

# BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE 2022-2027

**C**OMPREHENSIVE  
**E**CONOMIC  
**D**EVELOPMENT  
**S**TRATEGY



## 2023 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGION





# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE** 2022-2027

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Cover page image of Decatur

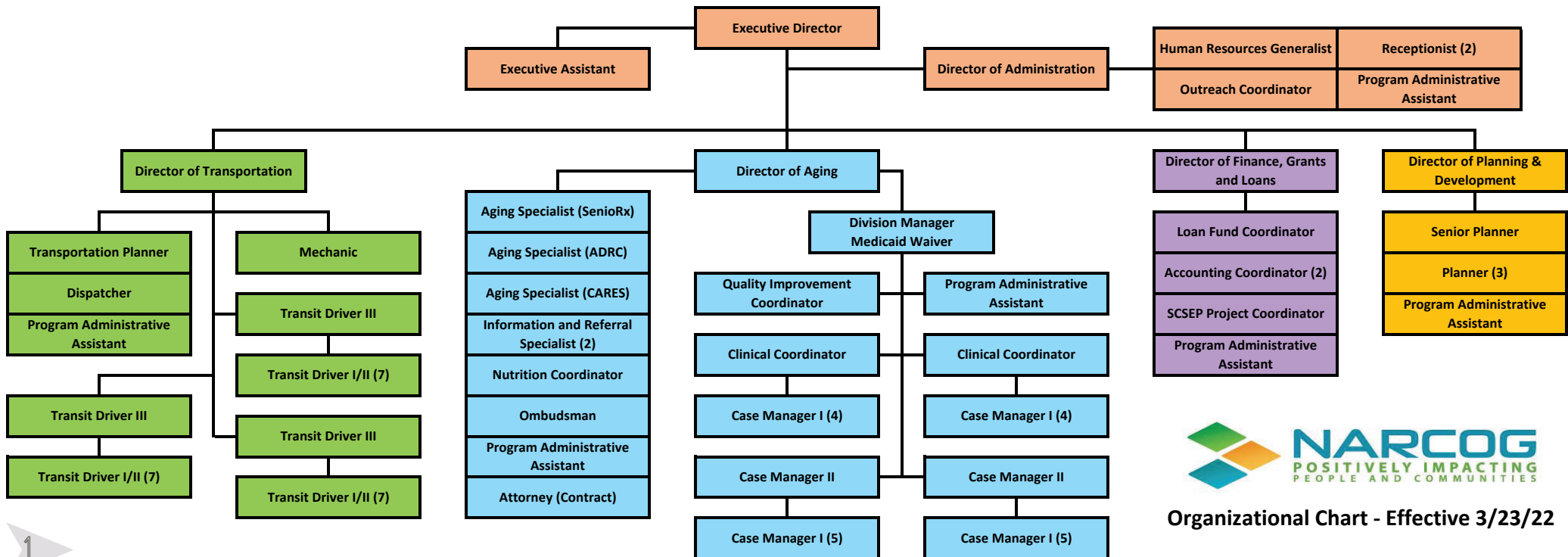
Source: [https://www.cityofdecatur.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/slide\\_downtownnight1.jpg](https://www.cityofdecatur.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/slide_downtownnight1.jpg)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) was originally created in 1966 as the North Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. NARCOG was re-established with its new name and subsequently certified by Governor George Wallace on November 1, 1971. NARCOG operates under the authority of Section 3 of Act No. 1126 of the 1969 Regular Session of the Legislature of Alabama. This Act, as amended, can be found in Sections 11-85-50 through 11-85-73 of the 1975 Code of Alabama. It provides for the creation and operation of regional planning and development commissions, which have among their many purposes, to “carry on continuous, comprehensive planning for the Region, assessing needs, resources, and development opportunities and formulating goals, objectives, policies, and standards to guide physical, economic, and human resource development.” NARCOG offers a multitude of services to the people and communities in our Region, as illustrated in the organizational structure diagram.

The 2023 Annual Performance Report is intended to provide a snapshot of accomplishments achieved over the past year in the implementation of the mission, vision, and goals, outlined in the Region's CEDS and found on the following page.

## NARCOG ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# 2 CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE

The CEDS Strategy Committee is comprised of various stakeholders representing economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, tourism, entrepreneurs, education, workforce development, utilities, and local business owners in the Region. The purpose of the committee is to provide input and information on performance measures, the future economic direction of the Region, and to offer guidance on potential future initiatives of NARCOG.

During FY2023, a few changes occurred to the committee representatives from the organizations. The new members are indicated in "red" in the list of committee members located in the table to the right.

Kristi Barnett	Wallace State Community College
<b>Penny Townson</b>	Tennessee Valley Authority
<b>Jasmine Sanderfer</b>	Hartselle Chamber of Commerce
<b>Matt Kinsland</b>	Cullman County Economic Development
Jerry Felks	Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
John Joseph IV	Decatur–Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center
Dale Greer	Cullman Economic Development Agency
Brooks Kracke	North Alabama Industrial Development Association
Jeremy Nails	Morgan County Economic Development Agency
Doug Brazier	Calhoun Community College
Tami Reist	North Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association
Crystal Brown	Decatur–Morgan County Chamber of Commerce
<b>Joey Orr</b>	Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
Tabitha Pace	Lawrence County Industrial Development Board
Danielle Gibson	Decatur Morgan County Tourism
Kelly Thomas	Downtown Decatur Redevelopment Authority
<b>Renona Siebert</b>	Alabama's Mountains, Rivers & Valleys RC&D Council

# 3 MISSION, VISION, & GOALS

## MISSION

**Dedicated to improving the quality of life for the citizens of Cullman County, Lawrence County, and Morgan County.**

## VISION

**Build a sustainable and resilient regional economy that is vibrant, collaborative, diversified, entrepreneurial, forward-thinking, embraces change, and aggressively pursues new businesses, and high-tech industry, a skilled workforce, residential growth, tourism, and quality of life amenities that support and build upon our existing assets.**

## GOALS

- 1. Build Resilient Regional Businesses**
- 2. Build a Resilient and Sustainable Regional Economy**
- 3. Build a Resilient Regional Workforce Ecosystem**
- 4. Build Resilient Infrastructure for the Region**
- 5. Build a Resilient Regional Tourism Based Economy**
- 6. Build Resilient Regional Community Leaders and Capacity**

# 4 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

An evaluation framework is comprised of performance measures used to gauge progress on the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy, as well as providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Reports. Therefore, performance measures should be selected based upon what is important to our Region and used to evaluate the progress in achieving the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies in our CEDS. Below are some of our selected performance measures.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Number of jobs created (anticipated)
- Number of jobs retained
- Number of new businesses and/or industries
- Number of expanding businesses and/or industries
- Amount of private sector investment
- Amount of public sector investment
- Number of labor force
- Number of unemployed
- Unemployment rate
- Changes in the economic environment in the Region
- Number of grants submitted and amount
- Number of grants funded and amount
- Number of NARCOG Accelerate Business Growth Fund loans
- Local revenue generated
- Net taxable assessed valuation
- Wealth creation such as GDP per capita
- Median household income
- Per capita income
- Total personal income
- Annual wages per employee
- Median home value
- Population with no health insurance coverage
- Educational attainment – high school diploma and bachelor's degree
- Number of new partnerships
- New development regulations
- New plans (downtown plans, comprehensive plans, hazardous mitigation, etc.)
- Number of hybrid or electric fleet cars added to local businesses and agencies

# 5 PERFORMANCE

In terms of implementation of the CEDS during FY2023, the NARCOG EDD and others made significant headway. The following sections: Goals, Programs and Initiatives Updates, New and Expanding Industry, Selected Economic Highlights, and Regional & County Demographics Snapshots represents the various efforts towards implementation, but is not all inclusive of everything accomplished within our region.





# GOAL 1

## BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL BUSINESSES

Build resilient regional businesses through Innovation & Entrepreneurship (industry, financing, incentives, etc.)

### Decatur-Morgan County E-Center:

- Singing River Trail (SRT) Launch Tank Event held in March of 2023
- Pop-Up 2.0 events in Somerville and South Vinemont – *Underway* (see USDA RBEG grant below)

### NARCOG:

- Prepared and submitted a **USDA RBEG grant** for Pop-Up 2.0 for the Decatur Morgan County E-Center – **\$105,000**; *Funded*
- Continued to successfully administer and market the **Accelerate Business Growth Fund (RLF)** program



2023 SRT Launch Tank finalists. Rocket City E-Bikes (in the center) won the grand price.

Source: <https://i0.wp.com/hvilleblast.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/rocket-city-e-bikes-competition-3.jpeg?resize=1024%2C483&ssl=1>



Decatur-Morgan County E-Center Pop-Up 2.0 event in Somerville, AL

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=809842650935377&set=pcb.809848227601486>

## GOAL 2 BUILD A RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Build a resilient & sustainable regional economy to withstand economic shocks, pandemics, natural, man-made, etc.

### Lawrence County:

- First Solar announced a \$1M new plant at Mallard Fox West Industrial Park creating 715 new jobs

### NARCOG:

- Continued to successfully administer and market the **Accelerate Business Growth Fund (RLF)** program
- Regional Hazard Mitigation Plans (Divisions E& F); *On-going plan maintenance*
- Began the implementation phase of the **Red Stone Joint Land Use Study (JLUS)** with TARCOG for the part of Morgan County that is in the affected area
- Purchased stormshelter for Berlin – \$75,000 grant from NARCOG
- Purchased equipment for Lawrence County Volunteer Fire Department Association

## GOAL 3 BUILD A RESILIENT REGIONAL WORKFORCE ECOSYSTEM

Build a resilient regional workforce ecosystem through education, healthcare, housing, childcare, etc.

