

*Connecting  
North Carolina  
to a Better Future*

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The e-NC Authority  
[www.e-nc.org](http://www.e-nc.org)**

# Mission

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The e-NC Authority is dedicated to ensuring that all North Carolina citizens, businesses and communities are aware of, know how to use and have access to high-speed Internet services at affordable prices, creating local opportunities for technology-based economic development and job creation.



# Primary Legislative Mandate - Connectivity

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- Created by the N.C. General Assembly in 2000, formerly the Rural Internet Access Authority
- Mandated to track broadband connectivity levels, by county, across North Carolina
- Established as primary Internet-planning body for the state
- Advocate and serve as catalyst for infrastructure build-out in underserved areas



# Primary Legislative Mandate - Connectivity

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- Received \$30 million in private foundation funding from MCNC in 2000
- 8 staff members (3 are part-time)
- Governed by 15-member board – appointed by House, Senate and Governor
- Created by the state, but did not receive state funding until 2004



# Programs & Activities

## (Research – Implement – Evaluate)

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- **Annual 100 County Report** – outlining connectivity availability and last-mile infrastructure statewide
- **GIS Mapping Program** – award-winning, real-time tracking of infrastructure through partnerships with service providers, for public access
- **Citizen Surveys** – analysis of adoption (1999, 2002, 2004, forthcoming in 2007)



# Programs & Activities

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- **e-NC Business & Technology Telecenters** – primary grantor for these SEVEN technology resource centers for small business growth in economically-distressed areas
- **e-Communities** – grassroots effort started in 2001, *all 85 rural counties* developed assessment of technology needs and assets, and developed plans for digital literacy training, public access, connectivity and Web applications
- **e-Government** – created to show citizens and leaders the benefits of transactional gov't, resulted in interactive Web sites for 55 governments
- **TechForce** – in operation for three years



# Major Success – The e-NC Model

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- Hybrid organization – state authority housed in a non-profit rural economic development organization with funding from private foundations *and* state/federal
- Support of state legislature, service providers and local governments
- Three types of connectivity tracking
  - Availability of high-speed Internet per household
  - GIS-mapping
  - Subscription rates – Citizen Surveys



# Major Success – The e-NC Model

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- Consulting model for other states
- First state to create a GIS-based mapping program of a real-time nature
- One of the first out of the gate
  - e-Communities began in 2001
  - e-Government began in 2002
- Three-fold system
  - 1) Build supply
  - 2) Build demand
  - 3) Deliver valuable broadband outcomes research





Active Tool Mode:  
Identify

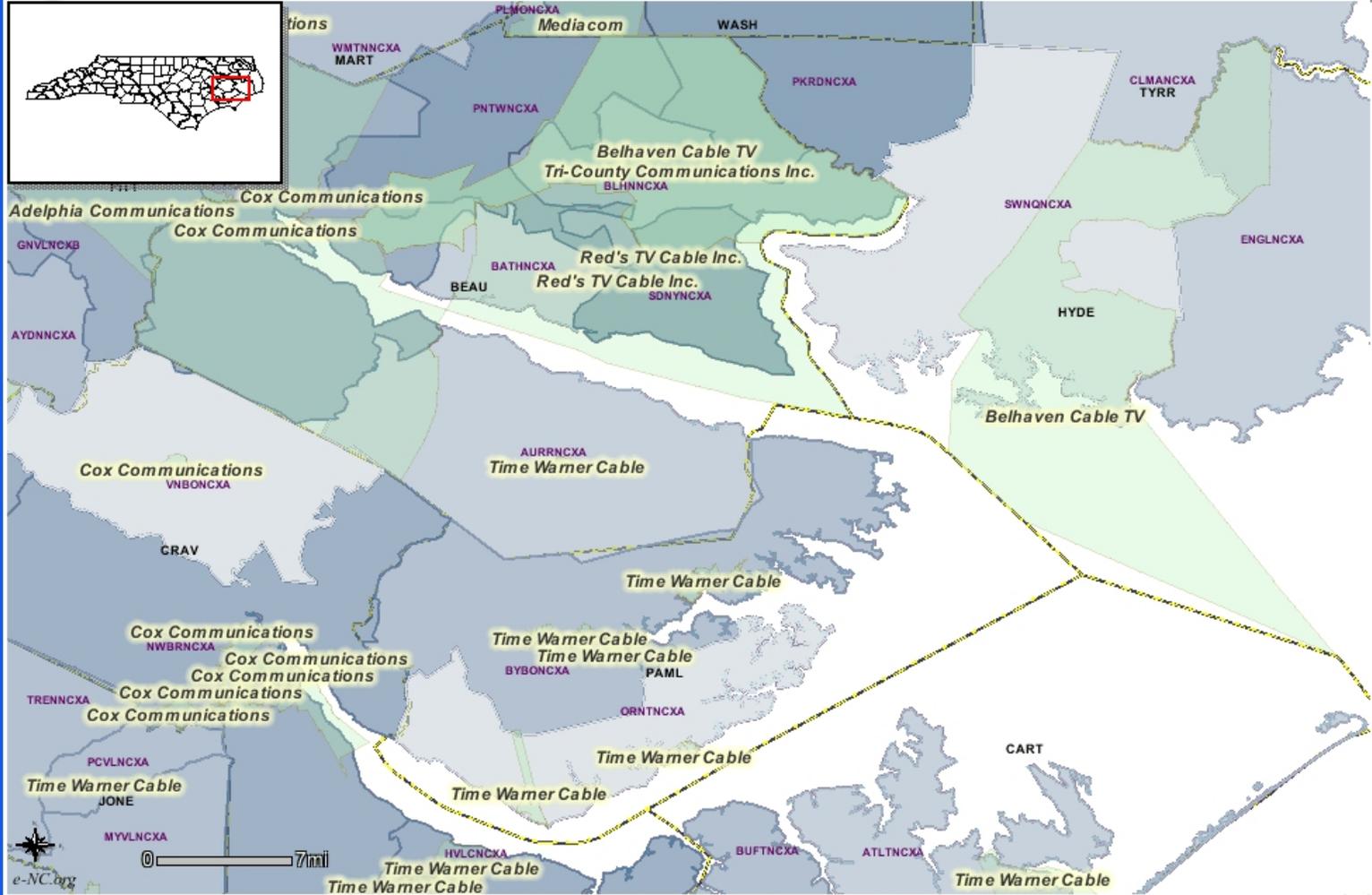
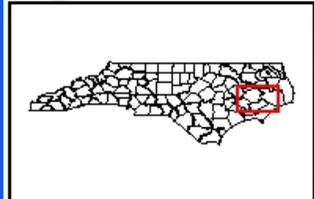
### Map Data Layers

