

# ENVIRONMENT

We are stewards of the environment who advocate the conservation, preservation, and restoration of resources.

*The Buncombe County Sustainability Plan Vision Statement*











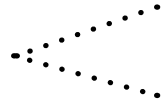
# CONSERVATION & RESTORATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

INDICATOR

STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVES:

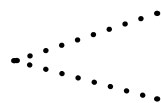
- **Conserve and protect water resources.**



Linear feet of streams restored by the Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) and partners

Utilize state programs (e.g. NC Agricultural Cost Share Program (NCACSP), Community Conservation Assistance Program, and Natural Resources Conservation Service programs) to restore stream banks and riparian areas.

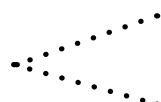
- **Protect ecological systems and wildlife.**



Acres of plans by SWCD and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with wildlife habitat improvement

Partner with the NRCS to write plans for private lands that contain provisions for wildlife habitat improvement.

- **Promote energy conservation.**



Energy intensity measurement (kBtu/sf) for Buncombe County facilities

Execute commodity-saving initiatives through the existing Buncombe County portfolio to promote the conservation of energy.

- **Encourage sustainable land use.**



Number of acres of conservation plans by SWCD and NRCS

Maximize the tools available through the NC Conservation Partnership to write and implement conservation plans on rural lands in the County.

- **Educate the public in reducing their environmental footprint.**

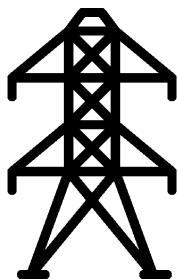


Number and reach of environmental education programs by SWCD

Utilize existing state and local environmental education programs (e.g. NC Envirothon, Food Land & People, Conservation Contests, Environmental Education Field Days) and other activities/programs outlined in the District's Annual Plan of Work.

# PROGRESS

## Promote energy conservation.



**59.48**  
kBTU/SF

Energy intensity measurement  
(kBTU/sf) for BC facilities in  
FY2016

## Protect ecological systems and wildlife.

**365**

Acres of plans by SWCD and NRCS with  
wildlife habitat improvement in FY2016

**656 total** acres since FY2013

## Conserve and protect water resources.

**0** FT

Linear ft of streams restored by the SWCD  
and partners in FY2016

**5,013 total** LF since FY2011

## Encourage sustainable land use.

**1,567**

Number of acres of conservation plans  
by SWCD and NRCS in FY2016

**6,423 total** acres since FY2012

## Educate the public in reducing their environmental footprint.

**146**

Number of education programs  
by SWCD in FY2016

**73,653**

Population reached by SWCD  
education programs in FY2016

**233,622 total** reached since 2012







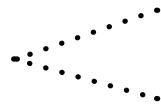
# POLLUTION AND WASTE PREVENTION

INDICATOR

STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVES:

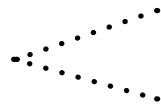
- Improve air quality.



Current Design Value for Ozone in the County

Partner with local, regional, and state agencies to facilitate air quality improvements.

- Improve water quality.



Number of NC Agricultural Cost Share Program projects

Work with citizens who have NC Agricultural Cost Share Program contracts to provide services to expedite installation of projects.

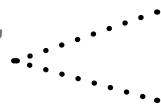
- Reduce the use of harmful chemicals.



Number trained in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by Cooperative Extension

Pursue additional funding for Integrated Pest Management education.

- Manage waste-reduce, reuse, recycle.



Amount of recycled goods (household, commercial, household hazardous waste, special waste)

Educate the public about their options to recycle through website, brochures, quarterly newspaper inserts, tours of the landfill facility, school education, and media outlets.

- Reduce Buncombe County Government's carbon footprint.



Metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalents)

Implement low cost/no cost facility conservation measures and capital improvement projects to reduce carbon emissions.



