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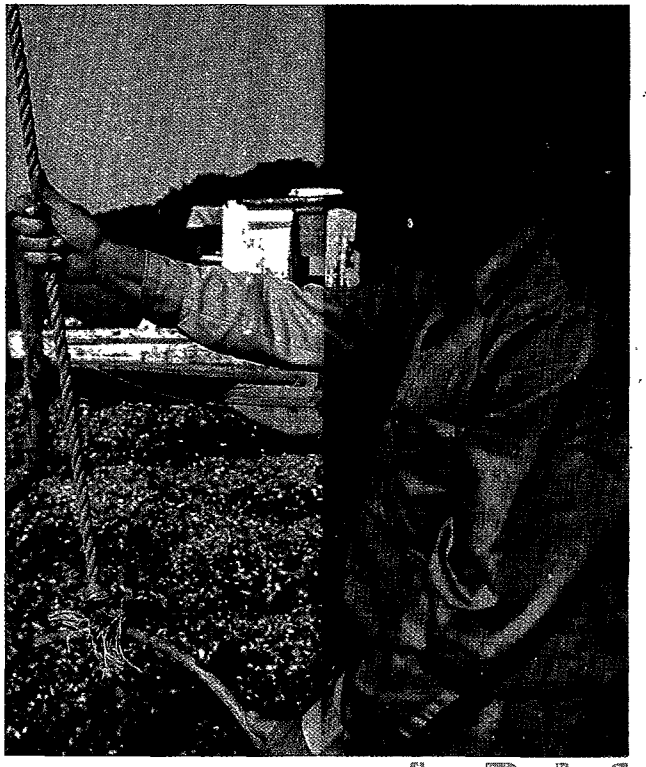
coastal plains regional commission



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Coastal Plains Regional Commission

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Regional Plan In Brief

COASTAL PLAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION

April, 1973

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INTRODUCTION

This is the story of a region—the Coastal Plains of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia—and its use of a new means—regionalism—to solve age-old problems of economic lag.

The Coastal Plains, throughout its 350 year history, has had a separate and distinctive character, geographic, economic and cultural. One determining feature has been the Fall Line, which serves as the western border of the Region. From the hills beyond, the rivers break over that geologic shelf and thereafter flow quietly to the Atlantic. This was important in the early history of the Region, since it marked the western limit of easy river transportation and therefore of the great plantations. It was the plantation economy and the plantation culture which largely shaped the enduring character of the Coastal Plains Long after the plantation system declined in importance economically, its influence continued to be felt. It's passing left a void which other forms of productive enterprise have not yet been able to fill completely.

This has not been because of any lack of aspiration or of industry on the part of the Region's people. From the time when the first settlers cleared the wilderness to establish a living base on the new continent, down to the latest surge in industrial activity, the Coastal Plains people have given themselves with energy and initiative to the task of building a good society. But they have struggled against formidable obstacles.

For most of its history the Coastal Plains economy depended mainly on an agriculture based on soil depleting crops. The plantation system and the institution of slavery which accompanied it held propertyless most of those who worked on the soil. Then came the debilitating and impoverishing effects of a long civil war, which itself was succeeded by a period of economic colonialism which saw the profits of industry flowing to other regions rich in capital. Finally, the great depression of the 30's left the Region prostrate and without the means of recovery available to other parts of the country. When industry did begin to burgeon in the national economy during and after World War II, the Coastal Plains was ill-prepared to participate There was growth, but largely growth in traditional, low-wage industries demanding a low order of skills. Neither the facilities and services nor the investment capital and managerial experience were there to enable the Region to share fully in the new national prosperity.

Such was the situation in the Coastal Plains when the Congress, in 1965, passed the Public Works and Economic Development Act. Concern had grown throughout the country over the loss to the national well-being resulting from the economic underdevelopment of certain areas Not only did such areas not make their full potential contribution to the national economy, but also they added to the problems of our urbanizing society by sending unskilled, low income migrants into the cities in search of job opportunities which often did not exist. In Title V of the new Act, Congress focused on lagging regions such as the Coastal Plains, authorizing a new form of Federal-State partnership to stimulate planned economic development To carry out this program, the

law provided for regional commissions consisting of the Governors of the participating States and a Federal member, who would be Cochairman, along with one of the State members. The Coastal Plains Regional Commission was established in July 1967.

The first task of the Coastal Plains Commission in the fall of that year was to study the Region's economic problems and formulate an action program to alleviate them. The Commission collected and analyzed data relating to the Region's characteristics and resources, interviewed government officials and civic, educational and business leaders at the State and local levels to gain further insights concerning the Region's needs, aspirations, and potentials. After examining various possible goals, it was determined that per capita income was the best indicator of the Region's economic well-being. At that time, the difference in annual per capita income between the residents of the Coastal Plains and their counterparts across the Nation was nearly $1,000.

The Commission's goal therefore, was set as narrowing and eventually closing the per capita income gap separating the Region and the Nation.

The Commission adopted an Initial Action Planning Document on January 19, 1968, which explained its goal of closing this gap, described the strategy for achieving this goal and established target areas for intensified efforts to produce accelerated growth. It then began to assist Federal, State and local agencies to expand the scope of their planning and made funds available for urgently needed projects. At the same time, the Commission began to prepare a comprehensive Regional Economic Development Plan.

The Plan was completed in the spring of 1971 and adopted by the Commission on August 30 in Atlanta, Georgia. It was later approved by the Secretary of Commerce, as required by law, and submitted to the Office of the President for review.

The Economic Development Plan is a document based on extensive research into regional problems and potentialities and on the experience of four years of intergovernmental cooperation for regional economic development.

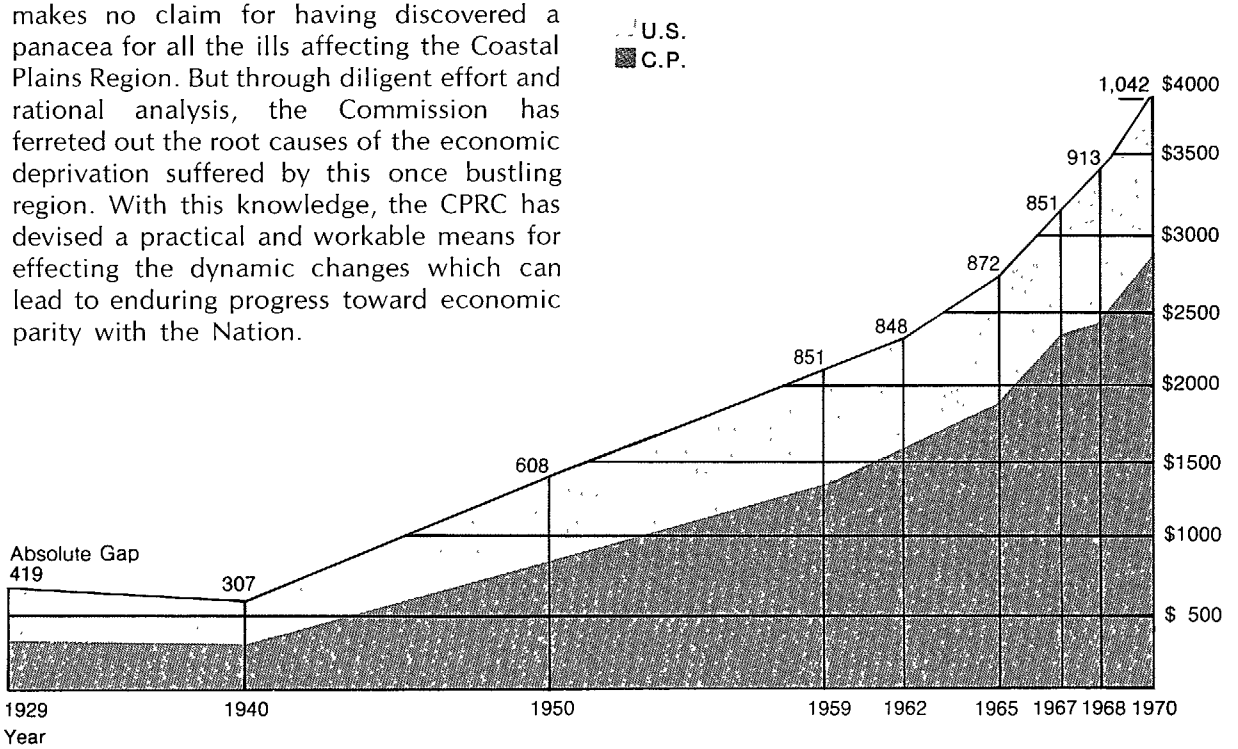
The Coastal Plains Regional Commission makes no claim for having discovered a panacea for all the ills affecting the Coastal Plains Region. But through diligent effort and rational analysis, the Commission has ferreted out the root causes of the economic deprivation suffered by this once bustling region. With this knowledge, the CPRC has devised a practical and workable means for effecting the dynamic changes which can lead to enduring progress toward economic parity with the Nation.