You must zoom in for greyed-out layers to become available for viewing.

[Refresh Map](#)

Visible Active

- Wireless Towers ?
- CLI Central Offices ?
- Distressed Schools ?
- Public Internet Access Sites ?
- TV Stations ?
- Water Towers ?
- TowerMap Towers ?
- Health Care Facilities ?
- Public Airports ?
- Unincorporated Communities ?
- Railroads ?
- BlueRidge Parkway ?
- Interstates ?
- Primary Highways ?
- Secondary Highways ?
- Local Streets ?
- Major Rivers ?
- Wireless Tower Service Areas ?
- Cable Modem Service Areas ?
- Activated Cable Franchise Areas ?
- % DSL Capable Lines ?
- Wire Center Boundaries ?
- Area Codes ?
- LATA Regions ?
- Incorporated Cities ?
- Major WaterBodies ?
- County Boundaries ?
- US House Districts (2001) ?



[Cable Modem Service Areas](#) (Click to open layer info. page.)

Record ID	SPU Service Location ID	SPU Provider Name	Website	City	SPU/Has Cable Modem Service	SPU/From_Client Max_Speed	SPU/From_Client Min_Speed	SPU/To_Client Max_Speed	SPU/To_Client Min_Speed	SPU/Service Loop Quality Pct.	SPU/Hubs	SPU/Head Ends	SPU/Homes Passed
1	NC0130	Belhaven Cable TV		BELHAVEN	Yes	256 Kb/s	0 Kb/s	1350 Kb/s	0 Kb/s	48	0	4	2425

# Major Success – Telecenter Program

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- All SEVEN Telecenters are located in distressed rural counties, fostering entrepreneurship, creating wealth and developing leadership through home-grown economic development
- Reinvention of older properties (ex. vacant cotton mill) and investment in new business



