



**MITCHELL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: AUGUST 2021**



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

**Yancey County/Yancey EDC Receives USDA Grant to Begin Site Search for Joint Industrial Park in Partnership with Mitchell County/Mitchell EDC**

For Immediate Release  
8 July 2021

The Yancey County Economic Development Commission received notification from the United States Department of Agriculture that its application for grant funding through the USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program to fund the cost of a site search for a potential new industrial park in partnership with Mitchell County had been approved. The grant award of \$41,500 will be made to Yancey County government to engage the services of an economic development consultant to evaluate potential sites for a multijurisdictional industrial park which would be developed in partnership with Yancey and Mitchell Counties.

A formal memorandum of understanding was approved by the Boards of County Commissioners and the Economic Development Commissions of Mitchell and Yancey Counties earlier in the year. The memorandum establishes a joint advisory committee to engage the services of an economic development consultant to evaluate potential sites in each community for potential industrial development.

Multijurisdictional industrial sites are industrial properties that are developed in cooperation between two or more counties. Though there have been previous similar collaborations in North Carolina, no such partnership has yet been developed in western North Carolina. If successful, the proposed project in collaboration between Yancey and Mitchell Counties would be the first such project in the western region of the state.

"The need for an inventory of ready industrial sites for business recruitment is prevalent across our region. This project in partnership with our neighbors in Mitchell County will allow us the opportunity to pool our resources and develop a potential site which would compete with any site offered by a larger, more urban community" said Yancey EDC Director Jamie McMahan. By partnering with each other, rural counties can pool their resources and compete effectively with other communities in our state and

beyond in a broader region. I'm excited to see this project move forward and grateful to USDA for investing in this project" added McMahan.

Mickey Duvall, Mitchell County EDC Executive Director expressed his excitement and gratitude for everyone who has been involved with the Mitchell-Yancey County Multi-Jurisdictional Industrial Park Project. "I am very thankful for the forward vision of the Mitchell County Commission as well as the Mitchell County Economic Development Commission in supporting and recognizing this project can be a giant leap forward for industrial growth and great paying jobs in Mitchell County, NC. We are very fortunate to have such a great relationship with Yancey County Leaders and look forward to partnering with them on this first economic development project of its kind in the Western part of North Carolina"

"Yancey County is excited to see what opportunities are available for future endeavors with Mitchell County. This is the first step in seeing what great resources both counties have to offer but the sky is the limit" said Yancey County Manager Lynn Austin, speaking on behalf of the Yancey County Board of County Commissioners upon news of the grant award.

With the USDA grant award in hand, and with further joint financial commitments made by both communities, the joint committee composed of stakeholders from both county governments and economic development commissions, will hold its first meeting in the coming weeks to engage the consultant and begin the site evaluation process.

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**YANCEY/MITCHELL BEGIN SITE SEARCH FOR JOINT INDUSTRIAL PARK WITH USDA GRANT FUNDING.** Very exciting news this month as Yancey and Mitchell Counties begin the Industrial Site Search Process with a USDA Grant of \$41,500 to help begin funding the process. Both Yancey/Mitchell EDC's and Boards of Commissioners have worked very hard in building a great relationship with each other, and we look

forward to a great partnership regarding the current Joint Industrial Park Project. A kick-off Advisory Committee Meeting was held on July 27 with unanimous Committee attendance. Mickey Duvall and Jamie McMahan meet with the third-party industrial site consultant the first week in August 2021 with each county's identified potential industrial sites. The consultants are now working with us to narrow down possible industrial locations.



**MEET THE PINE VALLEY MOTEL'S NEW OWNER.** The EDC has been working diligently with the listing commercial agent on the sale of the Pine Valley Motel, and we are excited to formally announce Mr. Sam Patel as the new owner. Mr. Patel is making significant upgrades and renovations to the property and intends to continue to operate the property as a (41) Unit Family Motel. A children's play area is planned for the back of the property, and there is a great picnic shelter with grills located along the creek. The price point for rooms will start at \$69. Also, we are working with Mr. Patel to recruit a tenant for the Commercial Building on the property. There is also an open area in the center of the property the Patel's are offering to the community for possible farmers/artisan markets and music festival locations, etc. For more information, contact the EDC or Mr. Patel at: (803)460-8195



