I am pleased to present the annual report for the Lumber River Council of Governments for fiscal year 2020–2021. As we started this fiscal year, we were uncertain as to what challenges we might face from the COVID-19 pandemic or how soon life would return to normal. However, as you will see through this year’s annual report, the Lumber River Council of Governments has continually adapted and responded by meeting the ever-changing needs of our region’s citizens and providing exceptional service and value to its member governments.

Over the past year, our day-to-day lives have changed. Our communities have adapted to virtual schooling, doctor visits, and activities, just as the LRCOG has adapted to remote working and virtual meetings and trainings. This virtual environment has further highlighted the broadband challenges that we knew existed throughout the region. The LRCOG has proactively worked to confront those challenges by providing internet hotspots to grandparents serving as caregivers to assist with virtual schooling and by offering virtual job fairs for employers and job seekers. The Regional Broadband Demand Aggregation study has been implemented to locate the areas that are not receiving sufficient broadband internet services.

In addition to helping our region cope with the new virtual demands, your LRCOG has ensured that the traditional needs of our region’s citizens are met. Our Area Agency on Aging has been on the frontlines, addressing the basic needs of our region’s older adults. They have provided fresh produce boxes and essential supplies, facilitated contactless grocery pick-ups, and utilized technology to reduce social isolation. Our Workforce Development division assisted 193 community college students with unexpected expenses due to COVID to ensure that they cross the “finish line” and achieve their degree or certification. Finally, our Community & Economic Services division has helped our region’s local governments to understand new federal funding opportunities. All of the divisions have continued to ensure that their traditional programs, goals, and objectives have been achieved and continued.

I am also happy to announce that the LRCOG has truly embraced the new virtual age by completing its first strategic plan in its 49-year history virtually. With this plan, the LRCOG can focus its efforts and meet its goals. With your support, we will continue to strengthen the organization that has left a truly remarkable impact on our region and that will continue to do so for years to come.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE.

Rufus Duckworth
2020-2021 LRCOG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS
Chairman         Rufus Duckworth
Vice-Chairman    Robert L. Conoly
Second Vice-Chairman Angeline David
Treasurer        David Kirby

COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
Bladen County    Charles Ray Peterson
Hoke County      James Leach
Hoke County      Tony Hunt (Alternate)
Richmond County  Tavares Bostic
Robeson County   John Cummings
Scotland County  John Alford
Scotland County  Clarence McPhatter II (Alternate)

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVES
Bladenboro       Rufus Duckworth  McDonald  Dannie Bacot
Bladenboro       Jeff Atkinson (Alternate)  Norman  Nancy Paxton
Clarkton         Linda Crooms  Norman  Tonia Collins (Alternate)
Dobbins Heights  Angeline K. David  Orrum  Jessie Stephens
Dublin           David Kirby  Parkton  Robin Hill
East Arcadia     Perry Blanks  Pembroke  Larry McNeill
East Arcadia     Lillian Graham (Alternate)  Proctorville  Michael Sealey
Elizabethtown    Rich Glenn  Proctorville  Robert L. Conoly
Elizabethtown    Howell Clark (Alternate)  Raeford  Alphonso McRae (Alternate)
Ellerbe          Elsie L. Freeman  Red Springs  Murray McKeithan
Fairmont         Charles Townsend  Red Springs  Caroline Sumpter (Alternate)
Fairmont         Felecia McLean-Kesler (Alternate)  Rennert  Vivian W. McRae
Gibson           Eric Stubbs  Rockingham  Denise Sullivan
Gibson           Adam Liles (Alternate)  Rockingham  A. Eugene Willard (Alternate)
Hamlet           Maurice Stuart  Rowland  Jean Love
Hamlet           Oscar Sellers (Alternate)  St. Pauls  Debbie Inman
Hoffman          Tommy Hart  St. Pauls  Jerry Quick (Alternate)
Laurinburg       Mary Jo Adams  Tar Heel  Samuel Allen
Laurinburg       Mary Evans (Alternate)  Wagram  Robert McLaughlin
Lumberton        Owen Thomas  Wagram  Milton Farmer (Alternate)
Lumber Bridge    William Davis  White Lake  Timothy Blount
Marietta         Donna Stubbs  White Lake  Mike Suggs (Alternate)
Marietta         Walter Powell (Alternate)
Maxton           Virgil Hutchinson

