

**Adult & Community Education,  
Columbus City Schools  
Impact Summary and Report  
2023 - 2024**

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**Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools  
Impact Report Summary  
Fiscal Year 2024**

**ADULT WORKFORCE EDUCATION**

**Generated income for all workforce programs - \$3,136,785**

**Federal and State Support**

- Pell Grants award for Adult Workforce Education student - \$453,458
- Federal Direct Loan Program disbursement - \$554,453
- Perkins V Funding - \$114,363
- Center for Training Excellence Grant - \$84,469
- Aspire Instructional Grant Allocation - \$1,533,870
- ICLCE/IET Grant Allocation - \$90,222
- Adult Diploma Program – \$65,400
- Talent Ready Grant - \$36,433
- Super Rapids Funding - \$200,000
- Ohio Work Ready Grant - \$4117

**Students Served**

- Served 91 students enrolled in four cohorts in the Practical Nursing program in fiscal year 2024;
- Enrolled 14 students in the second cohort of the HVACR program
- Enrolled 13 students in the newly re-launched Nurse Aide program
- Enabled 40 individuals to acquire their GED, with 132 more in process
- Served 1655 individuals in the Aspire Program, including 1139 in ESOL Language Acquisition
- Served 52 students in Ed2go on-line courses
- Provided online career training courses and programs for 51 students

**Student Achievement**

- Practical Nursing graduates earned a 83.7% passage rate on the National Council Licensure Examination during FY-24.
- All 7 eligible HVACR graduates earned certification
- All 5 eligible Nurse Aide graduates earned certification
- 623 Aspire students reached level achievements relative to the Measurable Skills Gain benchmark established by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

**Program Quality**

- Practical Nursing, Nurse Aide, and HVACR programs nationally accredited by the Council on Occupational Education through June 2025

## Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools Impact Report

### BACKGROUND

Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools (ACE, CCS) is proud to serve the educational and training needs of the adult population in the Columbus area. The vision of ACE--to be a world-class model of public education that prepares members of our communities to reach their full potential--aligns with Columbus City Schools' mission of ensuring that each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community. Our purpose also aligns with the Ohio Department of Higher Education's four areas of focus: *educational access, affordability, workforce, and opportunity*.

With a population of 2.25 million, Columbus is not only the largest city in the State of Ohio (McDonald, 2023), but it also grew faster than any other city in the nation during the second half of 2023 ([www.nbc4i.com](http://www.nbc4i.com), Feb 16, 2024). This growth is expected to continue; the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission projects that Central Ohio's population will exceed 3 million by 2050 ([www.nbc4i.com](http://www.nbc4i.com), Feb. 16, 2024).

As the Columbus Metro area continues to expand, it is growing increasingly diverse. The city's population is 53.5% white, 29.2% black, 6.9% Hispanic, 8.1% multi-racial, 5.7% Asian, 3.2% other, and .2% American Indian (<https://www.census.gov/>), and more new Americans continue to call Columbus home. In the past 10 years, the five largest refugee groups have emigrated to Columbus from Somalia (3000), Bhutan (8410), Democratic Republic of the Congo (3312), Iraq (2500) and Afghanistan (345) (Cheng, 2021). The significance of immigration is underscored by the fact that a language other than English is spoken in nearly 20% of homes in Columbus (<https://data.census.gov>).

The growth of Columbus holds much promise for the employment sector. Its residents' median age is 33.4% (<https://data.census.gov>), and its regional economy is growing, with six employment sectors projected to dominate in the next decade: automotive and mobility; semi-conductor supply chain; finance and insurance; e-commerce and advanced logistics; pharma, biotech, and gene therapies; and high performing computer engineering (McDonald, 2023). Recently, the emergence of Intel represents the largest single private sector company investment in the history of Ohio and is expected to create 3000 direct Intel jobs, more than 20,000 jobs across the state, \$405 million in annual payroll, and an additional \$2.8 billion to Ohio's annual gross state product (<https://www.knoxpages.com/2024/03/17/statewide-impact-of-ohio-intel-project-evident-in-initial-progress-report/>).