### Cullman County:

- Wallace State Community College in Hanceville: Providing Healthcare Professionals to Rural Communities & Medically Underserved Areas  
ARC Grant – \$269,772/\$539,544; *Funded*

### Calhoun Community College:

- STEAM: Merging Art with Technology and Engineering project  
ARC Grant – \$108,800/\$252,356; *Funded*

### NARCOG:

- Prepared and submitted ARC SAAW & EDA grants for:
  - Lawrence County Board of Education's Career Tech Center Expansion – \$1,000,000/ARC SAAW; *Funded*
  - Lawrence County Board of Education's Career Tech Center Expansion – \$2,000,000/EDA; *Pending*
- Prepared and submitted a USDA RBEG grant for Pop-Up 2.0 for the Decatur Morgan County E-Center – \$105,000; *Underway*



First Solar plant under construction

Source: [https://www.moultonadvertiser.com/news/local/article\\_12dd51c2-1b4b-11ee-af57-6b122409d7ae.html](https://www.moultonadvertiser.com/news/local/article_12dd51c2-1b4b-11ee-af57-6b122409d7ae.html)

# GOAL 4

## BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE REGION

**Build resilient infrastructure for the region including broadband, planes, trains, automobiles, bike/ped, transit, ports, water, sewer, drainage, electric, etc.**

### **Cullman County:**

- Cullman County Road and Drainage Improvements: **CDBG Grant** – \$500,000; *Funded*
- Good Hope Sewer System Improvements: **ARC Grant** – \$250,000/\$687,108; *Funded*
- AL Hwy 57 widening and bridge project – over \$14M; *Completed*

### **Lawrence County:**

- Town Creek Sewer Improvements: **CDBG Grant** - \$400,000; *Not Funded*

### **Morgan County:**

- Priceville Upper River Road/Bethel Road Sidewalk project: **ALDOT TAP Grant** - \$798,168/\$997,710; *Funded*
- Dr. Bill Simms Hike/Bike Way on the Singing River Trail: Reconnecting Old Town to Decatur’s Riverfront: **RCN Grant** - \$17M; *Pending*

### **NARCOG:**

- Previously prepared and submitted 2 **RTP grants** (equipment [Closed-Out] & bridge/trail improvements) for Cullman County’s Stony Lonesome OHV Park – \$500,000; *Closeout Underway*
- Previously prepared and submitted **CDBG grants** for the following towns:
  - Colony Road Improvements – \$400,000; *Funded; grant administration underway*
  - Garden City Sewer Improvements – \$350,000; *Funded; grant administration underway*
  - Falkville Drainage Improvements – \$350,000; *Funded; grant administration underway*
  - Hillsboro – Stormwater Drainage – \$350,000; *Funded; Closeout underway*
  - Moulton – Sewer Improvements – \$500,000; *Not Funded*

- Previously prepared and submitted an **ARC grant** for Moulton Sewer Improvements – \$198,627/\$283,753; *Funded; grant administration underway*
- Prepared and submitted an **ARC SAAW grant** for Infrastructure Improvements for First Solar – \$1,000,000; *Funded*
- Prepared and submitted a **CDBG-ED grant** for Infrastructure Improvements for First Solar – \$1,500,000; *Funded*
- Previously prepared and submitted an **ARC grant** for Falkville Drainage Improvements – \$98,541/\$197,082; *Funded; grant administration underway*
- Continued to improve the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) rural transportation planning program and implementation of the **FY23 Work Program** activities including administration, GIS data management and mapping, reports, public involvement, and committee service; *On-going*
  - Staff held ALDOT STIP public involvement meetings in the Region
  - Staff held RPO Committee meetings in the Region
  - Staff completed the West Point Street Assessment
- Previously prepared and re-submitted **ALDOT Rebuild Alabama Act (RAA) grants** for the following towns:
  - Colony Road Improvements – \$250,000; *Not Funded*
  - Eva Road and Safety Improvements to Sanders Road – \$250,000; *Not Funded*
  - Garden City Rehab CR 26 (Roland Johnson Parkway) from US HWY 31 to town limits – \$250,000; *Funded*
  - Hillsboro Repave and stripe Oakdale Avenue between CR 217 and 400 – \$250,000; *Not Funded*
  - Fairview Resurface Wesley Avenue – \$235,000; *Funded*
- Continued to provide clearinghouse services in support of local water and sewer projects funded through the **ADEM CWSRF and DWSRF programs**; *On-going*
- Tennessee River Bridge Feasibility Study – \$1M **ARC SAAW**; *Funded and Underway*

# GOAL 5 BUILD A RESILIENT, REGIONAL TOURISM-BASED ECONOMY

**Build a resilient, regional tourism-based economy to leverage our assets (cultural, natural, & historical assets, downtowns, trails, etc.)**

## **Cullman County:**

- Trail and bridge improvements at Stoney Lonesome OHV Park; *Complete*

## **Lawrence County:**

- Lawrence County selected to participate in the Tennessee “RiverTown” Program by Tennessee RiverLine

## **Morgan County:**

- Dr. Bill Simms Hike/Bike Way on the Singing River Trail: Reconnecting Old Town to Decatur’s Riverfront; **RCN Grant – \$17M**; *Pending*
- Downtown Decatur Redevelopment Authority – **Johnston Street Alley Project**; *Complete*
- “Hartselle For Tomorrow 501C3 Chamber Foundation” purchased the Old Post Office Building Downtown

## **NARCOG:**

- Continued working on the **Lawrence County Master Trail Plan** & held community meetings; *Completed*
- Participation with the North Alabama Trails and Recreation (NATR) and the Singing River Trail (SRT) planning initiatives
- Attendance at **Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, RC&D, and NATR** meetings



One of the Johnston Street Alley project murals

Source: <https://hvilleblast.com/6-beautiful-murals-to-check-out-in-decatur/>

# GOAL 6

## BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL COMMUNITY LEADERS & CAPACITY

Build resilient regional community leaders & capacity through partnerships, training, planning, etc.

### Lawrence County:

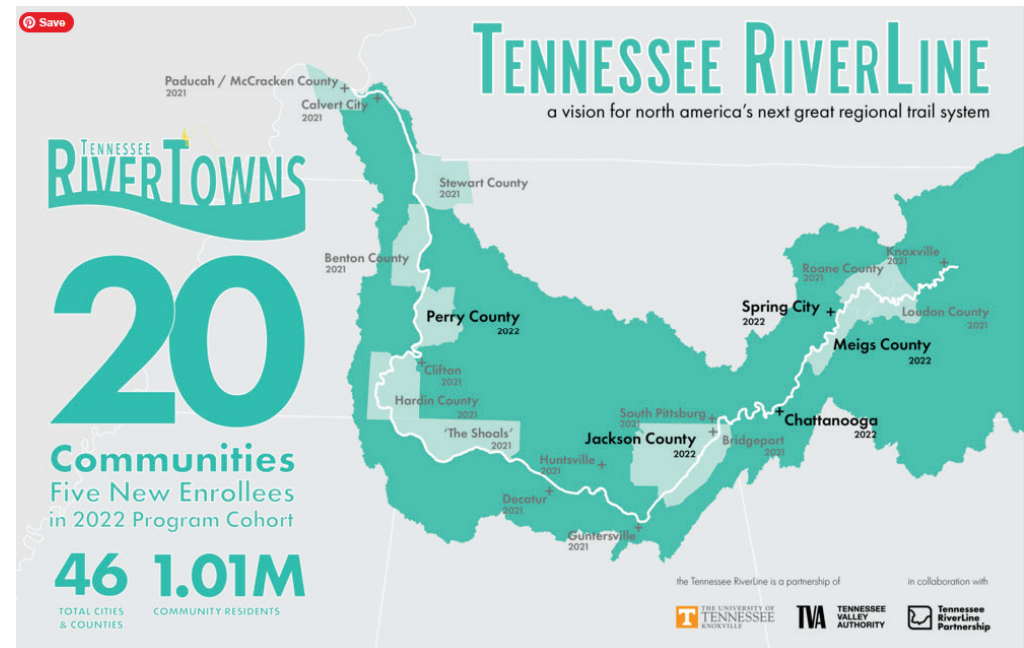
- Lawrence County selected to participate in the Tennessee “RiverTown” Program by Tennessee RiverLine

### Morgan County:

- Hartselle Area Chamber of Commerce establishes the “Hartselle For Tomorrow 501C3 Chamber Foundation”

### NARCOG:

- Began work on the **Hartselle Comprehensive Plan Update**
- Submitted **Lawrence County** to the Tennessee RiverLine’s “RiverTown’s Program”; *Selected*
- Completed work on the Division F **Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan**; *Complete*
- Provided FEMA FIRM flood maps and information to citizens upon request
- Continued to serve on the Alabama Association of Regional Council’s (AARC) **Planning Task Force** that is charged with coordinating and developing regional and statewide economic development and planning projects
- Serves on the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) **Ambassador’s Council**
- Supporting and partnering with the Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA), Main Street Alabama, DesignAlabama, and Your Town Alabama, etc.



Above: 2022 Program enrollees. Lawrence County is now selected as a Tennessee RiverTown in the 2023 Program

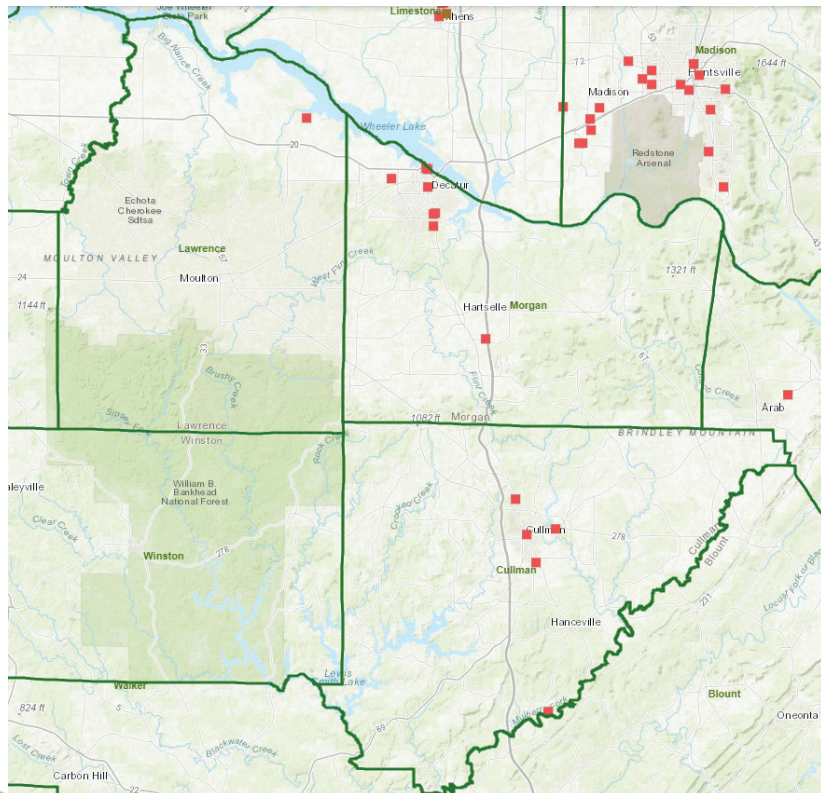
Source: <https://www.tnriverline.org/rivertowns>

# PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES UPDATE

## BROWNFIELD INITIATIVE

A brownfield is defined as land that has been previously developed for industrial or commercial use that has possibly been compromised by contamination. Brownfields are typically compromised by a hazardous substance, contaminant, or pollutant. Although compromised, brownfields can be redeveloped and reused if properly assessed and remediated. The redevelopment of remediated brownfields can help the local economy, create jobs, and expand the tax base while preserving undeveloped land (or "greenfields") and restoring land that has already been developed in the past.