FINANCE REPORT

REVENUES
FEDERAL  6,380,651
STATE  1,429,309
LOCAL  789,268
TOTAL REVENUES  8,599,228

EXPENDITURES
Aging
PLANNING & ADMIN.  238,725
OMBUDSMAN  129,207
COORDINATED SERVICES  2,028,327
AAA HOUSING  227,228
NUTRITION  605,290
OA STATE FUNDING  48,263
FAMILY CAREGIVER  143,000
CARES/FFCRA  601,316
TOTAL AGING  4,023,356

Community & Economic Services (CES)
LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE  206,470
LOCAL CONTRACTS  262,063
RURAL TRANS. PLANNING  140,153
LOCAL COG CAPITAL  112,957
BROADBAND/SEDC  103,707
TOTAL CES  825,350

Workforce Development
ADMINISTRATION  398,712
ADULT  982,882
DISLOCATED WORKER  728,218
YOUTH  1,010,583
NATIONAL DISASTER RELIEF  424,441
STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES  205,686
TOTAL WORKFORCE DEV.  3,750,522

TOTAL EXPENDITURES  $8,599,228

* UNAUDITED
* DOES NOT INCLUDE REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR FAIR BLUFF HOUSING COMPLEX
RIVER BLUFF POINTE APARTMENT COMPLEX

On December 17, 2020, the Lumber River Council of Governments’ Board of Directors held a ribbon cutting for the River Bluff Pointe Apartment Complex in Fair Bluff. The housing complex will provide safe and affordable housing to 31 families. Funding for this project came as a direct appropriation from the North Carolina General Assembly.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The LRCOG has completed its first strategic plan in its 49-year history. This plan will drive the organization and region forward over the next five years. Among the goals established by the plan are the following:

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING
Ensure the economic growth and success of the organization

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT
Invest in the understanding of the LRCOG by its stakeholders

SHARING REGIONAL RESOURCES
Help the region save money by sharing cost

REGIONAL SUPPORT
Act as convener to bring the region together

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Home Modifications 4 Caregivers
Respite Vouchers 7 Caregivers
Incontinence Supplies 49 Caregivers
In-Home Respite 1,437 Hours
Liquid Nutrition 32 Caregivers

FCSP CARES ACT Funding $16,828
33 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
Received hotspots and headsets for virtual school
15 Caregivers
Received supplemental supplies
(liquid nutrition, incontinence supplies, and PPE)

General Purpose Funding for Senior Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bladen County Senior Center</th>
<th>East Arcadia Senior Center</th>
<th>Ellerbe Senior Center</th>
<th>Hoke County Senior Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$4,673</td>
<td>$4,673</td>
<td>$4,673</td>
<td>$4,673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Richmond County Senior Center</th>
<th>Scotland Place Senior Center</th>
<th>Wagram Active Living Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$4,673</td>
<td>$4,673</td>
<td>$4,673</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Rockingham Senior Center</th>
<th>Hamlet Senior Center</th>
<th>Pine Street Senior Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$14,020</td>
<td>Center of Excellence</td>
<td>Center of Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$14,020</td>
<td>Center of Excellence</td>
<td>Center of Merit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Budget

| Local- $17,523 | State- $52,576 | Total- $70,099 |

Health Promotions

Tai Chi for Arthritis
13 Participants

Walk With Ease
18 Participants

Senior’ Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Clients Served</th>
<th>Total Cost Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>355</td>
<td>$377,027</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Regional Data
The LRCOG's Community and Economic Services (CES) Division is a varied department and involved in many different efforts of our members. Some of our work is highlighted below:

**Convene Groups and Partner Agencies**

During FY’21, we continued to “convene” our partners through virtual communications using available technology. As we all grappled with this changed way of doing business, the LRCOG CES staff continued to deliver the following services:

- Assisted Members with American Recovery Program Access
- Assisted Members with CARES Act Funding Access
- Bladen Complete Count Census Committee
- Broadband Study
- Manager Search Support- Elizabethtown, Fairmont, Maxton, and White Lake
- Region N Managers Association
- Robeson Complete Count Census Committee
- Staff for Municipal and County Association of Bladen
- Teaching Tuesdays Webinar Series

**Planning Assistance**

- General Planning Assistance- Bladenboro, Clarkton, Dobbins Heights, Dublin, Ellerbe, Fairmont, Gibson, Hoffman, Marietta, Maxton, Norman, Parkton, Proctorville, Rennert, Rowland, St. Pauls, Tar Heel, Wagram, White Lake
- Subdivision Ordinance- Hoffman, White Lake
- Updated Wastewater Maps- Pembroke
- 160 D Zoning Ordinance Revisions– Bladen County, Bladenboro, Clarkton, Dublin, Fairmont, Hoffman, Maxton, Scotland County, Wagram, White Lake