# Major Success – Telecenter Program

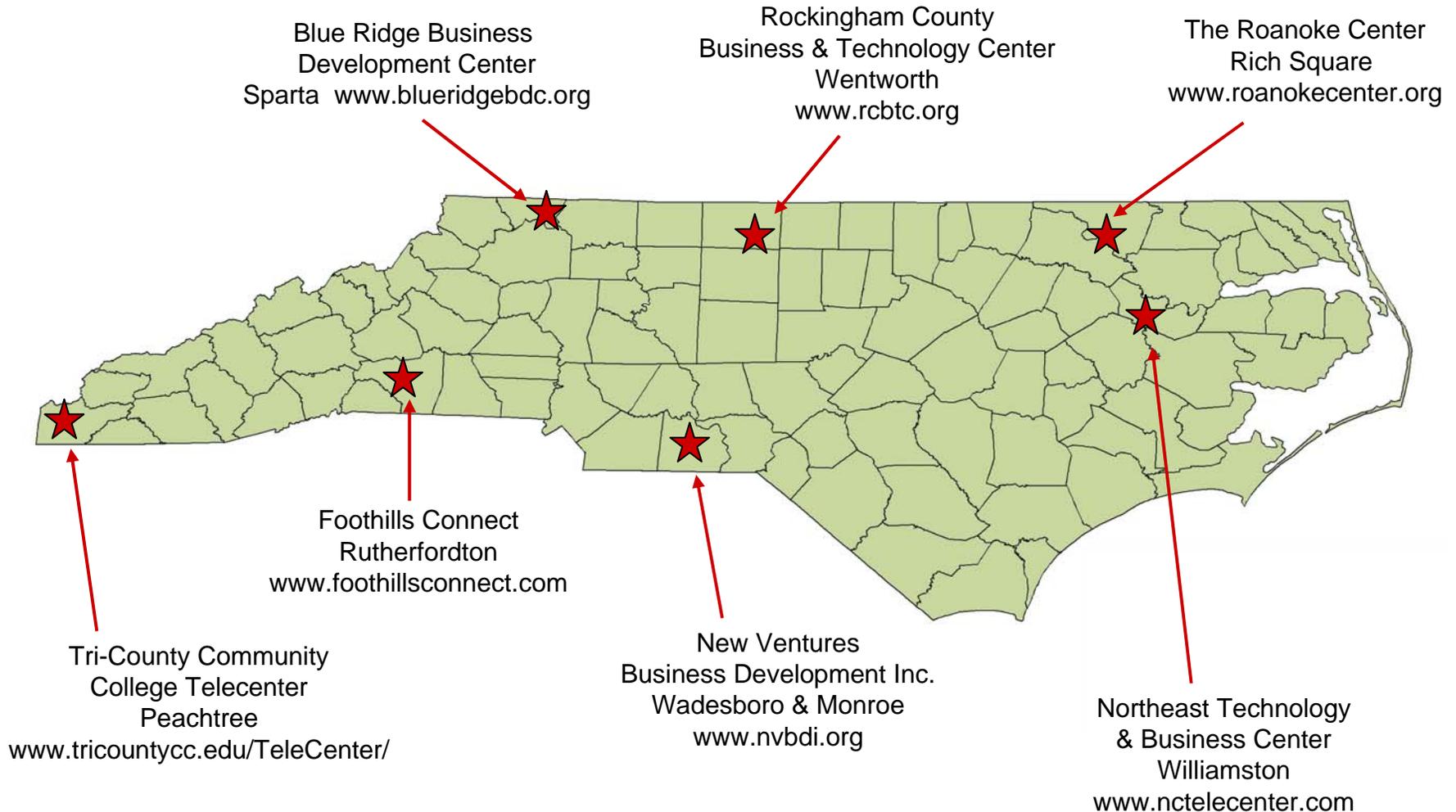
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- Technology training programs
- Partnership with local K-12 schools, community colleges and universities
- Valuable results (2001-2006)
  - 1,190 new jobs created (\$5,070 cost per job created)
  - 132,770 public Internet access visits
  - 20,533 technical/business clients served
  - \$9,966,760 leveraged by the e-NC Authority



# e-NC Business & Technology Telecenters

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**Foothills Connect  
Rutherfordton, N.C.**



**New Ventures  
Business Development  
Wadesboro, N.C.**



**New Ventures  
Business Development  
Wadesboro, N.C.**



**Blue Ridge Business  
Development Center  
Sparta, N.C.**

**Northeast Technology &  
Business Center  
Williamston, N.C.**



# Major Success – e-Communities

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- Grassroots organization at LOCAL level, empowering citizens to take ownership of community planning
- Planning grants facilitated to all 85 rural counties – all counties designated by the Governor as an official e-Community
- Grew to include grants for public access, digital literacy training and technology implementation



# Lessons Learned

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- Many rural populations still must be educated about the value of high-speed connectivity
- “Business case” challenge – service providers rarely expand infrastructure as a gesture of goodwill
- Divide and conquer – N.C. is deceptively large (85 of 100 counties are considered to be rural)
- Teaching them to fish – many elected leaders lacked basic digital literacy and understanding



# Strategic Partnerships

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- Service Providers (through board and incentive grants)
- County governments, managers, legislators and economic developers in all 100 counties
- N.C. Healthcare Information & Communications Alliance
- N.C. Technology Association
- Microelectronics Council of North Carolina
- UNC Center for Public Technology



# Strategic Partnerships

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- N.C. League of Municipalities & Association of County Commissioners
- N.C. Rural Economic Development Center
- N.C. Dept of Commerce / U.S. Dept of Commerce
- Seven N.C. regional economic development partnerships
- Regional Councils of Government



# Current Policy Work

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- At the state level:
  - Advocating for infrastructure incentive funds – to be matched 100 percent with industry dollars to expand broadband in the most underserved counties (budget is in-process)
  - Advocating for funds for continued investment in Telecenters
  - New media / PEG Channels project



# Current Policy Work

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- At the federal level:
  - Working with groups in S.C. toward cross-border efforts to drive technology-based economic development as a region
  - Working with other states to look at creation of national center to track broadband access and advocate for rural expansion
  - Provision of FREE policy and research advice to assist other states in setting up similar programs



# “This is not for the faint of heart...”

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“ We believe that in order to transform a rural area economy, you must have imagination, be a risk-taker, and most importantly – believe that it can happen. We are standing on the shoulders of the e-NC Authority, who believed in us. They were the only organization that made this investment in a ‘build it and they will come’ approach. ”

Stan Crowe

Chair, Martin County Economic Development Commission

