS 2017-22
What needs to be done		
Expanding CLT and the airport		3.17 meeting
Strengthen air/rail assets/access to ports		CEDS 2017-22
Connectivity walkable streets and bike trails		CEDS 2017-22
Enhanced highway and transit Commuter		CEDS 2017-22

Quality of Life

The Good		
Blue Line extension and small business along the corridor		3.17 meeting
Affordable cost of living		CEDS 2017-22
Natural recreation amenities/parks/trails/greenways		CEDS 2017-22
World class sports		CEDS 2017-22
Big city/small town charm		CEDS 2017-22
Geography – ocean/mountain access		CEDS 2017-22
The Bad		
Access to affordable housing		3.17 meeting
Intersectionality of family and childcare needs, mental health and wellness		3.17 meeting
Tremendous growth pressures		CEDS 2017-22
K-12 education lacking		CEDS 2017-22
Traffic Congestion		CEDS 2017-22
Lack of connectivity – walk/bike/transit		CEDS 2017-22
Greater awareness of the Charlotte Region Quality of Life positives		CEDS 2017-22
What needs to be done		
Advocate for wellness		3.17 meeting
Enhance economic mobility		3.17 meeting
Build regional sense of community and empowerment		3.17 meeting
Connect and onboard elected officials		3.17 meeting
Collaboration in regional planning		CEDS 2017-22
Promotion to ensure intelligent growth		CEDS 2017-22
Increase tourism		CEDS 2017-22
Increase global recognition		CEDS 2017-22
Clear communication about the region’s positive assets		CEDS 2017-22

Workforce and Education

The Good	
Growing young professional population	CEDS 2017-22
Strong community and 4-year colleges/universities	CEDS 2017-22
Apprenticeship programs	CEDS 2017-22
Career academies in select high schools	CEDS 2017-22
Improved employer-educator partnerships	CEDS 2017-22
The Bad	
Providing a strong primary and secondary education	3.17 meeting
Providing a variety of career pathways	3.17 meeting
Opportunities for childcare and early childhood education	3.17 meeting
Artificial intelligence and automation impact to changing job climate	3.17 meeting
Lack of talent supply, strained labor market	3.17 meeting
Lack of affordable housing and childcare	3.17 meeting
Systemic challenges to k-12 education	3.17 meeting
Inconsistent, underfunded and underperforming K-12 education in portions of the region	CEDS 2017-22
Lack of employer-educator coordination for all sectors	CEDS 2017-22
Limited Understanding/awareness of technical /apprenticeship programs	CEDS 2017-22
What needs to be done	
Workforce development	3.17 meeting
Promotion of Career Technical Education awareness	3.17 meeting
Introduce career pathways that do not require a college degree	3.17 meeting
Identify certification programs	3.17 meeting
Expanding opportunities for existing workforce	3.17 meeting
Ensure transportation affordability	3.17 meeting
Educational KPI's are need	3.17 meeting
Develop affordable and accessible arrangements for childcare	3.17 meeting
Adopt new positive narrative surrounding the skilled trades	3.17 meeting
Acknowledge changes to achieve equity	3.17 meeting
Alternative pathways to 4-year college degree	3.17 meeting
Promote upskilling through certification	3.17 meeting
Address biases in hiring practices	3.17 meeting
Improve K-12 education with increased funding	CEDS 2017-22
Focus on workforce preparedness	CEDS 2017-22
Stronger employer-educator communications/partnerships	CEDS 2017-22



Centralina

Economic Development District

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Steering Committee Kick Off Meeting

March 17, 2022



CENTRALINA
Community Economic
Development

Mayor Atkins, CEDD Board Chair

Welcome!

Today's Agenda

1. Warm Up:
Prosperity for
Greater Charlotte
CEDS & the
Update Process
2. What We Heard:
Key Themes from
Pre-CEDS
Activities
3. What We Heard:
Key Themes
County EDC
Interviews
4. Prosperity for All
Framework:
Group Discussion
5. Debrief: Regional
Highlights
6. Wrap Up & Next
Steps



Warm Up

Prosperity for Greater Charlotte CEDS Update Process

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

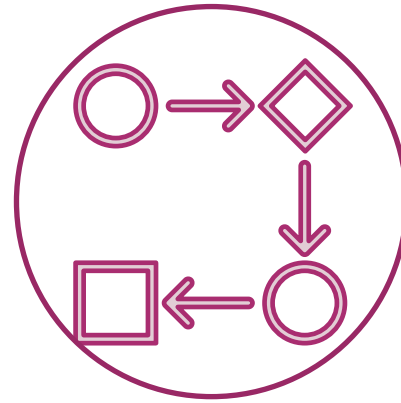
What is a CEDS?

A locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning **process** and **document** that brings together a diverse set of partners to generate good jobs, diversify the economy, and spur economic growth.

- *Updated at least once every five years*
- *Required for all EDA certified Economic Development Districts*



CEDS Update Outcomes



Process:

to build capacity, relationships and structures for ongoing regional collaboration



Document:

to develop an asset-based, strategy-driven plan for regional economic development

Regionally driven, regionally owned



CEDS Required Components

1. **Summary Background** – understanding of current economic conditions and regional assets
2. **SWOT Analysis** – assessment of competitive advantages, disadvantages, externalities
3. **Strategy Development** – a framework for action: vision, goals, implementation plan
4. **Evaluation Framework** – approach to measuring implementation progress and impact on the regional economy