**Enhancement of the Technical Assistance Portal**

The Portal is designed to be a secure, self-service website that will give our member governments and their staff the ability to connect and share useful information, while also allowing the user to easily search, upload, and view information. Once fully operational, maps and data from the water and wastewater Asset Inventory and Assessments grants completed by the LRCOG will be accessible.
Develop and Administer Projects

Each of our member governments has their own, unique set of needs. Whether it is water and sewer, housing or transportation, LRCOG planners can help with:

- Assessing the condition of assets.
- Making a plan for better management of assets to prolong asset life
- Developing loan and grant applications for specific projects
- Development of an asset inventory
- Condition assessments of asset inventory
- Mapping of asset systems
- Analysis and recommendations concerning fiscal and operational management of water and sewer systems

LRCOG planners have been extensively involved in assisting members with:

- Issues revolving around their water and sewer utilities
- Assistance with operational and management issues
- Developing customer profiles
- Providing fiscal management and rate studies directly or through workshops and training opportunities

Summary of Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bladen County</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Lake</td>
<td>$5,306,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Richmond County</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellerbe</td>
<td>$1,049,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scotland County</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurinburg</td>
<td>$4,721,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Partnership with other Council of Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tabor City</td>
<td>$4,736,820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rural Planning Organization

# of New Projects Submitted for Consideration for the Next State Transportation Improvement Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aviation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle &amp; Pedestrian</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail Projects</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Projects</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Business Services

The Lumber River Workforce Development Board in conjunction with our local area NCWorks Career Centers has continued to provide services to our local businesses despite the global challenges faced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employers Receiving Job Referrals</th>
<th>Services Provided to Job Referrals Created</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff-Assisted Services 873</td>
<td>Employers 10,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Assisted Services 795</td>
<td>Employers 3,713</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COVID-19 Employment & Training Project

This project is designed to assist dislocated individuals by placement into full-time permanent employment positions through the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) services, and employers by providing an OJT wage reimbursement incentive to hire and train these individuals.

- Expended $144,167.37
- Placed 16 Individuals in On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- 3 OJT Participants Retained Positions as Full-Time Permanent Employees
- Placed 3 Temporary Contact Tracers
- 1 Contact Tracer Transitioned into a Full-Time Permanent Contact Tracer with the Department of Health and Human Services at Hoke County

In Partnership with other Council of Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bladen Community College</td>
<td>$24,767.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Community College</td>
<td>$6,293.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robeson Community College</td>
<td>$78,148.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandhills Community College</td>
<td>$18,244.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finish Line Grant (FLG)

The Lumber River Council of Governments Workforce Development Board has provided 193 FLG awards to students with unforeseen financial emergencies that may have prohibited their chance at completing their program of study.

Pictured left: Mr. Charles Melvin, Jr. in his position as an Electronic Assembler with Anthem Displays, Inc. in Elizabethtown, NC.
Chrishaud entered the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program at Scotland County Schools as an in-school youth seeking to gain employability skills and pursue a career in computer technology. Chrishaud achieved a Gold level Career Readiness Certification through the ACT WorkKeys Assessment and was one of five finalists for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Presidential Scholars Program, he served as a Junior Marshall, a member of the Future Business Leaders of America, a member of the National Honor Society, the programmer of the Robotic team, and an NAACP Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) Contestant. Each of these activities contributed to Chrishaud becoming an influential leader and an exceptional youth. Chrishaud completed his high school graduation requirements with honors and is a CTE Completer in Information Technology. Chrishaud is scheduled to attend NC State this fall as a Goodnight Scholar to study technology. Chrishaud achieved a Gold level Career Readiness Certification through the ACT WorkKeys Assessment and was one of five finalists for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Presidential Scholars Program.

Kerra enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program at Partners in Ministry in Richmond County seeking assistance with full-time employment and furthering her education. Kerra was an 18-year-old high school graduate from a low-income household working a part-time job. Realizing she wanted to achieve more in life, she set goals to work towards sustainable employment and a college degree. She participated in work experience and internship activities, gaining high scores on her evaluations. Once the internship was complete she was offered a full-time, permanent position with the Richmond County Department of Social Services as an Income Maintenance Caseworker. Kerra is also enrolled at UNC-Wilmington, majoring in Marketing.

Rashad and Benyetta Burroughs came to the career center seeking CDL training opportunities. The career advisor provided them with information about available CDL training opportunities. The Burroughs knew that this would put them on the path to achieving their dreams of completing truck driving training and passing the test to earn their commercial driver’s license. The Burroughs completed Miller-Motte College's CDL: Class A Tractor Trailer program. They obtained their Commercial Driver’s License. The couple is working for TNT International as team drivers. Their future goal is to purchase a truck and start a local delivery service between North and South Carolina.

