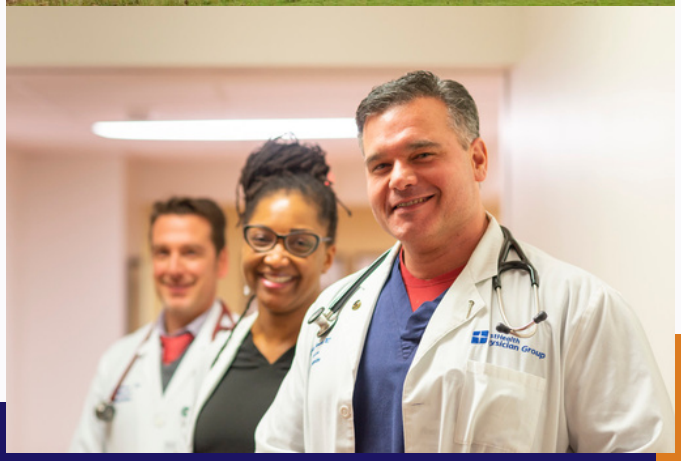
MOORE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Building More Than The Economy





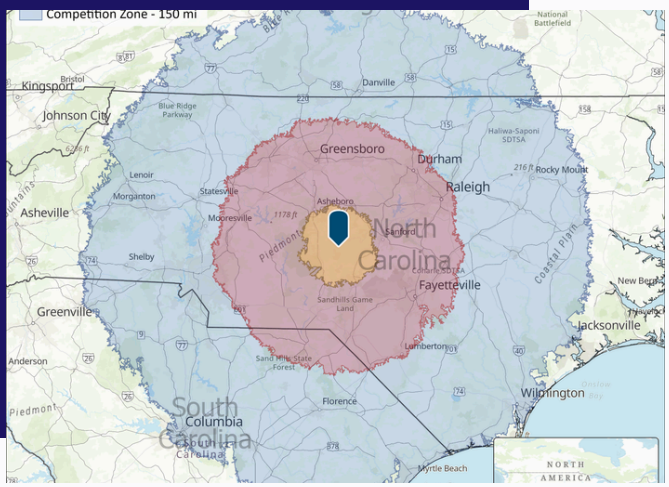


MOORE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP

QUARTERLY REPORT

September 30, 2026

moorecountyedp.org | 910.246.0311



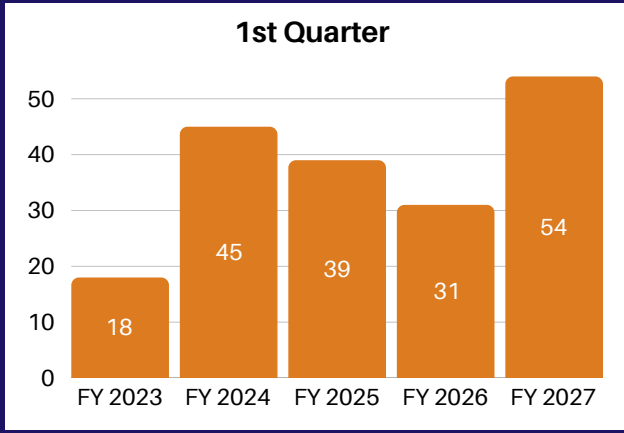
BUSINESS RECRUITMENT, EXPANSION, & SUPPORT

Promoting Moore County for Biobased Development

Earlier this year, MCEDP was awarded a **$75,000 Rural Business Development Grant** from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to obtain North Carolina's first Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone Rating to support efforts to recruit biobased development to Moore County.

BUSINESS LEADS

From July-September, MCEDP responded to **54** NEW business leads, an increase of 38% from the first quarter of last fiscal year. MCEDP was able to submit properties for 10 of the leads, or 19%.



As of September 30th, MCEDP is actively working **28** projects representing more than **470** new jobs and more than **$175** million in capital investment.

MCEDP contracted with Ecostrat, a leading biomass development and supply chain assessment firm, who recently issued a **BDO Zone 'A' Rating** for Moore County. Moore County's 'A' rating denotes high prospective viability of woody biomass feedstock supply and infrastructure and low expectations of default risk in the Zone defined as a 75-mile radius from the Town of Robbins.