Role of the Steering Committee

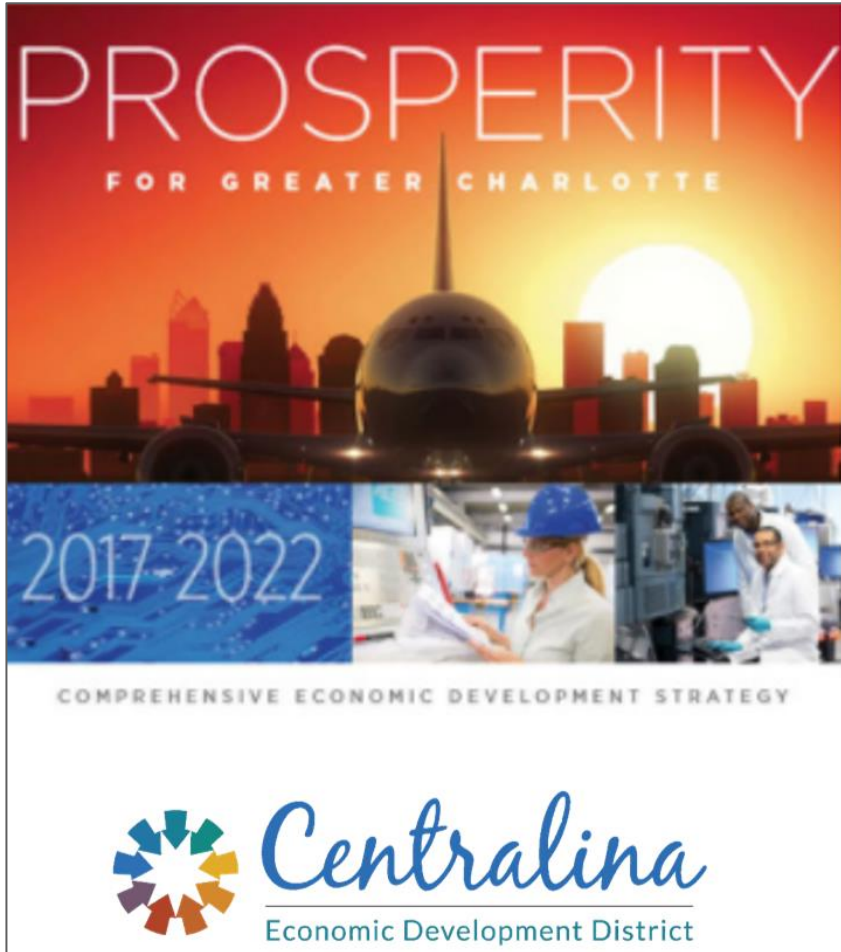
1. Engage to provide feedback and leadership throughout the process
2. Guide regional visioning
3. Contribute to strategy development
4. Identify opportunities for your organization in implementation

HOW

- Attend Board and Special Steering Comm. Meetings
- Participate in and/or chair a Working Group
- Host and lead county engagement process
- Provide technical expertise on work components
- Use your platform to disseminate information and help us engage stakeholders



Our Current CEDS Vision



The Charlotte region invests together to enforce its position as a global leader in business, innovation and talent.

