



Regions (and States) Working Together

A Brownfield RLF across North Carolina and Virginia

Adam Shull, Assistant Director of Regional Planning
October 22, 2024



Who we are

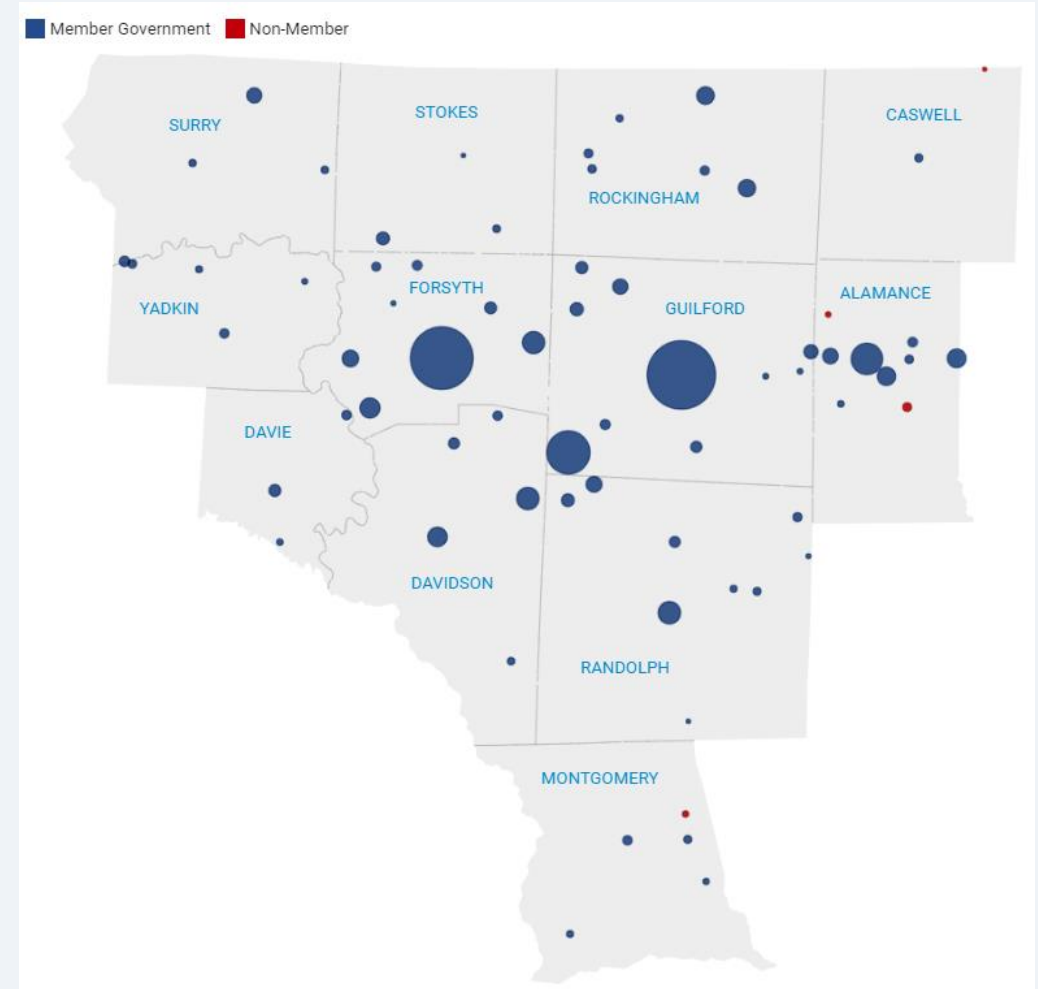
The PTRC is one of the largest regional councils in North Carolina serving 75 members

What we do



Who we serve

12 counties and 63 municipalities in total:





The **PTRC Regional Planning Department** serves as a planning resource to our members, citizens and local, state and federal organizations. We coordinate regional initiatives and provide technical assistance to our member communities.