In the pages to follow, we hope to bring about a clearer understanding of the Region's problems, its potentials and more importantly, of the Commission's role in making use of the underutilized human and natural resources abounding in this vast area all with one central theme—achievement of the ultimate goal of closing the income gap.

EXTENT OF THE INCOME GAP

between the Coastal Plains Region and the United States

Per Capita Income



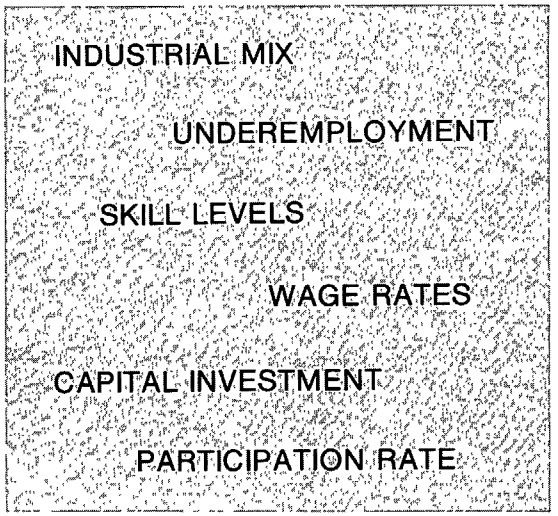
NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH CAROLINA
GEORGIA

THE COASTAL PLAINS REGION

Historically, the Coastal Plains Region has been bound together by its social, cultural and historic heritage. The most common bond, however, has been it's economic evolution.

The Region has been trapped in a cycle of self generating low income levels. Incomes depend heavily on a low wage industrial structure which pays wages below those paid by the same industries elsewhere in the Nation. These income conditions placed in a heavily rural environment bring about a shortage of public facilities necessary for the betterment of society. Lack of population concentrations along with low incomes (and out migration which erodes even further the tax base in some areas) make delivery of adequate public services difficult if not impossible. This, in turn, perpetuates the conditions and qualities of life, education, and health which once again generate substandard incomes.

The Economy of the Region

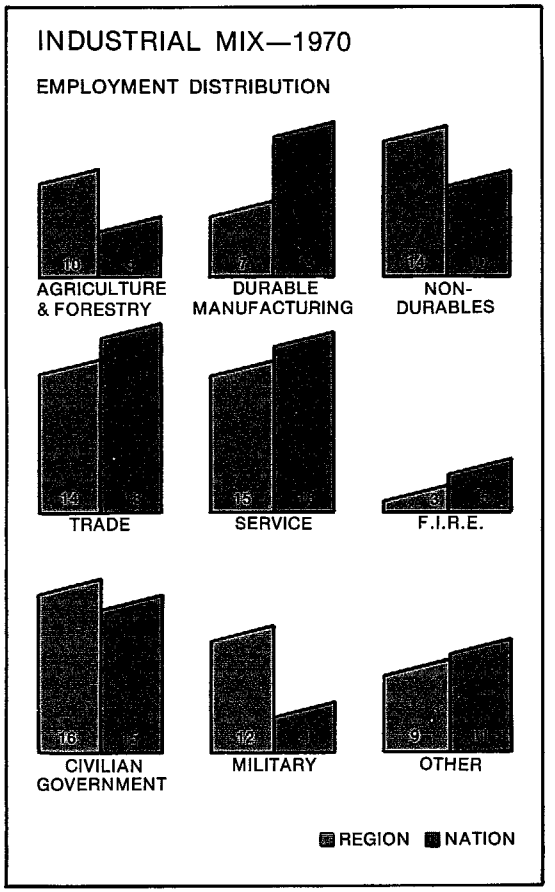


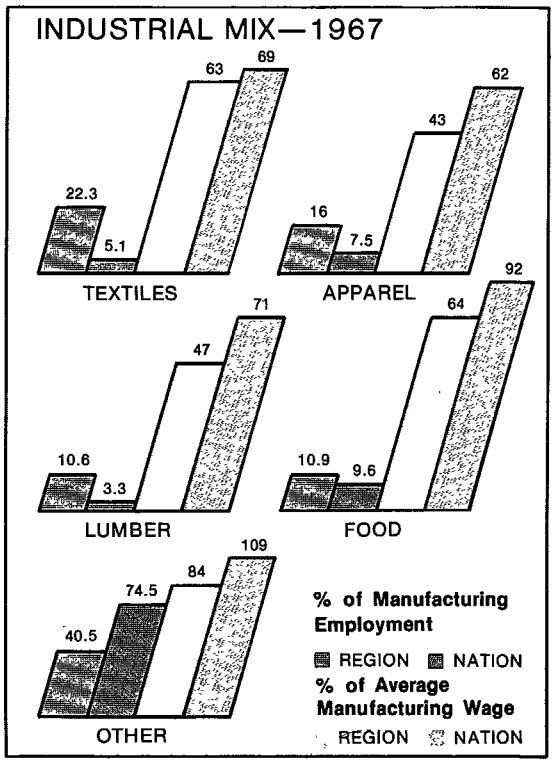
Research done by the Commission has given added credibility to what had been recognized before. That is, the income gap in the Region is a result of several basic problems.

First, the Region's industrial mix is generally characterized by low-wage, labor-intensive industry. For example, the four manufacturing sectors paying the lowest average wage per worker nationally—textiles, apparel, lumber, and food processing—account for more than 60 percent of manufacturing employment in the Region. The five manufacturing sectors with the highest average wage per worker nationally—chemicals, electrical machinery, transportation equipment, petroleum, and fabricated metals—account for only 14 percent of the Region's manufacturing employment.

A second reason for this lag is because wage rates paid by these already low-paying industries to workers in the Region are below the national average paid to workers in other regions for the same jobs. This obviously compounds an already serious problem.

Another contributing factor is the lower-than-average civilian participation rate—that is the ratio of persons employed in the labor force to the total population. The participation rate in the Coastal Plains is lower





than the Nation's by some 5 percent. This is accounted for in part by the relative scarcity of jobs paying wages high enough to attract potential workers into the labor force

Finally, a high proportion of workers in the Region and of those who will soon enter the labor force have less education and training than their counterparts in the more industrialized regions of the Nation. Latest statistics show that the average adult in the United States has completed 10.6 years of formal schooling while the average adult in the Region has completed only 8.9 years. Further complicating this problem is the high number of "functional illiterates" in the Region, which according to the Census Bureau definition is anyone who has completed fewer than five years of schooling, and fully one-fifth of the adults in the Region fit into this category.