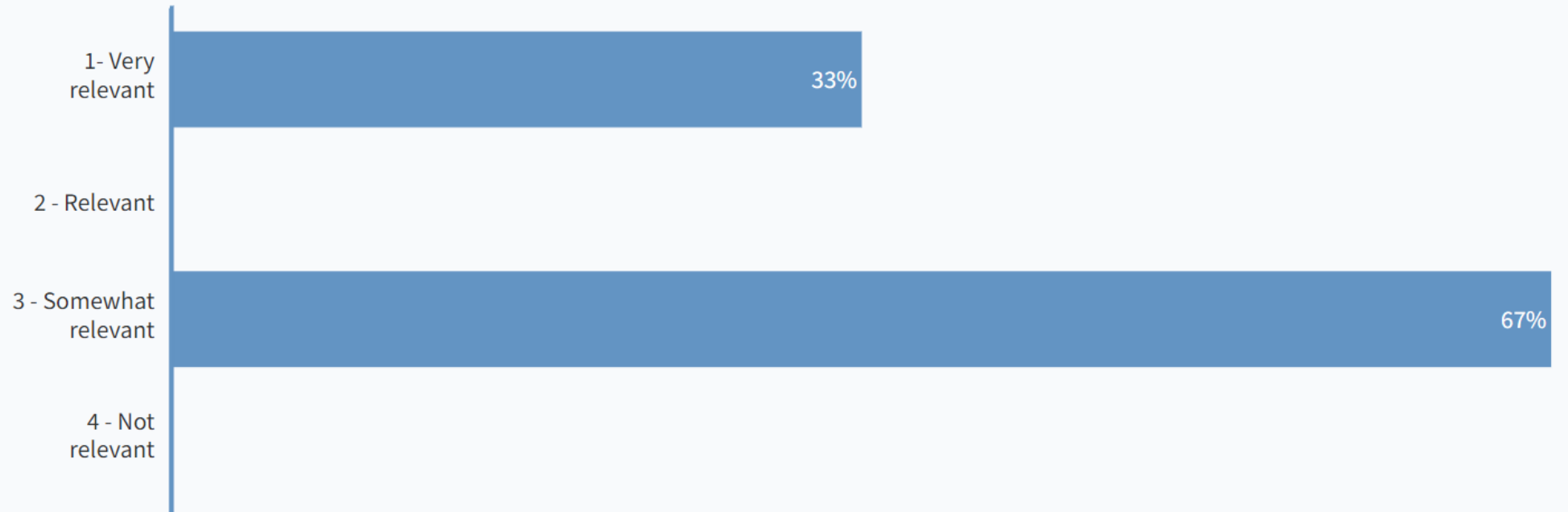




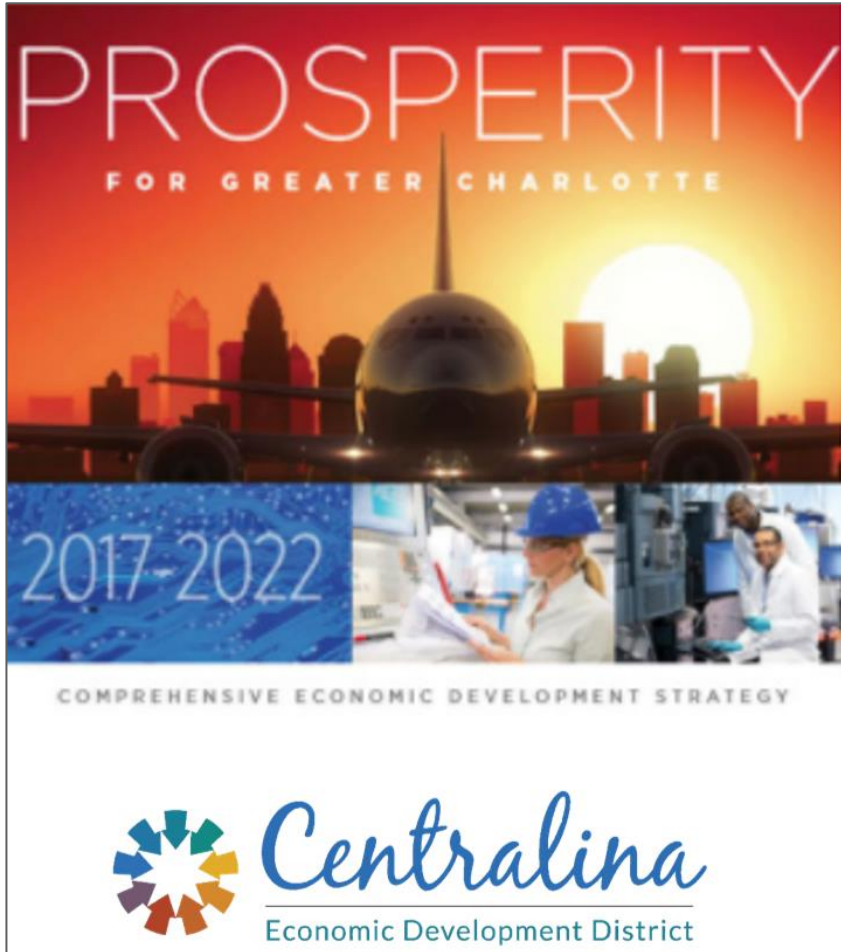
When poll is active, respond at Pollev.com/centralina0001

Text **CENTRALINA0001** to **22333** once to join

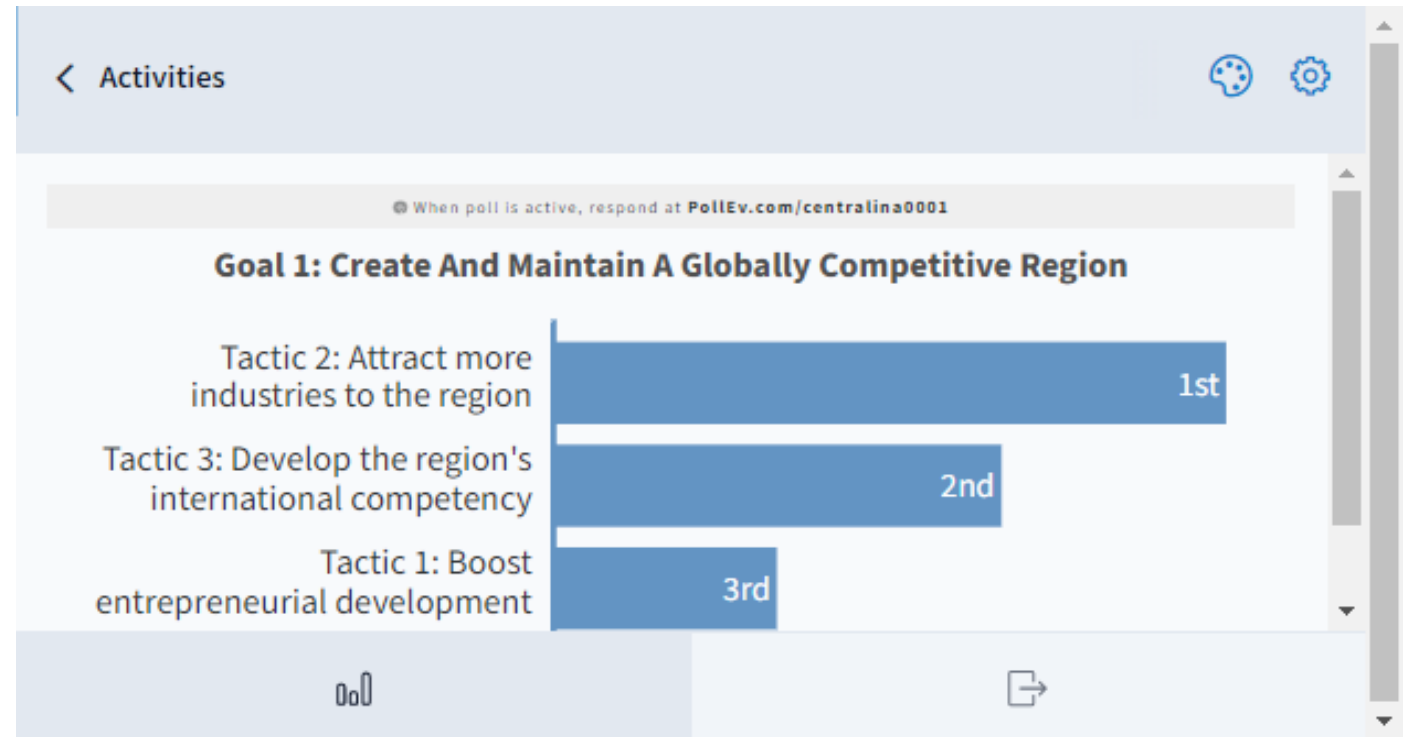
How would you rate the relevance of our current CEDS vision? "The Charlotte region invests together to enforce its position as a global leader in business, innovation and talent."