Our services include, but are not limited to:



**Land Use Planning
& Mapping**



**Transportation
Planning**



**Grant Administration
& Assistance**



**Water Resources &
Environmental Planning/
Education**



**Regional
Food Systems**

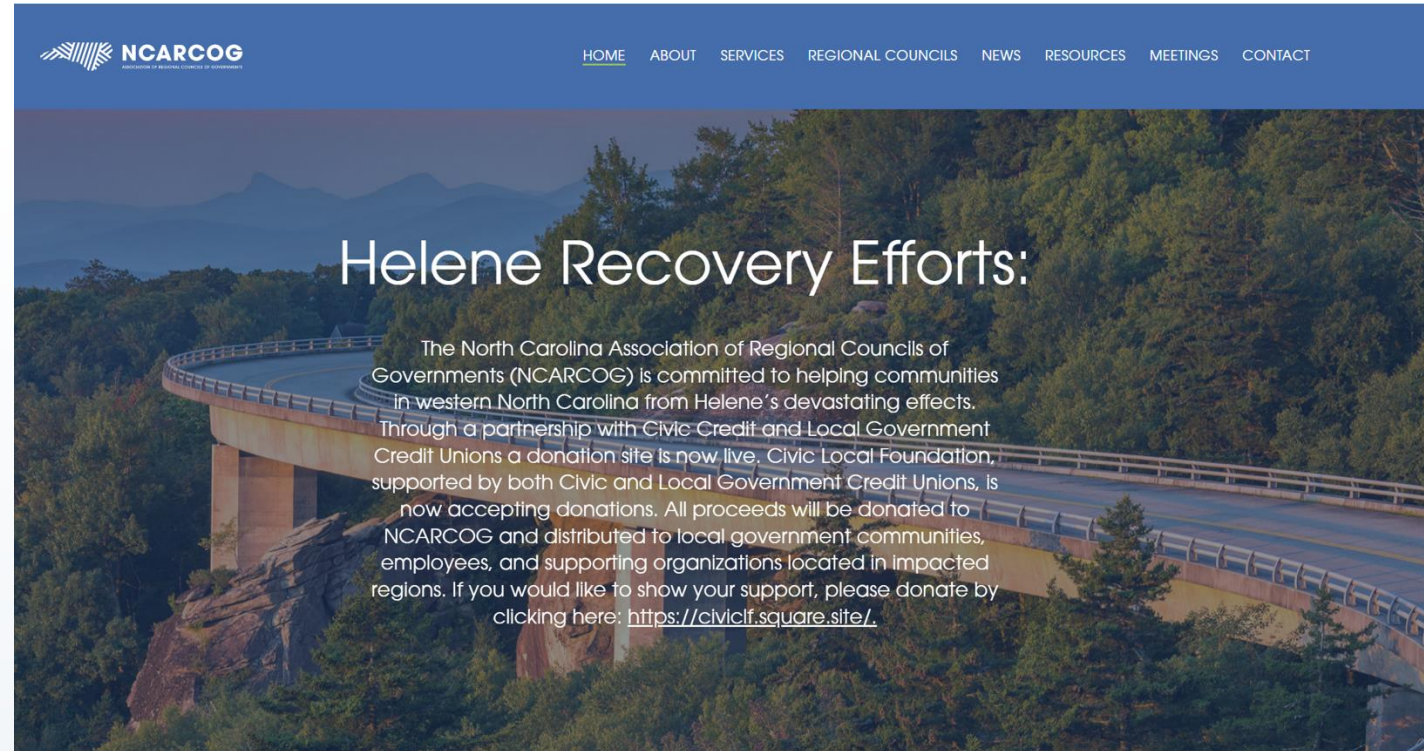
To learn more about PTRC Regional Planning Department, please visit:

