



## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

ITEM NO. 12.

**DATE OF MEETING:** December 3, 2012

**REQUESTED BY:** Chris May, Cape Fear Council of Governments

**SHORT TITLE:** NC Tomorrow Plan Technical Corrections.

**BACKGROUND:** The final draft of the Cape Fear Region's NC Tomorrow Plan was submitted to the Board on October 15, 2012 and the Board has voted to submit the report to the NC Department of Commerce. However, upon close final review, we noticed minor corrections that were needed as indicated below. Changes, no matter how minor, must be reviewed and approved by the BOC.

**SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTED:** Review and accept the proposed changes in the NC Tomorrow Plan as part of the Consent Agenda on December 3, 2012.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

Respectfully recommend approval.



Initial

**RESOLUTION**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Pender County Board of Commissioners that:

the following changes be made to the Cape Fear Region's NC Tomorrow Plan:

1. P. 33 1.3.1 spell out ' NC Biotechnology Center', not NC Biotech Center
2. P. 35 1.3.5 "Eagle's Island Coalition" as a Key Partner, not "Eagle Island Coalition"
3. P.34-36 renumber 1.3.4 as 1.3.3 and correct other numbers in this objective [numbers currently skip 1.3.3]
4. P. 39 actual cost of Pembroke Northeast Rail Connector is \$13,791,000 and again on p. 42 [The NCDOT Rail Division asked us to list the total project cost as \$13,791,000; the document currently shows the amount remaining to be funded - \$7,817,000.]
5. P. 59 change commas to periods in the list of Actions ,] should be .]
6. In Appendix 3, underline the full name of the source document Federal Resources

The Chairman/County Manager is authorized to execute any/all documents necessary to implement this resolution.

**AMENDMENTS:**

MOVED \_\_\_\_\_ SECONDED \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DENIED \_\_\_\_\_ UNANIMOUS

YEA VOTES: Brown \_\_\_ McCoy \_\_\_ Tate \_\_\_ Ward \_\_\_ Williams \_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman 12/3/12  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST 12/3/12  
Date



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**Objective 3: Pursue emerging opportunities that use the region's assets and adaptive capabilities.**

**Strategies** **1.3.1** Promote the region's biorenewable resources to attract, retain, and foster startup companies that use renewable material sources to manufacture industrial bioproducts and energy/fuel. Viable, renewable biomass resources include the following: woody biomass including wood waste; agricultural products and residues including animal waste; municipal solid waste and county landfill waste; food and beverage production/processing waste; and industrial waste (including industrial CO<sub>2</sub>) for remediation with algae. Potential biotechnology-derived products include bioplastics, bioenergy, biolubricants, advanced biofuel, biotextiles, other biomaterials (e.g., for the aerospace industry or advanced medical device industry), animal and fish feed supplements, biopharmaceuticals, and natural products, among many others.

The southeastern region of North Carolina is rich with assets suitable to feed the growth of a biorenewable biotechnology industry, based on the region's existing industry base, wide range of biomass feedstocks, agricultural production, and marine biotechnology strengths.

**Lead Agency:** NC **Biotechnology** Center

**Key Partners:** NCSE, Biofuels Center of NC, BEDC, CEDC, WBD, NC Ports, Entrepreneurship Center

**Estimated Costs:** \$50,000 for comprehensive study; \$100,000 to market the industry cluster and strengths

**Resources:** EDA, USDA, USDOE, NC Rural Center, NC Commerce

**Actions:** 1) Target the region's locational advantages for producing renewable bioproducts. 2) Support a range of existing biotechnology-related companies that use biorenewable feedstocks. 3) Assist in attracting new biorenewable biotechnology companies to the region. 4) Foster new biotechnology-related entrepreneurial ventures, focused on biomass conversion for biorenewable products.