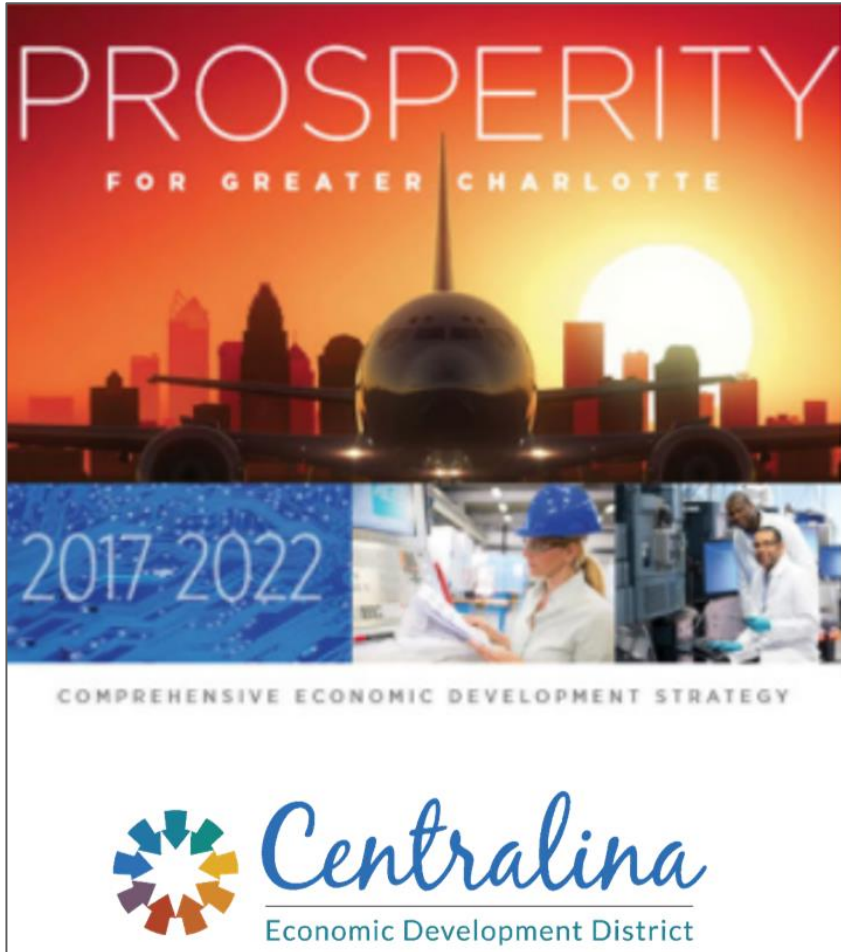
Our Current CEDS Goals



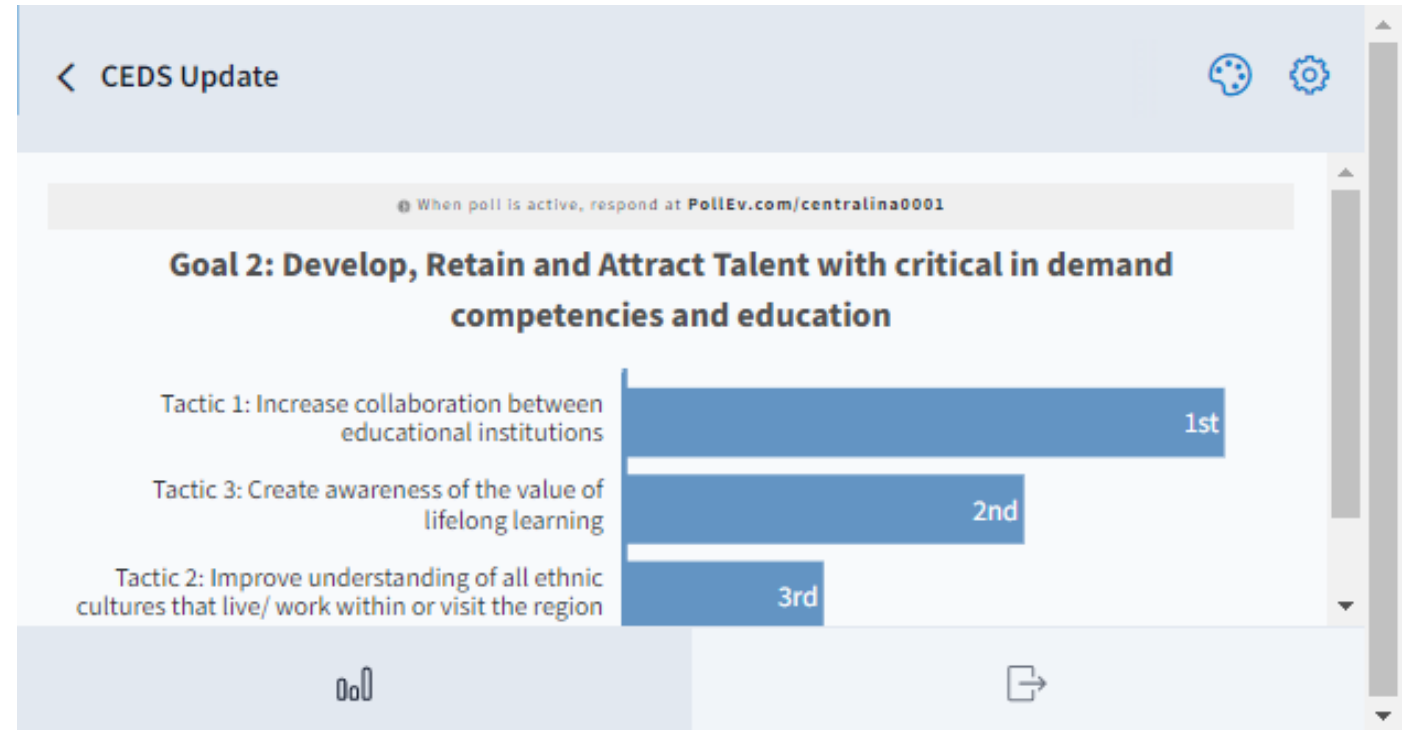
Rank the progress of the CEDS implementation tactics, highest (most progress) to lowest (least progress) using the up and down arrows in the poll below.