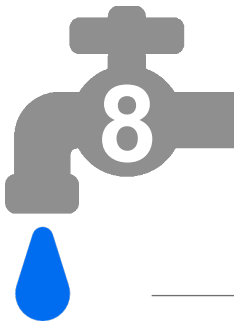
# PROGRESS

## Improve air quality.

Current Design Value for Ozone in BC in 2015 (In parts per billion), compared to **67 PPB** in 2011



## Improve water quality.



Number of NC Agricultural Cost Share Program projects in FY2016

**42 total** projects since FY2012

## Reduce the use of harmful chemicals.

**8,175**



Number of people trained in IPM by the Cooperative Extension in 2015

**34,294 total** trained since 2012

## Reduce Buncombe County Government's carbon footprint.



Metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalents) in FY2016 (Not including landfill emissions) compared to **15,385 mtCO<sub>2</sub>e** in FY2015

## Manage waste - reduce, reuse, recycle.

Amount of recycled goods in FY2016



**69 TONS**  
**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE**

**254 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**365 TONS**  
**WHITE GOODS**

**1,816 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**2,552 TONS**  
**TIRES**

**12,473 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**28 TONS**  
**USED OIL**

**134 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**2.4 TONS**  
**ANTIFREEZE**

**11 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**1.6 TONS**  
**LEAD ACID BATTERIES**

**16 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012



**163 TONS**  
**ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

**768 TONS**  
TOTAL SINCE FY2012







# ACCESSIBLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

INDICATOR

STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVES:

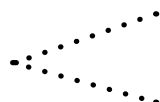
- Reduce the rate of increase of annual Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT).



Percent change in VMT within Buncombe County

Promote awareness and use of Park-and-Ride lots.

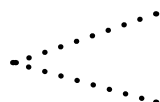
- Increase commuting choices.



Number of Facebook followers on Go Mountain Commuting website

Partner with the regional Transportation Management Demand Program to increase participation in commuting options like carpools, vanpools and transit.

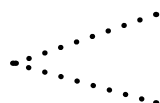
- Increase fixed route public transportation ridership.



Annual passenger trips provided by Asheville Redefines Transit (ART)

Conduct collaborative outreach efforts with the City of Asheville's ART fixed route system.

- Extend greenways for pedestrians and cyclists.



Miles of greenways throughout Buncombe County and all municipalities

Work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to integrate multi-use paths into highway construction and road upgrade projects.

- Encourage land development connected to existing transportation corridors.



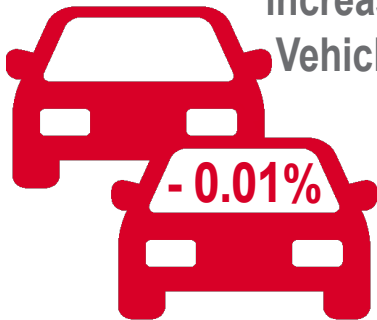
Percent of County households within 1/4 mile of transportation options (Greenways, bus stops, Mountain Mobility Trailblazer route, and sidewalks)

Promote the Community Oriented Development option under the County's Zoning Ordinance that allows density bonuses for affordable housing along existing transportation corridors.



# PROGRESS

Reduce the rate of  
increase of annual  
Vehicle Miles Travelled.



Percent change in VMT  
within BC between  
2014-15 compared to  
a **1.18% increase**  
between 2013-14

Encourage land development  
connected to existing transportation.

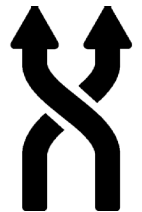
**96%**

COA

**25%**

BC

(excluding Asheville)



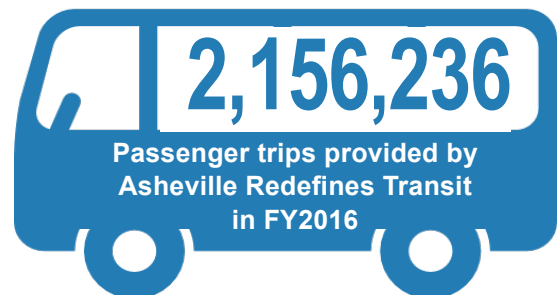
Percent of households within 1/4  
mile of transportation options

Increase commuting choices.

**228**

Number of Facebook followers  
on Go Mountain Commuting  
website in FY2016

Increase fixed route public  
transportation ridership.



**7,944,953 total** trips since FY2012

Extend greenways for  
pedestrians and cyclists.