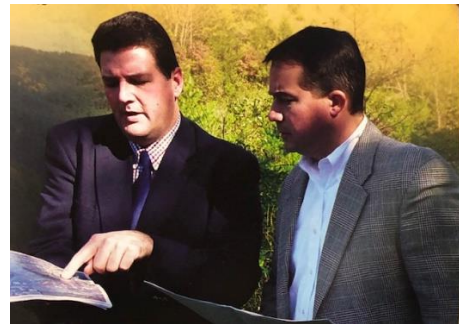
### GOUGE SCHOOL ACCESS ROAD/MITCHELL COUNTY BAKERSVILLE RECREATION PROJECT CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD.

The EDC is continuing to work with the Mr. Brock Duncan and the Mitchell County Recreation Department, NCDOT, Town of Bakersville and Gouge School Principal Mr. Colby Calhoun regarding a new NCDOT Access Road into Gouge School and the remainder of the site being used for a Bakersville Recreation Facility. The EDC organized a meeting on April 12, 2021 with NCDOT District 13 Engineers, Town, County and School Leaders to work together in coordinating the project moving forward. The Access Road to Gouge School is now being reviewed by the NCDOT MSTTA Office in Raleigh regarding requirements for engineering, design and right-of-way needed, prior to the County applying for NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund or other applicable project grants. We are working closely with the Mitchell County Recreation, Commissioners and NCDOT MSAT as we continue to help plan and bring this much needed project in Bakersville to fruition.



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUILDING REUSE “PROJECT MOONRAKER” (AN EXISTING INDUSTRY INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION GRANT IN MITCHELL COUNTY, NC UP TO \$500,000):** I have now completed writing and submitted this grant application two weeks early for up to \$500,000 for a NCDC Building Reuse Expansion Grant on behalf of an existing industry expansion in Mitchell County, NC. The Mitchell County Board of Commissioners held a **Public Hearing on**

**Monday, August 2, 2021 at 7:00pm** in the Commission Boardroom in Bakersville, NC as required regarding this grant. The NCDC-Building Reuse Program Manager confirmed receipt of our grant application on Tuesday, August 10, 2021 well in advance of the August 26, 2021 deadline. A required NCDC-Building Reuse Program Manager conference call was held on August 17, 2021 at 9:30am with the company, the county manager, and the EDC Director.



**THE EDC HAS BEEN BUSY THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS EVALUATING VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL SITES IN MITCHELL COUNTY REGARDING THE MITCHELL-YANCEY JOINT INDUSTRIAL PARK PROJECT.** If you own a piece of property in Mitchell County with water/sewer amenities and excellent road access over 15 acres and would like for your property to be considered for industrial capabilities, please contact Mickey Duvall, Mitchell County EDC Director at: (828)537-1404 or (828)342-4746 (24/7 Call/Text). Your information will remain confidential.



CONGRATULATIONS TO MAYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON THEIR OPENING OF THE "BLUE RIDGE BOUTIQUE HOTEL" IN SPRUCE PINE, NC THIS LAST MONTH! The initial phase of this project features 16 boutique hotel rooms. For pricing, a list of hotel amenities, and/or to book a room at this wonderful hotel, please visit the Blue Ridge Boutique Hotel Site at: [Blueridgeboutiquehotel.com](http://Blueridgeboutiquehotel.com) or call (828)765-0391



ACREAGE FOR TWO "LARGE-SCALE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS" HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND ARE NOW GAINING MUCH INTEREST FROM DEVELOPERS IN MITCHELL COUNTY. ONE PROJECT IS BEING PLANNED AND MARKETED TOWARD "SENIOR HOUSING" AND THE OTHER PROJECT WILL FOCUS ON "AFFORDABLE HOUSING." More to come on these projects as we can release information to the public.