This low level of educational attainment has taken its toll in skill levels and potential for advancement into higher paying jobs—thus the Region is suffering from an overwhelming amount of underemployment as opposed to unemployment which perpetuates the income gap

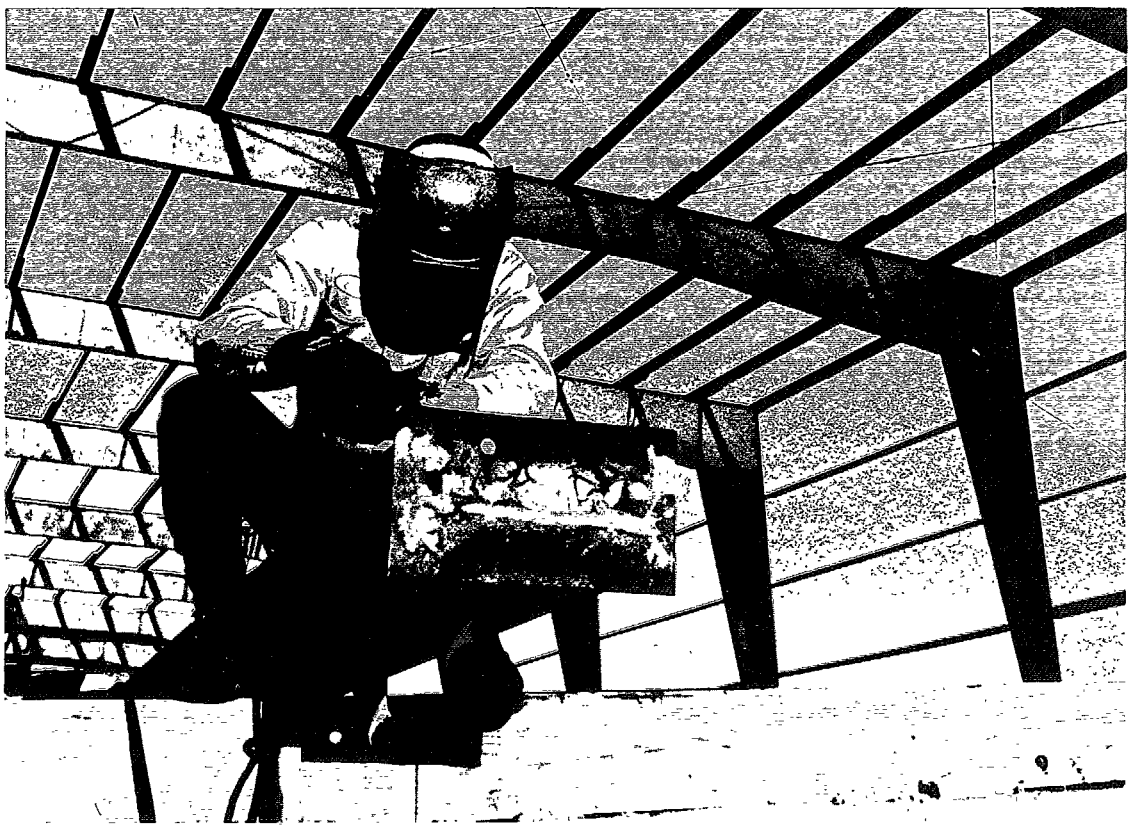
If current trends are allowed to continue—if no substantial additional economic development effort takes place—

The Region's per capita income in 1980 will still be approximately $1,000 below the Nation's;

Most new jobs will be in low wage industries;

The quantity of manpower will be more than ample to fill the new jobs; however

At least 100,000 workers will leave the Region.



This sub par performance cannot be allowed to continue. Fortunately, one of the most important resources of the Region is the five million people who live there. Efforts to improve the quality of these people is one way to break the cycle of low incomes and low skills and low incomes. Productivity and earnings can be raised by raising the levels of education and skills of workers and managers in the Region, and by improving the functioning of labor markets by improved communication concerning job opportunities.

Many of the changes which have occurred in the Region in recent years are slowly improving the structure of the economy The Region's economy is in a period of transition, and it is taking on more of the characteristics of the broader, urbanized, national economy of which it is an integral part.

However, major changes in the Region's economic structure must be achieved in the decade of the '70's if the goals for the Region are to be achieved.

The potential for bringing about these changes is there—it exists within the vast human and natural resources with which the Coastal Plains is blessed.

Now through the medium of the Coastal Plains Regional Commission, the catalyst is at hand for blending these resources together with comprehensive and imaginative planning to put these forces to work on the task of full development of the Region's economic potential.

Let us turn now to an examination of some of these resources.

Natural Resources of the Region

The Coastal Plains Region extends for nearly 600 miles in a southwesterly direction from Virginia's southern border to Florida's northern border. It begins at the fall line in the Carolinas and Georgia and slopes gently to the Atlantic Ocean nearly 150 miles to the southeast.

Nine major rivers meander across the Region before mingling with the waters of the Atlantic in its sounds, marshes, and estuaries. In addition to these rivers, the Region possesses many smaller surface streams, lakes and ponds, salt water estuaries, protected waterways, harbors, and ample supplies of ground water.

The Region has 600 miles of coastline, nearly three million acres of estuaries, and thousands of square miles of continental shelf including the Blake Plateau. The vast economic potentials represented by these marine resources have scarcely been tapped.

Hardwoods suitable for furniture manufacturing and softwoods suitable for home building and manufacturing paint, paper, chemicals, and synthetic fibers grow in the Region's dense forests which are also becoming increasingly important for their recreational uses.

The Region's level terrain also favors industrialization. It permits roads and industrial plants to be constructed in the Region relatively inexpensively.

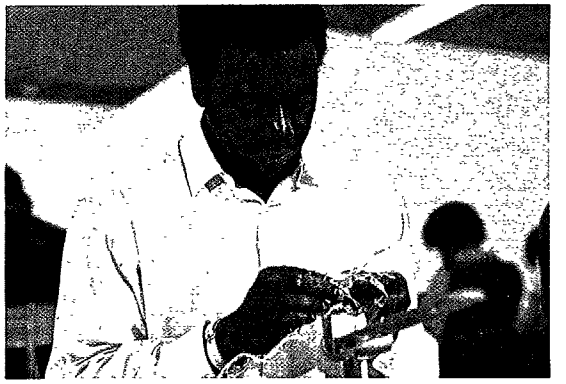
The People of the Region

These natural advantages would mean little without people willing and able to use them wisely. The Coastal Plains Region has such people.

They are part of a Nation—but distinct in their heritage and tradition. They are people descended from rural folk imbued with pride in their culture and history. They live in small communities and large cities; they work on farms and in stores, plants and offices. Together they comprise an asset more highly prized than any other the Region possesses.

But many of those born and reared there have left to find better opportunities elsewhere. This out-migration has intensified the social problems in the cities to which they have gone and has further impoverished the towns they left.

One thing is clear, however, the citizens of the Coastal Plains Region are dedicated to the desire to accelerate sound economic development and thus reverse the trends of the past.



GOALS FOR THE COASTAL PLAINS REGION

The goal of the Coastal Plains Regional Commission, as has been stated, is to close the income gap that exists between the Region and the rest of the Nation. This goal was first stated in the initial action planning program of the Commission and has remained the overall goal throughout the planning process

This is an ambitious goal since the income gap has grown steadily wider over the years. Since 1950 the gap has increased from $608 to $1,042 in 1970. The aggregate income gap in 1970 was $5.5 billion. If the current trend is allowed to continue, it will cost the Region $60 billion in personal income in the decade of the 1970's.

The Commission while recognizing that a comprehensive program is essential to the achievement of its goal also recognizes that it cannot undertake its efforts without some central focus. In order to provide a framework for program planning, the Commission has designated certain program areas for intensive study.

These include:

- Industrial Development
- Human Resources
- Marine Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Transportation
- Tourism
- Housing

It is recognized that no program for the economic development of the Coastal Plains Region has a chance of being implemented unless it takes into account national goals. In other words, the program designed for the Coastal Plains Region must not only achieve regional goals but must also contribute to the achievement of the nation's goals. National goals taken into consideration in designing a program include the following:

- Full Employment
- Price and Wage Stability
- Optimal Economic Growth
- Reform of the Welfare System
- Favorable Balance of Payments
- Rural-Urban Balance
- Environmental Enhancement
- Optimal Income Distribution

The Economic Development Plan contains a statement of specific goals within each of these program areas In general they are as follows:

Industrial Development—To alter the Region's industrial structure to include more high/wage, high/growth industries while increasing productivity within the existing industries.

Human Resources—To fully develop the human resources base within the Region with emphasis on providing a higher level of skills than presently exists.

Marine Resources—To bring about full and wise development of these resources and enhance the quality of the marine environment.