**13.5**

miles of greenways throughout BC  
in 2016 with 102 miles of proposed  
greenways

**48.9**

Additional miles of  
Mountains-to-Sea  
Trail in BC





# ECONOMY

We are part of a community and environmentally-conscious economy that is stable and diverse.

*The Buncombe County Sustainability Plan Vision Statement*









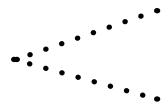


# THRIVING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

## OBJECTIVES:

INDICATOR
STRATEGY

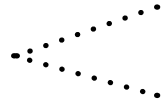
- **Promote farmland preservation in order to decrease loss of agricultural land.**



Acres in land protection programs (Voluntary Agricultural District program (VAD), Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District program (EVAD), conservation easements)

Increase public awareness of the need to conserve local farmlands and the availability of local and state programs (e.g. the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD), Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD), and conservation easements).

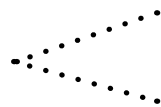
- **Promote sustainable agricultural production and community gardening.**



Number of citizens who obtained knowledge or developed new skills in farming, gardening, agritourism, farm marketing and related areas as a result of Cooperative Extension training and information

Maintain training programs in agricultural production and community gardening disciplines (e.g. farming, gardening, agritourism, farm marketing, and related areas).

- **Increase demand for locally produced foods.**



Number of local outlets (restaurants, retail, tailgate markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and other outlets)

Expand the Health & Human Services Pop-Up Markets to provide local and healthy food at four additional community sites.





# PROGRESS



Promote farmland preservation in order to decrease loss of agricultural land.

**295** Acres in land protection programs in FY2016  
**3,408 total** acres protected since FY2012



Promote sustainable agricultural production and community gardening.

**112,000** Number of citizens who obtained knowledge or developed new skills in 2015



Increase demand for locally produced foods.



**27**  
CSA'S



**17**  
TAILGATE  
MARKETS



**31**  
ROADSIDE  
STANDS



**27**  
U-PICK  
FARMS



**22**  
RETAIL  
GROCERIES



**98**  
RESTAURANTS



**61**  
OTHER  
OUTLET

**= 283**

Number of local outlets in 2016 compared to **232** in 2011



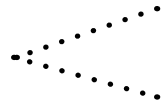
# ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMY

INDICATOR

STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVES:

- Increase the number of new jobs in Buncombe County.



Number of new jobs announced through the Chamber of Commerce

Promote Asheville-Buncombe as a centralized hub for entrepreneurship to efficiently connect entrepreneurs, talent, and investors to one another, and to startup resources.

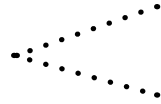
- Increase the number of new jobs with earnings above \$50k.



Number of new jobs with earnings above \$50k announced through the Chamber of Commerce

Promote Asheville-Buncombe's new target industries and explore targeted niche opportunities such as Micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS).

- Maintain high employment.



Unemployment rate in Buncombe County

Host the Annual Homecoming Career Fair, the region's largest career fair connecting employers with job seekers.

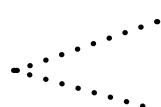
- Recruit new business.



Number of new businesses successfully recruited by the Chamber of Commerce

Target high growth and Inc. 5000 firms from major East Coast markets where there are existing business ties to Asheville for expansion/relocation into Asheville-Buncombe County.

- Support the expansion of existing businesses.



Number of expansions of existing businesses reported by the Chamber of Commerce

Work with partners to ensure real estate options, infrastructure, and other attraction components that meet the needs of current and prospective employers, and evaluate gaps with respect to the needs of target and expanding industries.