**STILL HIRING!!!** AVERY COUNTY NEWS-JOURNAL INTERVIEW WITH PRC'S CEO, MR. MATIAS PEREL. PEREL INDICATES PRC WILL HIRE UP TO 1,000 EMPLOYEES IN THE NEXT 18 MONTHS. The EDC meet with Mr. Perel and introduced his company with the NCWorks System (which encompasses an employment network within the region as well as the entire state of North Carolina). Mr. Perel indicates his company's expansion is due to "an increased demand and partnership with Amazon". For more information on employment opportunities at PRC please log-in to: [careers.prcind.com](https://careers.prcind.com) or go to: [www.ncworks.gov](https://www.ncworks.gov)

**Average Private Sector Wages**

2021 Year-to-Date		2020 Year-to-Date		2019 Year-to-Date	
County	Average Private Sector Wage	County	Average Private Sector Wage	County	Average Private Sector Wage
Albemarle	\$33,810	Albemarle	\$32,252	Albemarle	\$31,253
Ashe	\$33,083	Ashe	\$31,481	Ashe	\$31,393
Beaufort	\$32,276	Beaufort	\$30,829	Beaufort	\$30,262
Bladen	\$30,954	Bladen	\$31,212	Bladen	\$28,993
Burke	\$33,424	Burke	\$30,542	Burke	\$28,947
Caldwell	\$41,257	Caldwell	\$40,184	Caldwell	\$37,892
Camden	\$33,228	Camden	\$34,802	Camden	\$30,228
Cherokee	\$33,148	Cherokee	\$34,922	Cherokee	\$31,138
Catawba	\$40,884	Catawba	\$38,828	Catawba	\$41,378
Columbus	\$32,128	Columbus	\$32,287	Columbus	\$42,224
Cutherford	\$30,224	Cutherford	\$30,282	Cutherford	\$28,942
Dare	\$36,493	Dare	\$33,681	Dare	\$31,881
Débarre	\$36,270	Débarre	\$42,274	Débarre	\$42,281
Guilford	\$32,274	Guilford	\$32,228	Guilford	\$32,222
Hamilton	\$32,824	Hamilton	\$34,924	Hamilton	\$32,288
Henderson	\$36,275	Henderson	\$44,824	Henderson	\$31,382
Hertford	\$36,275	Hertford	\$42,828	Hertford	\$38,822
Jones	\$32,828	Jones	\$38,274	Jones	\$42,288
Wake	\$32,222	Wake	\$42,228	Wake	\$42,288
Lenoir	\$38,824	Lenoir	\$38,824	Lenoir	\$32,288
Martin	\$32,222	Martin	\$32,222	Martin	\$32,222
Mitchell	\$40,351	Mitchell	\$37,222	Mitchell	\$34,288
North	\$41,822	North	\$38,282	North	\$38,282
Northampton	\$38,824	Northampton	\$38,824	Northampton	\$38,824
Person	\$32,288	Person	\$32,288	Person	\$32,288
Randolph	\$32,282	Randolph	\$32,282	Randolph	\$32,282
Rockwell	\$36,824	Rockwell	\$37,282	Rockwell	\$37,282
Rocky	\$32,282	Rocky	\$32,282	Rocky	\$32,282
Rowan	\$32,282	Rowan	\$32,282	Rowan	\$32,282
Sampson	\$44,222	Sampson	\$32,282	Sampson	\$32,282
Swain	\$32,282	Swain	\$32,282	Swain	\$32,282
Taylorsville	\$32,282	Taylorsville	\$32,282	Taylorsville	\$32,282
Town	\$32,282	Town	\$32,282	Town	\$32,282
Wayne	\$32,282	Wayne	\$32,282	Wayne	\$32,282
Washington	\$32,282	Washington	\$32,282	Washington	\$32,282
Watauga	\$32,282	Watauga	\$32,282	Watauga	\$32,282
Wedge	\$32,282	Wedge	\$32,282	Wedge	\$32,282
Yancey	\$32,282	Yancey	\$32,282	Yancey	\$32,282

Source: Calculated by the NC Dept. of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division. For geographic consistency, these annualized average wages have been calculated using the most recent four quarters of available quarterly Bureau of Economic and Wage (BEW) data as of January 2021 (2020 Q4 through 2021 Q1).

**CONGRATULATIONS! MITCHELL COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA CONTINUES TO LEAD NORTHWESTERN NORTH CAROLINA REGION “D” WITH THE HIGHEST NC DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE “AVERAGE ANNUALIZED WAGE NUMBERS”:** Mitchell County’s current NCDC Average Annualize Wage number for 2021 is \$40,351. This AAW number reflects the hard work, dedication and cooperation of the Mitchell County Economic Development Commission, businesses, and industries working together for the greater economic success of the county.



