

sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



Secretary Copeland offering remarks at the announcement ceremony in Pinehurst September 9.

More Golf Championships On Tap as USGA Selects Pinehurst for New Research, Testing and Foundation Operations

The United States Golf Association (USGA) plans to create a multi-building research and testing campus in the Village of Pinehurst, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced on September 9.

The USGA's "Golf House Pinehurst" will become the home for the USGA Foundation's operations and include a visitor center and museum.

The association plans to invest up to \$36 million in the campus, which will employ a 50-person workforce. Part of the USGA commitment to North Carolina includes regularly bringing the men's and women's U.S. Open tournaments to Pinehurst and a host of other high-profile tournaments to courses across the state.

"This new USGA hub along with the assured rotation of the U.S. Open in Pinehurst will bring jobs and millions of tourism dollars to our state. North Carolina's golf history is legendary and this adds to the luster," said **Governor Cooper**.

Today, golf generates \$2.3 billion in direct spending in North Carolina, according to a 2017 economic impact analysis by the



Main Streets Across North Carolina Attract a Record \$372.7 Million in Investment

In the recently completed fiscal year 2019-2020, the North Carolina Main Street and Rural Planning Center and its programs supported 1,311 new jobs, 267 new businesses and more than \$372 million in local public and private investment, **North Carolina Department of Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland** announced recently. The results were derived from business activity in the state's 64 designated Main Street and 13 designated Small Town Main Street communities.

"The record capital investment for our Main Street communities is encouraging evidence about the energy of our rural downtowns and the viability of this important component of North Carolina's economic development strategy," said **Secretary Copeland**. "As our smaller cities and towns navigate the post-pandemic recovery, leadership and technical support from the Main Street program will help communities embrace long-range opportunities."

Currently, designated Main Street communities range in population from 1,615 to 92,067. All were under 50,000 in population at the time of their designation. These communities are managed at the local level by a Main Street director, a board of directors and a host of community volunteers.

Main Street communities reported the following statistics from their 2019-20 work:

- \$361,454,314 in downtown public and private investment
- 1,262 new jobs
- 260 new businesses
- 242 building renovations

Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association. The sport deploys a workforce of 53,000 in the state, generating a \$1.3 billion annual payroll impact.

Founded in 1894, USGA is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that acts as the governing body for golf worldwide. It produces and interprets the rules of golf and tests golf equipment for compliance with regulations. In addition to providing a national handicap system for golfers, USGA conducts 14 national championships, including the U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open and U.S. Senior Open. The organization is based in Liberty Corner, New Jersey.

There is no better place for the USGA to plant new roots than the beautiful and iconic Home of American Golf," said **Mike Davis, CEO of the USGA**. "Thanks to the vision of North Carolina, Moore County and Pinehurst leaders, we are taking a bold step forward and forging a long-term commitment that will elevate our championships, foster greater innovation in golf, and ultimately help grow the game. We look forward to building on our nearly 100-year history in this region, and growing our relationships with the leadership, golf community and residents of this great state."

Pinehurst has a storied history in the emergence of golf as a national pastime. The Village is a product of Boston soda fountain magnate James Walker Tufts' 1895 purchase of 598 acres in Moore County as the site for a new resort. In 1900, Tufts brought in Scottish immigrant Donald Ross to design the resort's first golf course and serve as golf pro. Ross would go on to design 45 North Carolina golf courses.

The USGA estimates the economic impact of the move will result in a \$2 billion economic impact for North Carolina over the next 25 years.



A strictly enforced, socially distanced announcement event was held at the Pinehurst Resort on September 9.

"The USGA's plans for this significant new presence in Pinehurst elevates the Village's reputation in the golfing world and enhances North Carolina's prestige as a destination for both businesses and tourists," said **Commerce Secretary Anthony Copeland**. "Today's news will add new energy to the leisure and hospitality services and significantly contribute to the long-term recovery of that important segment of our economy."