WIOA CUSTOMERS SERVED

**ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Total # of Trainings</th>
<th>Average Wage Paid to Employer</th>
<th>Average Amount Paid Per Participant</th>
<th>Total Training Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING (OST)</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>$13,344.12</td>
<td>$896.73</td>
<td>$422,915.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>$12,925.83</td>
<td>$597.24</td>
<td>$140,440.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK EXPERIENCE (WEX)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$13,344.93</td>
<td>$972.47</td>
<td>$65,024.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTIVE SERVICES</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>$66.14</td>
<td>$362.69</td>
<td>$72,224.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YOUTH PROGRAMS (IN & OUT OF SCHOOL)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Total # of Trainings</th>
<th>Average Wage Paid to Employer</th>
<th>Average Amount Paid Per Participant</th>
<th>Total Training Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING (OST)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$969.73</td>
<td>$422.91</td>
<td>$13,046.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>$572.47</td>
<td>$362.69</td>
<td>$9,732.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK EXPERIENCE (WEX)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>$2,308.91</td>
<td>$1,334.12</td>
<td>$244,744.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTIVE SERVICES</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>$122.69</td>
<td>$72.22</td>
<td>$4,785.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WIOA PERFORMANCE REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Performance Averages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADULT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISLOCATED WORKER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUTH</strong></td>
<td>112.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAGNER-PEYSER</strong></td>
<td>93.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>101.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NADO recognizes member organizations that demonstrate valuable and effective approaches to regional economic and community development and improved quality of life.

The Lumber River Council of Governments received three NADO Impact Awards for the following programs:

- COVID Care Package Distribution for Seniors
- Finish Line Grant
- Teaching Tuesdays Webinar Series

**ADMINISTRATION**

- David Richardson, Executive Director
  910.775.9752  drr@lrcog.org
- Erica Brayboy, Regional Engagement Specialist
  910.775.9748  dbh@lrcog.org
- Sonya Johnson, Administrative Secretary/Clerk to the Board
  910.775.9757  sj@lrcog.org
- Donita Wright, Administrative Secretary/Purchasing Officer
  910.775.9759  dw@lrcog.org

**FINANCE**

- Jo-Annah Sinclair, Finance Director
  910.775.9769  js@lrcog.org
- Caleb Register, Assistant Finance Director
  910.775.9768  cjr@lrcog.org

**AREA AGENCY ON AGING**

- Twilla Allen, Administrator
  910.775.9781  tca@lrcog.org
- Kathy Buie, Aging Program Coordinator
  910.775.9755  kbe@lrcog.org
- Melissa Hunt, Aging Program Specialist - Nutrition
  910.775.9746  mh@lrcog.org
- Camisha Laws, Nutrition Program Assistant
  910.775.9788  cl@lrcog.org
- Tabitha Locklear, Nutrition Program Assistant
  910.775.9780  tll@lrcog.org
- Kayla Lowery, Aging Program Specialist
  910.775.9741  kl@lrcog.org
- Stephanie Powers, Family Caregiver Resource Specialist
  910.775.9779  sps@lrcog.org
- Ursula Selles, Nutrition Director
  910.775.9762  us@lrcog.org
- Shondrella Sowers, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman
  910.775.9761  sks@lrcog.org
- Darcis Hunt, Rowland Nutrition Site Manager
- JoAnn Jacobs, Laurel Hill Nutrition Site Manager
- Janice Levine, Wagram Nutrition Site Manager
- Alan Locklear, Lumberton Nutrition Site Manager
- Barbara Locklear, Union Chapel Nutrition Site Manager

**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC SERVICES**

- Jean Klein, Regional Planning Director
  910.775.9753  jck@lrcog.org
- Jan Hester Maynor, Special Projects Planner (Part-time)
  910.775.9744  jhm@lrcog.org
- Jim Perry, Special Projects Planner (Part-time)
  910.775.9758  jbp@lrcog.org
- Janet Robertson, Rural Transportation Planner
  910.775.9749  jfr@lrcog.org

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- Patricia Hammonds, Administrator
  910.775.9764  pth@lrcog.org
- Antoinette Ball, Fiscal and Evaluation Coordinator
  910.775.9760  ab@lrcog.org
- Alice Williams, Special Projects/Business Services Coordinator
  910.775.9763  alw@lrcog.org