www.ptrc.org/services/regional-planning



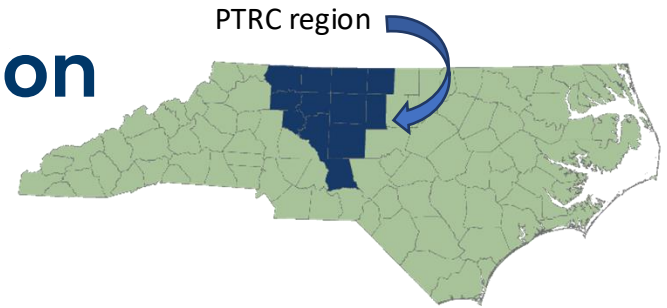
Collaboration in Context

- North Carolina features 16 Regional Councils of Government (COGs) – a designation created by State legislation in 1969.
- COGs in NC are represented by the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Governments (NCARCOG)
- Recent examples of NCARCOG collaboration:
 - Coordinating support to western NC after Tropical Storm Helene
 - ARPA Assistance/Strategy
 - Disaster Recovery and Resiliency

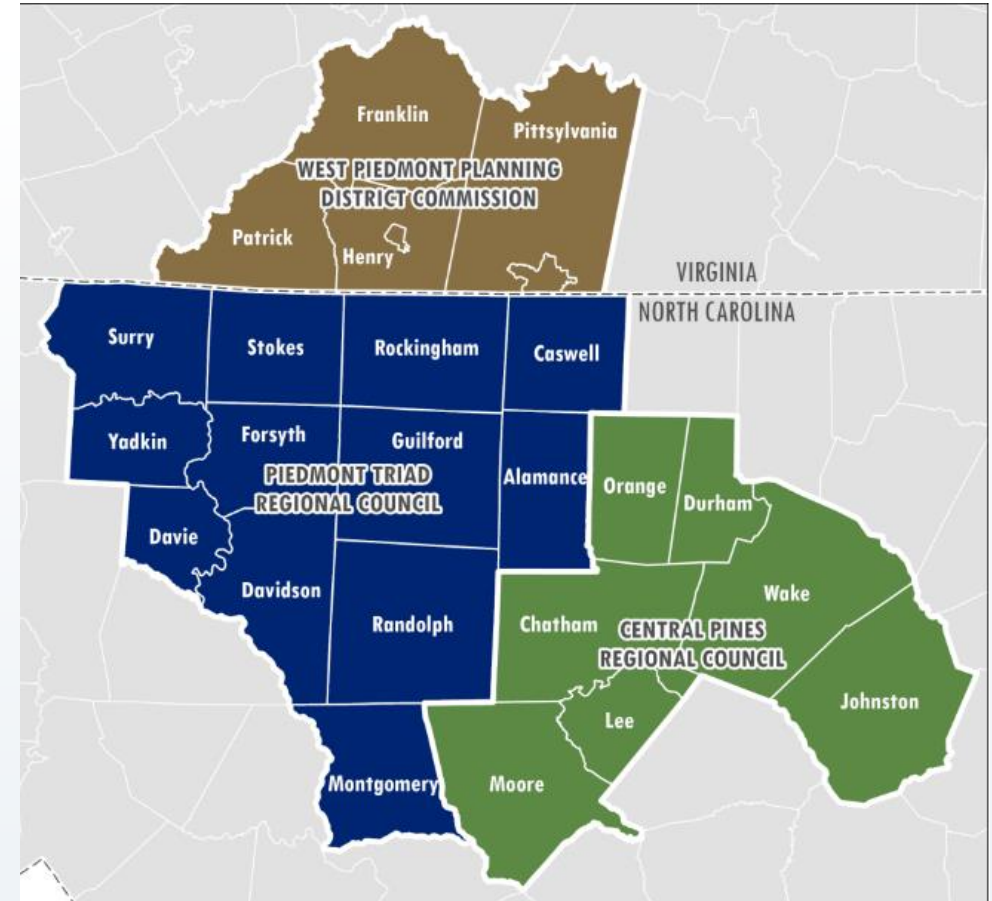




The “Piedmont Triangle” Coalition



- In 2023, the Piedmont Triad Regional Development Corporation (PTRDC) was awarded a \$1 million Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund grant through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Provides favorable loans and subgrants for eligible cleanup costs with an emphasis on the redevelopment stage within the EPA Brownfield program.
- Three regional government areas comprise the Coalition:
 - **PTRC, NC:** 12 counties and all municipalities, including the Piedmont Triad of Greensboro–Winston–Salem–High Point
 - **Central Pines Regional Council, NC:** 7 counties, including the Research Triangle of Raleigh–Durham–Chapel Hill
 - **West Piedmont Planning District, VA:** 4 counties, including cities of Danville and Martinsville