The EPA's Brownfields Program provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse contaminated properties. NARCOG has and will continue to strive to establish a Regional Brownfield Initiative through obtaining funding for assessments from the EPA. In the meantime, NARCOG will continue to partner with ADEM and their Brownfields Program.



[Link to ADEM'S map of Alabama Brownfields](#) as shown in the image to the left.

## ALABAMA COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE (ACE)

- Hartselle
  - NARCOG – Mentor
  - Comprehensive Plan Update (Underway)
- Hanceville
  - NARCOG – Team Captain
- The following communities are eligible to participate in the ACE Program:
  - Cullman
  - Good Hope
  - Moulton
  - Priceville
  - Trinity

## REGIONAL DOWNTOWN NETWORK INITIATIVE

- Walkability Audit Projects Implementation - *Underway*

# ACCELERATE BUSINESS GROWTH FUND

NARCOG operates a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program intended to assist small businesses and industries throughout the region with gap financing. This program was rebranded in 2020 to the Accelerate Business Growth Fund. The NARCOG program has been very successful over the years and is partially funded by EDA.

Program information is made available at: NARCOG, local Chambers, industrial development associations, Decatur-Morgan Entrepreneurial Center, local banks, all member governments, and online at [www.narcog.org](http://www.narcog.org). For the period October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023, the Accelerate Business Growth Fund has done the following:

- Loan Inquiries: 5
- Loan applications received: 5
- Loan applications reviewed: 5
- Applications/Loans approved: 5
- Loans closed: 3
- Loan Review Committee Meetings: 4
- Active Loans: 53

## Small Business Fund Program Loan Activity Since October 1, 2022



	AMOUNT	PRIVATE FUNDS LEVERAGED	JOBS CREATED	JOBS RETAINED
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$95,000	\$148,750	0	5

**Funding opportunities to strengthen your business.**

[narcog.org](http://narcog.org)  
(256) 355-4515



**Accelerate**  
BUSINESS GROWTH FUND

# NEW AND EXPANDING INDUSTRY

In terms of patterns and trends, employment continues to be the primary gauge in analyzing or measuring the economy of the NARCOG EDD and its service area. The following table reflects the number of new and expanding industries along with the corresponding amounts of capital investment and jobs created within the NARCOG EDD service area of Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. Also, these numbers, provided by our local economic development agencies, represent what has been “announced” during this time period, and it may be several years in some cases before the actual private investment and, most importantly, the jobs are actually created.



## New & Expanding Industry: FY2023

	CULLMAN COUNTY	LAWRENCE COUNTY	MORGAN COUNTY	NARCOG REGION
Total New Companies:	0	2	1	6
Total New Jobs:	0	800	200	1,036
Total New Capital Investment:	\$0	\$1,154,200,000	\$125,000,000	\$1,286,830,000
Total Expanding Companies:	28	0	11	38
Total Expanding Jobs:	643	0	191	790
Total Expanding Capital Investment:	\$488,997,600	\$0	\$129,621,632	\$286,560,806
<b>Total New &amp; Expanding Companies:</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Total New &amp; Expanding Jobs:</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>1,834</b>
<b>Total New &amp; Expanding Investments:</b>	<b>\$488,997,600</b>	<b>\$1,154,200,000</b>	<b>\$254,621,632</b>	<b>\$1,897,819,232</b>

**Sources:** Cullman Economic Development Agency  
 Lawrence County Industrial Development Board  
 Morgan County Economic Development Agency



# SELECTED ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

## Cullman County

- "Gov. Kay Ivey has awarded a \$200,000 grant to improve a Cullman County road which will pave the way for the expansion of a local industry that plans to hire 50 new employees. The Community Development Block Grant will be used to rehabilitate, reconstruct and resurface Cullman County Road 222. The road serves as the only access to North Alabama Fabricating Co. and Topre America Corp."

Source: <https://adeca.alabama.gov/2023/06/14/gov-ivey-awards-grant-to-aid-expansion-of-cullman-manufacturer/>

- Alabama Highway 157 widening and bridge project in Cullman – +/- \$14M; Completed

Source: <https://www.wbrc.com/2023/05/02/cullman-highway-157-widening-project-finally-complete/>



## Lawrence County

- \$1.1 Billion First Solar Project

Sources: <https://governor.alabama.gov/newsroom/2022/11/governor-ivey-announces-first-solar-to-open-1-1-billion-alabama-facility-creating-over-700-clean-energy-manufacturing-jobs-in-lawrence-county/>

<https://www.madeinalabama.com/2022/11/first-solar-plans-1-1-billion-alabama-manufacturing-facility-with-700-jobs/>

[https://www.moultonadvertiser.com/news/article\\_d8ceb0a0-70c5-11ed-acbc-37e0510b6ee6.html](https://www.moultonadvertiser.com/news/article_d8ceb0a0-70c5-11ed-acbc-37e0510b6ee6.html)

<https://aldailynews.com/1-5-million-grant-awarded-to-solar-plant-project-in-lawrence-county/>

<https://yellowhammernews.com/ivey-announces-1m-grant-for-lawrence-county-solar-plant-project/>



## Morgan County

- "City Harbor" style project near Ingalls Harbor

Sources: <https://www.dcc.org/2023/04/17/decaturn-city-council-approves-agreement-for-riverfront-development-near-ingalls-harbor/>  
<https://positivelydecaturn.com/ingalls-harbor-is-positively-expanding-with-a-new-development-coming-soon/>

- Scottsboro Boys Museum, Judge Horton Home, Civil Rights District and Trail

Sources: <https://www.rocketcitynow.com/article/news/local/historic-horton-house-completes-move-will-be-centerpiece-of-scottsboro-boys-civil-rights-museum-decaturn/525-36cbd212-3da2-49d3-8672-076bb5cd9744>  
<https://whnt.com/news/decaturn/historic-home-of-scottsboro-boys-trial-judge-completes-move-to-decaturn/>

- 2023 Public Policy Agenda for the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce

Sources: <https://www.dcc.org/assets/pdf/2023+Decatur-Morgan+County+Chamber+Of+Commerce+Public+Policy+Agenda/>  
<https://www.dcc.org/development/>

- "Spotlight on Limestone & Morgan: Community Development – These two counties are building several new residential developments, making improvements to schools and more"

Source: <https://businessalabama.com/spotlight-on-limestone-morgan-community-development/>



Conceptual renderings of the future "City Harbor" development near Ingalls Harbor

Source: <https://positivelydecaturn.com/ingalls-harbor-is-positively-expanding-with-a-new-development-coming-soon/>



Left: The Judge Horton Home moved to its final place in Decatur's Old Town right next to the Bates House

Right: A rendering of the future Scottsboro Boys Museum in the Bates House

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/584476451692194/>



- Tennessee RiverLine “RiverTowns” Program and partnership with the Singing River Trail – Decatur as a RiverTown and the potential redevelopment of Rhodes Ferry Park

Sources: <https://www.tnriverline.org/riverline-spotlights>

<https://www.tnriverline.org/new/tennessee-riverline-and-singing-river-trail-announce-collaborative-partnership>

- "Governor Kay Ivey today announced that Nucor Corp. plans to invest approximately \$125 million to open an advanced manufacturing facility in Alabama where a new business unit, Nucor Towers & Structures, will produce transmission towers."

Source: <https://governor.alabama.gov/newsroom/2023/02/governor-ivey-announces-nucor-corp-plans-125-million-facility-creating-200-jobs-in-north-alabama/>

- Continued growth planned for Morgan Center Business Park as the new 270,000-square-foot Cerrowire plant opens

Source: <https://hartselleenquirer.com/2023/06/14/continued-growth-planned-for-morgan-center-business-park-as-new-plant-opens/>



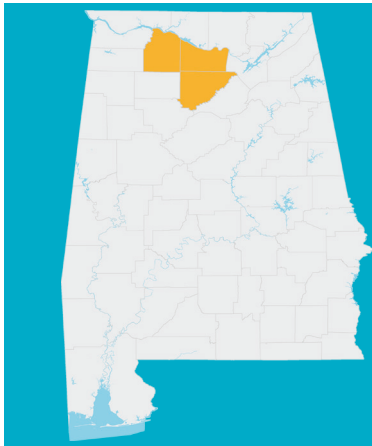
Conceptual renderings of proposed enhancements to Rhodes Ferry Park by the Tennessee RiverLine for Decatur as a RiverTown

Source: <https://vimeo.com/user21512992>

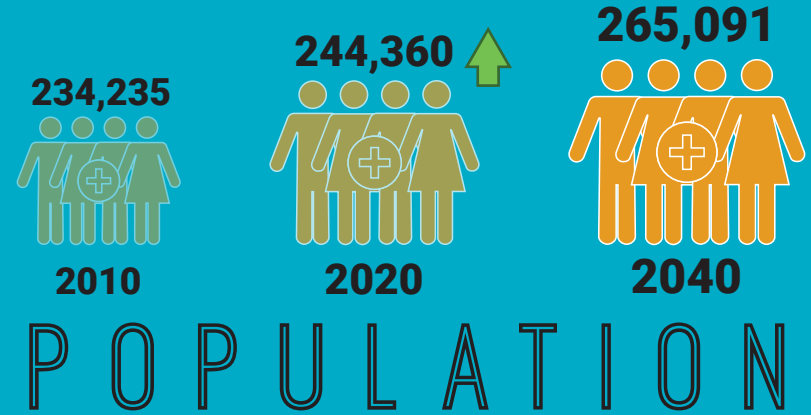


Cerrowire ribbon cutting in Hartselle

Source: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cerrowire-launches-mc-cable-lineup-301864827.html>



# NARCOOG REGION



## HOUSING



Housing units	107,165	↑
Vacancy	13.3%	↓
Housing units with no vehicle	4.3%	

## EDUCATION

84.3%	Age 25+ with ≥ high school diploma	↑
19.5%	Age 25+ with ≥ bachelor degree	↑

## HEALTH

10.6%	Population with no health insurance	
14.2%	Food insecurity rate	↓
13.5%	Child food insecurity rate	↓

## TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Decatur Morgan Hospital
- Wal-Mart Distribution
- GE Appliances, a Haier company
- Cullman Regional Medical Center
- Decatur City Schools
- Cullman County Schools
- Wayne Farms Prepared Foods
- Topre America Corporation
- Morgan County Schools
- 3M Company