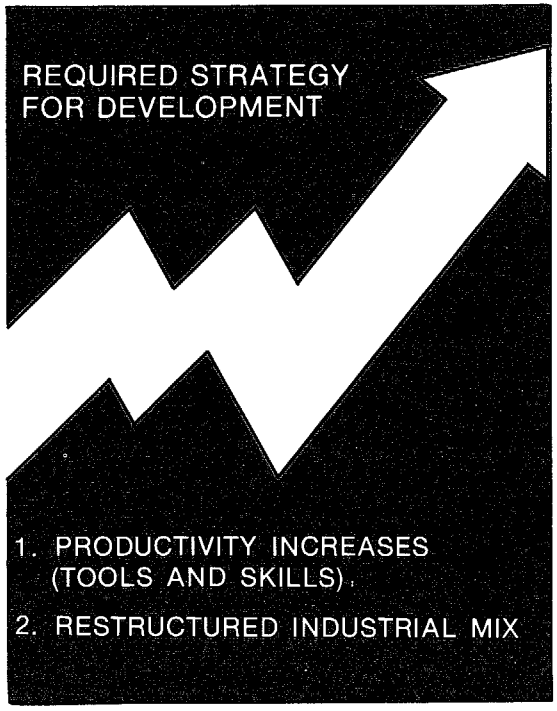
Agriculture and Forestry—To increase the productivity and incomes of agricultural workers through the development of more efficient production and marketing techniques and the introduction of a more profitable commodity mix.

Tourism—To create a coherent system of tourist attractions that will make the Region attractive to tourists from all parts of the country.

Transportation—To construct a developmental highway system linking the Region's growth centers and improving the quality of service by existing air, water and rail transportation systems.

Housing—To fully develop the housing industry as an integral part of the industrial structure of the Region and to insure that the lack of adequate housing is not a deterrent to the attraction of industry to the Region.

STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

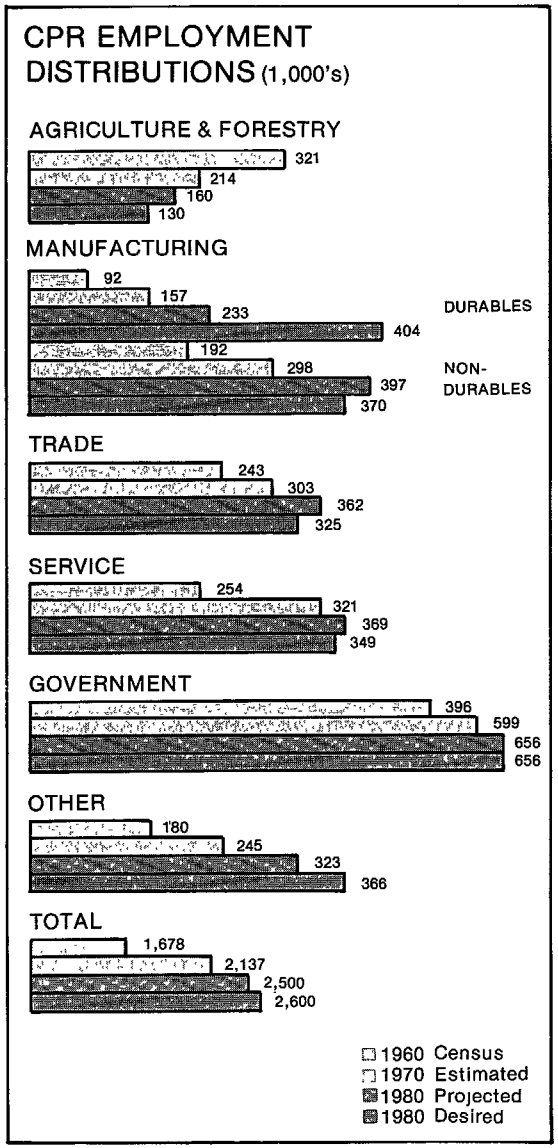


In the economic development process, as with any problem solving exercise, setting goals is only an intermediate step toward mounting the attack on the problem itself. Perhaps the most critical phase during the evolution of the process is devising a feasible strategy, if implemented effectively can lead to the sought after solutions.

The basic choice of a strategy for closing the income gap in the Coastal Plains Region was outlined in the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965. The Act suggested that the Commission's goals were to be achieved through the economic process, involving planning and stimulation of the underlying forces and conditions affecting the Region's economy.

Several early studies by the Commission suggested that realistically the income gap could not be closed through simple public investments designed to improve the productivity of labor and capital based on the Region's existing economic mix. More of the same kinds of growth within the present economic structure would result in income gains, but would fall far short of the goal of closing the income gap. Thus, the conclusion was reached that a new mix of economic activities would have to be created in the Region, implying that many of the underlying conditions that determine economic structure also would have to be changed.

In its simplest terms, the Commission's strategy calls for restructuring the Region's economic structure—creating a new industrial mix which will include more and higher paying jobs requiring higher and more sophisticated skills than presently possessed by much of the Region's labor force



During the period of preparing the *Economic Development Plan,* the Commission studied many different economic structures, a number of which would close the income gap projected for 1980. It was acknowledged that any new structure would depend heavily on attracting industry which produced durable goods because these types of industries are of the high/growth, high/wage type needed to provide the better jobs needed for the projected labor force.

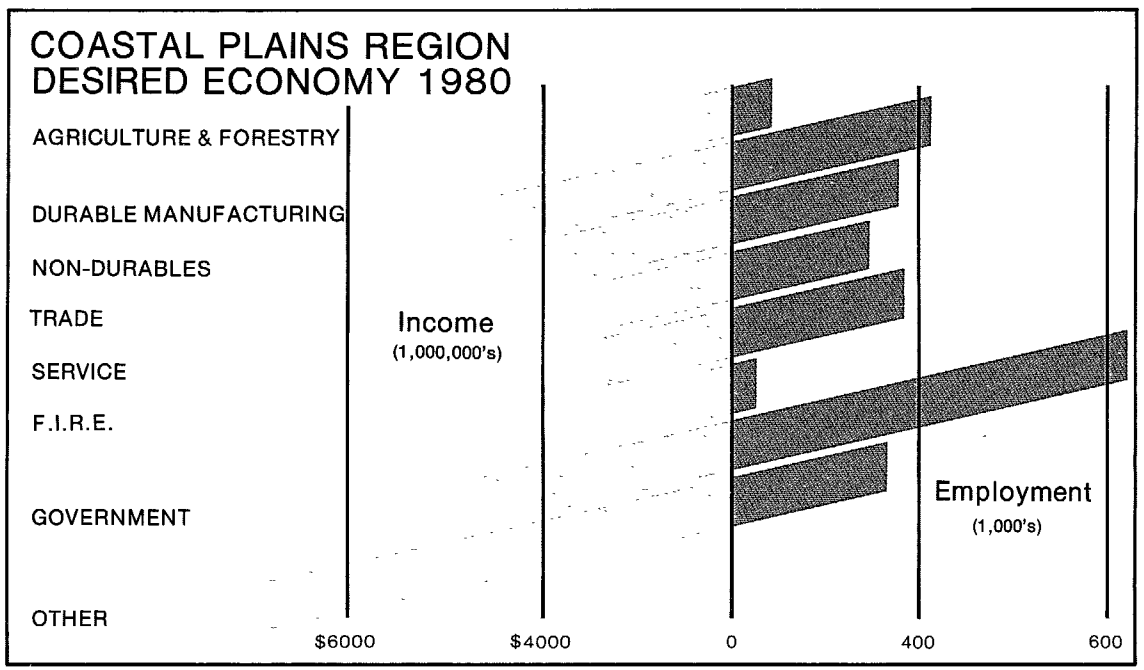
Another point taken into consideration was that the new structure should allow for opportunity for advancement for all income levels. In short, this requires an effort to increase all skill levels and an opportunity for increased income for all.