The Coalition's "Brownfield profile"

- A region of mill towns – large and small, urban and rural. Emblematic example: Washington Mill site in Mayodan, N.C. (right)
 - 10-acre site, historic textile mill on Mayo river near Virginia border
 - Asbestos and PCBs found on site
 - Owner abandoned property after demolition in 2012, left a pile of bricks
- Throughout much of the 20th Century, the region was the largest manufacturer of furniture, textiles and tobacco products in the nation





PTRC/PTRDC as Lead Applicant

- Since 2006, the EPA has awarded \$1.4 million via three Assessment grants to PTRC (or to the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, PTCOG, pre-merger).
- Since RLF launch, PTRC has contracted with Alamance County and environmental engineering firms Hart & Hickman and Terracon to implement the County's \$1 million EPA Assessment grant.
- PTRC activities to date:
 - 35 Phase I Assessments
 - 15 Phase II Assessments
 - 6 USTs removed for assessment
 - Spurred millions of \$ of private investment
- Key takeaway: Lead Applicant could have been any of the regional governmental entities involved – we just looked for

PIEDMONT TRIAD

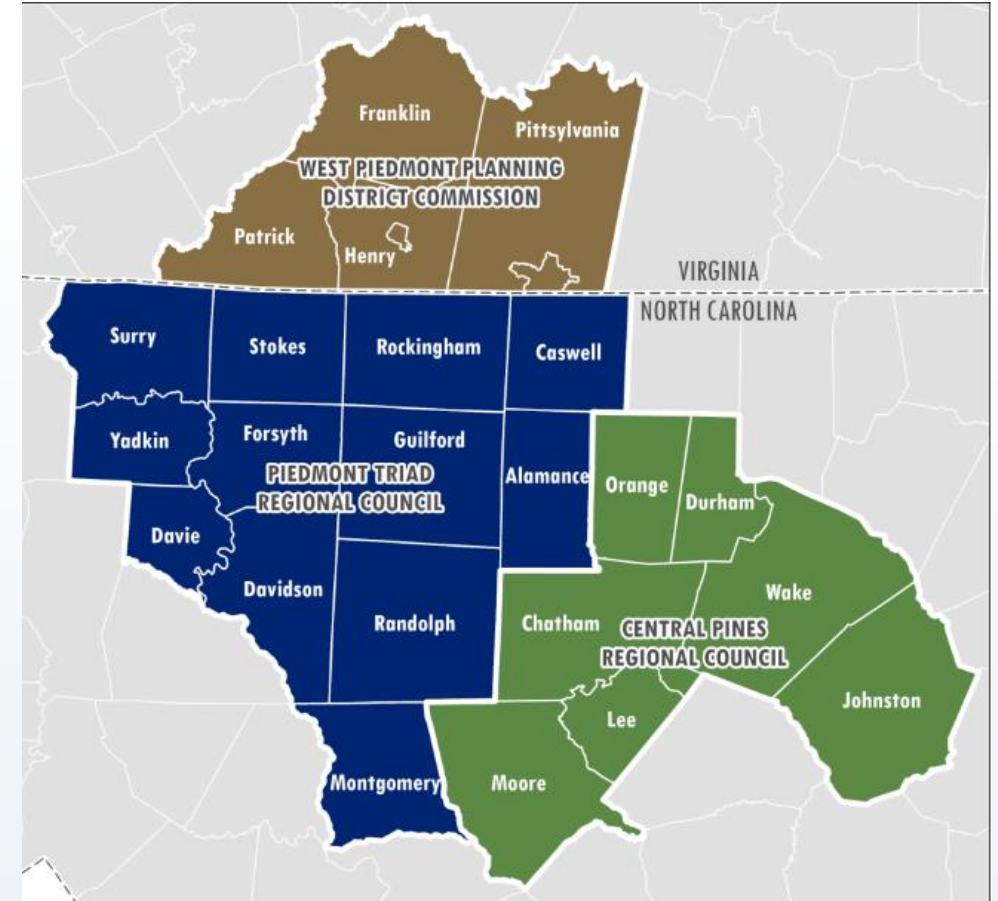


BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM



The “fit” – Playing Off Coalition Strengths

- Leverage
 - Leveraged PTRC’s Brownfield and EPA experience
 - Tapped into the financial expertise of the Piedmont Triad Regional Development Corp. and its Loan Committee (as well as EDA RLF experience)
- Greater geographic scope
 - Adding the Central Pines region to PTRC’s alone added 146 sites with State Brownfield Agreements to the Coalition inventory, and grew residents impacted from 1.7 million to 3.7 million.
- A diverse collection of advisory group members (a mayor, nonprofit leader, City of High Point Economic Development Director, etc.)
- Takeaway: a Coalition approach addressed a key challenge in Brownfield RLF projects – finding eligible projects ready for clean up





How is it structured? How does it work?

Quarterly meeting abound!

- With COGs/regions involved to cultivate projects, marketing opportunities and share insights
- Sharing any and all contacts and development plans

