

# **Guidelines for Establishing State of North Carolina Agrarian Growth Zones**

## **1. Intent**

As authorized in GS 143B-437.10, the purpose of the State Agrarian Growth Zones is to provide economic incentives to stimulate new investment and job creation in economically distressed areas. A State Agrarian Growth Zone is an area comprised of one or more contiguous census tracts, census block groups, or both, in the most recent federal decennial census that meets all conditions listed in section 2 of this document.

## **2. Qualifying an Area for Designation**

The basis for identifying and qualifying an area for a State Agrarian Growth Zone is contiguous census tracts and census block groups as defined by the most recent decennial United States Bureau of Census. A County government may request the designation of one or more Agrarian Growth Zones. Each Zone must meet the minimum criteria specified in the General Statutes and described below.

An Agrarian Growth Zone is an area that meets all of the following conditions:

1. It is comprised of one or more contiguous census tracts, census block groups, or both, in the most recent federal decennial census.
2. All of the area is located in whole within a county that has no municipality with a population in excess of 10,000 based on current population estimate from NC State Demographer's Office.
3. Every census tract and census block group that comprises the area has more than twenty percent (20%) of its population below the poverty level according the most recent federal decennial census.

**The area of a county that is included in one or more agrarian growth shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the total area of the county.**

The application shall include all of the following requirements in order to be considered for designation:

1. A map showing the census tracts and block groups that would comprise the zone.
2. A detailed description of the boundaries of the area that would comprise the zone.
3. A map illustrating the size of the proposed zone.
4. Detailed census information on the county and proposed zone.
5. A resolution of the board of county commissioners requesting the designation of the area as an agrarian growth zone.
6. Any other materials required by the Secretary of Commerce.

## **3. Assistance with Preparation of an Application for Zone Designation.**

Assistance with preparation of the application for Agrarian Growth Zone Designation is available at the North Carolina Division of Community Assistance. Regional Offices may provide assistance with these guidelines. Contacts at these offices are provided on Attachment C.

While the Division of Community Assistance may assist a County in the preparation of an application, the accuracy of all information contained in the application remains the sole responsibility of the local government submitting it. Local officials should carefully check the accuracy of all information in an application prior to submission.

Additional information related North Carolina demographics can be found at the State Demographers website <http://demog.state.nc.us/>

#### **4. Submittal Information and Approval Process Information.**

1. Who may apply? Each County that meets the qualifications in the GS 143B-437.10 is allowed to designate one or more Agrarian Growth Zones. A resolution is required by the board of county commissioners requesting the designation of the area as an agrarian growth zone.
2. Submit the completed application form to: J. Keith Crisco, Secretary  
NC Department of Commerce  
c/o Gloria Nance-Sims, Director  
Division of Community Assistance  
4313 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699 -4313
3. The Secretary of Commerce will designate areas that meet statutory criteria. A determination is effective until December 31 of the following year in which the determination is made.
4. For information concerning the status of an application, applicants may call Will Best at (919) 733-2853 extension 265.
5. If an application is unsigned, incomplete or inaccurate, it will be returned to the applicant at the address on the application.
6. An applicant will be notified by mail as to whether the application is approved or disapproved.

#### **5. Detailed instructions to complete the Application for Zone Designation.**

1. Accuracy of the information submitted in an application, and a clear understanding on the part of a local government on the territory contained within a zone, is essential. Improperly designating zones, or incorrect advice given by local officials to businesses inquiring about zones, may result in local businesses claiming zone tax credits to which they are not entitled and may subject them to audit and assessment the N.C. Department of Revenue.
2. County: This is the County in which the proposed Agrarian Growth Zone is located.
3. County Area: This is the total County land area. This information can be found at [http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)
4. Applicant Information: Applicants are limited to County governments. Be sure to designate a contact person to respond to any questions about the application.
5. Census Tract Data: Each census tract and/ or block group must be entirely or partially within the current County limits, as those limits exist on the date of the application for Agrarian Growth Zone Designation. ***Applications will be returned if the Division of Community Assistance discovers that the wrong census data has been used. Be certain to follow these instructions exactly.***

Census Tract and/or Block Group Number: This number is determined by locating census tracts and/or block groups on census tract/block group maps. Many Counties have census maps for their jurisdiction or GIS Departments that can assist in mapping the potential Agrarian Growth Zones. Other census data centers are listed on Attachments A and B. Information about Census Tracts and Block Groups can also be located at the Census Bureau website [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Total Population: Locate data on the 2000 Census of Population and Housing **Summary File 3** ([http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)), at the enclosed listing of Census Data Centers. When analyzing total population from the data CD, locate the total population statistic in the Census Tract/Block Numbering Area (Totals) or Block Group (Totals), depending on what geographic identifier you are utilizing (i.e. tract or block group). Determine the population by the 100-Percent Count of Persons. *Applicant must have a municipal population greater than 10,000.*

Percent below Poverty: This statistic is also located on Tape File 3A, or can be obtained by visiting [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Select the General Profiles and scroll down to Income and Poverty; you will locate the Percent below Poverty under this heading. *(Hint: This number should not include the hundredths decimal. If a census tract or block group has less than 20.00% below poverty it does not qualify.)*

Total Population Below Poverty: *This function shall be performed manually. (File 3 P87 POVERTY STATUS)* For each census tract or block group, perform this calculation. Multiply the Total population of the census tract and/or block group by the Percent below poverty = Total population below poverty. Round to the nearest whole person.