**Barriers:** insufficient funding, competition from other regions and other states

**Performance Measures:** number of jobs generated by biorenewable companies and related businesses, \$ invested by biorenewable companies



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**1.3.2** Promote infill as a land use strategy and facilitate reuse of vacant buildings in the region, focusing on overlooked opportunities in good locations close to services and other advantages.

**Lead Agency:** CFCOG

**Key Partners:** BEDC, CEDC, WBD, municipal and county governments

**Actions:** 1) Design inventory procedures, 2) convene local developers and key local stakeholders, 3) gather input from real estate professionals and redevelopers on feasibility and best uses, 4) prepare summary findings with lists of priority properties in the region.

**Estimated Costs:** \$20,000 for inventory, preliminary assessments of best use and feasibility, \$3,500 per application

**Resources:** NC Commerce, Golden LEAF Foundation, NC Rural Center, EDA

**Barriers/Issues:** lack of funding for inventory and preliminary feasibility studies

**Performance Measures:** Dollars invested in vacant buildings, additional jobs created in vacant buildings

**1.3.3** Protect the region's beach and inlets, natural heritage. This strategy aims to preserve and promote the natural heritage and amenities that fuel the economy of the region, including beaches, rivers, inlets, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and wetlands, clean water, and fishing resources. It will entail expanding the tourism and ecotourism industries through marketing the abundance of natural assets in the region and marketing the region as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts and athletic competitions and events that use natural resources, but do not degrade them.

**Lead Agency:** NC Beach, Inlet & Waterway Association

**Key Partners:** tourism development agencies, chambers of commerce, local governments, NC Coastal Federation, NC Commerce

**Actions:** 1) convene stakeholders group, 2) highlight natural assets in maps and web-based promotions, 3) target outdoor groups and media for marketing, 4) identify priorities for protective measures

**Estimated Costs:** to be determined

**Resources:** local tourism revenues, NC Commerce

**Barriers/Issues:** agreeing on collaborative approach may be difficult, competing priorities for those involved

**Performance Measures:** increased tourist expenditures, visitation at events, state parks and natural sites



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**1.3.4** Promote the region's cultural heritage and preserve endangered resources associated with our economic history and the diversity of our region's development including agriculture, ports, transportation, military, etc.

**Lead Agency:** Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, Eagle's Island Coalition

**Key Partners:** Battleship NC Commission, NC Department of Cultural Resources, National Park Service

**Estimated Costs:** \$5 million investment for property purchase, development of the trail and preservation of historic sites

**Resources:** NC Department of Cultural Resources, NC Commerce

**Actions:** 1) Identify funding sources and pursue funding for purchase of property; 2) develop interpretive programs for the site; 3) protect and preserve remaining evidence of agricultural activities (rice fields).

**Barriers:** funding

**Performance Measures:** completion of the Eagle's Island site on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Tour, number of visitors

**1.3.5** Promote the region's forest resources and wood waste (slash) as an alternative to fossil fuels, creating the potential for a wood pellet production industry with international markets and other renewable energy products. Market forestry resources, the region's forestry-related workforce and other assets, and quality industrial sites to companies using woody biomass for wood-to-energy operations in southeastern NC.

Ample woody biomass resources exist in the wider SE North Carolina the region for the operation of multiple wood to energy, wood pellet, and wood to bio-fuels facilities. To realize this potential, however, a terminal is needed at the Port of Wilmington.

**Lead Agency:** NCSE

**Key Partners:** NCSPA, Entrepreneurship Center

**Estimated Costs:** \$55 million investment for bulk wood pellet terminal at Port of Wilmington, \$12 million for rail connection to pellet terminal and loop track

**Alignment of Resources:** NCDOT, EDA, NC Commerce

**Actions:** 1) Target the region's resources and locational advantages for producing wood pellets for international energy production. 2) Improve the capacity of the Port of Wilmington to handle exports of wood pellets and wood chips to international locations. 3) Explore profitable markets for "waste wood" and expand small business opportunities in this sub-sector

