

BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE



**Marion Economic
Development Resources**

For Business and Real Estate Development



LOCAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The following resources, program and services are available locally to help your business or real estate venture succeed in Marion, North Carolina.

Growing Entrepreneurs Marion (GEM) – An 8-class entrepreneur training teaching the basics of entrepreneurship. Is the idea feasible? How will it be financed? What is the best legal structure of ownership? Effective marketing practices. All aspects of starting a new business are covered. This program is a very good refresher for existing businesses. Businesses participating in the program are eligible to apply for a grant providing up to \$5,000 of rent and utility assistance for a period of up to six months. To qualify, businesses must be in the retail or food service sectors, locate in Downtown Marion, create at least 1.5 jobs and be open a certain number of hours per week. For more information, ontact Freddie Killough at 828-652-2215 or email freddiek@frontier.com.

Marion Façade Grant Programs – For improvements to building facades including free design assistance. City funding is available to cover up to 100% cost of paint and window materials for façade renovations for qualifying buildings in the Downtown Marion. One-half of the costs of labor or for materials (other than paint and windows) can be funded by the Historic Marion Façade Grant, funded by the Marion Business Association and McDowell Economic Development Association, and supported by the City of Marion and McDowell County. Free Design Assistance is available from the N.C. Main Street Center for buildings in Downtown Marion. For more information, ontact Freddie Killough at 828-652-2215 or email freddiek@frontier.com.

City of Marion Revolving Loan Program – The City of Marion has available \$100,000 in a revolving loan program, funded by a grant from the N.C. Rural Center. Loans will be targeted to new businesses in Downtown Marion or businesses expanding to the Downtown area. For more information, ontact Freddie Killough at 828-652-2215 or email freddiek@frontier.com.

Building Inspector Consultation – The City of Marion Building Inspector is available for consultation regarding potential projects within the City of Marion. Contact Building Inspector Matthew Crawford at 828-652-3551 or mrcrawford@marionnc.org for more information.

“Moving Up In Marion” Initiative - The City of Marion has initiated a new economic and community development program to support the private development of upper floor residential housing in existing multi-story buildings in its historic downtown. For more information, contact Planning Director Heather Cotton at 828-652-3551 or hcotton@marionnc.org.

VEDIC – Based in Valdese, North Carolina, VEDIC operates loan programs focused on helping entrepreneurs start businesses and existing businesses to expand. VEDIC bridges the gap for those businesses that need funding, but cannot qualify for a bank loan. It is our hope that through this loan program, businesses will prosper and become credit worthy for bank funding in the future. Visit www.vedic28690.com for more information.



CONTACT INFORMATION

The City of Marion, McDowell County, McDowell Chamber of Commerce, McDowell Economic Development Association and Marion Business Association are eager to assist with any questions concerning new or expanding businesses. For more information, please contact:

Marion Business Association

Executive Director
Freddie Killough
Phone: 828-652-2215
freddiek@frontier.com

Marion City Manager

Bob Boyette
Phone: 828-652-3551
bboyette@marionnc.org

City Planning Director

Heather Cotton
Phone: 828-652-3551
hcotton@marionnc.org

McDowell Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director Steve Bush
Phone: 828-652-4240
sbush@mcdowellchamber.com

McDowell Economic Development

Executive Director
Chuck Abernathy
Phone: 828-652-9391
meda@mcdowelleda.org

McDowell County Manager

Ashley Wooten
Phone: 828-652-7121
awooten@mcdowellgov.com



STATE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

North Carolina Rural Center Microloan Program – Several loan options are available for new and expanding businesses. The N.C. Small Business Credit Initiative helps make capital available for business startups and expansions across the state. With more business investment comes more jobs for North Carolinians. The Microenterprise Loan Program works with individuals who have sound ideas for starting or expanding a small business but may not qualify for bank loans. <http://www.ncruralcenter.org>.

N.C. Main Street Program – Main Street Solutions Fund - Used to assist planning agencies and small businesses with efforts to revitalize downtowns by creating jobs, funding infrastructure improvements and rehabilitating buildings. Downtown Redevelopment Fund - Designed for infrastructure upgrades of downtown buildings in order to meet current code requirements. The upgrades should be for vacant or underutilized downtown commercial buildings. An underutilized building is defined as a property that is less than fully utilized or used below its potential. This fund is designed to return vacant or underutilized commercial buildings to economic use for new and/or expanded business. For more information or visit www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street.

Business Link North Carolina - BLNC (pronounced “blink”) offers free business compliance information on behalf of the State and the NC Department of Commerce. BLNC partners with all state agencies and licensing boards and helps with business resources related to starting, expanding or moving a business to NC. Resource information includes: licensure, permitting, education, funding and events. Our goal is to help small businesses succeed. Call BLNC toll-free, 1-800-228-8443, or visit BLNC.gov to the “Start a Business” page and click on the GREEN BOX – CONTACT BLNC.

McDowell Tech Small Business Center – Free counselling for new and existing business. Contact Frank Silver at 828-652-0633 or franks@mcdowelltech.edu.