While population increases and economic growth are major benefits to living in Columbus, 18.1% of residents still live below the poverty line (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/columbuscityohio/EDU685222>), representing both a significant challenge and opportunity. Fortunately, Adult & Community Education provides learning spaces in the Linden neighborhood and downtown, offering full-time nursing program; part-time adult education courses; part-time evening HVACR and nurse aide programs (at Fort Hayes Career Center); as well as online career training programs. Adult & Community Education makes an impact on the Columbus community by meeting the complex and evolving educational and training needs of Columbus' adult population through the provision of in-demand program and courses; strong student support; robust partnerships; and highly qualified staff.

## IN-DEMAND PROGRAMS AND COURSES

### Health Occupations

Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools offers a practical nursing program and a nurse aide course for adults in the local community who wish to enter the health care profession.

Statewide, both licensed practical nurse and nurse aide programs are in high demand. In October 2021, a study by Ohio Means Jobs identified licensed practical nurses as a top occupation in Ohio (Ohio Means Jobs, 2022), with future job growth expected to increase by 6% (<https://www.bls.gov/>, 2023).

Similarly, in 2020, nurse aides represented the largest occupation in Ohio nursing care facilities, yet a report revealed that Ohio nursing homes reported more shortages of nursing assistants than any other state during the COVID-19 pandemic (Strott, 2021). Overall employment for nurse aides is expected to grow by 5% (<https://www.bls.gov/>, 2022). About 58,800 openings for licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses are projected each year, on average, over the decade ([Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses : Occupational Outlook Handbook: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(bls.gov, 2023\)](#))

The Columbus School of Practical Nursing, a one-year program that has operated for nearly seven decades, provides graduates with the knowledge and documentation to pass the Ohio Board of Nursing National Council Licensure Examination Practical Nursing (NCLEX PN) to become a licensed practical nurse. In addition, a 10-week evening nurse aide course, which includes the option for non-graduated students to also earn a high school diploma, launched in May 2023 at our Fort Hayes Career Center extension campus.

### Skilled Trades

The field of Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVACR) remains an in-demand skilled field. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for 2023-2033 is 9%, considered much faster than average (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/installation-maintenance-and-repair/heating-air-conditioning-and-refrigeration-mechanics-and-installers.htm>). Since its launch in December 2022, the ACE HVACR program has become very much in-demand, enrolling students at maximum capacity each semester. With a median pay of \$57,300 per year possible for program completers who become certified, the year-long, part-time evening program at the Fort Hayes Campus is especially appealing as it prepares program completers to become commercially certified in the field.

### **Aspire Program**

ACE is honored to work in partnership with organizations to help identify, address, and support the needs of adult learners. ACE collaborates closely with Ohio Means Jobs to conduct Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessments to identify individuals who may be eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, intended to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market. Earning a high school diploma can increase an individual's earning power by at least 35% (Ohio Department of Education, n.d.). Yet over 700,000 adults in the state of Ohio are without a high school diploma (Ohio Department of Education, 2022), signifying that a large segment of the state population is underemployed.

Fortunately, the work of ACE helps to address this problem by providing adult learners, including English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), several options for earning a high school diploma or its equivalency. The ACE Aspire program offers High School Equivalency (HSE) courses, including testing options, free reading and math remediation, and free Adult Diploma Programs (ADP) that provide industry certifications. Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools is proud to share testimonials from our 2024 graduation celebration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8KxACXYack>

## **Workforce Development Partnerships with Columbus City Schools**

In addition to career preparation and academic remediation, ACE collaborates with partners to offer online and face-to-face courses that help advance workforce development skills.