**Barriers:** funding, competition from other states, thin margins for waste wood products

**Performance Measures:** number of new wood pellet manufacturing facilities, volume of pellets exported from Port of Wilmington, number of jobs created by wood-to-energy companies



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**1.3.6** Complete development of the Columbus County Alternate Energy and Agricultural Biotechnology Complex. The Columbus County Economic Development Commission, North Carolina Biotechnology Center Southeastern Office, and Southeastern Community College have partnered to develop the Columbus County Alternative Energy and Agricultural Biotechnology Complex, an endeavor to develop the counties and the region's biotechnology and biorenewable assets located at the Columbus County Landfill. The Complex concept includes a number of technologies and companies with potentially symbiotic relationships, including the following: 1) landfill methane capture for use in an energy co-generation process also using forestry waste, which then transfers heated wastewater to heat nearby greenhouses for micropropagation and associated agricultural production; 2) pyrolysis to convert municipal waste to fuel for county buses and other vehicles; 3) an energy-producing solar panel farm.

**Lead Agency:** Columbus County Economic Development Commission

**Key Partners:** NC Biotech Center Southeastern Office, NCSE, Southeastern Community College, NC Commerce, Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**Actions:** 1) pursue funding for greenhouses and related infrastructure; 2) construct greenhouses, training facility and other infrastructure to allow companies to operate in the Complex; and 3) work with economic development partners to create and execute an external marketing plan to promote the Complex outside the region and state.

**Estimated Costs:** \$360,000 for greenhouses; \$500,000 for site improvements, heat exchanger, power lines, and natural gas lines; \$50,000 over 2 years to market the complex to additional companies and investors.

**Resources:** Tobacco Trust Fund, Golden LEAF Foundation, EDA, NC Commerce, Workforce Investment Act, NC Rural Center, private investment in energy-generating components

**Barriers:** securing funding for initial greenhouses, uncertainty in market for renewable energy credits, competition from other regions and other states

**Performance Measures:** number of jobs generated by companies in or related to the Complex, \$ invested by companies in or related to the Complex, energy generated by methane capture, pyrolysis, co-gen plant and solar collection, cost savings for solid waste operation.



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**High priority rail projects include:**

- Creating dual use of rail lines by CSX and Norfolk Southern to provide improved access and competitive rates for businesses shipping goods by rail.
- Constructing the Pembroke Northeast Rail Connector in Robeson County to connect the north-south CSX A-line and its SE-line, allowing trains with shipments to travel from Ft. Bragg to the State Port at Wilmington more efficiently and cost effectively.

**Estimated Costs:** \$13,791,000

**Resources:** NCDOT (STIP Project P-4900)

**Status:** dependent on funding through Mobility Fund, project could begin in 2013-2014

- Restoration of rail lines between Wallace and Castle Hayne (New Hanover County and Pender County) About 27 miles of rail line was taken up in the early 1980's. Restoration would provide rail access from the Wilmington area to the northeast as well as another transportation mode for the region's agricultural products.

**Estimated Costs:** \$55,000,000

**Resources:** NCDOT

**Status:** ranked 19 of 100 projects for inclusion in Mobility Fund; feasibility study to be initiated in FY 2013-14

- Re-establishing rail service between Whiteville and Tabor City in Columbus County and Conway, SC Carolina. Southern Railroad (CSR) has suspended service due to unsafe bridges. This rail line provides a critical link between Columbus County industries and Horry County, SC. Track and bridge rehabilitation by CSR was the subject of Horry County's unsuccessful application for 2012 TIGER IV funds.

**Lead Agency:** NCDOT

**Key Partners:** Horry County, SC, CEDC, Cape Fear RPO, NCDOT Rail Division, NC Department of Commerce, EDA

**Estimated Costs:** \$23.2 million

**Resources:** NCDOT, SCDOT, US DOT-TIGER grant, EDA

- Extending a rail spur to serve the Pender Commerce Park and other industrial sites on the US 421 corridor.