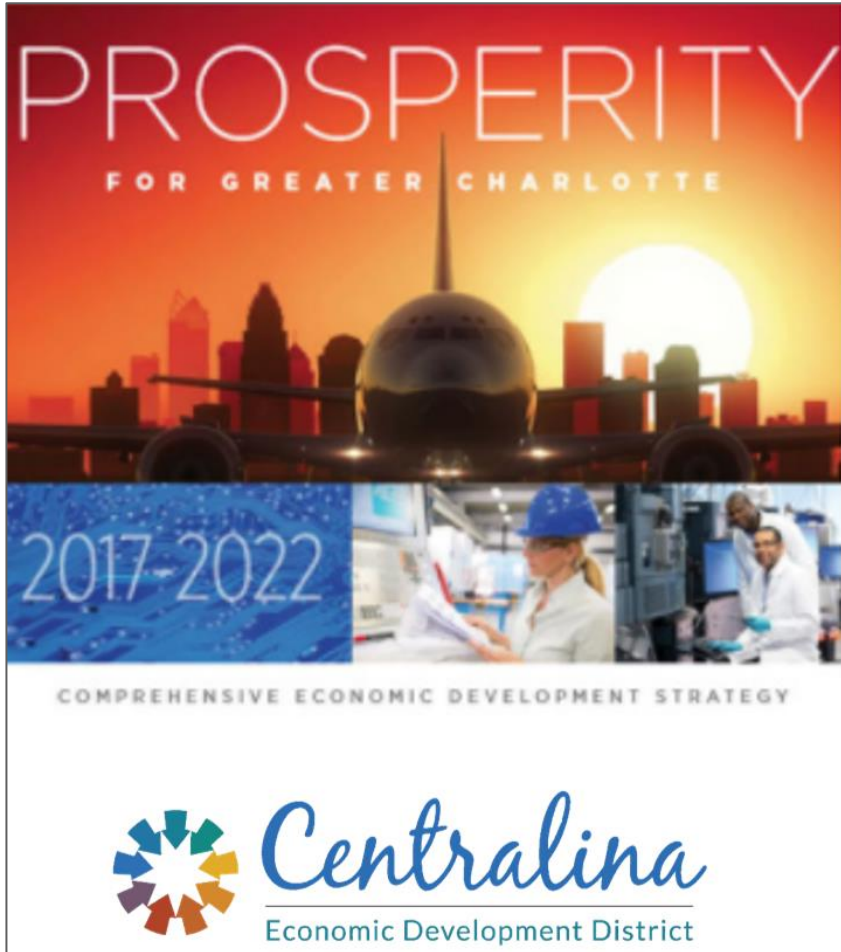
Our Current CEDS Goals



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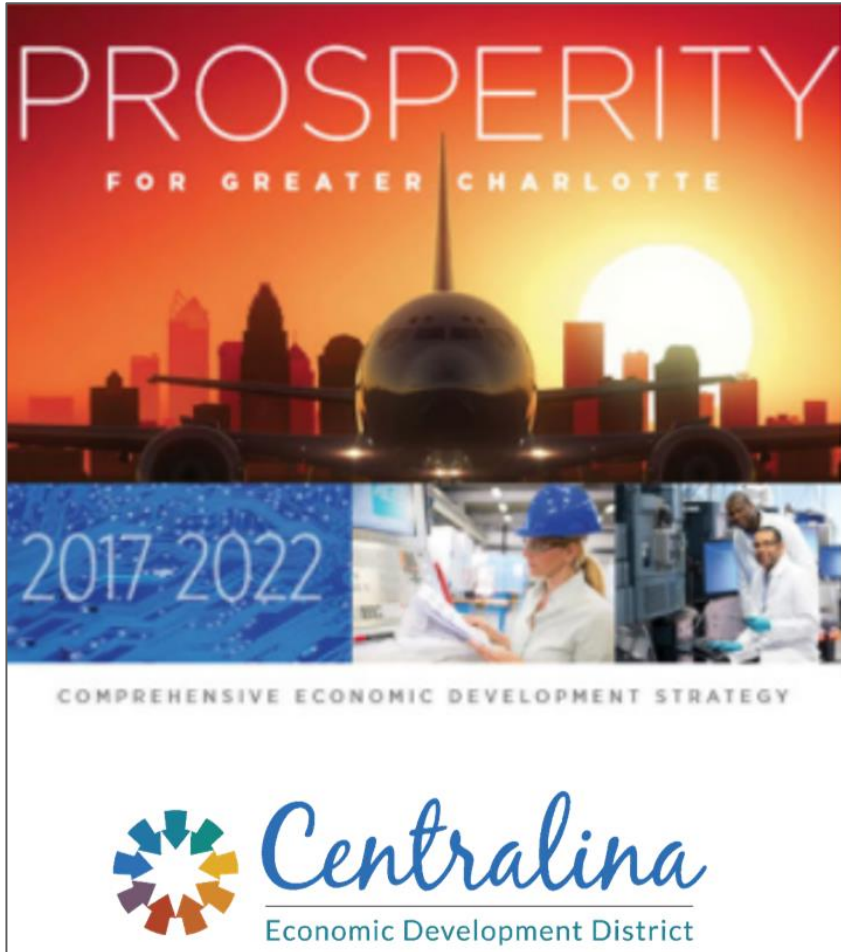
Our Current CEDS Goals



