

Alexander County EDC *News Release*

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Alexander Industrial Park selected as Best Small Rail Site in North Carolina

As a part of its Progress in Motion Forum held in Raleigh on May 10 and 11th, the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) challenged local economic development agencies to identify and submit sites for recognition in the Great Freight Rail Sites in North Carolina.

Alexander Industrial Park was selected as a Best Small Industrial Site. Recognizing the rapid disappearance of rail-served sites because of our state's rapid growth, the challenge was designed to provide a learning opportunity for those with properties they think are suitable for consideration as rail industrial sites to get professional input.

Working closely with state, local and regional economic developers, NCR engaged site consultants McCallum Sweeney Consulting to evaluate rail sites submitted from across the state. "We were pleased to have received 34 entries from local economic development organizations," says Richard Wiley, Senior Consultant for Economic Development for NCR. "The economic developers really stepped up and took advantage of this opportunity to showcase properties from their regions. Rail-served sites are extremely important to the state's economic growth. Last year numerous new industries located in North Carolina because we had available sites with access to rail, creating hundreds of jobs."

The categories in the Great Freight Rail Sites event were Large Industrial Rail sites, Small Industrial Rail sites, Distribution Center sites and Best Presentation. The sites were judged by such criteria as proximity and access to rail lines, roads and air service, the presence of utilities such as electricity, natural gas, water, and actual usable acreage. The Alexander site is served by the Alexander Railroad Company. "Of the 34 entries, only 10 economic development organizations were presented awards," noted Alexander Economic Development Corporation Director David Icenhour. "For Alexander County to be recognized as one of the best sites in the state should signal to industries that the county is a viable location for new or expanding industry."

The Progress in Motion Forum brought together those with an interest in North Carolina's rail industry and its role in the state's transportation system and economic health. The North Carolina Railroad Company owns and manages the 317-mile rail corridor extending from Morehead City to Charlotte.