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NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES  
FROM N.C. COMMERCE



## Italian Maker of Plastic Packaging Will Bring 46 Jobs to Robeson County

Global packaging maker Serioplast US LLC will establish production operations in Red Springs in a project that will create 46 new jobs in Robeson County, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced June 18. The company, which manufactures rigid plastic packaging for a wide variety of consumer goods, plans to invest \$9.42 million in its new North Carolina presence.

"New jobs like these demonstrate that North Carolina has a strong workforce and is open for business," **Governor Cooper** said. "This investment by Serioplast shows that our state remains is a good fit for global companies."

Serioplast US is the North American unit of Serioplast Group, founded in 1974 and headquartered in Italy's Lombardy region. The privately-held firm employs a worldwide workforce of 1,600 across 30 facilities in 14 countries. In 2018, it opened its initial North American outpost in St. Louis, Mo. Serioplast's plastic packaging products are used by major names in food and beverages, personal care products and other consumer goods.

"Serioplast Group considered several possible locations for this investment prior to making our choice of Robeson County," said **Carlo Innocenti, chief executive officer of Serioplast Global Services S.p.A.**, the company's Italian parent. "In the Town of Red Springs we found a site that fit our facility needs, had access to strong workforce assets and was convenient to growing North American consumer markets. We are grateful to North Carolina's leaders, who were willing to work closely with our site selection team in addressing our objectives for this expansion."

The North Carolina Department of Commerce led a team of partners in supporting Serioplast's decision to establish operations in Robeson County, where the company's 46 new jobs will come with salaries averaging \$45,457 per year. The



## Digital Advertising Company to Expand in Elizabethtown

Anthem Displays, a national manufacturer of digital billboards, will create 17 jobs in Bladen County, North Carolina **Governor Roy Cooper** announced June 15. The project will generate a \$3.6 million investment in Elizabethtown.

"North Carolina continues to attract new jobs in a wide range of industries," said **Governor Cooper**. "Global companies like Anthem Displays see the potential of growing in southeastern North Carolina because of the strong workforce that is ready to get to work."

Anthem Displays is an industry leader in state-of-the-art digital outdoor advertising displays and solutions. In 2018, Prismaflex International, a worldwide operator of direct-out-of-home advertising, took a minority stake in Anthem Displays. Anthem Displays provides digital display technology for advertising companies, including Lamar Advertising, globally and in all 50 U.S. states. Its Boulder, Colorado location will consolidate and relocate electronics and firmware operations to Elizabethtown, where the company currently employs nine workers in the design and manufacture of display frames.

"We are pleased to build upon our 35-year history in Bladen County," says **Nico Marais, Partner of Anthem Displays**. "The majority of the outdoor billboard market is east of the Mississippi River, which was one of the top reasons for consolidating our operations to North Carolina. This expansion will provide greater efficiencies and quality in producing our digital billboards for our customer base."

"Our one-of-a-kind talent, convenient access to global markets and moderate business costs continue to attract jobs and investment both nationally and internationally," **North Carolina Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland** said. "Anthem Displays' expansion in Bladen County is further evidence that our state and its economy are as resilient as any

average annual wage in Robeson County is \$33,454. The project will create for the community an annual payroll impact of more than \$2 million.

A performance-based grant of \$150,000 from the One North Carolina Fund will help facilitate Serioplast's new operations in North Carolina. The One NC Fund provides financial assistance to local governments to help attract economic investment and create jobs. Companies receive no money upfront and must meet job creation and capital investment targets to qualify for payment. All One NC grants require a matching grant from local governments and any award is contingent upon that condition being met.

In addition to the [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#), other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), the [North Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Robeson Community College](#), the [Robeson County Board of Commissioners](#), and the [Robeson County Office of Economic Development](#), the [Robeson County Committee of 100](#), [ElectriCities](#), the [Town of Red Springs](#), and [North Carolina's Southeast](#).



Photo by [Nicholas Doherty](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## Commerce to Study North Carolina's Infrastructure and Supply Chain Assets to Support Offshore Wind

The North Carolina Department of Commerce has launched a comprehensive project to assess the state's inventory of businesses, organizations, and physical infrastructure best positioned to promote offshore wind development in North Carolina. The move is the latest step in **Governor Roy Cooper's** far-reaching commitment to build a clean energy economy to fight climate change and grow clean-energy jobs in North Carolina.

To produce the supply chain report, the North Carolina Office of Science, Technology, & Innovation, an operating unit of the Commerce Department, recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking an experienced consulting partner to help the Department develop and publish the study. The response period closed yesterday (June 22) and a contract award is expected soon.

in the world."