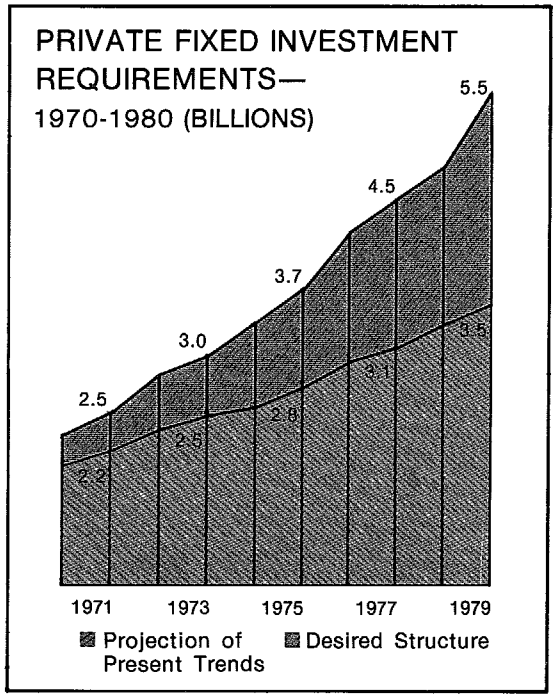
The Commission contracted with the Research Triangle Institute to determine whether it would be possible, using realistic constraints and assumptions, to restructure the Coastal Plains economy in a way that would enable the income gap to be closed by 1980. The basic technique used in formulating a more desirable economic structure was linear programming, a mathematical technique which forces rigorous treatment of all assumptions and is capable of handling the numerous complex computations involved

The results of the analysis produced 27 attainable structures, nine of which would close the income gap projected for 1980.

After extensive analysis, one structure of the many alternatives available was deemed as most desirable and set as the objective for 1980. Employment from this structure would be 2.6 million for the Region in 1980, an employment increase of only 100,000 over the projected level. But the significant point was that the major gains under the desired structure would occur in the durable goods categories. Income would then rise to $36.5 billion, sufficient to close the income gap.

A point bearing on the interpretation of the "desirable" structure should be explained. The structure selected and discussed is only one of several structures that are reasonable and possible to attain. Other structures would either approach or actually close the projected income gap. Thus, considerable variations are possible, and in actual practice are likely. Moreover, it can be





argued that it is impractical to effect the desirable structure in the short period of seven years remaining in the decade. If the appropriate policies and programs are not adopted in the ensuing years this will be true. In this event, 15 or 20 years may be necessary to close the income gap. But the basic contention of the Commission stands: economic restructuring is a necessary requirement for closing the income gap.

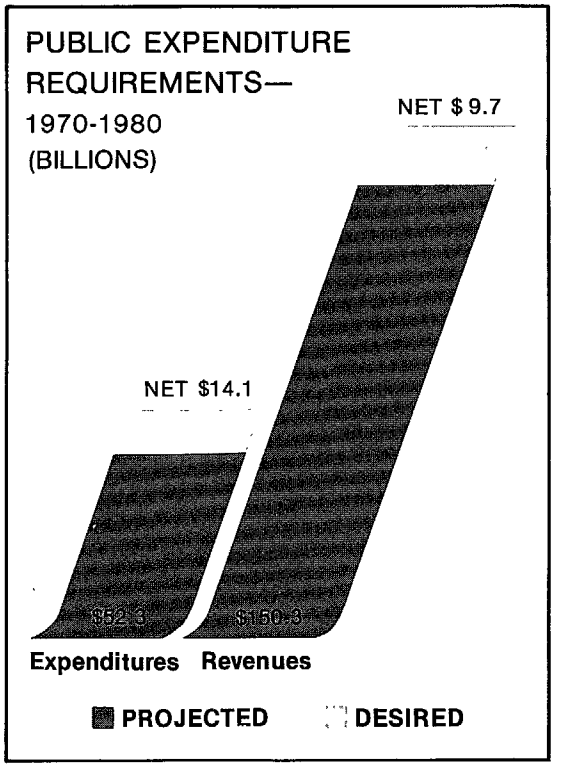
The cost of generating a new economic structure in the Region over a ten-year period is enormous. But the result in terms of increased human productivity, income, standard of living and most important to political decision makers—new tax revenues—is also enormous.

The Commission estimates that to provide the needed new and upgraded jobs called for by the desired structure, the private sector—that is business and industry—must invest $9.1 billion in the Region over the ten years for new plants, expansion of existing industry and for new equipment.

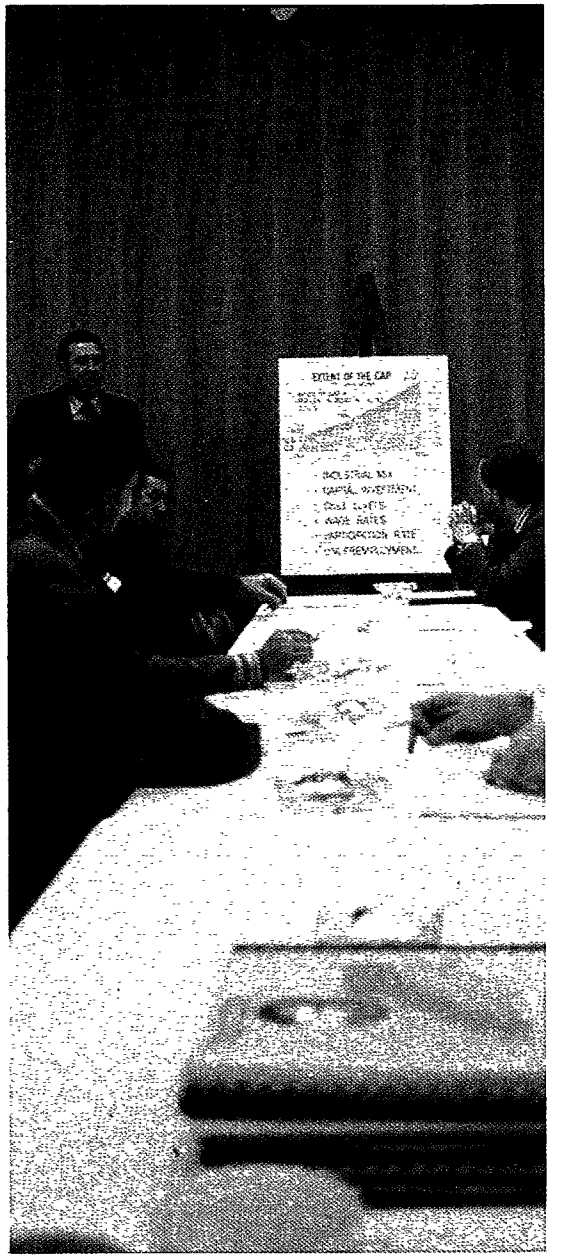
Investment by the public sector—Federal, State and local government—over the same period must amount to an additional $14.1 billion for public facilities and services to support the new structure.

These figures sound awesome. They are. But the price of doing nothing is even more awesome. With each passing year, over $5 billion in personal income is lost to the residents of the Coastal Plains. In ten years these same people will be deprived of some $50 to $60 billion in income if there is no action to prevent it.

If the type of activity which the Coastal Plains Regional Commission proposes can be initiated, then this situation can be averted. In addition, major social benefits would result such as reduced migration from the Region, a reduction in the welfare rolls and an upgrading of general health conditions—all of which are contributory factors to an increase in the productivity of the Region's labor force.



The Commission recognizes that it cannot stand alone if it is to be successful in revitalizing the economy of the Coastal Plains Region. The joint efforts of Federal, State and local decision-makers will be required, together with private industry and business, to close the income gap.



THE COMMISSION'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Up to this point, we have discussed the problems of the Coastal Plains Region and examined the Region's potentials in terms of resources. In addition, we have talked about the Commission's goals for the Region and briefly described the strategy to be employed to achieve these goals.

But a number of questions remain to be answered. The Commission's prime responsibility is the economic development of the Coastal Plains Region. What are some of its other responsibilities in this context, what tools does the Commission have at its disposal to carry out these responsibilities; and finally and most importantly, what programs have been designed to meet the challenge of closing the income gap?

Finally, there are seven action programs in which the Commission believes public investments will yield the greatest gains in terms of the sustained economic development of the Coastal Plains Region.

The functions and responsibilities assigned to the Coastal Plains Regional Commission by Title V of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 are broad but clearly limited to planning and inducing regional economic development. The Commission is not to duplicate services provided by existing agencies, but should be an innovator, demonstrating the value of new programs and techniques, and a catalyst, helping private entrepreneurs and public officials on all levels of government to blend their interests and expertise to accelerate the orderly economic development of the designated regions.