**SECOND FRANCHISE RESTAURANT IN LESS THAN A YEAR SHOWS INTEREST IN MITCHELL COUNTY, NC:** The Mitchell County EDC is currently working with a second franchise restaurant that is interested in possibly locating across the street from the new Puerto Nuevo Restaurant (soon to open) at the intersection of US Hwy. 226 and Hall Town Road at Spruce Pine Walmart (in the former Burger King Building). More to come as negotiations proceed.



**CONGRATULATIONS: GUSTOSO RISTORANTE ON THEIR RECENT GRAND OPENING AT ON LOCUST STREET IN DOWNTOWN SPRUCE PINE, NC:** The Mitchell County EDC attended a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony this month hosted by Spruce Pine Main Street. We wish this local business great future success in Mitchell County, NC. GUSTOSO'S RISTORANTE contact number is: (828)520-1555



**\*NC CERTIFIED ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITY SIGNS ARE UP:** The EDC would like to thank Mr. Chris Blanton with NCDOT District 13 for working with us to place the Mitchell County "NC Certified Entrepreneurial Community" signs back on US 19 E. This designation opens the door to more grant funding, training programs, etc., for local entrepreneurial businesses in Mitchell County, NC.





Application Deadline	Date of Award
February 25, 2021	April 15, 2021
April 22, 2021	June 17, 2021
June 24, 2021	August 19, 2021
August 26, 2021	October 21, 2021
October 28, 2021	December 9, 2021
January 6, 2022	February 17, 2022
February 24, 2022	April 21, 2022
April 28, 2022	June 16, 2022

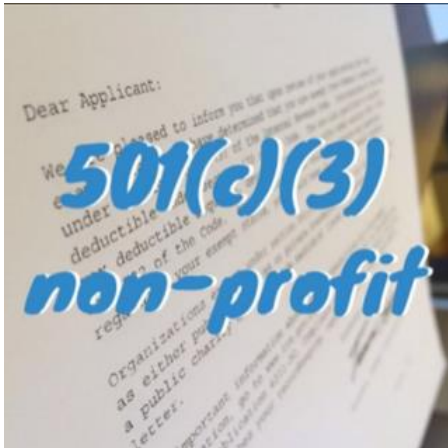
**\*NC DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUILDING REUSE GRANTS:** The EDC is working with and monitoring (2) Mitchell County Existing Industries regarding their expansion plans for 2021. Information has been distributed from the North Carolina Department of Commerce Grant to these industries including Building Reuse Grant Information, submittal and award dates.



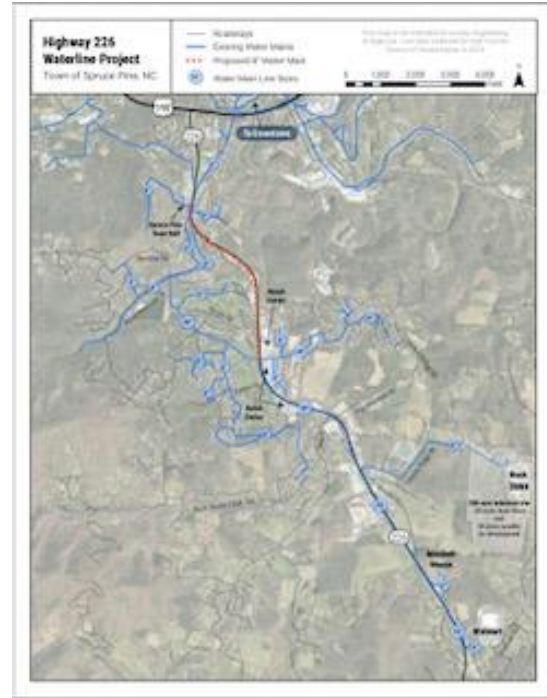
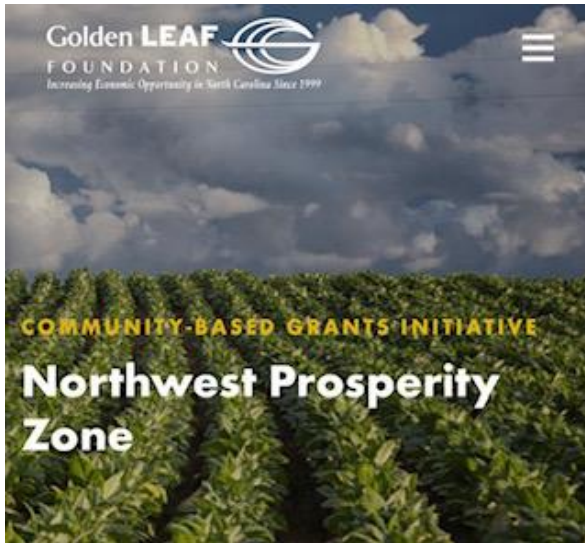
**\*CONGRATULATIONS! MITCHELL-YANCEY JOINT INDUSTRIAL PARK KICK-OFF MEETING WAS HELD ON JULY 27, 2021! THIS PROJECT IS GETTING ACCOLADES FROM NDCD AND RALEIGH LAWMAKERS AS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE WESTERN END OF NC:**