Prior to the onset of COVID-19 and the social distancing measures that followed, North Carolina's leisure and hospitality services industry, which includes lodging, events, food service and recreational activities, employed 535,800 workers. The number fell by more than half in March and April of this year

- 398 façade improvements
- 84,017 volunteer hours with a value of \$2,032,371

The program's Small Town Main Street communities contributed additional results to the overall total.

While the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a decline in business growth and new jobs from the previous year, public and private investment was up by nearly \$100 million over 2018-19, demonstrating the increase in rehabilitation and new construction that is occurring in downtown districts across the state.

"Main Street is a strong economic development program with proven success for cities and towns of all sizes," said **Liz Parham, director of the N.C. Commerce Main Street and Rural Planning Center**. "The structure of a Main Street program provides a public-private foundation to build a downtown environment that thrives, and as a partner with the local programs, our office is committed to providing resources, assistance and guidance that will build more resilient local economies."

Since the inception of the program in 1980, North Carolina Main Street communities have generated nearly \$3.5 billion in downtown public and private investment, created over 26,000 jobs and opened 6,235 businesses.

More information on the N.C. Main Street and Rural Planning Center is available at [Commerce's website](#).

Read more about [N.C. Main Street's FY 19-20 performance here](#).

Job Retention Grant (JRG) Program Attracts Strong Interest

The state's Job Retention Grant Program (JRG), administered by the Department of Commerce, drew strong interest from businesses and nonprofit organizations from across the state. The program's application period closed on September 1.

Commerce received a total of 665 applications from organizations impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Commerce staff members are now reviewing the applicant pool, and no grant payments have been issued as yet.

However, early analysis of the applicant pool indicates that individual awards will require grant amounts to be pro-rated downward somewhat from their theoretical full amounts, since the amount of available funding will fall short of meeting the demand seen from the current pool of applicants.

before rebounding sharply in May and June. As of July, the sector employed 366,300 in the state, according to the most recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, remaining down 28 percent from pre-pandemic levels.

The [North Carolina Department of Commerce](#) and the [Office of the Governor](#) led a collaborative effort to support USGA's selection of North Carolina for the investment. Other key partners were the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), [Moore County](#), the [Village of Pinehurst](#), [Moore County Partners in Progress](#), [North Carolina's Southeast](#), and the [Pinehurst Resort](#).



Photo courtesy of [Jakob Owens](#) via [Unsplash](#)

Film Production Resumes in North Carolina

Five new productions have been approved for North Carolina Film and Entertainment Grants and will start production in the state by the end of October, **Governor Roy Cooper** announced today (September 15). Combined, these productions are projected to generate a direct in-state spend of more than \$107 million while creating 8,671 job opportunities including 650 well-paying crew positions for the state's highly skilled film professionals.

With the help of public health officials, industry trade associations and alliances have developed protocols to aid in preventing the spread of COVID-19 at filming locations. Each production has a COVID-19 safety plan that provides extra precautions to protect those working in front of and behind the camera.

"Our state's film industry continues to welcome new projects from prominent production companies," said **Governor Cooper**. "The industry provides good jobs and opportunities for local businesses, while also showcasing what North Carolina has to offer on a larger stage."

"2019 was a banner year for film and television production in North Carolina and despite some setbacks related to COVID-19, it looks like 2020 will also be a great year for the state's industry," added **North Carolina Film Office director Guy Gaster**. "It is exciting to have these productions up and running and we may have even more before the end of the year."

Review information about the [individual film projects at Commerce's website here](#).

Current funding for the program now stands at \$60.5 million.

Watch for news and updates on the program by [monitoring the JRG page at nccommerce.com](#).

N.C. in the News

- [Visitor Spending Trending Up. Recovery Will Take Time](#) (*The Pilot* - Southern Pines - September 15)
- [Clean Water Management Trust Fund Gets New Name](#) (*High Country Radio News* - Boone - September 15)
- [BUILD grants announced for North Carolina. Tennessee rail projects](#) (*Progressive Railroading* - September 14)

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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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