The Commission is also charged with reviewing the programs of Federal, State, and local agencies and recommending improvements to their legislation, administrative procedures, and funding levels. It should also recommend new forms of interstate cooperation and should work with State and local agencies in developing appropriate model legislation.

The planning and the inducing of regional economic development must go hand-in-hand. The more closely the planning and operating functions are merged, the more likely it will be that the plans are both relevant and implemented. The Commission, in its staff organization and program activities, seeks to merge its dual functions of planning and inducing regional economic development.

An integral part of the Commission's planning process is the sponsorship of State Development Planning. The overriding purpose of this activity is to provide the Governors with an increasingly powerful tool for policy formulation and program management and to help them set priorities for the expenditures of State funds and thereby influence the priorities adopted by both the local governments and the Federal Government.

The Commission has sought planning that is comprehensive and unites the planning contributions of Federal, State, and local government agencies. The Commission's own plan provides a common focus for the diverse aims of these agencies: regional economic development.

In addition to the planning function, the Commission has an action responsibility which involves inducing the desired restructuring of the economy and fostering resource discoveries and technological advances. It can accomplish this only by influencing decisions and programs in the private and public sectors. The methods available to the Commission for exercising this influence are: Technical Assistance, Supplemental Grants, and Demonstration Projects.

Technical Assistance can be used to secure the services of experts for special research and analysis and even to demonstrate the feasibility of new high-risk, high-return enterprises particularly suited to the Region through a guarantee-against-loss agreement.

Supplemental grants can remedy a significant deficiency in Federal grant-in-aid programs for contracting needed facilities.

Often the communities most in need of such facilities are the least able to afford their share of the cost of constructing them. In such cases, the Commission can raise the ratio of one Federal dollar for every local dollar to four Federal and Commission dollars for every local dollar.

The third action tool for influencing decisions in the public and private sectors is the demonstration grant authority. It can be used to construct facilities not eligible for assistance under any existing Federal categorical grant-in-aid program. The Commission has used this authority to assist the States in constructing marine research, development, education and extension facilities.

There are seven action programs in which the Commission believes public investments will yield the greatest gains in terms of the sustained economic development of the Coastal Plains Region.

Industrial Development

As has already been stated, closing the income gap is predicated on restructuring the economy with heavy reliance on industries which manufacture durable goods.

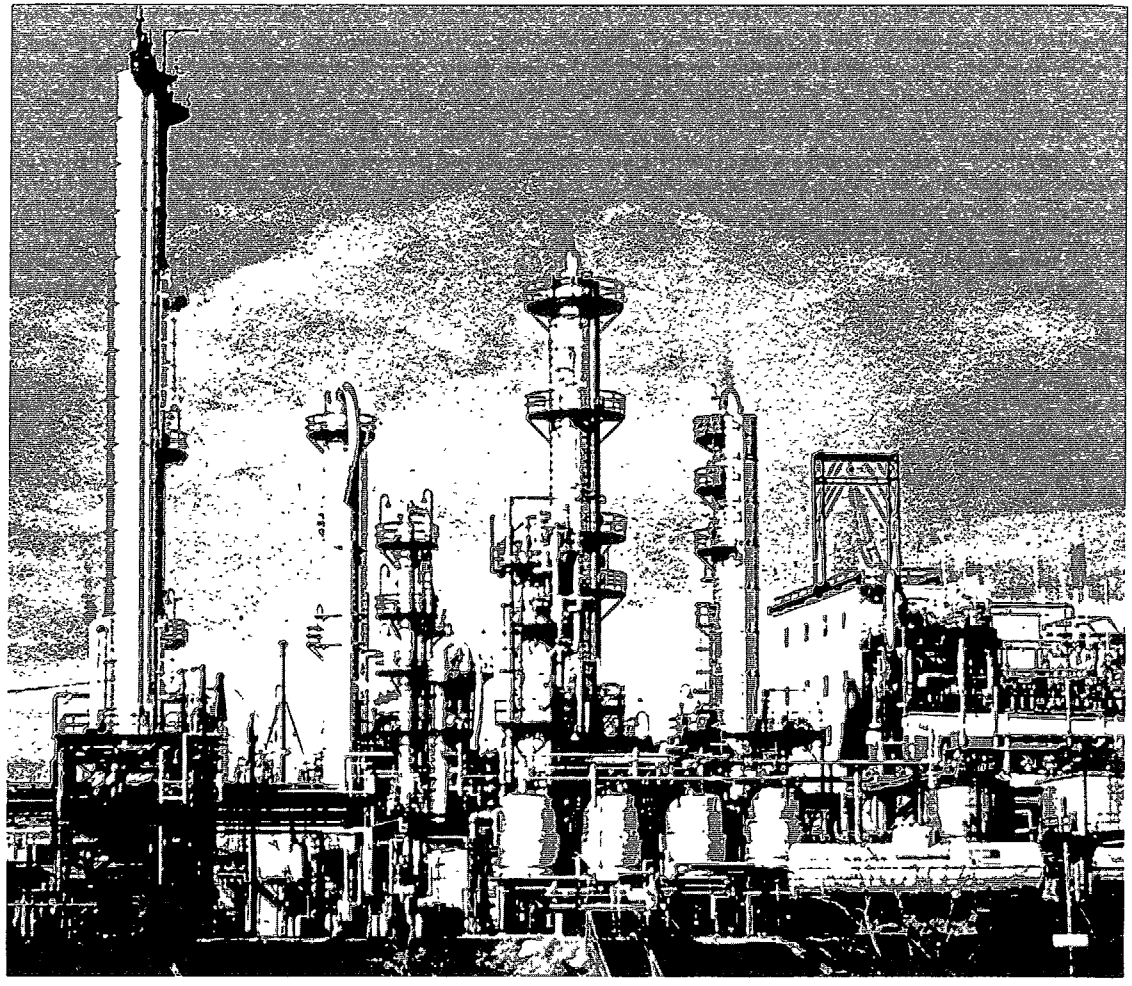
Industrial Development is the heart of the Commission's program to induce this restructuring. The six other action programs are designed to support this very important activity

Within this program rests the responsibility for identifying the kinds of industries needed to improve the Region's industrial mix and for helping State and local officials to attract them to suitable locations in the Region.

The Industrial Development Program seeks to make the conditions in the Region favorable for the location, expansion and modernization of the desired industries to encourage the creation of more than 525,000 new jobs in these sectors during the 1970's. The continuation of past trends will account for 270,000 of these new jobs being created: therefore the quantitative objective of this program over the next ten years is the creation of 255,000 additional new jobs in higher wage occupations

It must be pointed out that industrial solicitation is the job of the States and the agencies responsible for this function. The Commission's role is a catalytic one, working through and with these agencies to make their efforts successful.

Keeping this in mind, the Commission has



outlined the following types of activities for this program:

Improving the availability of investment capital, investment opportunities, industrial sites, and assistance programs for entrepreneurs;

Disseminating information concerning available assistance programs, sources of capital, investment opportunities (new products and new markets,) technological advances (new processes and new products,) and suitable industrial sites; and

Improving community leadership entrepreneurship, and environmental quality.

Human Resources

High technology industries cannot be expected to expand significantly in the Region unless measures are taken to provide an adequate supply of workers with the skills needed for advanced industrial operations.

Current trends during the 1970's will result in nearly 700,000 newly trained entrants into the regional labor force. However, to man the industrial structure that would close the income gap, nearly 600,000 of the 2.1 million people now employed in the Region must be retrained. The cost of upgrading their skills will be $1.5 billion. The additional cost of raising all levels of the Region's educational systems to the national average will be $6.5 billion. The additional cost of raising the quality of available health care to the national norm by 1980 will be $2 billion.

In short the Human Resources Program accounts for $10 billion of the additional $14 billion of public investment required to facilitate the desired restructuring of the regional economy. To date the Commission have invested over $8 million in thirty-eight training facilities in the Region costing over $33 million.