## EMPLOYMENT

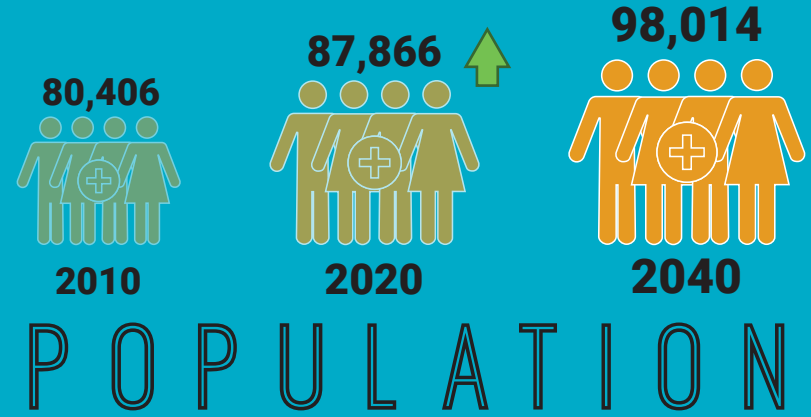
116,823	Total labor force	↑
2,399	Unemployed	↓
2.05%	Unemployment rate	↓

## ECONOMY

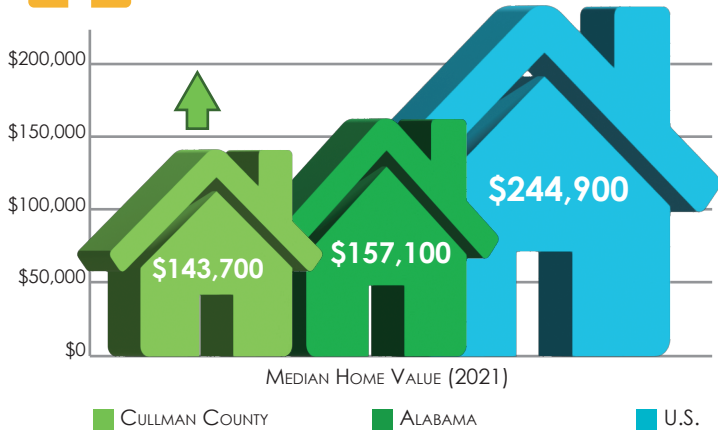
\$11,416,630,000	Total personal income	↑
\$4,205,264,340	State Assessed Value	↑
20.4%	Public assisted households	↓
\$45,512	Per capita income	↑
\$53,135	Annual wages per employee	↑



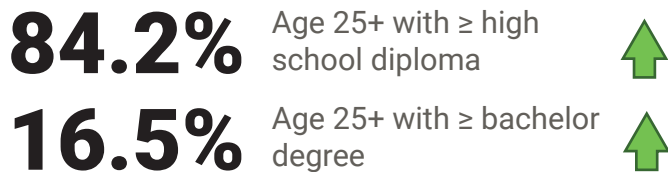
# CULLMAN COUNTY



## HOUSING



## EDUCATION



 Wallace State Community College  
5,965 enrolled students

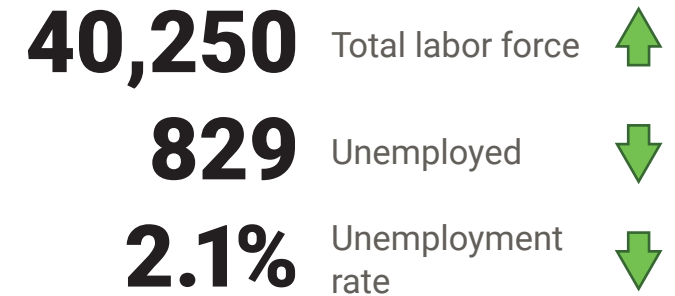
## HEALTH



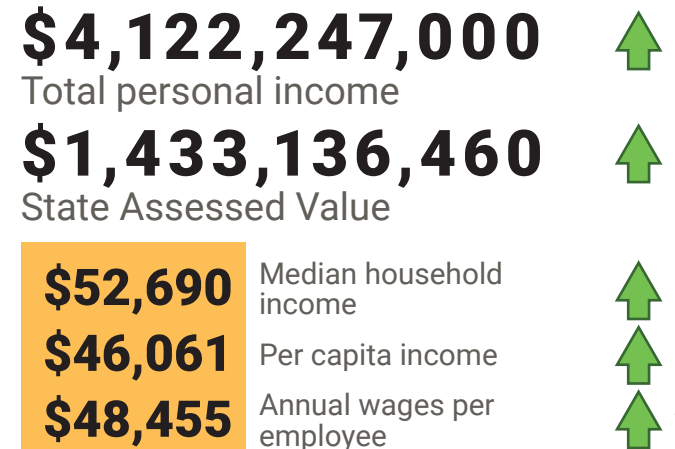
## TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Wal-Mart Distribution
- Cullman Regional Medical Center
- Cullman County Schools
- Topre America Corporation
- Wal-Mart Super Center North/South
- REHAU
- City of Cullman
- Reliance Worldwide
- Cullman County Commission
- Yutaka Technologies

## EMPLOYMENT

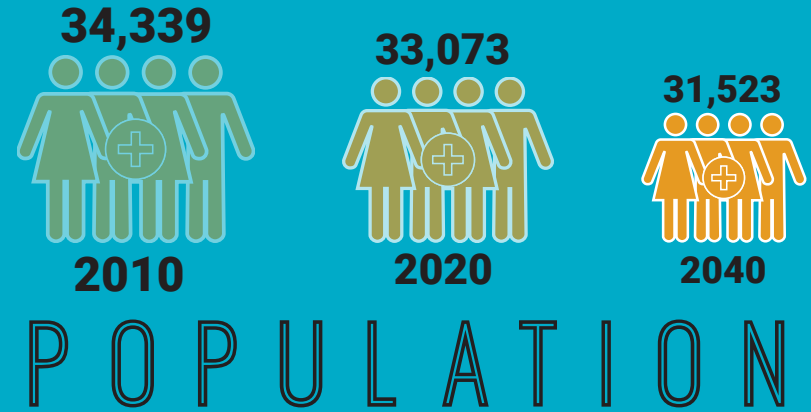


## ECONOMY

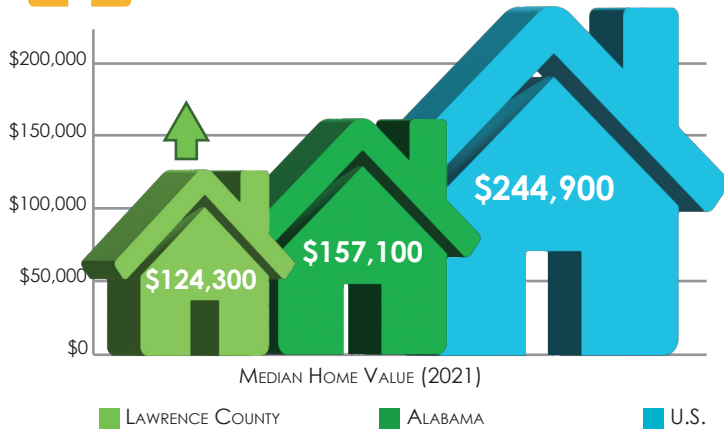




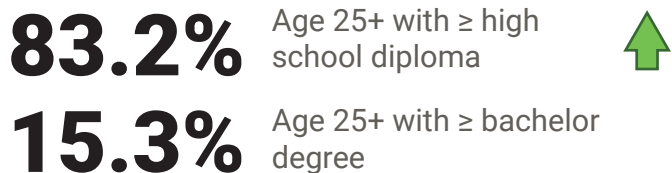
# LAWRENCE COUNTY



## HOUSING



## EDUCATION



## HEALTH



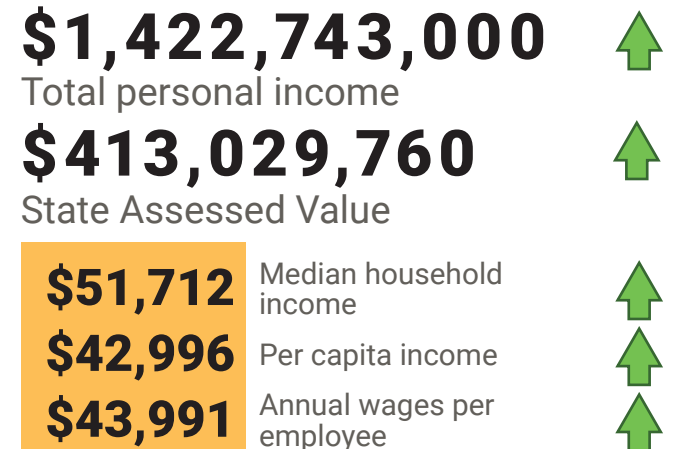
### TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Lawrence County School System
- Wal-Mart
- Lawrence County Medical Center
- Lawrence County Commission
- Jack Daniel Cooperage
- Lockheed Martin Space Systems
- Joe Wheeler EMC
- Nucor Tubular Products
- Country Brook Design
- City of Moulton

## EMPLOYMENT

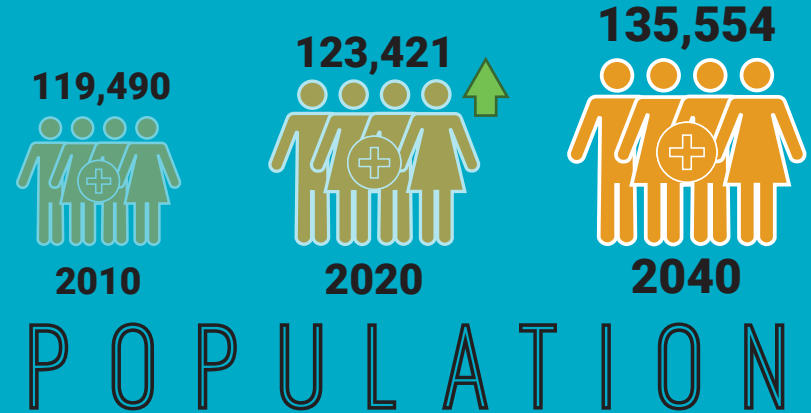


## ECONOMY

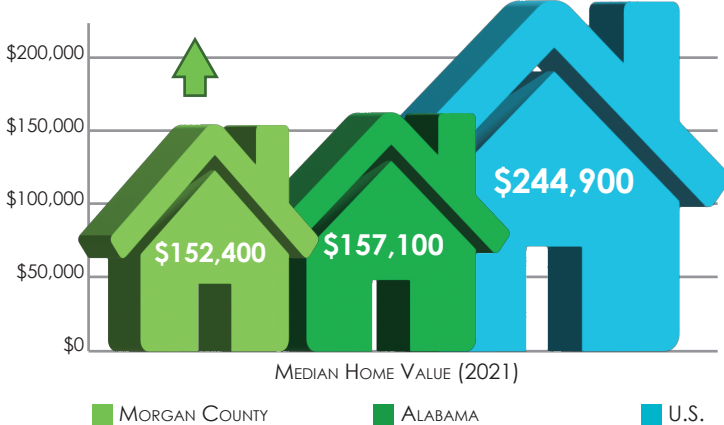




# MORGAN COUNTY



## HOUSING



## EDUCATION

**84.7%** Age 25+ with ≥ high school diploma

**22.8%** Age 25+ with ≥ bachelor degree



\*Calhoun Community College  
 9,736 enrolled students

\*Physical location is in Decatur city limits, but in Limestone County

## HEALTH

**10.8%** Population with no health insurance

**13.8%** Food insecurity rate

**14.5%** Child food insecurity rate

## TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Decatur Morgan Hospital
- GE Appliances, a Haier company
- Decatur City Schools
- Wayne Farms Prepared Foods
- Morgan County Schools
- 3M Company
- Nucor Steel
- Wayne Farms Fresh Facility
- United Launch Alliance
- City of Decatur