Among the positions Anthem Displays will add in Elizabethtown are electronic assembly personnel and managerial staff. The average annual salary for the new positions could exceed \$38,300, creating an annual payroll impact of more than \$651,750 per year for the local economy. The current average annual wage in Bladen County is \$34,856. The company's expansion will occur at a facility developed by Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-industrial, a nonprofit corporation supported by the Golden Leaf Foundation, USDA Rural Development, and the US Economic Development Administration.

A performance-based grant of \$50,000 from the One North Carolina Fund will help locate Anthem Displays to Bladen County. The One N.C. Fund provides financial assistance to local governments to help attract economic investment and to create jobs. Companies receive no money upfront and must meet job creation and capital investment targets to qualify for payment. All One N.C. grants require a matching grant from local governments and any award is contingent upon that condition being met.

The [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) worked closely with the [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina](#) in leading a collaborative state effort to support the company's expansion. Other key partners in the project include the [North Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority](#), the [North Carolina Community College System](#), [Golden LEAF Foundation](#), [North Carolina's Southeast](#), [Four County Electric Membership Corporation](#), [Bladen Community College](#), [Bladen County Economic Development Commission](#), the [Bladen County Board of Commissioners](#), Bladen County Committee of 100, and the [Town of Elizabethtown](#).

## Governor Cooper announces Grants to Three Communities to Support Jobs and Investment

The North Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) has approved three grant requests to local governments totaling \$2,825,000, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced June 18. The requests include commitments to create a total of 264 jobs, 250 of which were previously announced. The public investment in these projects will attract more than \$114 million in private investment.

"Rural Infrastructure Authority grants help our cities, towns and counties address critical infrastructure needs so they can attract new, good-paying jobs," **Governor Cooper** said. "When we invest in rural communities, we are demonstrating that North Carolina is open for business with the tools and workforce to help companies compete on a global scale."

"Our state enjoys one of the east coast's strongest natural resources for utility-scale wind energy, and our heritage in manufacturing guarantees we can provide the trained workforce to support this growing sector of the nation's economy," said **North Carolina Department of Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland**.

The supply chain and infrastructure assessment will identify strengths and opportunities to prepare the state to serve the specialized needs of the wind energy industry. The study will also identify new opportunities to both develop commercial-grade wind energy off the North Carolina coast as well as supply wind energy facilities along the entire eastern seaboard.

"We applaud the leadership of the state of North Carolina in moving forward to harness this once-in-a-generation opportunity that offshore wind energy is bringing to coastal communities up and down the Atlantic seaboard," said **Laura Morton, Offshore Wind Senior Director for the American Wind Energy Association**. "As a result, North Carolinians across the state can expect to experience benefits that come with offshore wind such as an increase in local well-paying jobs, economic investments to revitalize port infrastructures, more affordable, stabilized electricity costs, and improved environmental conditions."

The new assessment is part of the ongoing work to implement Governor Cooper's Clean Energy Plan for the state.

In October 2018, Governor Cooper signed [Executive Order 80](#) to reaffirm North Carolina's commitment to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions and support the expansion of clean energy businesses. Among other actions, the executive order directed the Department of Commerce to support the expansion of clean energy businesses and service providers, encourage clean technology investment, and support companies seeking to procure renewable energy. On October 1, 2019, the Department of Commerce published an extensive workforce assessment for the clean energy and clean transportation industry sectors. That assessment noted that North Carolina has strong potential to develop offshore wind energy and support considerable job growth in that industry.

The offshore wind supply chain and infrastructure report is expected to be published later this year.

"These three grants will help rural areas of North Carolina facilitate the creation of new jobs and business expansion," **N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony Copeland** said. "The Rural Economic Development Division at Commerce and the Rural Infrastructure Authority are proud to partner with community leaders, to strengthen their economies and encourage investment."

The North Carolina Department of Commerce's team of rural economic development professionals supports the RIA's work. RIA members review and approve funding requests from local communities. Funding comes from a variety of specialized grant and loan programs offered and managed by N.C. Commerce's Rural Economic Development Division, led by **Assistant Secretary for Rural Development Kenny Flowers**. Grants can support a variety of activities, including infrastructure development, building renovation, expansion and demolition, and site improvements.

More details on the [grant award winners is available online](#).

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## On Our Radar

- [Students urged to apply for college aid - \(Rocky Mount Telegram\)](#) - June 22

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## N.C. in the News

- [Downtown Laurinburg becomes nationally recognized](#) (*Laurinburg Exchange* - June 22)
- [North Carolina studies offshore wind opportunities](#) (*Riviera* - United Kingdom - June 19)
- [These jobs are in high demand – a good sign for the Triangle](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - June 17)

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## About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor](#).

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