The major focus of the Human Resources Program for the foreseeable future includes:

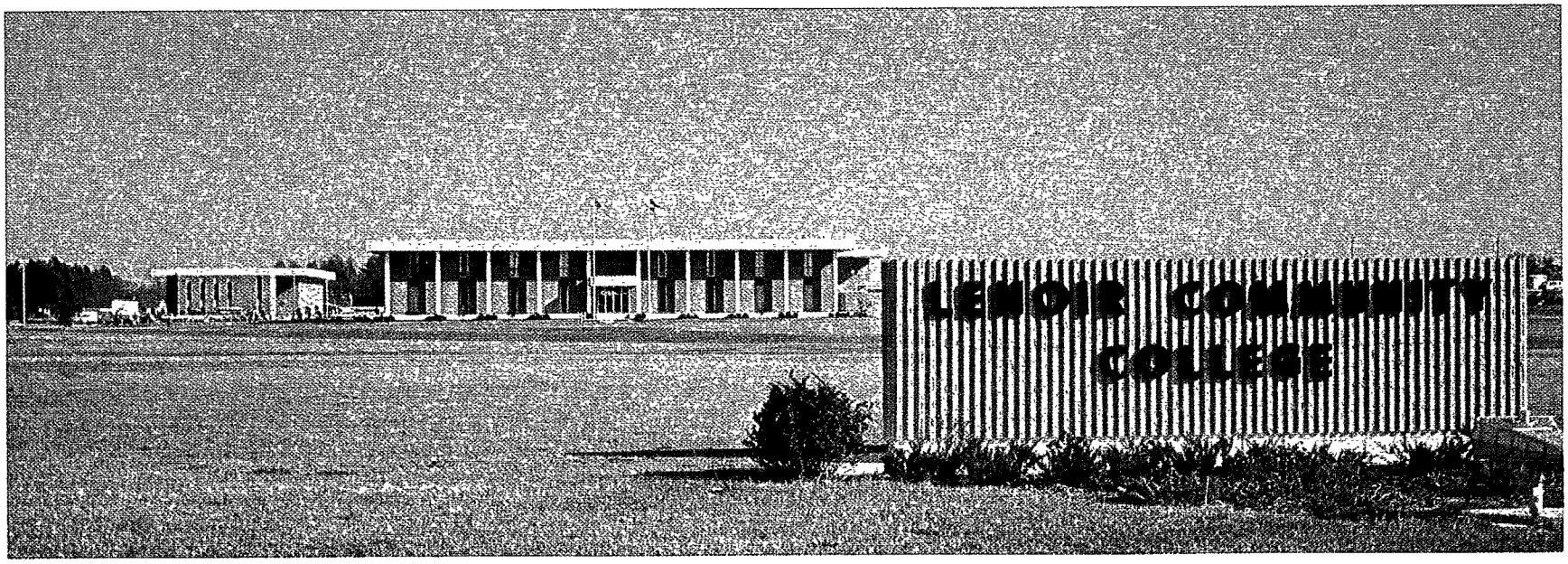
Assisting in the construction, equipping and maintaining of occupational training facilities throughout the Region;

Improving curriculum content in order to have the programs in skill training and upgrading conform to the specific needs of the service areas of the individual facilities;

Fostering closer communication between the schools offering skill training programs (vocational education) and the community (service area) at large;

Working with educators and businessmen to find additional ways for the Commission to help raise the skill of the Region's labor force; and

Identifying problems hampering human development, supporting promising efforts at solving them, and documenting solutions of general applicability to facilitate their adoption by other institutions.



Marine Resources

The Region's marine resources represent economic potentials which are as yet relatively untapped.

Development of these resources can lead to (1) enabling the Region's residents to engage in marine enterprises more productively and profitably; (2) enhancing the attractiveness of the Region for high technology industry; (3) enabling the Region's residents to compete more successfully for marine research and development contracts and grants; and (4) improving the understanding of the marine environment.

In pursuit of these purposes three types of efforts have been undertaken:

Facilitation of communication among those engaged in marine R&D in the Region. The Center for Marine Development Services in Wilmington, North Carolina is the focal point of these efforts.

Demonstrating the economic feasibility of new or expanded business activities by supporting innovative entrepreneurs under a guarantee–against-loss agreement.

Systematic expansion and improvement of the research, development, education and extension facilities and programs in the Region Approximately $5 million has been contributed to assist in the construction of marine research and extension facilities on Skidaway Island in Georgia, in Dare, Carteret and New Hanover Counties in North Carolina and in Charleston, South Carolina.

Completion of a comprehensive environmental baseline study of the coastal zone of the Region and establish a continuing system of environmental monitoring.

Agriculture and Forestry

The projections made in connection with the search for a 1980 economic structure that would close the Region's income gap indicated that the simple continuation of past trends would reduce employment in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector of the regional economy by 54,000 jobs during the 1970's. Achieving the Commission's desired structure would require a further reduction of nearly 30,000 jobs. This can only be achieved by accelerating the rate of technological and managerial improvements in this sector. Productivity per worker must be increased to release nearly 84,000 underemployed farm workers for more remunerative employment and to provide higher earnings for the more productive workers who remain engaged in agriculture and forestry.

The goals of this program are:

Achievement of levels of productivity and income per employee engaged in agriculture and forestry in the Region at least equal to the national levels;

The introduction of more profitable crops and varieties in the Region;

Continuous improvement in the efficiency of organization, management, methods, and techniques in agriculture and forestry; and

Continuous improvement in the quality of planning and level of effectiveness of Federal, State and local agencies concerned with these industries.

Transportation

Meeting the transportation needs of potential industry and business is of major importance to any program seeking to revitalize the economy of a specific region.

Improved transportation facilities are essential if there is to be efficient movement of people and material.

Although funds are not yet available for the developmental highway system, it continues to have top priority in the Transportation Program.

This program envisions, in addition to the developmental highway program:

Scheduled air service between the growth centers of the Region. The air service demonstrations in Georgia and South Carolina may well be the first step toward accomplishment of this objective.

Progressive expansion of the Region's major seaports so that they will have the capacity to handle expeditiously the imports required and exports generated by the Region's expanding industrial base.

Progressive improvement of the efficiency in the intermodal aspects of the Region's transportation system.

Continuous improvement of the quality of planning and level of effectiveness of all agencies concerned with transportation facilities and services.

Tourism

The Tourism Program is directed primarily at attracting private capital to the Region for investment in potentially profitable opportunities developed through Commission research.

Tourism is becoming a major source of employment and income in the Region. It is a powerful generator of new revenue from tourist-serving facilities, such as motels, restaurants, service stations and shopping centers. Many of the jobs created by this development can be filled by relatively unskilled people.

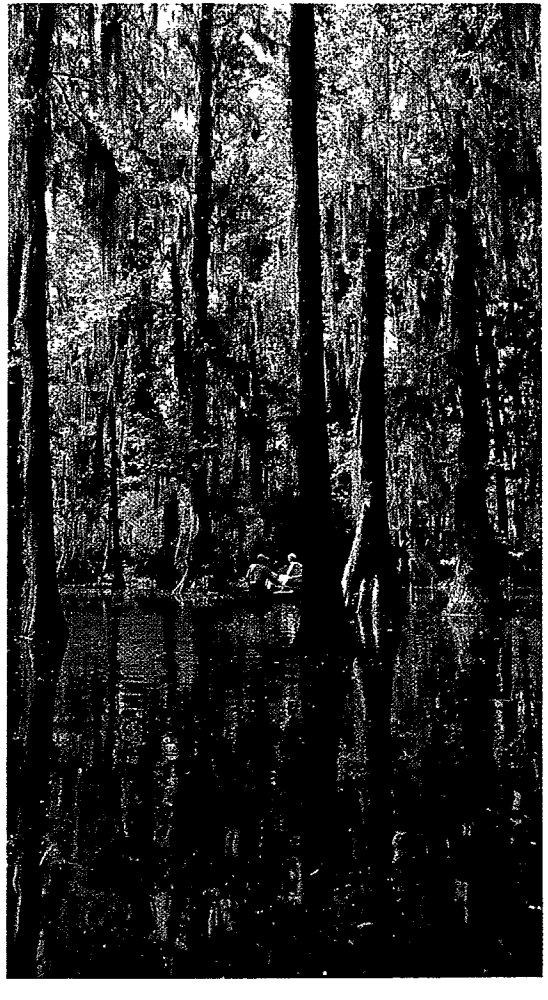
In addition, good tourism facilities serve a secondary purpose in that they increase the Region's attractiveness as a location for the kinds of industrial plants needed to improve the economic structure of the Region.