The partnership between Adult & Community Education and Columbus City Schools is particularly valuable because it includes the use of Fort Hayes Career Center as a home for the part-time evening programs that ACE offers in the HVACR and Nurse Aide fields. This collaboration between ACE and CCS has recently expanded to include a learning space at Downtown High School for the new Broadband Infrastructure Training Program (BITP) that will launch in Spring 2025. As a result of months of collaboration with Columbus State Community College, The Ohio State University, and Ohio Means Jobs, the part-time, 215-hour course will be delivered in the evenings. Upon successful program completion, the first cohort of twelve adult students will be equipped to be employed as fiber optic technicians, earning upwards of \$48,000 annually, and will receive the following industry-recognized credentials:

- Certified Premises Cabling Technician (CPCT®)
- Certified Fiber Optic Technician (CFOT®)
- OSHA-100
- CPR/First Aid

Grant funding has provided instructor training, curriculum, and a fully equipped lab to prepare this and future training cohorts for this critical and in-demand occupation.

Another partnership between ACE and Columbus City Schools that directly addresses worker shortages for district paraprofessionals and food service staff has resulted in ACE's development and implementation of the following initiatives:

- **ParaPro Assessment:** ACE staff instructs a seven day, in-person course to prepare six CCS employees and candidates for the ParaPro Assessment, allowing individuals who do not have the required college credits to become instructional assistants in CCS classrooms. Completers of this training are eligible to take the state of Ohio ParaPro Assessment.
- **ServeSafe:** ACE staff provides food and beverage safety training and certificate program administered by the U.S. National Restaurant Association and accredited by ANSI and the Conference for Food Protection to upskill 19 CCS food service workers.

Figures 1 and 2 reflect the numbers of students served by ACE in FY 2024.

Figure 1.