# PROGRESS

## Increase the number of new jobs in Buncombe County.

58

Number of new jobs announced through the Chamber of Commerce in FY2015



**1,184 total** new jobs announced since 2012

## Support the expansion of existing businesses.

Number of expansions of existing businesses reported by the Chamber of Commerce in FY2015

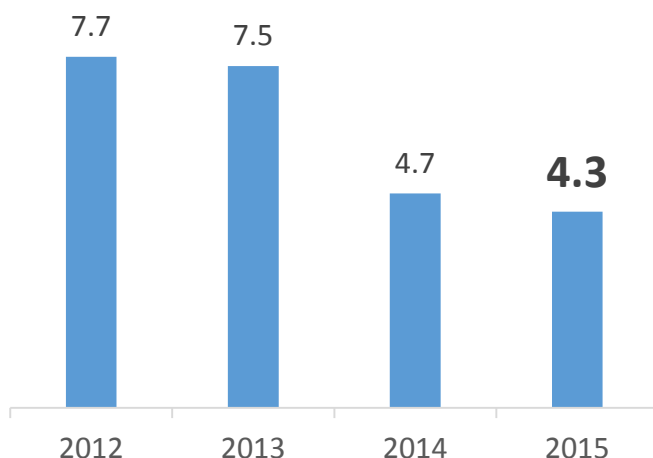
2



**920 total** jobs created through expansion since 2013

## Maintain high employment.

Unemployment rate



## Increase the number of new jobs with earnings above \$50k.



4

New jobs with earnings above \$50k announced through the Chamber of Commerce in FY2015

## Recruit new business.



1

Number of new businesses successfully recruited by the Chamber of Commerce in FY2015

**8 total** since 2012





# RESPONSIVE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

INDICATOR

STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVES:

- Increase the number of specialized training courses offered for businesses in Buncombe County.



Number of specialized training courses offered for businesses by Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College Economic and Workforce Development/Continuing Education Program

Increase the number of state funded Customized Training Program (CTP) projects as businesses locate or expand in Buncombe County through local economic development efforts.

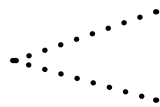
- Provide job applicant assessment and job training that fits anticipated and current job skills demand.



Number of NC Career Readiness Certifications in Buncombe County

Achieve Work Ready Community status.

- Increase the number of companies participating in training and/or services for job creation or advancement.



Number of companies participating in training and/or services through A-B Tech Economic and Workforce Development/Continuing Education Program

Connect Economic & Workforce Development (EWD) staff with local businesses and industry to analyze training needs and provide specialized training events.





# PROGRESS



Increase the number of companies participating in training and/or services for job creation or advancement.



**70**

Number of companies participating in training and/or services in FY2016

**271 total** companies participating since FY2012

Increase the number of specialized training courses offered for businesses.



Number of specialized training courses in FY2016

**428 total** courses since FY2012

Provide job applicant assessment and job training that fits anticipated and current job skills demand.