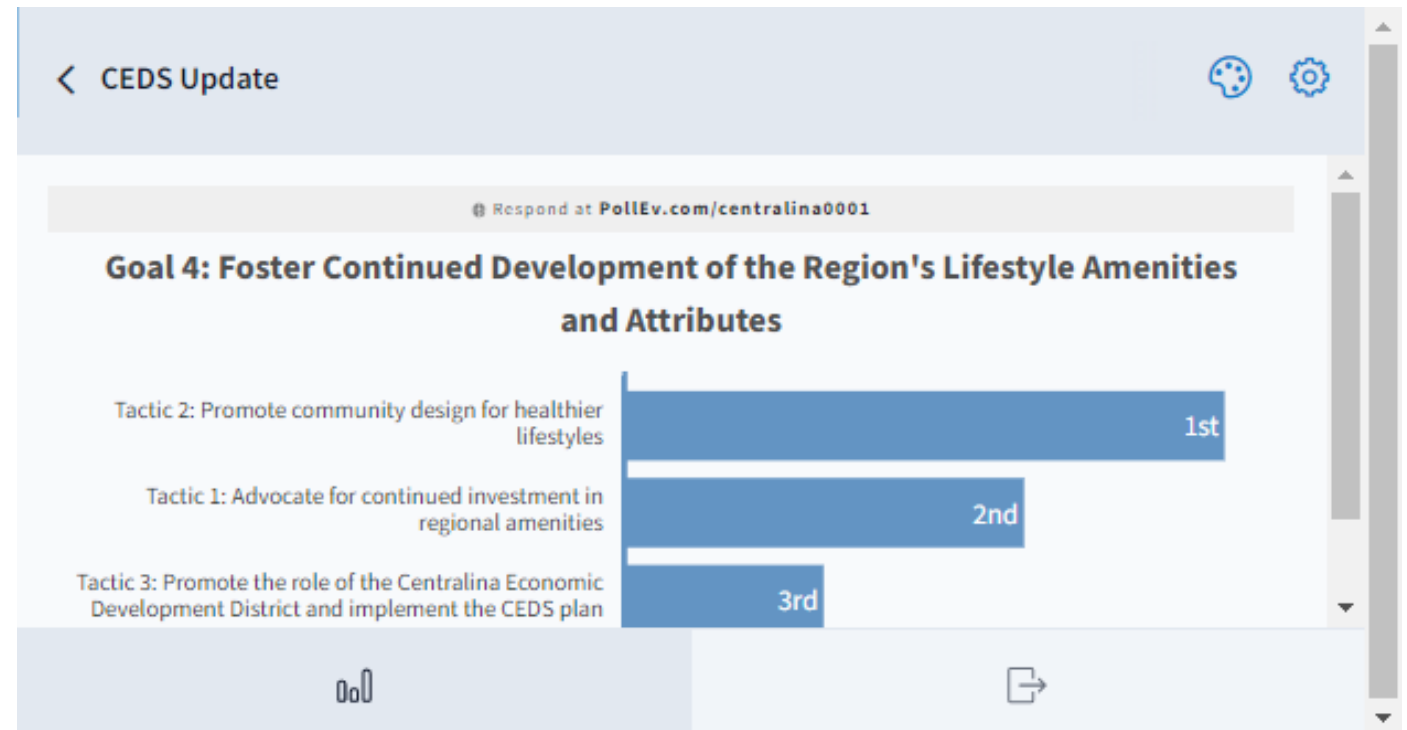
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Our Current CEDS Goals



Rank the progress of the CEDS implementation tactics, highest (most progress) to lowest (least progress) using the up and down arrows in the poll below.



CEDS Reflections

Where we are today

- What is your top regional economic development success story of the last five years?
- What are the current threats to our region's prosperity?



What We Heard

Insights from Preparatory Activities

CEDS Work Components

Technical (Document)

- Summary Background Analysis
- SWOT Analysis
- Vision and Goal Setting
- Implementation / Action Plan Development
- Evaluation Framework

Engagement (Process)

- Steering Committee
- Thematic Working Groups (Cluster? Themes?)
- Regional Stakeholder Engagement (Boards, Alliance, Institutions)
- County Engagement (EDCs, Higher Ed, Private Sector)



FY22: Preparing for the CEDS

Technical

- Target Industry Cluster Analysis (EY, Complete)
- Supply Chain and AI/Automation Analysis (EY, Complete)
- Regional Resilience Collaborative (Centralina, Complete)
- Regional Data & Equity Profile (Centralina, In Process)

Engagement

- Regional Dialogues Series
 - Survey
 - Focus Groups
- Informal Board and Stakeholder Engagement
- Expectations from EDA



Industry Cluster Analysis Insights

- Affirmed 5 Regional Clusters:
 - Advanced Manufacturing,
 - Financial Services,
 - Health,
 - Logistics & Distribution, and
 - Information Technology
- Presence in all 9 counties with various niche sectors

Next Steps

- How we address the disruptors and threats to our clusters identified in the analysis



Supply Chain Survey

- 116 manufacturers
- Long-term factors for overall competitiveness and the resiliency of supply chains.
 - 74% workforce upskilling was a very important
 - 43% robotics/automation was a very important factor

EY Opportunities & Trends

- Decarbonization goals and locally sourced supply chains
- Potential for a global minimum tax
- Customized, local and on-demand trends



AI/Automation Assessment

- Risk Assessment identified those occupations (region-wide and in the five industry clusters) that are most at risk for automation
- The most jobs at risk of automation are those requiring No Formal Education (83% of jobs are at risk) or those requiring a High School Diploma (64%). Combined, nearly 700,000 people are employed in these at-risk jobs.

Next Steps

- EY to Prepare Analysis with PowerBI dashboard that will help workers transition to:
 - 1) Similar occupations with much lower automation risk (horizontal shift),
 - 2) Higher-skill occupations that build on their current job skills (vertical shift), or
 - 3) Higher-skill occupations in related but different industries (diagonal shift).



Equity & Resilience

- Regional Resilience Collaborative finding: region has strong coordination infrastructure on response, but not recovery
- Developing index for assessing equity using National Equity Atlas categories (Economic Vitality, Readiness, and Connectedness) and other data sets

Next Steps

- Finalize index and launch online data portal
- Share data profile to inform SWOT development process and CEDS strategy development



What We Heard

Insights from Regional Engagement

Top Issues

influencing our region's economic development and prosperity



RDS Key Takeaways

- Survey affirmed critical regional issues:
 - Supporting balanced growth
 - Expanding housing and mobility choices;
 - Infrastructure to support growth.
- Focus groups identified other important issues to be addressed in CEDS
 - Economic recovery and resilience
 - Education and workforce development
 - Bridging divides (geographic, political, race, gender, etc)
 -



County EDC Engagement

- Expectations for the CEDS
- Opportunities to Improve
- Leveraging County strategies and priorities
- Recommendations for engagement

Key Insights

- Importance of regionalism and the uniqueness of each county
- Need for a focused rural strategy
- Identify a regional agenda that resonates
- EDCs - key connection to existing industry



EDC Insights

What are the top barriers or challenges to your county's economic growth trajectory?

- Balancing growth between the counties
- Balancing residential and commercial development
- Housing affordability & housing choices
- Transportation & mobility
- Lack of infrastructure & sewer capacity
- Retaining jobs and companies in the county
- Rising cost of living
- Need for upskilling
- Available workforce



EDC Insights

What are the top opportunities for regional collaboration to support your county's economic growth trajectory?