**Lead Agency:** Pender County

**Key Partners:** WBD, NCSE, NCSPA, NCDOT

**Estimated Costs:** \$32,000 for engineering, \$1,000,000 for construction

**Resources:** EDA, Pender County, NCDOT, NC Commerce

  
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**Objective 2: Enhance the capacity of the N.C. Ports to meet the needs of North Carolina businesses in the changing, global economy**

International deep-water ports are essential transfer points in the flow of cargo for North Carolina's businesses and citizens. To meet the requirements of increasing volumes and decreasing delivery times, cargo must have free-flowing access to these transfer points, to and from inland markets as well as to and from the ocean. Statewide market access to North Carolina State Ports is a key transportation priority for the North Carolina State Ports Authority (NCSPA) and for this Cape Fear NC Tomorrow Plan.

Interstate grade highway access is a critical infrastructure component for the Port of Wilmington. The Interstate 74 upgrade from Gastonia to Wilmington (including the Monroe Bypass) is crucial to the Port and City of Wilmington, as well as completion of the Wilmington By-pass (Interstate Loop 140). Completion of both projects would provide dual interstate access to the Port of Wilmington.

Another important priority of the NCSPA and this plan is providing service to our national defense community in and around North Carolina. Recent Base Relocation and Closure (BRAC) and 'Grow the Force' initiatives elevate the importance of the State Ports' role in serving the logistics needs of our defense community.

For all strategies listed under this objective, NCDOT and the NCSPA serve as the **Lead Agency**. Key Partners vary depending on the nature of the strategy but include NCSE, NCDOT-Rail Division, NC Logistics Task Force, Wilmington MPO, Cape Fear RPO and the City of Wilmington.

More thorough explanations and justifications for the strategies can be found in the North Carolina Maritime Strategy and the Seven Portals Study.





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**Strategies** 2.2.1 Improve the Cape Fear Navigation Channel to meet vessel requirements

**Lead Agency:** NCSPA

**Key Partners:** Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), NCDOT, NC Logistics Task Force

**Estimated Costs:** awaiting Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study

**Resources:** NCDOT, NC Commerce

**Actions:** complete USACE study, follow-up on recommendations

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding, permitting, potential groundwater intrusion

**Performance Measures:** Completed turning radius, increased shipping volumes

2.2.2 Improve terminal operating technology, gate and roadway configurations to facilitate on - terminal freight movement

**Lead Agency:** NCSPA

**Key Partners:** NCSE, NCDOT, NC Logistics Task Force, Wilmington MPO, Cape Fear RPO, City of Wilmington

**Estimated Costs:** \$8.2 million

**Resources:** NCDOT, EDA

**Actions:** complete engineering for specific projects, initiate construction

**Barriers/Issues:** projects in FY 2012 Capital budget

**Performance Measures:** Improved travel time, loading, unloading

2.2.3. Upgrade 'last mile' and interstate grade highway access to reduce time and congestion

**Lead Agency:** NCSPA

**Key Partners:** NCSE, NCDOT, Wilmington MPO, City of Wilmington

**Estimated Costs:** \$49.4 million (not including new bridge)

- \$25.1 million for causeway (R-3601)
- \$20.5 million for S. Front Street from Cape Fear Memorial Bridge to Burnett Boulevard (C100)
- \$3.8 million for Burnett Boulevard/Carolina Beach Road improvements(W01)

**Resources:** NCDOT

**Actions:** complete detailed plans with Wilmington MPO, coordinate with plans for new bridge

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding, delays in permitting, constructing improvements, difficulties siting improvements with minimal impact on nearby neighborhoods

**Performance Measures:** improved travel times, decreased congestion on local streets



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**2.2.4** Improve rail connectivity and competitive service to the Port of Wilmington, expanding market reach for businesses in the region and throughout the state. Specific priorities include:

- Completing the Pembroke Northeast Rail Connector project, listed in Objective 1 above
- Expanding the reach of short lines serving the region
- US 421 rail spur to serve Pender Commerce Park
- Providing dual Class 1 rail service to the Port of Wilmington (Objective 1 above)

**Lead Agency:** NCDOT

**Key Partners:** NCSPA, NCSE, NC Logistics Task Force, county economic developers

**Estimated Costs:** \$13,791,000 for Pembroke Northeast Rail Connector, \$1 million for US 421/Pender Commerce Park extension, others to be determined

**Resources:** NCDOT, EDA, USDOT

**Actions:** 1) pursue rail-related recommendations in NC Maritime Study, 2) seek funding for rail spur to serve Pender Commerce Park and sites on US 421 corridor

**Barriers/Issues:** insufficient funding for improvements, difficulties getting CSX and Norfolk Southern to agree to dual use arrangements

**Performance Measures:** increased shipping by rail, increased efficiency

**2.2.5** Address Department of Defense concerns for improving logistics movements to the NC Ports and Sunny Point. Providing more efficient access for moving supplies to and from the region's military bases is critical to serving and retaining North Carolina's military presence.

**Lead Agency:** NCDOT

**Key Partners:** NCSE, NCSPA, Department of Defense, Military Growth Task Force, NC Defense Logistics Initiative, Wilmington MPO, Cape Fear RPO

**Estimated Costs:** to be determined

**Resources:** NC Department of Transportation, US Department of Defense

**Actions:** 1) review recommendations from NC Maritime Study and NC Defense Logistics Initiative with partners, 2) find funding for key priorities

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding to implement improvements

**Performance Measures:** Volume of shipments moving through the Port of Wilmington

**2.2.6** Improve 'at port' distribution capabilities in our region to attract new shippers to North Carolina and new manufacturers to sites in the region. Our region provides locations with competitive inland pricing advantages for moving goods for North Carolina-based suppliers and manufacturers. Inland transportation costs are a critical factor in growing business in North Carolina.

**Lead Agency:** NCSPA, NCSE

**Key Partners:** NCDOT, NC Logistics Task Force, BEDC, CEDC, WBD, NC Commerce

**Estimated Costs:** to be determined

**Resources:** NCDOT

**Actions:** Follow up on recommendations in the NC Maritime Study

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding

**Performance Measures:** Increased use of Ports by North Carolina businesses



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**Objective 4: Promote vitality in the region's downtowns and 'Main Street' centers.**

**Strategies** **3.4.1** Pursue implementation of downtown revitalization plans of towns in the region. This strategy supports locally-initiated downtown plans and priority projects in these towns' plans. Examples include: the 8-Point Action Plan for Downtown Burgaw, Shallotte Vision Plan, Southport's Main Street Plan, Bolton STEP Strategy, and Tabor City's STEP strategy. Priority projects can be found in the Appendix.

**Lead Agency:** CFCOG

**Key Partners:** NC Commerce, NC Rural Center, Wilmington Downtown, Inc., City of Wilmington, Town of Bolton, Town of Burgaw, Town of Shallotte, Town of Southport, Town of Tabor City, other governments

**Estimated Costs:** \$5,000 for coordination; specific costs for implementing priority projects to be determined for each project

**Resources:** NC Commerce, NC Rural Center, USDA-Rural Development

**Actions:** 1) Assemble and analyze list of priority projects for towns in the region with downtown improvement plans, processes or projects. [This includes Southport, the region's only Main Street, Burgaw, the region's one Small Town Main Street, and Tabor City, Bolton and Sandyfield, the region's STEP Towns, Shallotte, Whiteville, and other towns in the region with downtown improvement processes and projects.] 2) Identify potential funding sources for priority projects. 3) Mobilize effort to prepare applications for funding high priority projects

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding of projects

**Performance Measures:** \$ new investment in downtowns, # new jobs in downtown areas, # completed projects

**3.4.2** Encourage adaptive reuse and historic preservation of priority buildings. Under this strategy Cape Fear COG will organize partners in the region for mutual support, offer assistance with utilizing tax credits and other incentives for redevelopment, market potential projects to real estate and development firms that specialize in downtown revitalization, historic properties and infill development.