**5,055**

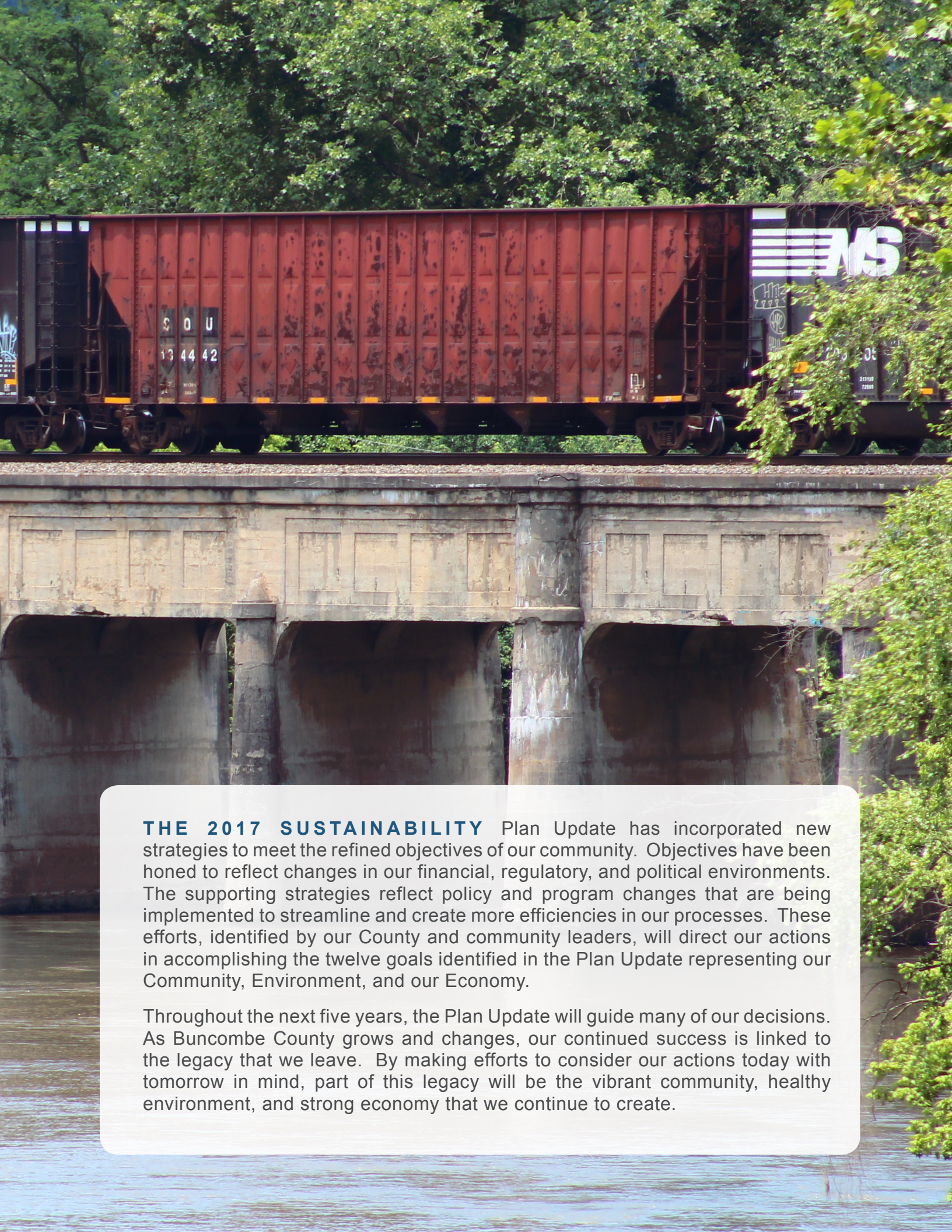
Number of NC Career Readiness Certifications in BC from January 1, 2012 through September 30, 2016



# CONCLUSION







**THE 2017 SUSTAINABILITY** Plan Update has incorporated new strategies to meet the refined objectives of our community. Objectives have been honed to reflect changes in our financial, regulatory, and political environments. The supporting strategies reflect policy and program changes that are being implemented to streamline and create more efficiencies in our processes. These efforts, identified by our County and community leaders, will direct our actions in accomplishing the twelve goals identified in the Plan Update representing our Community, Environment, and our Economy.

