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*Governor*

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*Secretary*

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## **MAIN STREET PROGRAM CREATES JOBS AND INVESTMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITIES**

*Program Reports 2,000 New Jobs, 319 New Businesses  
and \$200,011,827 in Investments in FY 2016-17*

Raleigh, N.C. – The NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center reports today that its programs supported 2,000 new jobs, 319 new businesses and more than \$200 million in private investment for fiscal year 2016-2017, N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland announced today.

These results are from the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center’s fiscal year reports for the 64 designated Main Street and the 23 designated Small Town Main Street communities active in the two programs.

### **NC Main Street Program**

Currently, designated Main Street communities range in population from 1,730 – 87,130. All were under 50,000 in population at the time of designation. These communities partner at the local level with a Main Street director, a board of directors and a host of community volunteers.

Since the inception of the program in 1980, North Carolina Main Street communities have exceeded more than \$2,650,750,000 in downtown public and private investment, created over 22,000 jobs and opened 5,410 businesses.

Main Street communities reported the following statistics from their 2016-17 work:

- \$189,562,163 in downtown public and private investment
- 1,804 new jobs
- 281 new businesses
- 235 building renovations
- 322 façade improvements
- 114,968 volunteer hours with a value of \$2,643,122

“Main streets and downtowns serve as hubs for life and business in a community,” said Secretary Tony Copeland. “The NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street

programs support these areas by getting them what they need to prepare and compete for business and new jobs for their residents.”

The NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center assists selected communities across the state in restoring economic vitality to historic downtowns. The Main Street staff provides strategic economic development planning and technical assistance, program guidance, and training and education to participating communities under the structure of the Main Street America™ program, created by the National Main Street Center. The program incorporates transformative economic development strategies that are implemented through a Four-Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization: Organization, Design, Promotion and Economic Vitality.

“Main Street is the foundation that creates the environment for economic development activity in downtown districts throughout the state and the country, especially in small to medium-sized communities,” said Liz Parham, director of the N.C. Commerce Main Street and Rural Planning Center. “We are so pleased to see the tremendous investment, business development and job creation that was made in our Main Street and Small Town Main Street districts. These numbers demonstrate the success that the Main Street program has here in North Carolina.”

### **Small Town Main Street Program**

In addition, the designated Small Town Main Street communities have been successful in revitalizing the state’s smallest communities. The Small Town Main Street program operates in communities with populations below 5,000 that have the capacity to run a volunteer-driven downtown revitalization initiative. Small Town Main Street communities reported the following statistics from their 2016-17 work:

- \$10,449,664 in downtown public and private investment
- 196 new jobs
- 38 new businesses
- 24 building renovations
- 45 facade improvements
- 24,398 volunteer hours with a value of \$560,913

Since its inception in 2003, the program boasts \$103,380,999 in downtown public and private investment, more than 1,400 jobs and a net gain of more than 470 businesses.

Each year participants in both programs are required to track key factors that help determine the overall health of the downtowns in the program. In 2017, the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center worked with N.C. Commerce’s Labor and Economic Analysis Division to develop a Statics Reporting Portal. The portal allows reporting to be completed online, reducing error rates and increasing efficiency.

For more information on the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center and its programs, go to <http://www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street>.

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