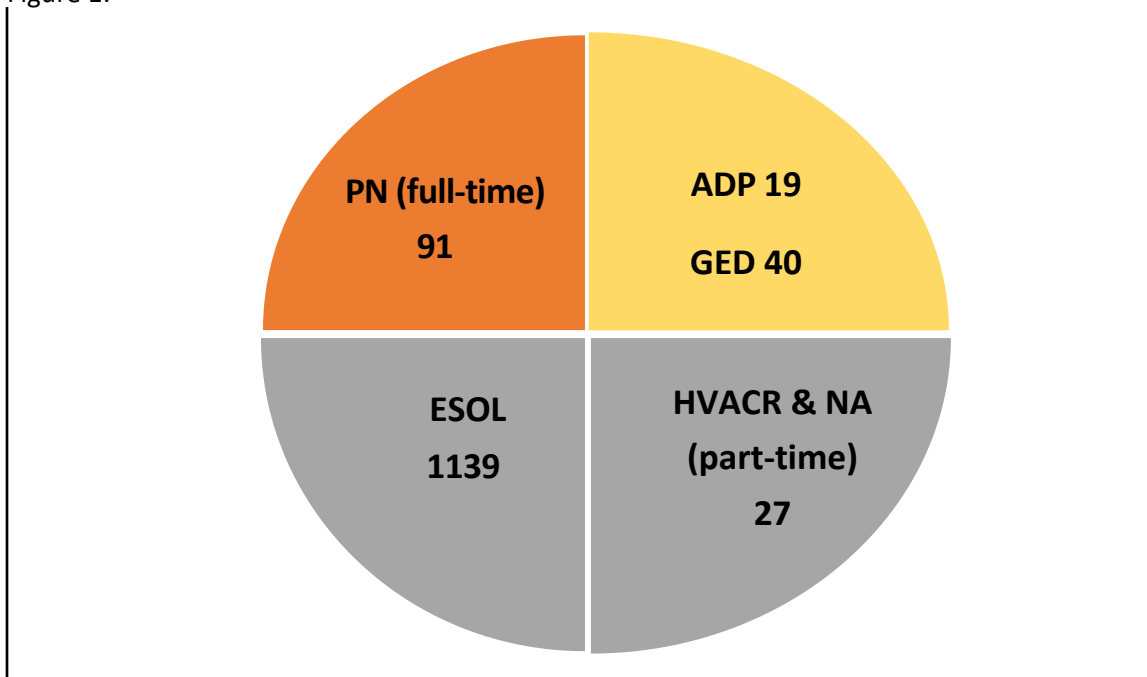
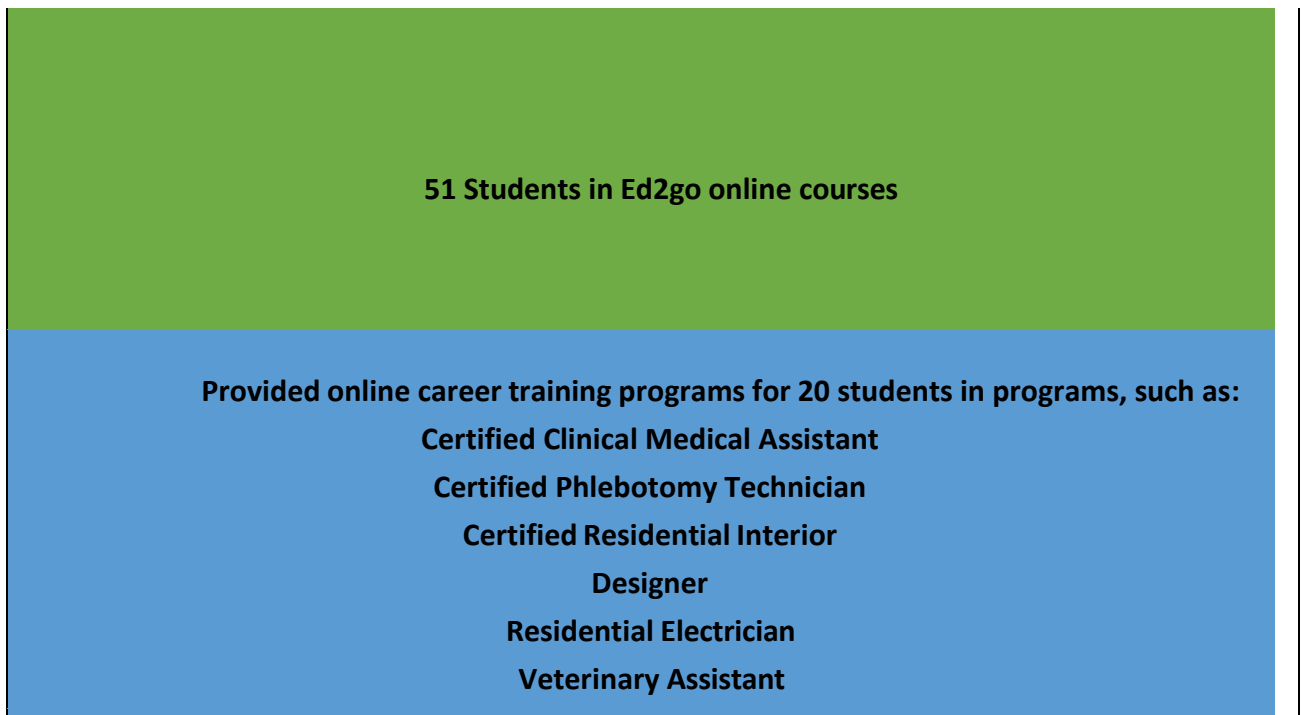


Figure 2.



### STRONG STUDENT SUPPORT

As a self-funded department, ACE relies heavily on subsidies to support our students and a portion of institutional expenses. Table 1 below identifies various funding sources and how they have been leveraged to provide education and training for adult learners in Workforce Development Programs and the Aspire Program who may otherwise not have had access to career development, high school equivalency, or ESOL opportunities.

Table 1.

Funding Source	Amount Received/Awarded
Awarded Pell Grants for Adult Workforce Education (AWE) students	\$453,458
Disbursed Federal Direct Loan Program funds to students	\$554,453
Received Carl D. Perkins funding from the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act to support Career-Technical and Adult Education	114,363
Received Center for Training Excellence grant to develop custom/contract/business services	\$84,469
Received funding for the Adult Diploma Program from the Ohio Department of Education	\$65,400
Received Ohio Work Ready Grant funding	\$4,117
Received Super Rapids funding	\$200,000
Aspire Instructional Grant	\$1,533,870
ICLCE/IET Allocation	\$90,222
Talent Ready Grant	\$36,433
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,136,785</b>

### ROBUST PARTNERSHIPS

Local and state governmental agencies, as well as business and community partners, serve as stakeholders and partners in helping ACE fulfill its mission to improve the lives of adult students through personalized, quality learning. Dedicated ACE staff continuously work with these partners to identify opportunities to expand educational services to adult learners. Whether these organizations serve in a regulatory, educational, employment, or advisory capacity, they are invaluable to the success of ACE.