Contacts



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REGIONAL COUNCIL

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How is it structured? How does it work?

Quarterly meeting abound!

- Quarterly meetings with Advisory Group members
- Group of volunteers with the charge of considering community impacts and equity among projects considered for loans and/or subgrants
- Key takeaway: vital to have numerous sectors/roles involved and to remind our RLF that it exists to catalyze inherently “risky” loans and grants

- *Advisory Group members as of 2024:*
 - Merald Holloway, Executive Director of nonprofit NC-100 in Rockingham County
 - Dwight Lake, Mayor of Mayodan, N.C.
 - Peter Bishop, Economic Development Director for the City of High Point
 - Samuel Hunter, Assistant Neighborhood Services Director, City of Winston-Salem



How is it structured? How does it work?

Quarterly meeting abound!

- Quarterly meetings of the Piedmont Triad Regional Development Corp. and its Loan Committee
- Structured meetings for all of PTRDC business, during which we provide program updates and present loan and/or subgrant applications for approval
- Key takeaway: a group charged with balancing risk with community benefit, and there to remind us we are structuring loans that can be repaid
- *Financial institutions represented among our Loan Committee members as of 2024:*
 - Skyline National Bank
 - Fidelity Bank
 - First Horizon Bank
 - Surrey Bank & Trust in Surry County



Other Thoughts on Structure

- Lucky to have a nimble group among COG staff to usher in projects (h/t to Lindsay and Kristie) and willing to hand off information to staff with the time (and admin support) to follow up
- A pre-application online helps eligible and “clean-up ready” projects rise among all the plans “in talks”
- Built a concise and informative website that acts as our “business card” for developers: <https://www.ptrc.org/services/regional-planning/brownfields/piedmont-triangle-rlf-coalition>
- Underwriting and legal representation contracted out
- Conducted an on-call for environmental engineering services to streamline support when needed



What has happened? Results?