## EMPLOYMENT

**61,663** Total labor force

**1,229** Unemployed

**2.0%** Unemployment rate

## ECONOMY

**\$5,871,640,000** Total personal income

**\$2,359,098,120** State Assessed Value

**\$56,128** Median household income

**\$47,479** Per capita income

**\$56,816** Annual wages per employee

## A RESOLUTION

### NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Resolution Number 2024-0002

#### 2023 CEDS Annual Performance Report

**WHEREAS**, the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) Board of Director's recognizes the importance of creating employment opportunities and promoting a stable and diversified economy throughout our Economic Development District (EDD) as designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and

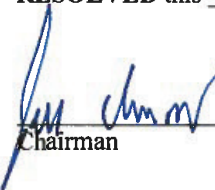
**WHEREAS**, the NARCOG EDD is required by EDA to prepare and maintain a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as part of its annual work program, and


**WHEREAS**, the Building For The Future: 2022 – 2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was approved and adopted by the NARCOG Board of Directors to cover the five-year period from 2022 to 2027, and Annual Reports are required for the intervening four-year period from 2023 to 2026, and

**WHEREAS**, the NARCOG staff, CEDS Strategy Committee, and stakeholders have undertaken and completed the performance measures review and input, economic research, data updates, and analysis required by EDA resulting in the 2023 CEDS Annual Performance Report,

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NARCOG Board of Director's approves and adopts the NARCOG EDD's 2023 CEDS Annual Performance Report.

**RESOLVED** this 13<sup>th</sup> day of December 2023

  
Chairman

  
Executive Director





# B REFERENCES

## DATA SOURCES:

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), The University of Alabama, 2023
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) 2021 CA1 Personal Income Summary: Personal Income, Population, Per Capita Personal Income
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2022 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), County High-Level Annual Averages
- Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR), 2020 Annual Report (2019 data)
- Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL), Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Civilian Labor Force by County, September 2023 Unemployment Data
- Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, 2021 State Data Tables by county for Alabama
- Cullman County Top Employers:
  - Cullman Economic Development Agency (CEDA) – <https://www.cullmaneda.org/workforce/largest-employers>
- Morgan County Top Employers:
  - Morgan County Economic Development Association (MCEDA)
- Lawrence County Top Employers:
  - Lawrence County Industrial Development Board
- (Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce)  
<https://www.dcc.org/assets/pdf/2301-107+Chamber+Of+Commerce+Booklet+2023+May+Update/>

## DISCLAIMER

Neither the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) nor any employees thereof, make any warranty, expressed or implied, or assume any legal liability or responsibility, for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information contained on these maps. Linear and Spatial Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau 2022 TIGER/Line Shapefiles. Maps produced by North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments, 2023.

# C<sup>2</sup> MAPS & REVISED STRATEGIES

## DEFINITIONS:

**Opportunity Zones** - A new community investment tool established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. Opportunity Zones provide a tax incentive for investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into dedicated Opportunity Funds. There are 158 Census tracts that are designated Opportunity Zones distributed across all 67 counties in Alabama.

<https://eig.org/opportunityzones>

<https://adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/OpportunityZones/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>

<https://opportunityalabama.com/>

There are 4 designated opportunity zones in the NARCOG region. Two of them are in Cullman County, which are Tract 9648 (01043964800) and Tract 9650 (01043965000). There is also one tract in Lawrence County, which is Tract 9791 (01079979100), and one tract in Morgan County, which is Tract 1 (01103000100).

\*See map on following page

**New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program incentivizes** business and real estate investment in low-income communities of the United States via a federal tax credit. The program is administered by the US Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and allocated by local Community Development Entities (CDEs) across the United States. The New Markets Tax Credit Program was established as part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000.

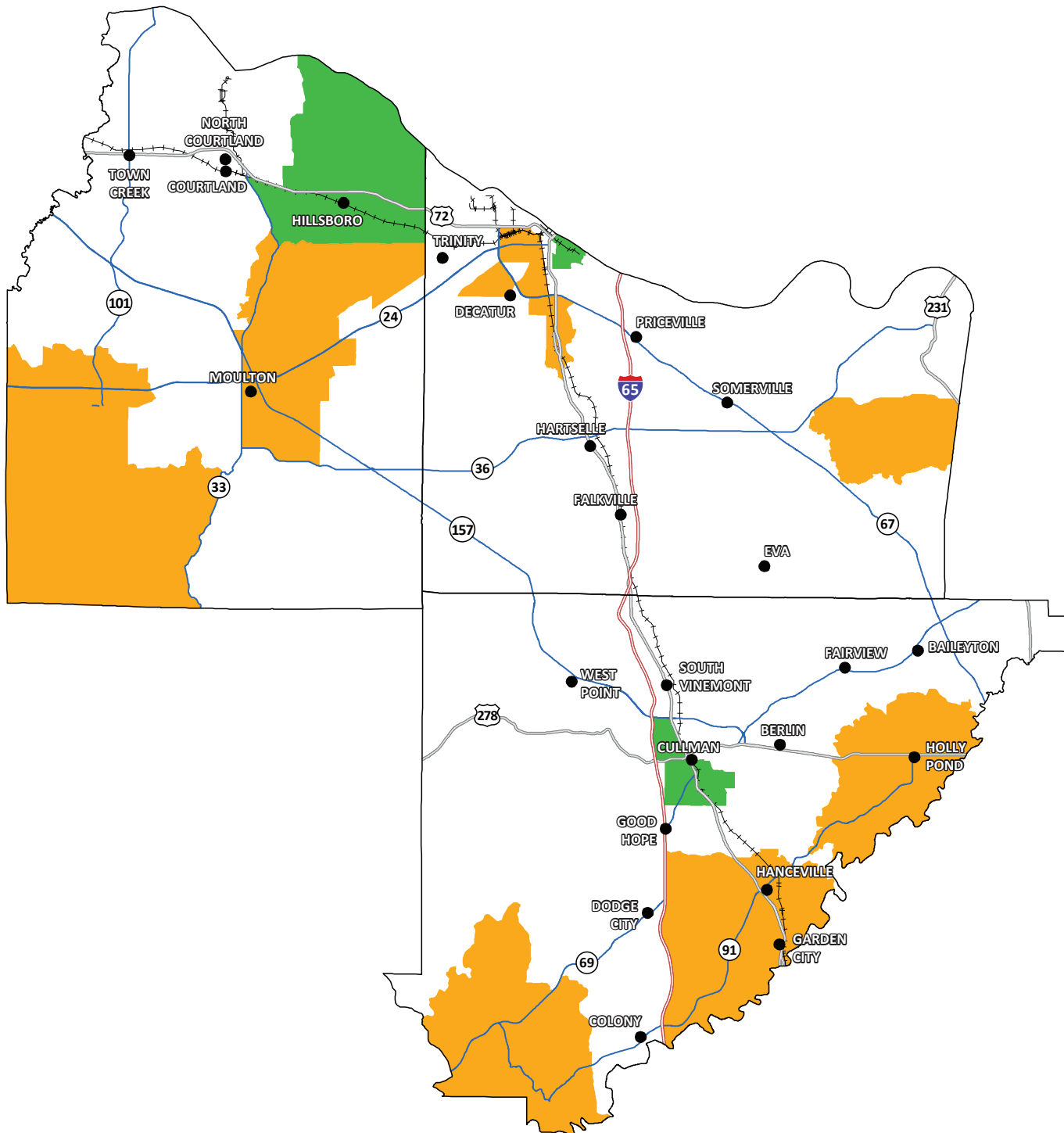
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Markets\\_Tax\\_Credit\\_Program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Markets_Tax_Credit_Program)