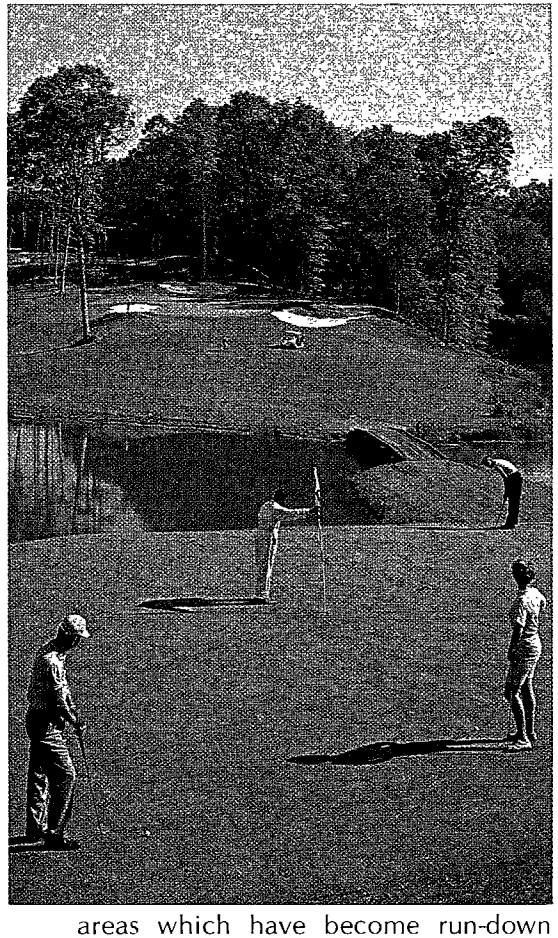
To date, research has been devoted to developing specific investment opportunities with a probability of immediate implementation and financial success and economic impact; development techniques and procedures for State and local agencies to use in developing investment opportunities; identifying sites and presenting them to prospects; economic impact of sportfishing in the Region; and marketing vacation packages.

The objectives of this program for the immediate future are:

To increase the quantity and quality of information concerning all aspects of tourist industries, such as the formulation of a regional theme and graphic image, the creation of guidebooks and directories, and the dissemination of information required by officials and investors;

To conserve the Region's recreational resources through programs to restore





areas which have become run-down and to improve the environment by methods such as artificial fishing reefs;

To improve access to recreation areas with respect to land, sea and air transportation as well as visitor facilities; and

To foster the development of a coherent regional system of vacation attractions and accommodations.

Housing

Housing conditions have been generally worse in the Coastal Plains Region than any other region of the United States. The Commission's awareness of this problem has led to the designation of housing as a priority area for action. This designation is based on the income producing potential of the development of the housing industry in the Region rather than the social aspects usually associated with government housing programs.

The mission of the housing program is to translate the Region's obvious need for improved housing into specific economic opportunities for the Region's construction and modular home manufacturing industries.

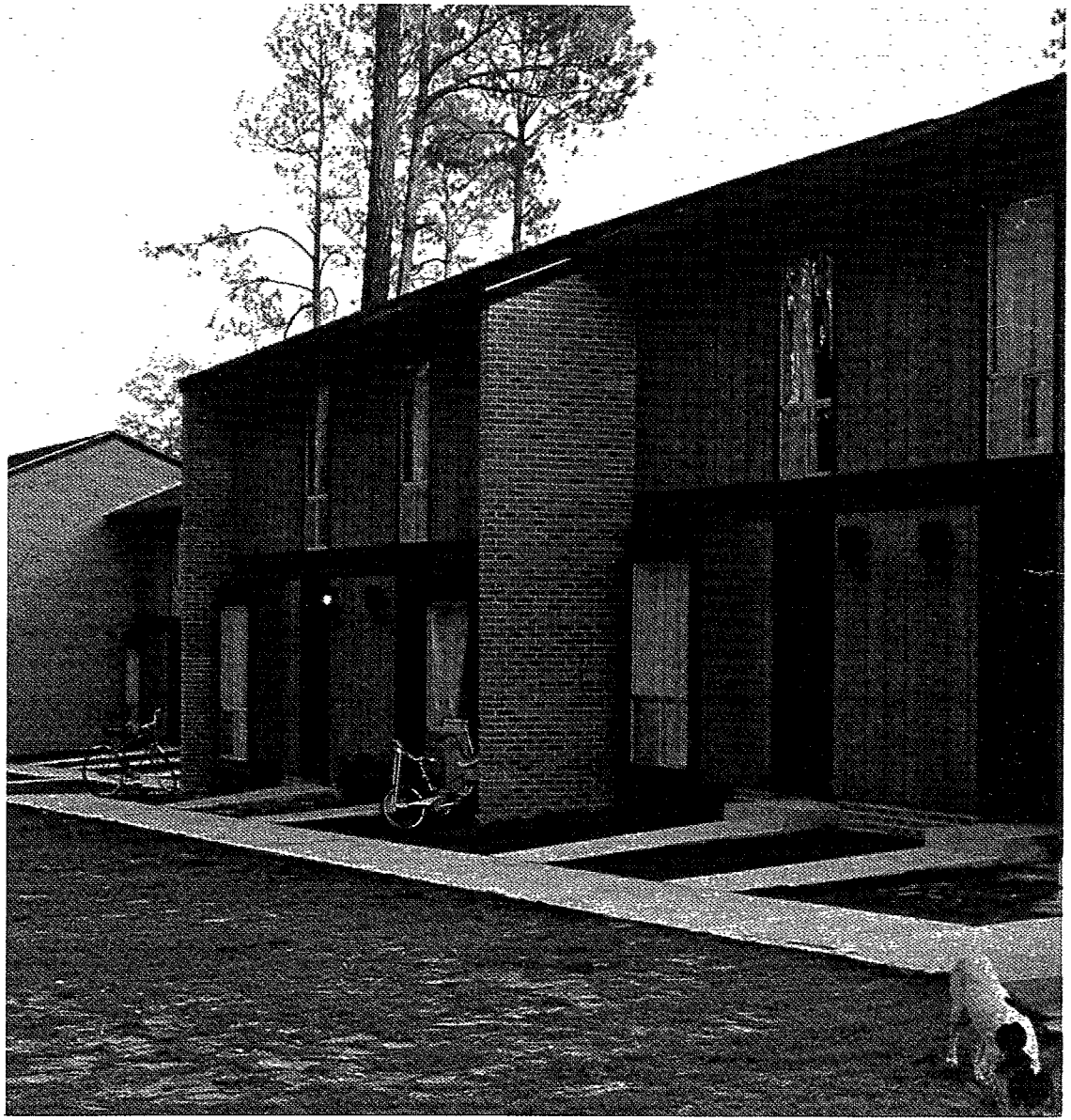
Research required for planning and developing the Commission's Housing Program is underway.

The goals of this program are:

A thoroughly documented delineation of the Region's needs and market demand for new housing, aggregated by income groups and localities;

An evaluation of how current housing programs are meeting the Region's needs; and

A determination of the investment and employment opportunities represented by this demand.



The social consequences are extremely important but are considered to be the responsibility of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; whereas, the Commission's clear mandate is to plan and induce regional economic development.

CONCLUSION

These are the programs of the Commission and the techniques available for use in the development process. Proper utilization of these techniques can assist entrepreneurs to create income-producing enterprises in the Region. It can also enable members of the regional labor force to take advantage of the opportunities created by these enterprises. At the same time, the Commission can assist State and local governments in providing required supporting services.

But beyond this, the success of the Commission's efforts to bring about economic development in the Region will be determined by the Coastal Plains Regional Commission's ability to enlist the support of governmental officials at all levels as well as citizen leaders in business, industry and institutions.

Development of a meaningful, realistic plan for the Region, as we have done, is of major importance, but the plan and its strategy must gain acceptance from those individuals and groups who comprise the Region's leadership. Even more, the Commission must secure a commitment from this leadership to the goals and objectives set forth in the plan and then bring about their full envolvement in the implementation of the plans and programs to be undertaken.

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