

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



Tryon, a North Carolina Main Street Community.

Downtown Strong: New Initiative To Expand Local Capacity

The North Carolina Department of Commerce is investing \$260,000 in *Downtown Strong*, a program to build local government capacity by providing economic development planning and revitalization resources and guidance.

The program is a result of feedback gleaned from Governor Cooper's Hometown Strong initiative. *Downtown Strong* will operate out of the Department of Commerce's [Main Street and Rural Planning Center](#).

"As we work with small communities throughout our state, local governments need more capacity and resources to tackle the unique challenges they face," said **Governor Roy Cooper**. "Downtown Strong will provide planning and revitalization expertise to communities across North Carolina that otherwise might not have access to these resources."

Downtown Strong is a result of feedback from rural leaders during Hometown Strong community meetings. Hometown Strong convenes leaders from every cabinet agency to meet with local leaders to forge new relationships, increase communication and help state government better serve rural North Carolinians.



North Carolina
MAIN STREET

N.C. Main Street Conference Early Bird Registration Underway

Early bird registration is open and underway for the premiere conference in North Carolina for downtown economic development.

This year's North Carolina Main Street Conference convenes in Salisbury, March 12-14. Early registration - and the chance to register at a lower price - closes next week (February 15).

Town leaders, board members, and committee members working on downtown development issues will find the conference an excellent tool to build momentum with your stakeholders and in your community.

Keynote speakers will deliver insights on retail strategy and small business entrepreneurial success.

Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder of RetailMinded.com, will share "10 Must Know Strategies to Help Downtown Thrive," and Ken Anderson, Director, Small Business & Entrepreneurial Services for Delaware Economic Development will deliver a talk entitled "Make Sure the Dog Wants to Eat the Dog Food": Ways to Enhance Downtown Entrepreneurial Business Success!"

Review a complete agenda and then register for the event at the main conference website, ncmainstreetconference.com.

The Main Street and Rural Planning Center, which will head up *Downtown Strong*, provides technical assistance services to communities that are revitalizing and preserving their traditional downtown commercial districts as mixed-use centers of activity. *Downtown Strong* will assist communities that are not yet part of the formal Main Street program or that have needs outside the traditional program.

"The NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center has deep economic and community development expertise, especially for downtowns in rural and smaller communities," said **Secretary of Commerce Anthony M. Copeland**. "Through *Downtown Strong*, we can provide more communities with these elite resources."

Downtown Strong will provide a downtown assessment of each participating community, as well as staff training, technical assistance and other resources. Services and resources will use the Main Street America approach, which establishes economic development strategies and implementation plans through economic vitality, design, promotion and organization actions. The traditional Main Street program includes a Downtown Associate Community program for smaller communities or those just starting revitalization efforts. *Downtown Strong* will help interested communities prepare to become Downtown Associate Communities or will help them prosper on their own.

The program is available to all eligible communities in North Carolina. Interested local government officials should contact Liz Parham, Director of the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center, for more information at lparham@nccommerce.com.



Deputy Secretary Liz Crabill (second from left) and Chief of Staff George Sherrill (to the right of her) with company and local officials in Catawba County.

ITM Breaks Ground in Hickory

Isotopen Technologien München AG (ITM), a group of specialized radiopharmaceutical companies, broke ground on a



John Council, fourth-generation leader of his family owned company, speaks with the Hometown Strong team.

Hometown Strong Team Visits Columbus County

Governor Cooper's Hometown Strong team visited Columbus County recently, and included a stop at Council Tool in Lake Waccamaw.

Council Tool manufactures tools such as axes for consumers as well as the military, firefighters, and other business markets.

During the learning session, ways to strengthen the state's workforce development programs were discussed.

On Our Radar

- [Report: Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina Should Increase Private Funding and Improve Formal Coordination with Department of Commerce](#) *N.C. General Assembly, Program Evaluation Division (January 2019) 2019-02*

N.C. in the News

- [Auto parts maker picks Johnston County for jobs, investment](#) *Triangle Business Journal* - February 5)
- [Dollar General to invest \\$13M, 105 jobs in new Triangle operation](#) *Triangle Business Journal* - February 4)
- [Opportunity Zones' gaining steam in the Triangle](#) (*Triangle Business Journal* - February 4)
- [Tax breaks could drive new development in Durham. Could they also worsen gentrification?](#) (*News & Observer* - February 4)

About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-

new facility in Catawba County January 24. The plant will be its first North American manufacturing facility of its subsidiary Isotopes Technologies Garching (ITG), creating 137 new jobs. ITM will invest \$12 million in Hickory with the project.

Commerce's Deputy Secretary Liz Crabill and Chief of Staff George Sherrill were on hand for the event.

Read the [project press release](#) and learn more at the [Catawba County Economic Development Corporation's website](#).

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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Building Location:
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:
4301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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