\*See map on following page

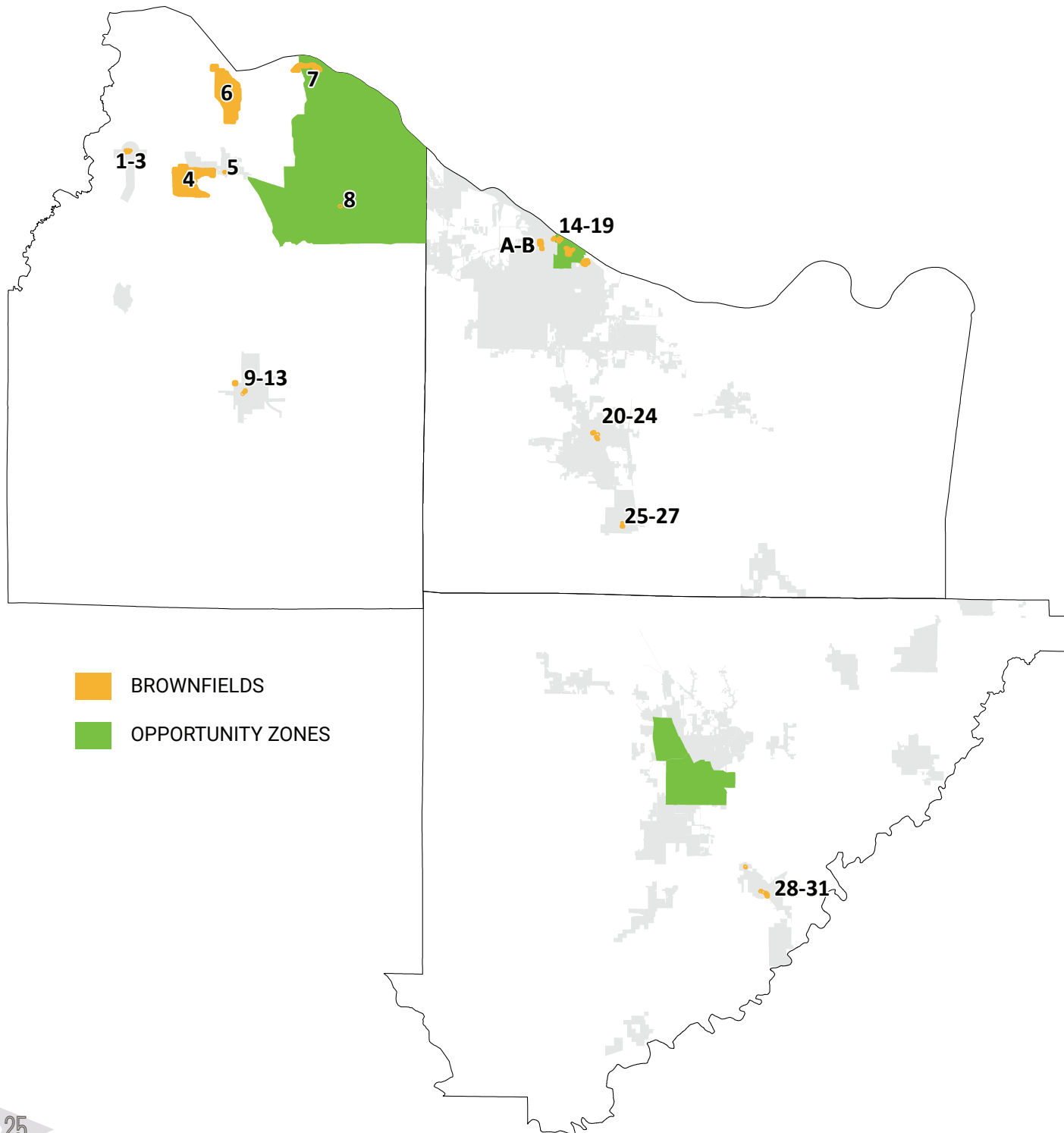
## **Revised Strategies to Support the CEDS Goals**

While working the last year to implement the goals established in the 2022 CEDS, some gaps were recognized in the existing supporting strategies. The following is the original six goals with accompanying objectives and strategies from the 2022 CEDS along with newly identified objectives and strategies in 2023 (indicated in **Red**) to better support the implementation of the NARCOG's CEDS.

### OPPORTUNITY ZONE AND NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT (NMTC) QUALIFIED TRACTS



- NMTC QUALIFIED
- OPPORTUNITY ZONE *AND* NMTC QUALIFIED



- BROWNFIELDS
- OPPORTUNITY ZONES

**Lawrence County**

- 1.) Hazelwood School (925 Wallace St, Town Creek)
- 2.) Warehouse (499 Factory St, Town Creek)
- 3.) Warehouse (452 Factory St, Town Creek)
- 4.) Lawrence Co Industrial Airpark/Courtland Airport (Lindburgh St, Courtland)
- 5.) Abandoned warehouses (240 College St, Courtland)
- 6.) Demolished International Paper mill (CR-150, Courtland)
- 7.) West Morgan-East Lawrence Water Treatment Facility (6505 CR-400, Hillsboro)
- 8.) Abandoned pawn shop/gas station (Approximately 11569 Main St, Hillsboro)
- 9.) Sewage plant (120 Beacon St, Moulton)
- 10.) Abandoned lot (14438 Market St, Moulton)
- 11.) Old Courthouse Annex (750 Main St, Moulton)
- 12.) Old automotive and miscellaneous buildings (14459 and 14485 Court St, Moulton)
- 13.) Old auto shop and other building (715 and 753 Spring St, Moulton)

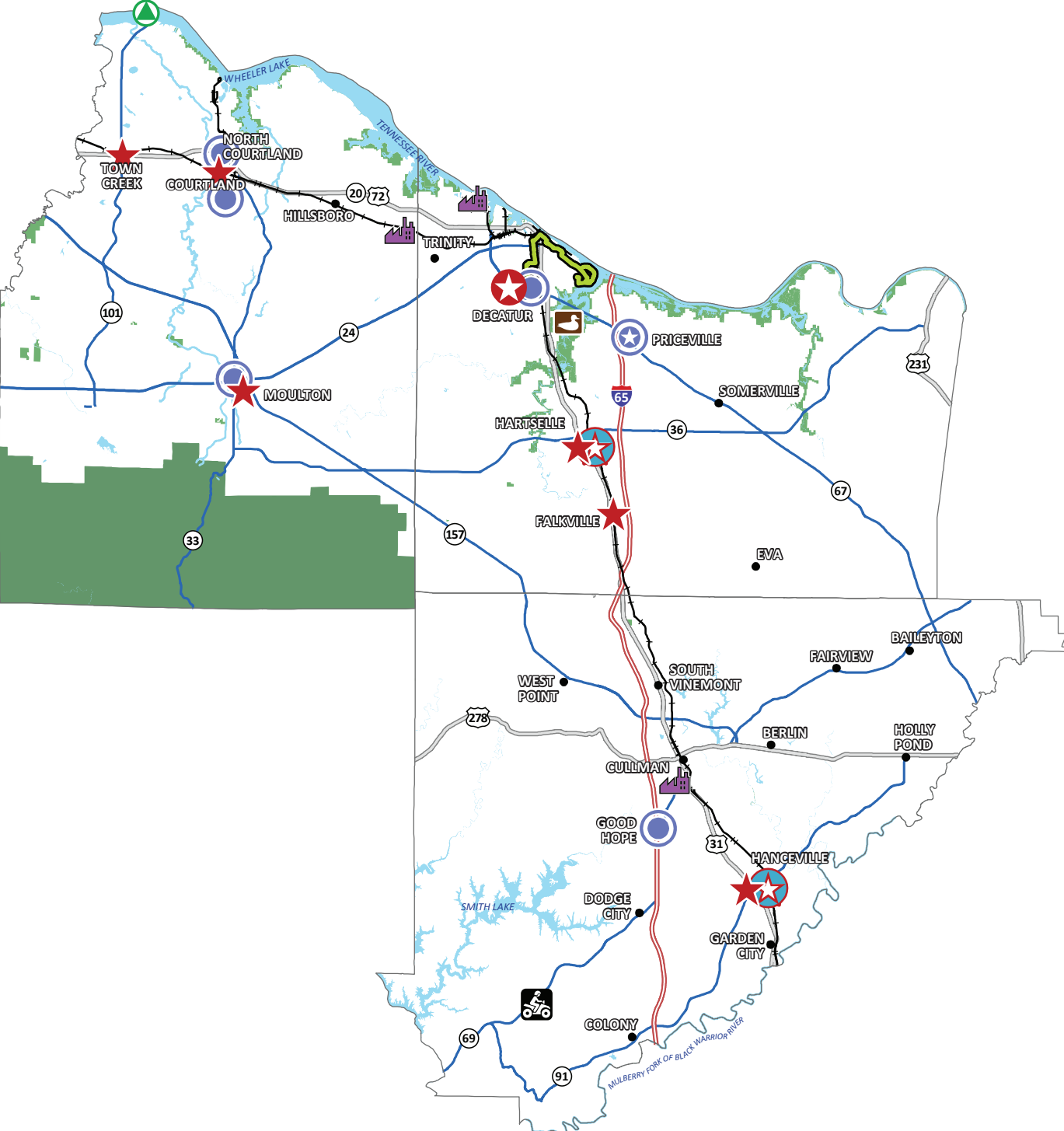
**Morgan County**

- 14.) Gateway Opportunity Zone - warehouses (616 Church St NE)
- 15.) Gateway Opportunity Zone - abandoned building (620 Wilson St NE, Decatur)
- 16.) Waterfront Opportunity Zone - Stone Lumber Company property (1100 Somerville Rd NE, Decatur)
- 17.) Hyosung Warehouse/Factory (500 19th Ave SE, Decatur)
- 18.) Parcel for waterfront access on Wolverine property (2100 Market St SE, Decatur)
- 19.) Undeveloped GE waterfront property (between 2519 and 2400 Point Mallard Dr SE, Decatur)
- 20.) Demolished hospital (201 Pine St NW, Hartselle)
- 21.) Vacant gas station (121 Main St E, Hartselle)
- 22.) Gas station (201 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 23.) Gas station (200 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 24.) Old auto shop (532 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 25.) Vacant gas station and car wash (property north of 4662 US-31, Falkville)
- 26.) Vacant building (8 W 2nd St, Falkville)
- 27.) Vacant Drinkard Chevrolet auto building (120 Grissom Way or Corner of E 2nd St and N 1st Ave, Falkville)
- A.) Warehouses (2 Moulton St, Decatur)
- B.) Warehouse (402 1st Ave SW, Decatur)