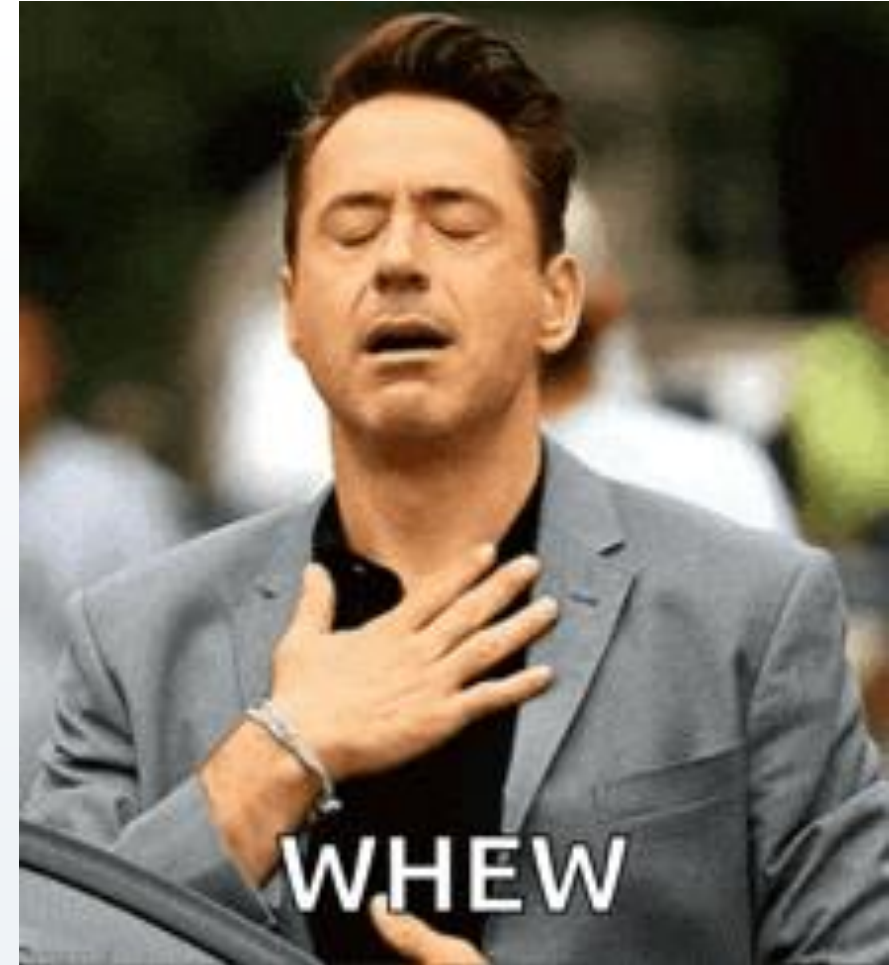


- A \$750,000 loan to 450 Polo, LLC for soil removal and costs toward a Vapor Intrusion Mitigation System
 - 1% interest rate, principal payments only for first two years
- A 3.92-acre site in Winston-Salem, N.C., that was once adjacent to a drycleaner with documented PCE (tetrachloroethene) contamination in groundwater
- Redeveloped into The Haven at Wake, mixed residential development with townhomes, detached cottages and garden-style flats
- Total project size estimated around \$20 million



More results...

- Cultivated a project list that should produce at least one loan application and one subgrant application in FY25,
- Received supplemental funding of \$1 million this year by executing our loan for \$750k,
- Built an application process from initial conversation to executed loan – a process timeline that we look forward to describing and visualizing much more effectively moving forward, and
- In August, successfully completed a randomly selected EPA desk audit of our first program year – hence the “Whew” face
- **Key takeaway:** communicate well about Davis-Bacon Act requirements and include them in all loan documentation/agreements. **CREATIVE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS**





What have we learned?

Key challenge: underwriting and legal support

- If contracted, invest time and energy into the first loans and build a process. Contracting for these services is not an auto-pilot situation.

Constant and scheduled communication

- Leaving Advisory Group or COG staff meetings to an “as-needed” schedule did not work. Stability and predictability is key for professionals working together across North Carolina and Virginia.

When beginning, define your own “structure” and build with partners

- Our program is nested among federal EPA, a State Brownfields program, and scattered jurisdiction-specific assessment grants. We have learned how to multiply these efforts rather than complicate.



Communication – As Stevie instructed in 1985, to create results across regions and state lines...

*“You can talk to me/
T-t-t Talk to me”*



Tap into your networks and other regions to mitigate the heavy lift of starting a Revolving Loan Fund coalition from scratch. Many hands make light work!

**If you have any questions or concerns,
please feel free to contact me.**

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www.ptrc.org

