



# Beaufort County Economic Development Report May 2019

## North Carolina's Broadband Plan – Source: NCPIO

<https://www.ncbroadband.gov/connectingnc/>

### The NC Broadband Plan recognizes:

- Increased competition drives innovation, affordability, and the deployment of future-proof infrastructure.
- In areas where competition is lacking, empowered and engaged communities form more equitable partnerships with private sector internet service providers (ISPs). Communities can lower deployment costs by better leveraging existing infrastructure, easing access to right-of-ways and poles to facilitate path creation, and investments in next-generation infrastructure.
- Community-based adoption and utilization programs help drive demand.
- Federal, state and private loans and grants offer untapped funding for infrastructure, planning, and adoption initiatives, including subsidies for low-income households.

### Goals and Objectives:

The plan's overarching goal is for every North Carolinian to have affordable access to broadband service—wireline or wireless—if they so choose, by June 2021. The following objectives support these goals:

- Increase the percentage of households with access to fiber optic cable to 50 percent by June 2021
- Increase the percentage of households with access to broadband to 100 percent by June 2021
- Increase household adoption rates to over 60 percent by June 2021
- Affordable access to the internet outside of school for 100 percent of K-12 students by June 2021
- A state-wide model for the development and deployment of local, community-based digital literacy programs

### Summary of Recommendations:

In this summary document, readers will find the plan's recommendations organized into six groups: broadband availability, broadband adoption, the K-12 homework gap, economic development, telehealth, and public safety. The plan's recommendations specifically support the achievement of these goals. While not interdependent, they are interrelated and build on one another.

The final recommendations were informed by subject matter experts, providers, and stakeholders. While compiling research and recommendations from stakeholders, two consistent themes emerged: 1) communities that plan and have 'skin in the game' impact deployment and affect adoption; and 2) where competition is lacking, communities will need to partner with private-sector entities and ISPs to expand affordable options.

### Beaufort County Current Statistics

| Unadjusted Labor Force Statistics 02/19 |         |         |        |
|---|---------|---------|--------|
| USA '000                                | 02/18   | 02/19   | Δ      |
| Labor Force                             | 161,494 | 162,793 | 0.80%  |
| Employed                                | 154,403 | 156,167 | 1.14%  |
| Unemployed                              | 7,091   | 6,625   | -6.57% |
| Unemp. Rate                             | 4.40%   | 4.10%   | -6.82% |
| NC '000                                 | 02/18   | 02/19   | Δ      |
| Labor Force                             | 4,975   | 5,035   | 1.21%  |
| Employed                                | 4,757   | 4,824   | 1.41%  |
| Unemployed                              | 219     | 211     | -3.65% |
| Unemp. Rate                             | 4.40%   | 4.20%   | -4.55% |
| GWCSA                                   | 02/18   | 02/19   | Δ      |
| Labor Force                             | 110,512 | 110,735 | 0.20%  |
| Employed                                | 105,347 | 105,756 | 0.39%  |
| Unemployed                              | 5,165   | 4,979   | -3.60% |
| Unemp. Rate                             | 4.70%   | 4.50%   | -4.26% |
| Beaufort County                         | 02/18   | 02/19   | Δ      |
| Labor Force                             | 20,153  | 20,005  | -0.73% |
| Employed                                | 19,144  | 19,022  | -0.64% |
| Unemployed                              | 1,009   | 983     | -2.58% |
| Unemp. Rate                             | 5.00%   | 4.90%   | -2.00% |