**Cullman County**

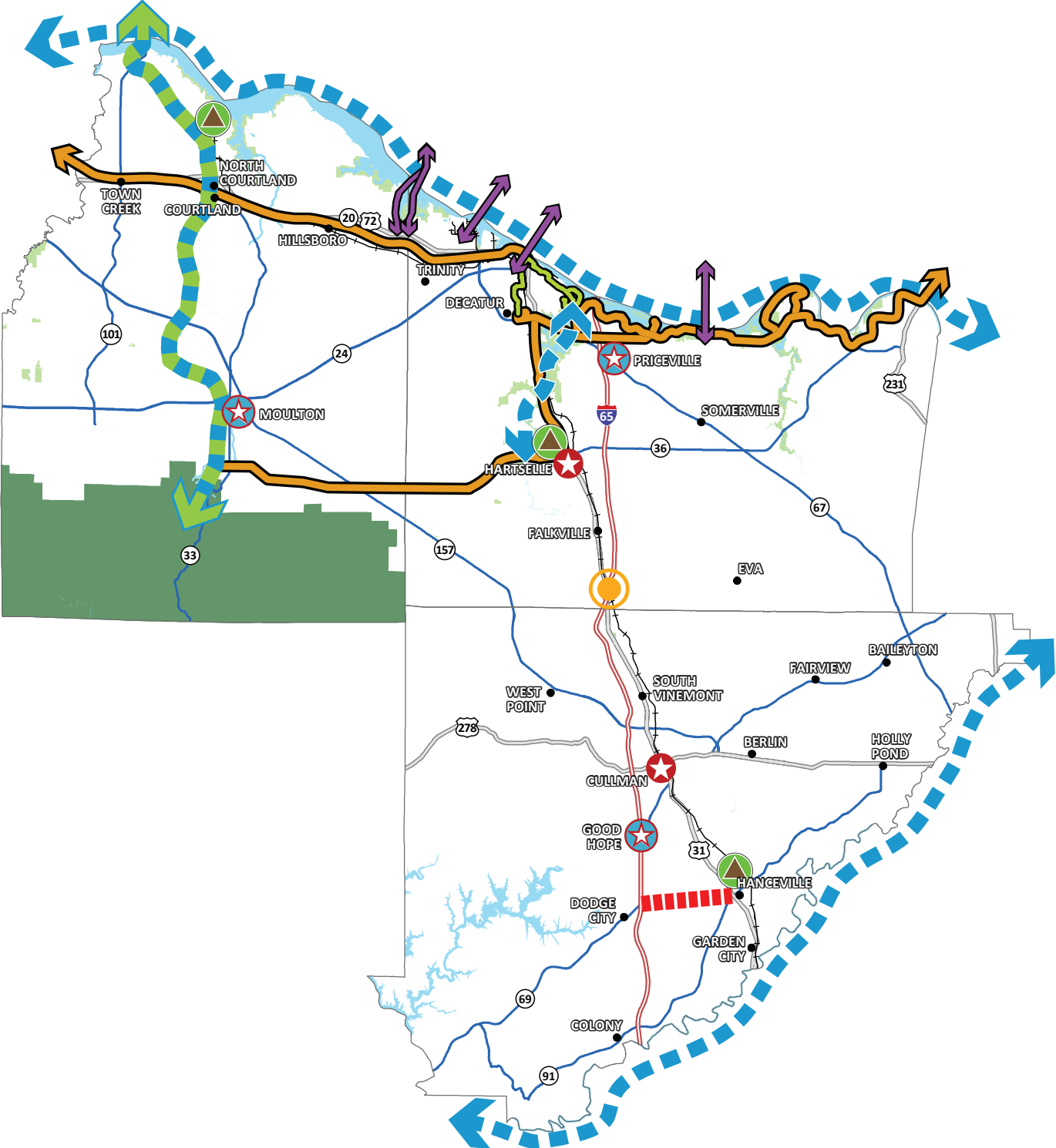
- 28.) Vacant buildings (Corner of Magnolia Ave NE and Arkadelphia Rd, Hanceville)
- 29.) Abandoned gas station (110 Main St NE, Hanceville)
- 30.) Abandoned warehouse (Approximately 504 Bangor Ave, Hanceville)
- 31.) Public Works buildings (Corner of Park St and Main St/US-31, Hanceville)

# REGIONAL STRATEGIC EXISTING ASSETS MAP



- PLACES
- COUNTIES
- WATER
- BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST
- PROTECTED AREAS
- RAILROAD
- ROAD TYPE**
- INTERSTATE
- STATE
- U.S.
- REGIONAL INITIATIVES & ASSETS**
- EXISTING TRAILS
- 🏍️ STONY LONESOME OHV PARK
- 🌐 DESIGN ALABAMA MAYORS DESIGN SUMMIT
- 🌐 DESIGN ALABAMA MAYORS DESIGN SUMMIT & DESIGNPLACE
- 🌟 DESIGNATED ACE COMMUNITY
- 🌟 MSAL DESIGNATED COMMUNITY
- 🌟 DOWNTOWN NETWORK COMMUNITY
- 🌳 JOE WHEELER STATE PARK CABINS
- 🦆 WHEELER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
- 🏭 INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS

# REGIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MAP



- PLACES
  - COUNTIES
  - WATER
  - BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST
  - PROTECTED AREAS
  - RAILROAD
- ROAD TYPE**
- INTERSTATE
  - STATE
  - U.S.
- PROPOSED**
- ★ DESIGNATED ACE COMMUNITY
  - ★ MSAL DESIGNATED COMMUNITY
  - PROPOSED GREENWAY TRAILS
  - EXISTING TRAILS
  - BIG NANCE CREEK BLUE/GREENWAY TRAIL
  - BLUEWAY TRAILS
  - BRIDGE/ROAD OVER TENNESSEE RIVER
  - ROAD FROM DODGE CITY TO HANCEVILLE
  - INLAND PORT AT LACON/US-31/I-65
  - ▲ BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

# GOAL 1

## BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL BUSINESSES

**Build resilient regional businesses through Innovation & Entrepreneurship (industry, financing, incentives, etc.)**

**1.1** Invest in next generation entrepreneurial and business development strategies

**1.1.1** Support the expansion of the E-Center, the development of a "tech accelerator" to house tech startups, and Business Incubator Centers

**1.1.2** Utilize the NARCOG Accelerate Business Growth Fund, venture capitalists, and angel investors for capital

**1.1.3** Create a Downtown Innovation District in Decatur

**1.1.4** Recruit entrepreneurs to the region

**1.1.5** Support efforts to recruit high-tech, high image companies to the Region

**1.1.6** Support efforts to expand Entrepreneurial education

**1.1.7** Participate in EDPA's Alabama Launchpad Program

**1.2** Support the Entrepreneurial Center

**1.2.1** Support of small start-up businesses; supply technical assistance with business plans, financial management assistance, and other resources

**1.2.2** Support the Best & Brightest Initiative

**1.2.3** Expansion of Business 101 and business coaching to Somerville and South Vinemont

**1.2.4** Support the expansion of Best and Brightest Initiative to recruit nurses and teachers

**1.2.5** Support the new partnership with Innovate Alabama to strengthen the entire region

**1.3** Continue expansion of technology and innovation programs in public and private schools

**1.3.1** Support robotics programs in the public schools, such as EARLY and FIRST Robotics

**1.3.2** Support AMSTI and STEAM programs in public schools

**1.3.3** Support Robotics Technology Park training programs

**1.3.4** Help facilitate partnerships between the Region's public schools, 2-year colleges, and the US Space and Rocket Center

**1.3.5** Implement Entrepreneurial Education curriculum in high schools

**1.4** Support the continued growth of the Alabama Center for the Arts and other higher education projects, such as the Cook Museum of Natural Science, to further the initiative of establishing a STEAM-based economy in Downtown Decatur

# GOAL 2

## BUILD A RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL ECONOMY

**Build a resilient & sustainable regional economy to withstand economic shocks, pandemics, natural, man-made, etc.**

**2.1** Ensure economic resiliency by preparing and protecting the Region from natural, man-made, and technological economic shocks

**2.1.1** Develop and maintain Pre-Disaster and Post-Disaster Recovery Plans

**2.1.2** Actively participate in regional hazard mitigation planning and incorporate into local plans

**2.1.3** Seek inspiration by researching local and national best practices in recovery and resiliency

**2.2** Create a diversified economic base to compete in the global marketplace

**2.2.1** Continue to attract new businesses and industries to the Region

## GOAL 3

## BUILD A RESILIENT REGIONAL WORKFORCE ECOSYSTEM

**Build a resilient regional workforce ecosystem through education, healthcare, housing, childcare, etc.**

**3.1** Continue expansion of technology and innovation programs in public schools

**3.1.1** Support AMSTI and the STEAM programs (See 1.2.1)

**3.1.2** Support federal funding to increase the number of career coaches based on enrollment numbers

**3.1.3** Support federal funding for high-quality early education opportunities including head start, Pre-K, early education, professional development for personnel, etc.

**3.2** Align existing education and training programs to establish a ready workforce for employers

**3.2.1** Expand Dual Enrollment, Fast Track, Fast Track for Industry, and Virtual School to all high schools in the Region

**3.2.2** Utilize Calhoun Community College and Wallace State Community College workforce development solutions/training programs

**2.2.2** Promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries in the Region

**2.2.3** Maintain and develop local, regional, national and international partnerships

**2.2.4** Support and market research and development parks in the Region

**2.2.5** Actively seek foreign direct investment in the Region

**2.2.6** Connect startup and existing businesses with external and global markets utilizing export strategies

**2.2.7** Seek AdvantageSite designation for industrial parks through the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama

**2.3** Promote environmental responsibility and stewardship in the Region to protect the Region's economy

**2.3.1** Encourage responsible and environmentally friendly economic development best practices

**2.3.2** Explore opportunities in business growth in tech-based clean energy innovations such as solar and EV charging stations

**2.3.3** Seek federal and state funds to support our Regional Brownfield Initiative to identify, assess, clean-up, and reuse contaminated brownfield sites

**2.3.4** Support development of advanced electric power generation and transmission grid improvements that allow

for sustainable growth while delivering low cost, reliable power for industrial, commercial, and residential customers

**2.4** Enhance the competitiveness of the Region's manufacturers for potential growth

**2.4.1** Develop networks and support innovative manufacturing processes

**2.5** Support redevelopment activities in identified Opportunity Zones in the Region

**2.6** Support and promote opportunities to capitalize on Toyota-Mazda

**2.7** Support Electric Vehicles (EVs) and future technological efforts in Alabama

**2.7.1** Support the completion of AIDT's new EV Training Center at the RTP in Tanner



**3.2.3** Utilize the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) programs and North Alabama Works workforce regional councils

**3.2.4** Support programs that offer basic knowledge and soft-skills training to prepare workers for employment

**3.2.5** Continue to support our AAA's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a program providing job training opportunities

**3.2.6** Support the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and funding for the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) initiative as well as the Alabama Technology Network (ATN)

**3.2.7** Support funding for marketing and economic recruitment efforts at the Alabama Robotics Technology Park

**3.2.8** Support continued grant funding for workforce development and education improvement programs

**3.2.9** Utilize the AIDT Military Training Program (AMTP) & DoD Skill Bridge

**3.3** Improve access to healthcare and address chronic health conditions for workers and their families

**3.3.1** Invest in access to quality and affordable healthcare, including professionals and facilities, for a healthy workforce

**3.3.2** Utilize the many programs available through NARCOG's Area Agency on Aging

**3.3.3** Partner with the Alabama Department of Public Health to implement telemedicine opportunities to rural residents

**3.3.4** Support legislation and funding/incentives for community mental health centers to ensure the centers cover a broad range of mental health services, including: 24-hour crisis care, increased integration of physical, mental and substance abuse treatment, and expanded support for families of people living with mental health issues