**Lead Agency:** CFCOG

**Key Partners:** NC Commerce, Wilmington Downtown Inc., Main Street organizations, architects specializing in historic preservation, Preservation North Carolina, NC Downtown Development Association

**Estimated Costs:** \$5,000

**Resources:** in-kind staff time, NC Commerce

**Actions:** 1) Convene working group to scope ideas and test interest in support network, 2) conduct 'how-to' seminars, 3) identify and market projects with high potential

**Barriers/Issues:** staff time and outside expertise to devote to assisting groups and conducting seminars

**Performance Measures:** Number of buildings reused, funds invested in preserving priority buildings, number of jobs created in reused buildings



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**3.4.3** Complete infrastructure redevelopment plans enhancing the public spaces in Wilmington’s central business district. For North and South Front Street this will enhance existing public spaces by replacing sidewalks, updating street furnishings, installing more landscaping and placing utilities underground to encourage more retail development in the central business district.

**Lead Agency:** City of Wilmington

**Key Partners:** Wilmington Downtown, Inc., Downtown Business Alliance (Wilmington), CFPUA, Duke Energy

**Actions:** 1) Identify next steps for utility replacement on Front Street; 2) place remaining five blocks in the Capital Improvement Budget for the City of Wilmington and CFPUA.

**Estimated Costs:** \$5,000,000

**Resources:** NCDOT, City of Wilmington capital funds

**Barriers/Issues:** Funding and cooperation with the City of Wilmington, CFPUA and Duke Energy.

**Performance Measures:** increased retail trade in central business district, number of new businesses and increase in retail sales

### Appendix 3: Federal Livability Principles

#### The Partnership for Sustainable Communities livability Principles

**Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

**Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

**Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.

**Support existing communities.** Target federal funding toward existing communities-through strategies like transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling-to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.

**Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.** Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

**Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods-rural, urban, or suburban.

**Source:** Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities, Partnership for Sustainable Communities (2012)



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#### Appendix 4: Major Narrative Responses from NC Tomorrow Survey

##### How might the county leverage its competitive advantage? (Question 9)

1. Need to figure out what exactly are our competitive advantages before leveraging them.
2. Use and fully fund community colleges, educational institutions so that they can grow workforce to match opportunities. Make K-12 education for workforce skills a priority. We need to recognize that the new economy demands an educated workforce and that all our students deserve full access to educational opportunity.
3. Greater cohesion and cooperation is needed among economic and community development entities, with stronger, more visionary leadership
4. Keep our environment clean, protect natural resources, stand tall on issues related to heavily polluting industries. Leverage beautiful coastal environment, place-based amenities (river, ocean, historic downtown). Protect tourism by creating a "destination place" environment, enhance and market.
5. Recruit clean knowledge industries.
6. Location, Location, Location. Highly desirable quality of life in our area desperately needs matching highly-desirable, non-polluting industry.
7. Grow businesses here in Wilmington into stronger regional clusters. Build on strengths in health care, clinical research/CROs, film, IT, professional services, and other knowledge economy clusters Existing industrial clusters can increase support of each other.
8. Use ports for shipping manufactured goods; build a new state port in Southport.
9. Build on agricultural backbone, expertise; support programs like Downeast Connect
10. Conduct business strategy sessions with organizations that have been successful elsewhere; conduct these with the backing of the Chamber of Commerce.
11. Refocus on means of executing business development programs with private-sector involvement.
12. More marketing: promoting occupational skill levels of current population; promoting the quality of life of the region including educational and recreational resources. Emphasize that this is a right to work State with very business friendly laws
13. Improving education and quality of life in the region to make it competitive to lure in industries