The following tables represent stakeholders and partners with ACE.

Table 2.

<b>Local and State Partners</b>	
Columbus City Schools	Fort Hayes Career Center, Columbus City Schools
Ohio Board of Nursing	Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Education	Ohio Means Jobs
Ohio Department of Higher Education	Columbus School Employee Association
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction	Columbus Community College
Ohio Technical Centers – Central Region	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Table 3.

<b>Healthcare Partners</b>	
Mayfair Village Nursing Care Center	Balanced Family Academy
Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber	Wexner Heritage Village
OhioHealth	Corrections Medical Center
Echo Manor Extended Care Center	Columbus Healthcare Center
Sanctuary at Tuttle Crossing	

Table 4.

<b>Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration (HVACR) Partners</b>	
Columbus City Schools, Building & Grounds	
Air Force One	G Mechanical

Table 5.

<b>Community Partners</b>	
Eckerds Connects	Finishing Trades Institute Ohio Region
PAST Foundation	Aspyr Workforce Innovation
Star House & Carol Stewart Village	Equip Skills Center
Goodwill Columbus	COTA
Worthington Industries	Nationwide Children’s Hospital
Builders Exchange of Central Ohio	Tyler Technologies
First Stick Phlebotomy	

## HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF

The ACE staff leverage their professional and specialized expertise so that an exemplary educational experience can be provided to each adult learner who receives ACE's services. The ACE Director has an extensive background as a building and district administrator. Prior to her current role, the Health Occupations Administrator served as a registered nurse. Student services and program coordinators all possess academic qualifications and extensive professional experience in their respective fields of adult education, workforce development, financial aid, and counseling. Adult & Community Education faculty hold appropriate academic and licensure credentials in their discipline. The high quality of ACE staff is reflected in the post-program surveys from practical nursing, nurse aide, and HVACR students, which reflect high levels of student satisfaction with program content, instruction, clinical, work-based learning experiences, and student services.

While ACE has a long history of providing excellent academic student support, many adult learners come to school with a variety of needs for non-academic support. Adult & Community Education is fortunate to employ a part-time Resource Coach, whose extensive community experience is an asset to students. Using a *Student Resource Questionnaire* distributed to students the first week of class, ACE identifies students' personal needs and targets local resources that can be of assistance. Connections with Ohio Health, the Office of Ohio Attorney General, and the City of Columbus have resulted in a community speakers' series on topics, such as stress management; health insurance enrollment; healthy eating on a budget; health care fraud; domestic violence resources; and food and housing resources. Lunch and Learn sessions have presented information on the COGO bicycle program and housing eviction myths and facts. Informal support is also provided through individual counseling students on topics related to rent, family situations, transportation, organizational skills, and study tips.

## PUBLIC PRESENCE

With the availability of many options for a post-secondary education in Ohio, an up-to-date social media presence is crucial to reach potential students for Adult & Community Education programs. When ACE began its social media campaign in 2021 with an external vendor, it had 1190 Facebook followers and 272 Instagram followers. One year ago, ACE staff took over this initiative and has subsequently increased the ACE social media presence, resulting in an increase to 2300 followers on Facebook and 1,300 on Instagram.