**3.4** Attract new and affordable housing with a variety of housing types

**3.4.1** Update and modernize zoning ordinances to reflect the changing land use patterns (mixed uses)

**3.4.2** Market region to progressive real estate developers who adhere to good planning practices

**3.5** Advocate for affordable and reliable childcare and transportation options for the workforce

## GOAL 4

## BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE REGION

**Build resilient infrastructure for the region including broadband, planes, trains, automobiles, bike/ped, transit, ports, water, sewer, drainage, electric, etc.**

**4.1** Explore the deployment of high speed broadband internet service through strategic use of wireless systems and smart grids that are partially funded by regional and state initiatives

**4.1.1** Support the State Broadband Initiative

**4.2** Foster the sharing of resources to improve multimodal transportation, including public transit, and shipping infrastructure in the Region to leverage community development efforts

**4.2.1** Maintain and expand federal and state highways including the Appalachian Development Highway System and local roads

**4.2.2** Develop working relationships and partnerships with the CSX and Norfolk Southern Railways

**4.2.3** Capitalize on the Tennessee River, the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and the Port of Decatur

**4.2.4** Promote, maintain, and improve small local airports

**4.2.5** Enhance all modes of freight movement in the region to allow for maximum safety and efficiency

**4.2.6** Actively participate in the Decatur Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan

**4.3** Support viable and reliable transit in the region for the elderly and disabled

**4.3.1** Support the NARCOG Transit that serves Decatur

**4.3.2** Support the City of Decatur Transit System and HSCTP –FY2020 plan

**4.3.3** Champion and support a Fixed Route Transit System for Downtown Decatur

**4.4** Continue to administer transportation planning programs, including the North Central Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO), which provide a forum for coordinating transportation improvements in the region

**4.4.1** Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**4.4.2** Continue to prepare Street Assessments, Corridor Studies, Trail Plans, and County Transportation Plans

**4.5** Promote the implementation of the Inland Port Initiative to create Transportation-Based Economic Development

**4.5.1** Support local leaders, CSX, Port of Mobile, Port of Decatur, and the State

**4.6** Improve, maintain, and expand existing water and sewer systems

**4.6.1** Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**4.6.2.** Support wastewater treatment improvements for West Morgan East Lawrence Water and Sewer Authority

**4.7** Improve, maintain, and provide adequate stormwater drainage facilities

**4.7.1** Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**4.8** Promote the use of electric or hybrid fleet vehicles and invest in more EV charging stations and electric vehicle production for the Region

**4.9** Promote the funding and construction of all road and bridge improvement projects in the region

**4.9.1** Support the construction of a new southbound U.S. 31 Bridge over the Tennessee River

**4.9.2** Support the construction of a third Bridge over the Tennessee River

**4.9.3** Support the construction of a new U.S. 278/St. Bernard Bridge in Cullman

**4.9.4** Continue seeking funding for a completed Corridor Study and

improvements along US Alt 72/SR 20 and US 31 to create a limited access roadway from the I-65/I-565 interchange to US 31 and SR 20/Wilson Street intersection

**4.9.5** Study and recommend improvements along US Alt 72/SR 20 from Wilson Street intersection to the Morgan-Lawrence County line.

**4.9.6** Seek funding to widen US 67 from two to four lanes from Priceville to the US 36 intersection

**4.9.7** Improve the I-65/US 67 interchange by increasing the number of turn lanes to access the interstate from US 67

**4.9.8** Support the construction of a Hartselle Bypass to avoid excessive downtown traffic

**4.9.9** Actively pursue widening of US Highway 31 to 4-lanes from South Vinemont to Lacon/I-65 Exit in Cullman County

**4.9.10** Actively pursue widening of I-65 to 6-lanes from Exit 291 (Colony/Hanceville) to Exit 304 (Good Hope) in Cullman County

**4.9.11** Support construction of the proposed I-65/Bethel Road interchange in Hartselle

**4.11** Invest in safe alternative transportation facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, such as sidewalks, walking trails, and bike lanes

**4.11.1** Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**4.11.2** Support the development of the Tennessee RiverLine Trail

**4.11.3** Support the development and implementation of the Singing River Trail

**4.11.4** Support the development and implementation of the Lawrence County Master Trail Plan

## GOAL 5

## BUILD A RESILIENT, REGIONAL TOURISM- BASED ECONOMY

**Build a resilient, regional tourism-based economy to leverage our assets (cultural, natural, & historical assets, downtowns, trails, etc.)**

**5.1** Continue to partner with and support the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association to promote the cultural and natural assets in the Region

**5.1.1** Support the continued success and development of the tourism industry in the Region

**5.1.2** Promote existing special events and festivals and establish new ones

**5.2** Preserve and capitalize on existing natural assets in support of local and regional economic opportunities

**5.2.1** Promote the Tennessee River, Smith Lake, Wheeler Lake, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Bankhead National Forest, Sipsey Wilderness, and others as eco-tourist destinations

**5.2.2** Discourage development of prime agricultural land; explore incentives for conservation programs

**5.2.3** Promote the North Alabama Birding Trail

**5.3** Preserve and capitalize on existing cultural assets in support of local and regional economic opportunities

**5.3.1** Promote the historic downtowns, Jesse Owens Park and Museum, Oakville Indian Mounds and Museum, Joe Wheeler Home, Cook Museum of Natural History, the Shrine, Ave Maria Grotto, Princess Theater, and others as tourist destinations

**5.3.2** Promote the Hallelujah Trail

**5.4** Support investments in natural and cultural heritage resources for preservation and stewardship of community character

**5.4.1** Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area

**5.4.2** Support development of heritage tourism by investing in downtown redevelopment, gateway communities, historic districts and other unique local community features

**5.4.3** Support seeking the additional funding needed to complete the 32-acre Ingalls Harbor project

**5.4.4** Explore development of the proposed Agricultural Center/ Equestrian Arena Complex in Moulton

**5.4.5** Support the new Civil Rights District including the Scottsboro Civil Rights Museum and the Judge Horton Home and its inclusion in the State's Civil Rights Trail

## GOAL 6 BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL COMMUNITY LEADERS & CAPACITY

**Build resilient regional community leaders & capacity through partnerships, training, planning, etc.**

**6.1 Advocate for community and regional planning**

**6.1.1** Continue to provide planning and technical assistance for local comprehensive planning, area development plans including downtown plans, and neighborhood revitalization plans that build support for partnering investments from state, federal, and private sources

**6.1.2** Champion a Centers and Corridors planning approach to guide regional economic development and spacial patterns (e.g. downtown and corridor plans)

**6.1.3** Adopt, improve and/or enforce existing development regulations and design guidelines

**6.1.4** Continue the Regional Downtown Network Initiative

**6.1.5** Develop a community design and aging in place program at NARCOG

**6.1.6** Support the mission of the Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority to implement the Envision Decatur plan updated in the One Decatur plan

**5.4.6** Support efforts of the “Hartselle For Tomorrow 501C3 Chamber Foundation” to raise funds to renovate the Old Post Office Building Downtown for a new Chamber home and Innovation Hub

**5.5** Support the development of the **Singing River Trail Western Route Master Plan**, Lawrence County Master Trail Plan (LCMTP), the Tennessee RiverLine program, and the **Sweet Trails Alabama program**, etc.

**5.5.1** Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**5.5.2** Support the Initiatives of the Decatur and Lawrence County Tennessee “RiverTown” Programs by Tennessee RiverLine

**5.6** Support the AMRV RC&D's North Alabama Trail & Recreation (NATR) initiative

**5.6.1** Continue to support and participate in the Annual NATR Fest Event

**5.7** Support, promote, and invest in Cultural Arts in the Region

**5.7.1** Promote all of the Mural Trails in the Region

**5.7.2** Utilize the Alabama Center for the Arts students to create a thriving art scene in Decatur

**5.8** Support, promote, and invest in parks and recreation facilities in the Region

**5.8.1** Support the implementation of the Point Mallard Park Master Plan

**5.8.2** Support the implementation of the Point Mallard Park Children's Play Area Master Plan

**5.8.3** Provide technical assistance to prepare grants and other applications

**5.9** Support the de-industrialization and careful redevelopment of the Decatur riverfront along the Tennessee River to include land uses that promote tourism and stewardship of the natural resources provided by the River

**5.9.1** Support the "City Harbor" development at Ingalls Harbor

**5.9.2** Support the redevelopment of the historic McEntire House into a destination along the riverfront

**6.1.7 Prepare a Strategic Plan for the “Hartselle For Tomorrow 501C3 Chamber Foundation”**

**6.2 Invest in, and take advantage of, available opportunities for networking and training current and future leaders**

**6.2.1** Encourage participation in the Alabama Community Leadership Network

**6.2.2** Encourage participation in the adult and youth leadership development programs provided by local chambers of commerce

**6.2.3** Encourage participation in the Alabama League of Municipalities training conferences

**6.2.4** Encourage participation in the Association of County Commissions of Alabama training conferences

**6.2.5** Encourage communities to participate in Main Street Alabama’s training conferences and webinars

**6.2.6** Encourage eligible communities (Hartselle, Hanceville, Cullman, Good Hope, Moulton, and Priceville) to seek and maintain designation as Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE)

**6.2.7** Encourage participation in the Economic Development Association of Alabama’s (EDAA) Leadership Training and other programs

**6.2.8** Encourage council members, planning commissioners, and building inspectors to participate in and pursue

certification in the University of North Alabama’s Certified Alabama Planning and Zoning Official (CAPZO) Program

**6.2.9** Encourage participation in Your Town Alabama

**6.2.10** Encourage attendance at other professional development training related to community and economic development

**6.2.11** Encourage communities to participate in the programs offered by DesignAlabama

**6.2.12** Encourage communities to participate in the new ARC Capacity Building Program

**6.2.13** Support the Local Leadership Teams of the Decatur and Lawrence County Tennessee “RiverTown” Programs by Tennessee RiverLine

**6.3 Expand upon existing regional cooperation and collaboration and look beyond regional borders**

**6.3.1** Support counties, municipalities, economic development organizations, and chambers of commerce

**6.3.2** Support the Tennessee RiverLine, Singing River Trail, and Sweet Trails Alabama

**6.4 Continue to develop and maintain partnerships at all levels**

**6.4.1** Local partnerships (EDO’s, Chambers, Tourism, etc.)

**6.4.2** State partnerships (ADECA, ADC, AIDT, ADEM, ALDOT, AHC, AEMA, Alabama Department of Tourism, Alabama STEM Council, Regional Workforce Councils, etc.)

**6.4.3** Federal partnerships (ARC, EDA, FHWA, FEMA, DoD, etc.)

**6.4.4** Other Agency and Organization partnerships (AARC, ACE, AMRV-RCD, DA, EDAA, EDPA, MSAL, NAIDA, SRT, N AL Tourism, TNRL, YTAL, etc.)