- Transit and transportation choices
- Affordable childcare
- Rural strategy
- Mindset – movement of companies within the region is a win
- Apprenticeships types of programs
- Long-term solutions for retraining opportunities
- Talent Attraction
- Workforce Development



Group Discussion

Prosperity for All Framework

EDA Investment Priorities

- 1. Equity**
- 2. Recovery and Resilience**
3. Workforce Development
4. Manufacturing
5. Technology-Based Economic Development
6. Environmentally-Sustainable Development
7. Exports & FDI



What is Resilience?

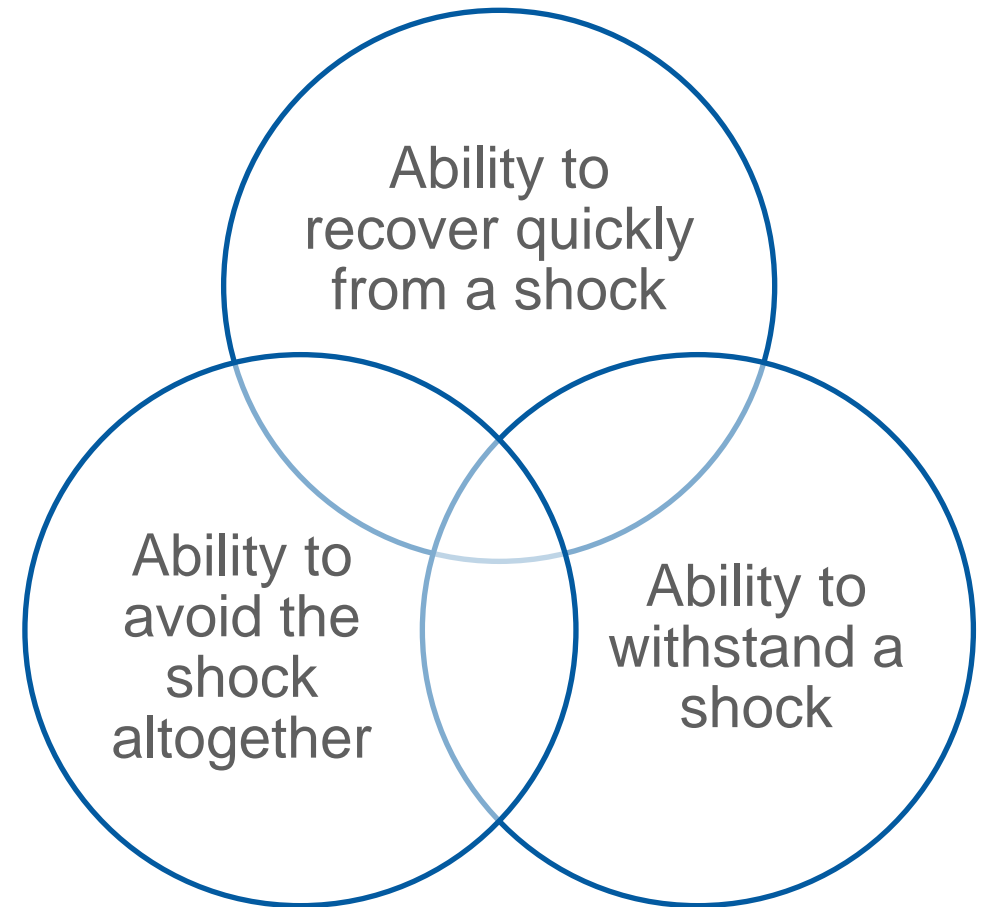
“Resilience is the ability to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.”

Judith Rodin, former president of the Rockefeller Foundation, “The Resilience Dividend”



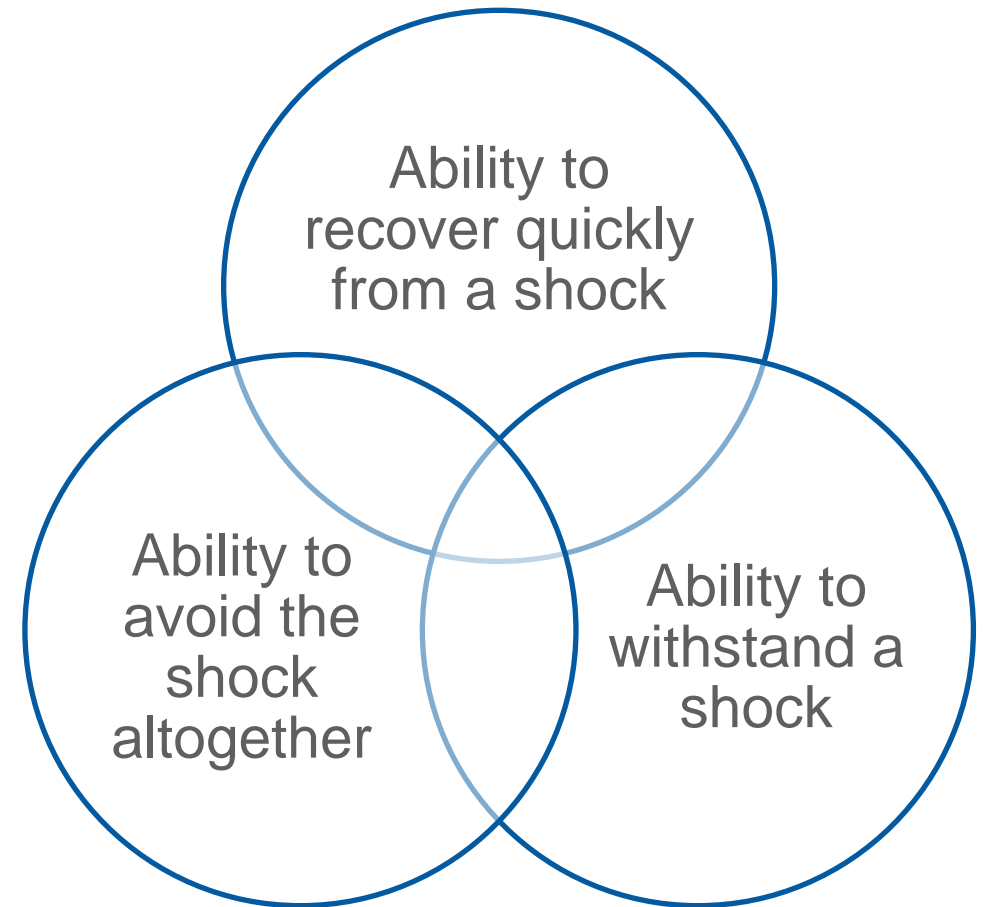
EDA & Economic Resilience

- Priority for EDA + CEDS Requirement
- Defines three dimensions of resilience ->
- Offers two approaches to building resilience:
 - Steady-state Initiatives
 - Responsive Initiatives