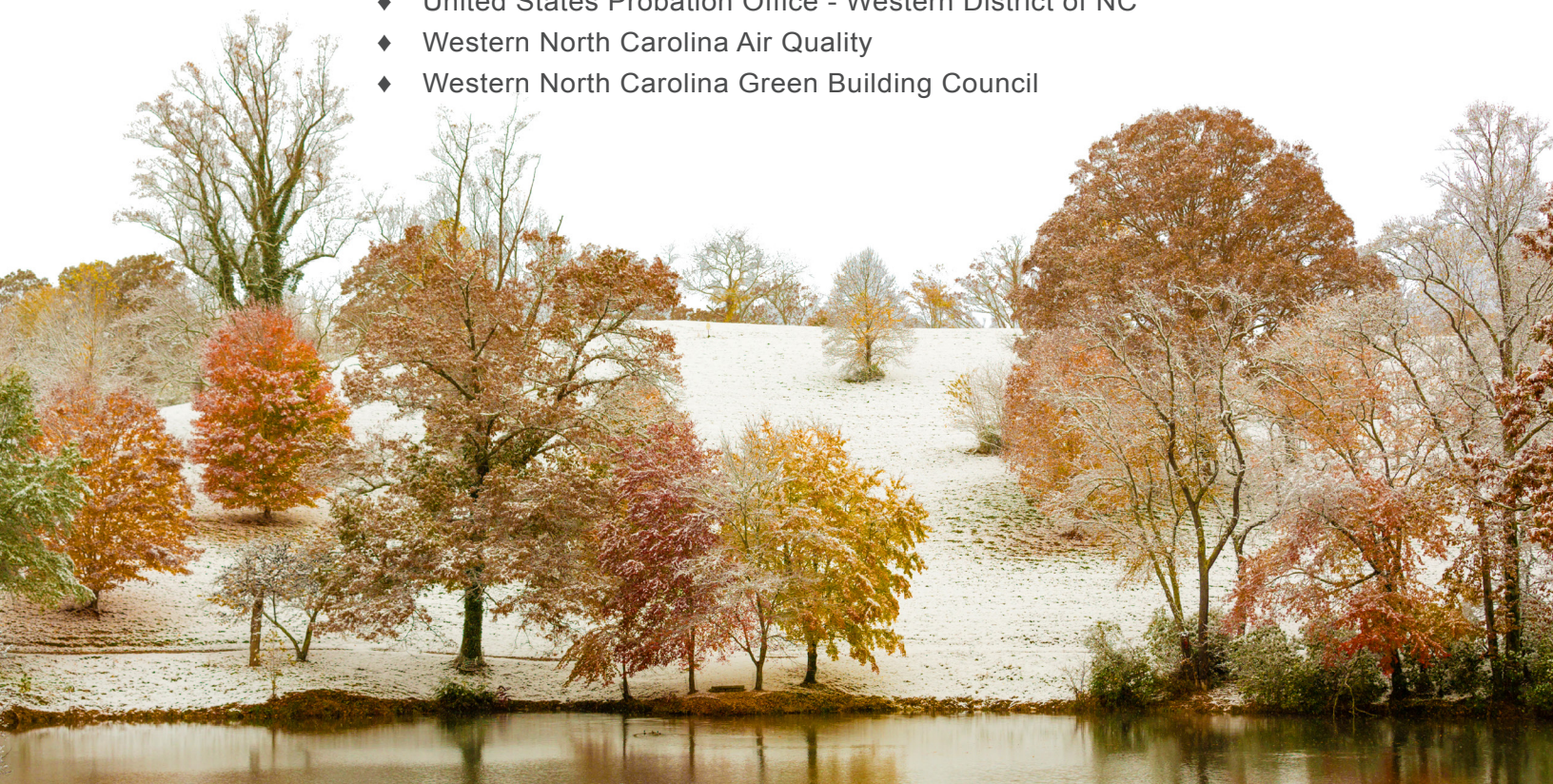
Throughout the next five years, the Plan Update will guide many of our decisions. As Buncombe County grows and changes, our continued success is linked to the legacy that we leave. By making efforts to consider our actions today with tomorrow in mind, part of this legacy will be the vibrant community, healthy environment, and strong economy that we continue to create.



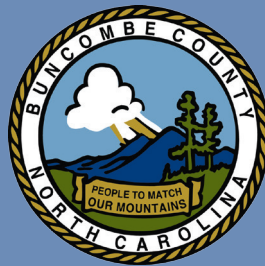
# SOURCES

Information sources within the Sustainability Plan Update and the fifth year Annual Report have been obtained from the following organizations and plans:

- ◆ Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP)
- ◆ Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce 5X5 Plan
- ◆ Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
- ◆ Asheville City Schools
- ◆ Buncombe County Government
- ◆ Buncombe County Health & Human Services Annual Report
- ◆ Buncombe County Schools
- ◆ Buncombe Partnership for Children
- ◆ City of Asheville - Transportation Department
- ◆ French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- ◆ Land-of-Sky Regional Council
- ◆ Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC)
- ◆ North Carolina Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP)
- ◆ North Carolina Cooperative Extension
- ◆ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)
- ◆ North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- ◆ North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics
- ◆ OnTrack Financial Education & Counseling
- ◆ Soil and Water Conservation District
- ◆ USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ◆ United States Probation Office - Western District of NC
- ◆ Western North Carolina Air Quality
- ◆ Western North Carolina Green Building Council







**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN UPDATE  
&  
2016 ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY**

Download this report online:  
[buncombecounty.org/Sustainability](http://buncombecounty.org/Sustainability)