"We're honored that Moore County is the first community in North Carolina to receive a BDO Zone Rating. Being first in the state is a distinction we don't take lightly, and it puts Moore County at the forefront of North Carolina's growing bioeconomy."
Natalie Hawkins, MCEDP President

The County's sustainably managed forest base combined with the availability of the 73-acre **Iron Horse Industrial Park** in Aberdeen that has integration with regional forestry operations & mill networks makes Moore County a prime location for biobased industrial development and investment.

MCEDP, in partnership with Ecostrat and the BDO Initiative, launched a global marketing campaign to promote Moore County's rating for biobased industry recruitment.

Connecting with Local Employers

This quarter, MCEDP conducted **4 industry visits** to local businesses, in addition to facilitating **2 Moore Manufacturers Meetups**. At the July and September Meetups held respectively at **OA Defense** in Robbins and **Meridian** in Aberdeen, +/-20 manufacturers, support organization representatives, and elected officials gathered to tour the host facilities and learn about their advanced manufacturing operations.



Iron Horse Industrial Park

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Iron Horse Industrial Park Update

MCEDP continues to make steady progress on efforts to prepare the **Iron Horse Industrial Park** in Aberdeen for development.

This quarter, Aberdeen's Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with MCEDP in which the Town agreed to initiate and oversee the design and construction of the **access road** from an entry point at NC Highway 211 East to the site. MCEDP transferred grant funding to the Town to help offset the cost of the work.

MCEDP also received the completed **Phase II Environmental Site Assessment** (ESA) report for Iron Horse which indicated no further assessments are recommended for the site's soil, soil gas, surface water, and groundwater.

The ESA did recommend additional geotechnical analysis; consequently, MCEDP applied for and was awarded a **$40,000 microgrant** from NC Railroad Company to cover the cost of the geotechnical analysis as well as an ALTA land survey. MCEDP obtained several quotes to complete this additional due diligence and will move forward with contracting the work.

Other Site Development Updates

MCEDP obtained an appraisal on the **107-acre site** in southern Moore County previously evaluated through Duke Energy's Site Readiness Program and subsequently presented the property owner with a five-year Option to Purchase Agreement. MCEDP is continuing negotiations with the owner.



MCEDP PERSONNEL NEWS

Staff Changes

With the resignation of MCEDP's Business Development Director this quarter, MCEDP began recruiting for a new executive-level **Vice President** role. Responsibilities of the Vice President will include partnering with MCEDP's President to develop & implement strategy and direct operations while leading business development & retention efforts. MCEDP anticipates having the new Vice President in place by January 2027.

"MCEDP Is looking for a strategic thinker, a relationship-builder, a results-driven leader, and a motivated professional ready to make an impact in our growing community."
- Natalie Hawkins, MCEDP President

Also in September, MCEDP welcomed **Lieutenant Colonel Bridget Kingsley** as an intern. Bridget is transitioning from active duty in the U.S. Army and is working with MCEDP through early November.

Bridget is establishing a new customer relations & project management database for MCEDP using the HubSpot platform to help staff be more efficient at managing project leads, general inquiries, and Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) activities.

Bridget and her husband live in Whispering Pines with their 2 children and will be launching a new plumbing business upon her full retirement from the Army.

ABOUT US

Moore County Economic Development Partnership (MCEDP) is a 501c(3) not-for-profit economic development organization and public-private partnership serving all of Moore County, NC. We work collaboratively with our partners and local governments to attract new businesses and support existing businesses.

OUR MISSION

To increase economic prosperity and improve the quality of life for Moore County's citizens through the creation of quality jobs and capital investment in our communities.

OUR STAFF



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Moore 100 Members Meetup
December 3, 2026 (5:30 PM)
Station 21, Aberdeen

Moore 100 Members Meeting
March, 2027 - TBD

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Indicator	Mar 31, 2025	Mar 31, 2026
# of new businesses (net)	(126)	333
# of new jobs (net)	2,572	411
Avg annual wages	$55,068	$56,420
# of private sector jobs	37,331	37,627
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	3.1%

Interested in supporting economic development in Moore County?
Email info@moorecountyedp.org to learn about our Moore 100 group.