Recently, ACE was contacted by local television station NBC4 WCMH and invited to present information about ACE program offerings. The ACE Health Care Occupations Administrator and a graduate of the Practical Nursing program were proud to provide program information on a televised segment found here:

<https://www.nbc4i.com/daytime-columbus/classes-for-lifelong-learners/>

## **RESULTS**

### **Accreditation and Approval**

Despite its limited facilities and small staff, ACE continues to achieve success as it reaches state and national benchmarks, with the practical nursing program, nurse aide, and HVACR programs maintaining accreditation status with the Council on Occupational Education (COE), a national accreditation organization, and approval from the Ohio Department of Higher Education, and the Ohio Board of Nursing, Chapter 4723-5 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

### **Performance**

ACE is proud that 83.7% of practical nursing program completers who took the NCLEX PN in fiscal year 2024 passed the state board exam, achieving one of the highest passage rates in the state. Also in fiscal year 2024, ACE exceeded the placement performance target set by the Ohio Department of Higher Education - Ohio Technical Center (ODHE - OTC) with an 94.5% placement rate for practical nursing program completers.

Additionally, all HVACR students and Nurse Aide students who completed their respective programs successfully in fiscal year 2024 passed their course certifications.

## IMPACT

There is a strong correlation between increased earnings, greater employability, and economic impact. Many of the students served by ACE represent underserved populations or are unemployed or underemployed. The educational opportunities provided by ACE can change their economic trajectory. Both professions provide a viable income for program completers. Licensed practical nurses earn approximately \$59,730 per year, while nurse aides can earn approximately \$38,130 per year (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/licensed-practical-and-licensed-vocational-nurses.htm>, 2023).

Upskilling, which provides training that allows employees to advance within their organization, and reskilling, which provides training that allows employees to make lateral moves within their organization, can support, strengthen, and sustain the workforce (<https://www.trelliscompany.org>, 2022). In the third quarter of 2019, workers without a high school diploma earned 62 percent of the earnings of all workers (regardless of educational attainment), while the earnings of high school graduates (with no college experience) were 77 percent of all-worker earnings (<https://www.bls.gov/> 2022).

In terms of income in dollars, the median household annual income in 2020 for workers who completed up to a 12th grade education (but with no diploma) was \$29,520, while the average annual income of a high school graduate in the United States was approximately \$34,320 ([Average salary high school graduates U.S. 2022 | Statista](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1102147/average-salary-high-school-graduates-u-s-2022/), 2022). ACE provides a variety of opportunities for adults to upskill or reskill. ACE students who complete Aspire courses can expect their new skills, whether they are academic, career development, or digital literacy, to transfer to the workplace.

Advancements in adults' careers greatly impact not only their individual livelihoods but also the local economy. Wage increases—especially for those who are underemployed—increase “community-level economic activity and support local businesses; reduce the amount by which taxpayers subsidize corporations for the low wages they pay; and reduce the pay inequalities for women and people of color that depress overall economic growth” (<https://www.americanprogress.org>, 2021). Ohio Technical Centers play a large role in making this happen. A 2018 economic impact study conducted by the University of Cincinnati confirms that Ohio's career centers and technical centers increase earning power (<https://economicsresearch.org/>, 2018), thus positively impacting the lives of families and the functioning of their local communities.

### Quality of Life

Studies show that the greater one's income, the lower the likelihood of illness, disease, and premature death. In fact, Americans at all income levels are less healthy than those with incomes higher than their own (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>, 2015). Most ACE students are persons of color, so this has particular implications for their health since minorities experience health disparities as compared to the majority population, much of it due to lower income levels (<https://www.urban.org>, 2015). However, all adults who have higher incomes as a result of their attending ACE programs or courses will have more access to economic and social supports that enhance their quality of life, including health care.

Finally, the effect of ACE's programs on the development of adult learners' understanding of and appreciation for lifelong learning cannot be overstated. ACE recognizes that many adult learners may have had negative experiences in previous learning environments that make them hesitant to return to a formal learning setting. However, the positive experiences that adult learners have at ACE and the support of ACE staff and faculty help restore their relationship to school and the learning process.

### **Conclusion**

As the City of Columbus prepares for major economic, employment, and demographic growth, Adult & Community Education, Columbus City Schools stands ready to meet these demands by serving the educational and training needs of adults--particularly those who are unemployed or underemployed-- living in the Columbus area. The staff continues to seek opportunities to expand its offerings, develop partnerships, provide exemplary services, and offer world-class facilities necessary to help adults acquire new knowledge and skills, improve their life chances, and in the process, meet the economic demands of the community.

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