On April 19, 2021 the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners Approved the Mitchell-Yancey Joint Industrial Park Agreement. The Mitchell and Yancey County EDC’s have been working with High Country Council of Governments and the respective County Attorneys for several months in crafting a draft “Memorandum of Understanding” regarding a Joint Industrial Park Partnership. The agreement was

submitted to both respective County Attorneys as well as both EDC Boards for look-over with possible revisions prior to scheduling a formal approval date by both respective Boards of County Commissioners. Also, both counties have jointly reached out to “Dogwood Trust” and “USDA” regarding possible grant funding for technical assistance regarding legal fees as well as third-party industrial site identifications in both counties. \*\*\*With last year’s sale of the Henredon Site to Krantz Industries for the Amazon partnership and expansion at PRC, Mitchell County currently has no industrial park or ownership of industrial property to market to potential industries. Both County EDC Boards have continued to meet regularly, with great cooperation and strong interest in this project. The Mitchell County EDC worked closely with the Yancey County EDC to set-up the Joint Industrial Park Advisory Committee’s first kick-off meeting on July 27, 2021. \*Again, we appreciate the strong support shown by the Mitchell County EDC and Mitchell County Board of County Commissioners. Both EDC are now evaluating possible industrial sites with the third-party consultant.



**MITCHELL COUNTY EDC's 501(c)(3) APPLICATION UPDATE:** Received the required IRS documents to our CPA and Attorney for completion of the EDC non-profit application. This “non-profit status” will enable the Mitchell County EDC to secure private foundation grant funding to help existing and new small entrepreneurial businesses with expansion and start-up funding. We are expecting final approval with EIN # very soon.



THE TOWN OF SPRUCE PINE \$875,000 WATERLINE REPLACEMENT /GOLDEN LEAF FUNDED PROJECT IS MOVING FORWARD WITH REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS (Per Town of Spruce Pine Manager Mrs. Darlene Butler). The EDC worked with High Country Council of Governments and the Town of Spruce Pine, NC to complete and submit the full "Water Infrastructure Improvement Grant Application" along with "Letters of Support" to the Golden Leaf Foundation's-Community Based Grant Initiative Program in the total amount of (\$875,000) on behalf of the Town of Spruce Pine, NC. **This grant project is essential for future industrial/business development along the US 226 Corridor in Spruce Pine, NC.**



**ADDITIONAL HOTEL DEVELOPERS SHOWING STRONG INTEREST IN MITCHELL COUNTY.** This last month has been a very busy one for the opening of new hotels and interest from hotel developers in Mitchell County, NC. We have been busy working with (2) additional hotel developer/investors showing interest in an additional hotel project in Mitchell County.



**\*PUERTO NUEVO GETTING A MAJOR RENOVATION AND PROMISE THEY ARE OPENING SOON:** The former Bojangles Building in Spruce Pine has been

leased, and we continue to work with the new tenant “Puerto Nuevo” regarding any possible North Carolina Department of Commerce Grant Opportunities. The new owners will operate a well-known Mexican/Seafood Restaurant at this location. The “Puerto Nuevo Brand” has 10 other restaurants located in a multi-state region around Spruce Pine, NC. The new owners are making renovations to the building and promise they ARE opening soon.



INTERNATIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL

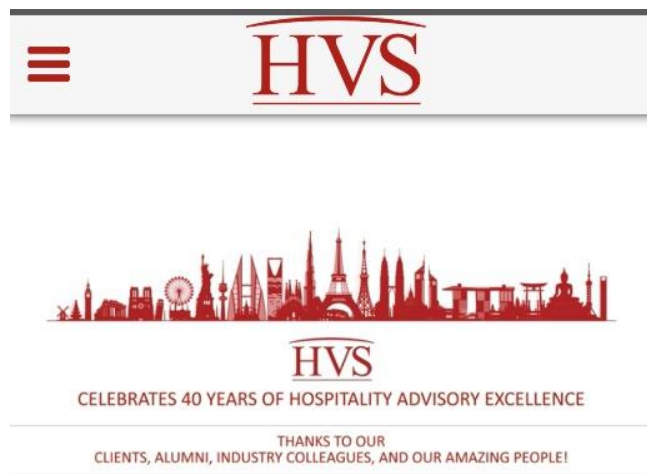
**\*MEETINGS:** Attended several Meetings with Spruce Pine Main Street, IEDC, EDPNC, NC Department of Commerce, Carolina West, NW Housing Coalition, Mitchell County Outdoor Strategic Planning, Bakersville Community Foundation and the US Small Business Administration.



**\*BAKERSVILLE DENTAL CLINIC:** Submitted the required NC Department of Commerce Project Report for “Project Topaz” (Bakersville Dental Clinic). Final seventh employee hired. July 15, 2021 Progress Report filed. We can now close this grant out in December 2021.



**\*INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS:** Continuing to work with PRC Industries on several confidential projects which will be released by the Mitchell County EDC and NC Department of Commerce as State Statute requires. This includes the 15acre County Site that the EDC sold to Krantz Industries last year for Amazon, and also PRC's additional 90acre existing Industrial Site contiguous to existing facilities.



**\*HVS 2019 HOTEL DEVELOPMENT STUDY HELPING TO DRIVE CURRENT INTEREST ON HOTEL DEVELOPMENT IN MITCHELL COUNTY:** The EDC was proactive in completing a Hotel Valuation Services (HVS) Mitchell County Hotel Feasibility Study in 2019 (this study can be found on the Mitchell County EDC Webpage [www.mitchellcountyedc.org](http://www.mitchellcountyedc.org))



**EDC WORKING ON MITCHELL COUNTY SIGNAGE ISSUES WITH NCDOT:** The EDC is working with Mr. Chris Blanton with NCDOT District 13 Sign Division on various NCDOT sign programs impacting Mitchell County Signage including NCDOT, Business, Informational, and Entrance Signage. New Mitchell County NCDOT Signage is now going up on the new stretch of Hwy. 19E. **\*If you own a business in Mitchell County and want to inquire about NCDOT directional signage, please contact Mr. Chris Blanton at: 828-250-3000 or Email: [ckblanton@ncdot.gov](mailto:ckblanton@ncdot.gov)**

## Economic Development **ANNOUNCEMENT**

**\*CONTACTS:** We are continuing to work with the commercial listing real estate agents regarding (1) possible national grocery franchisee interested in the former Food Line Building in Spruce Pine, NC. Also, we continue to work with listing real estate agents regarding a hardware/agriculture supply national franchise chain for possible location in Mitchell County, NC.

**\*A Third "NCDC Building Reuse Industrial Expansion Project" looks promising for an October 28, 2021 submittal date. Projected Grant amount for Industrial Expansion in Mitchell County is estimated at \$500,000.00.**



**\*The Mitchell County Economic Development Commission has a track record of taking advantage of every opportunity to assist existing businesses/industries and recruit/assist new businesses/industries wanting to locate to Mitchell County, NC. \*If you need our assistance, or know of someone who needs our assistance, we can be reached 24/7 at the numbers listed below. We look forward to helping you achieve your business goals in Mitchell County, NC!**

Dr. Mickey Duvall, Executive Director/Mitchell County EDC

Email: [mickey.duvall@mitchellcounty.org](mailto:mickey.duvall@mitchellcounty.org) Website: [www.mitchellcountyedc.org](http://www.mitchellcountyedc.org)

Bakersville Office: (828)537-1404 or Spruce Pine Office: (828)342-4746 (24/7)

Check us out on Facebook at: [Mitchell County Economic Development Commission](#)