Building Resilience

- **Steady-state initiatives:**
long-term efforts to bolster the community or region's ability to withstand or avoid a shock
- **Responsive initiatives:**
increasing capabilities to be responsive to recovery needs following an incident



CEDS Integration: EDA Recommendation

- **Planning for and implementing resilience (Steady State)**
 - Identifying vulnerabilities and persistent challenges
 - Developing specific goals tactics to address these
 - Identifying projects and potential EDA investments
- **Establishing regional information networks (Responsive)**
 - Utilize CEDS process to host active and regular stakeholder communications
 - Build capacity through CEDS implementation and improve “readiness” state for future disruptions



In what ways is/ was our economy resilient?

Clusters and Major Industries	Infrastructure	Workforce	Small Business & Entrepreneurship	Other Areas
Large percentage of businesses that could shift to remote work	Local jurisdiction support for existing industry	Talent Attraction	Entrepreneurs pivot to new products and services	Services Integration
Diversified Economy	Strong business activity, product development, infrastructure improvement			Strong investment in the residential growth for downtown revitalization
logistics and distribution growth			Add new businesses and services	Population Growth - in migration, attracting residents with wealth
many announcements across industries				Continued growth and expansion. Many announcements across industries. Logistics and Distribution very strong throughout the pandemic

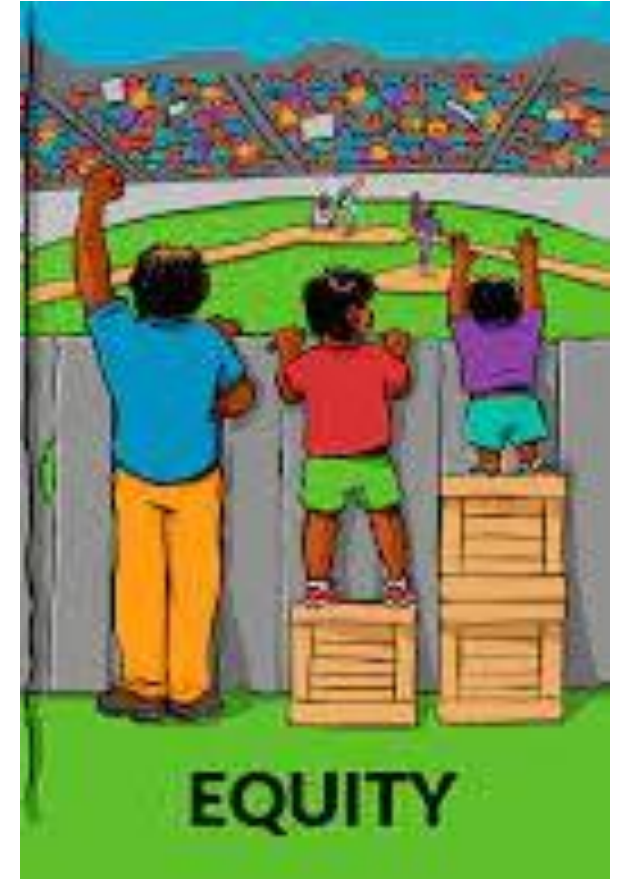
In what areas is our economy vulnerable?

Clusters and Major Industries	Infrastructure	Workforce	Small Business & Entrepreneurship	Other Areas
Workforce	Work Forces Talent	Affordable Housing	Workforce: Hiring became nearly impossible	Transitional skills
Computerized screening of applications	Access to business support services	Supply chain of supplies	Transportation	Access to Broadband
Affordable childcare, esp. for manufacturing employees	transportation limitations to meet the growth	Growth in rural areas will increase costs	Talent supply. Strain on the labor market	Mental health support; Services Integration
Land Use and zoning for growth	Hospitality/Tourism	Decline in workforce population	Transportation	Reversing of manufacturing with a local zoning policy benefiting from increased housing opportunities from development in industrial parks or development helps in areas that have and workers help companies manufacturers who need space
Access to healthcare			FDdi	rising cost of living
Urban areas have been challenged, specifically small businesses			DfD	Inflation

Connecting Equity & Resilience

Building resilience offers the opportunity to do regional economic development planning and investment differently. To plan and invest in a way that does not restore or replicate pre-shock inequities.

This process to grow inclusively and strive for equitable outcomes inherently builds economic resilience.



Opportunity for Our CEDS

- Define what equity and inclusive economic growth is for the Centralina region
- Balance an industry-driven approach to regional economic development with a person-centered approach
 - What do our most vulnerable communities, individuals and businesses need?
- Think systematically and plan for integrated approach across infrastructure, talent, etc.



Regional Highlights

Peer Sharing

Regional Highlights: Peer Sharing



Tracy Dodson

City of Charlotte, Assistant City-Manager



Jenn Bosser, CEcD

Iredell County EDC, President & CEO



Wrap Up

Next Steps

Project Schedule



Steering Committee Forecast

- April 21st – Board Mtg. SWOT Analysis and Key Issue Identification
- May 19th – Vision Work Session
- *No meeting June/Working Groups meet*
- July 21st – Board Mtg. Approve Vision and Goals; Working Group Reports
- September 15th – Action Plan and Evaluation Work Session
- October 20th - Board Mtg. CEDS Adoption

If Needed, November 17th – Special Board Mtg to adopt CEDS