6. Proposed Agrarian Growth Zone Summary Census Information:

Total Population is the sum of Total Population figures for all the census tracts and/or block groups listed in the table in # 4.

Total Population below Poverty is the sum of the Total Population below Poverty figures for all the census tracts and block groups listed in the table in # 4.

Percent below Poverty: This figure is equal to the (Total Population below Poverty for all census tracts and/or block groups in the proposed Zone (from the table in # 5.)) divided by the (Total Population for all census tracts and/or block groups in the proposed Zone (from the table in #5.)) ***For a Zone to qualify, each Census Tract and/ or Block Group must exceed 20.0% Percent below Poverty.***

7. Signature:

County government applicants: The Chief County Elected Official shall sign the application form. The signature certifies official action to apply for zone designation by the governing body.

**Department of Commerce - Business/Industry Regional Offices**

Western Regional Department of  
Commerce Office (Lenoir)  
P.O. Box 429  
602 Morganton Blvd. S.W.  
Lenoir, North Carolina 28645  
828/757-5651 FAX: 828/754-8856

Western Regional Department  
of Commerce Office (Bryson City)  
Economic Agrarian Growth Rep.  
P.O. Box 1940  
50 Main Street, Room 228  
Bryson City, North Carolina 28713  
828/488-0300 FAX: 828/488-3950

Western Regional Department  
of Commerce Office (Fletcher)  
3 General Aviation Drive  
Fletcher, North Carolina 28732  
828/654-9852 FAX 828/654-9859

Piedmont Triad Regional  
Dept. of Commerce Office (Greensboro)  
7614 Business Park Drive  
Greensboro, North Carolina 27409  
336/668-0474 FAX: 336/668-2164

Carolinas Regional Department  
of Commerce Office (Charlotte)  
8210 Univ. Exec. Park Dr. Suite 260  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28262  
704/547-5750 FAX: 704/547-5747

Research Triangle Regional  
Department of Commerce Office (Raleigh)  
301 N. Wilmington Street, P.O. Box 29571  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0571  
919/733-5148 FAX: 919/733-9299

Global Transpark Regional  
Department of Commerce (Greenville)  
601-H Country Club Drive  
Greenville, North Carolina 27834  
252/355-9048 FAX: 252/355-9051

Northeastern Regional  
Department of Commerce Office (Edenton)  
P.O. Box 405  
119 W. Water Street  
Edenton, North Carolina 27932  
252/482-2444 FAX: 252/482-7444

Southeastern Regional Department  
of Commerce Office (Fayetteville)  
Wachovia Building, Suite 802  
Fayetteville, North Carolina, 28301  
910/486-1549 FAX: 910/486-1826

**Attachment B**  
**Census Data Locations - Public Libraries**

Mecklenburg  
Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County  
310 North Tryon St.  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
(704) 336-2980  
*Have data for 13 counties*

Appalachian University  
Belk Library  
Boone, NC  
(828) 262-2186

Cumberland County Public Library  
300 Maiden Lane  
Fayetteville, NC  
(910) 483-3745

Western Carolina University  
Hunter Library  
Cullowhee, NC  
(828) 227-7316  
*Have data for limited area*

UNC - Asheville  
D. Hiden Ramsey Library  
1 University Heights  
Asheville, NC 28804-8504  
(821) 251-6336  
*Have data for Buncombe Co.*

East Carolina University  
Joyner Library  
Greenville, NC 27834  
(252) 328-6601

UNC - Wilmington  
Randell Library  
601 S. College Rd  
Wilmington, NC 28403  
(910) 962-3272

Duke University  
Perkins Library  
Flowers Dr.  
Durham, NC 27706  
(919) 660-5880  
*Have data for a limited area*

State of North Carolina  
State Library of North Carolina  
109 E. Jones St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807  
(919) 733-3270

Forsyth County Library  
660 W. Fifth  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
(336) 727-2208  
*Have data for a limited area*

**Division of Community Assistance Regional Office Information**

**Asheville Regional Office**

31 College Place  
Building B  
Asheville, NC 28801  
TEL. (828) 251-6914  
FAX (828) 251- 6918

**Raleigh Regional Office**

4313 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699 - 4313  
TEL. (919) 733-2850  
FAX (919) 733-5262

**Fayetteville Regional Office**

225 Green Street  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
TEL. (910) 829-6384  
FAX (910) 437-2535

**Washington Regional Office**

PO Box 850  
102 E. 2nd Street  
Washington, NC 27889-0850  
TEL. (252) 974-1308  
FAX (252) 974-2900

**Winston Salem Regional Office**

8025 North Point Blvd. Suite 256  
Winston Salem, NC 27106  
TEL. (336) 896-7050  
FAX (336) 896-7052