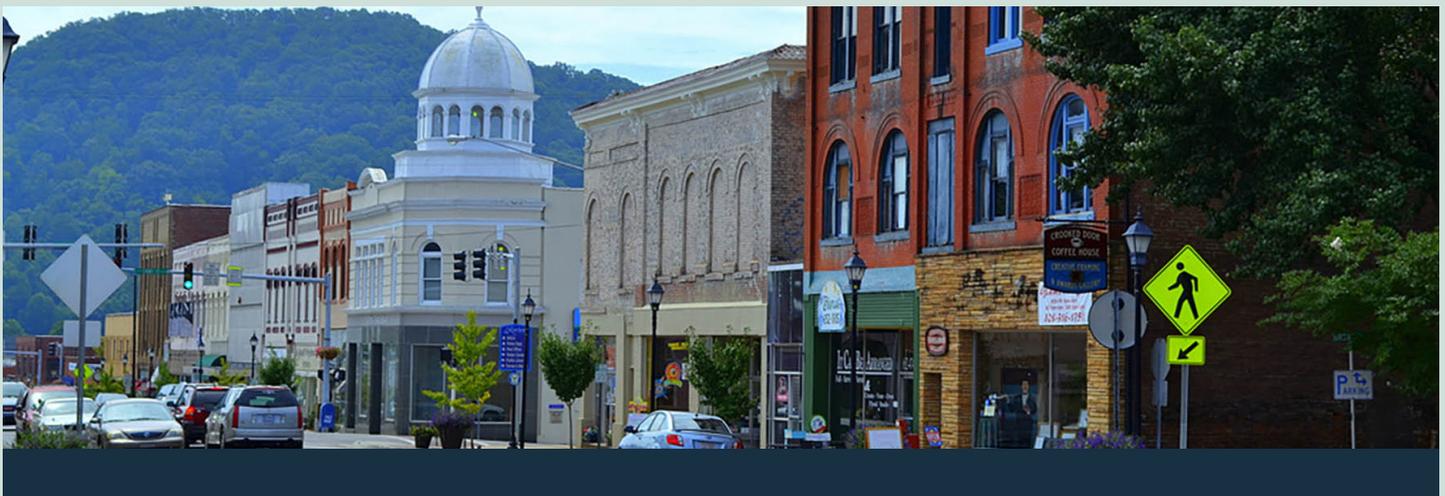
SCORE Counseling – A free counseling service for new or existing businesses, provided through the McDowell Chamber of Commerce. Contact McDowell Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Steve Bush at 828-652-4240 or sbush@mcdowellchamber.com for more information or visit www.mcdowellchamber.com

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) - For historic properties preservation, restoration, reuse and tax credit information. Contact Jennifer Cathey at SHPO at 828-296-7230 Ext. 227, at jennifer.cathey@ncdcr.gov or <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov>.

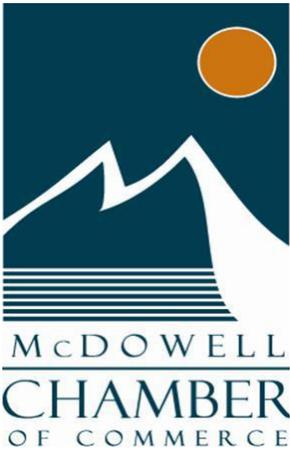
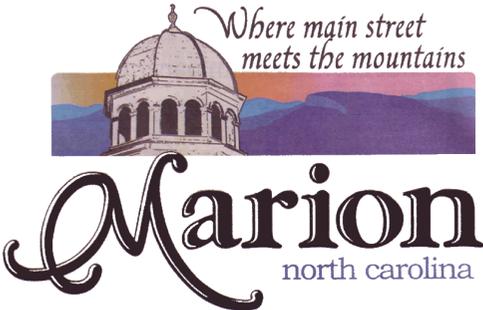
Building Reuse Program, N.C. Department of Commerce – Provides funding for job creation taking place in vacant buildings. Buildings must be vacant for at least three months prior to application deadlines. Mixed-use or adaptive reuse projects that include housing may be eligible, provided the building will be occupied by at least one private company committed to creating new jobs. Priority will be given to projects that create five (5) or more new full-time jobs. For more information, contact <http://www.nccommerce.com/ruraldevelopment/rural-grants-programs/building-reuse>.

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- **City Manager Bob Boyette** at 652-3551 or bboyette@marionnc.org
- **City Planning Director Heather Cotton** at 828-652-3551 or hcotton@marionnc.org
- **McDowell Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Steve Bush** at 828-652-4240 or sbush@mcdowellchamber.com
- **McDowell Economic Development Association Executive Director Chuck Abernathy** at 828-652-9391 or meda@mcdowelleda.org
- **McDowell County Manager Ashley Wooten** at 828-652-7121 or awooten@mcdowellgov.com



PARTICIPATING AGENCIES



For more local information, visit
WWW.GOTOMCDOWELL.COM