

# PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION

## NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

October 2014

Report No. 2014-12

### Follow-up Report: Indian Cultural Center

In 2012, the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee (JLPEOC) directed the Program Evaluation Division (PED) to evaluate options for the future disposition of the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center site located in Maxton, NC. The original concept for the site was a theme park-like attraction dedicated to the history, culture, and heritage of North Carolina American Indians. The North Carolina Indian Cultural Center, Inc. held the lease on the property and was the nonprofit charged with implementing the concept.

PED found that the Cultural Center had not become what was once envisioned. The site's geography, condition, and size constrained development, and the lease structure of the property hindered accountability and state oversight. PED determined that options for the future disposition of the site were limited to property allocation and sale.

PED recommended that the General Assembly

- terminate the property leases;
- direct the Department of Administration on the disposition of the four parcels of land; and
- direct the Commission of Indian Affairs to develop a new strategic vision for the preservation and promotion of North Carolina American Indian culture.



Based on PED's report recommendations, the General Assembly enacted S.L. 2013-186, which

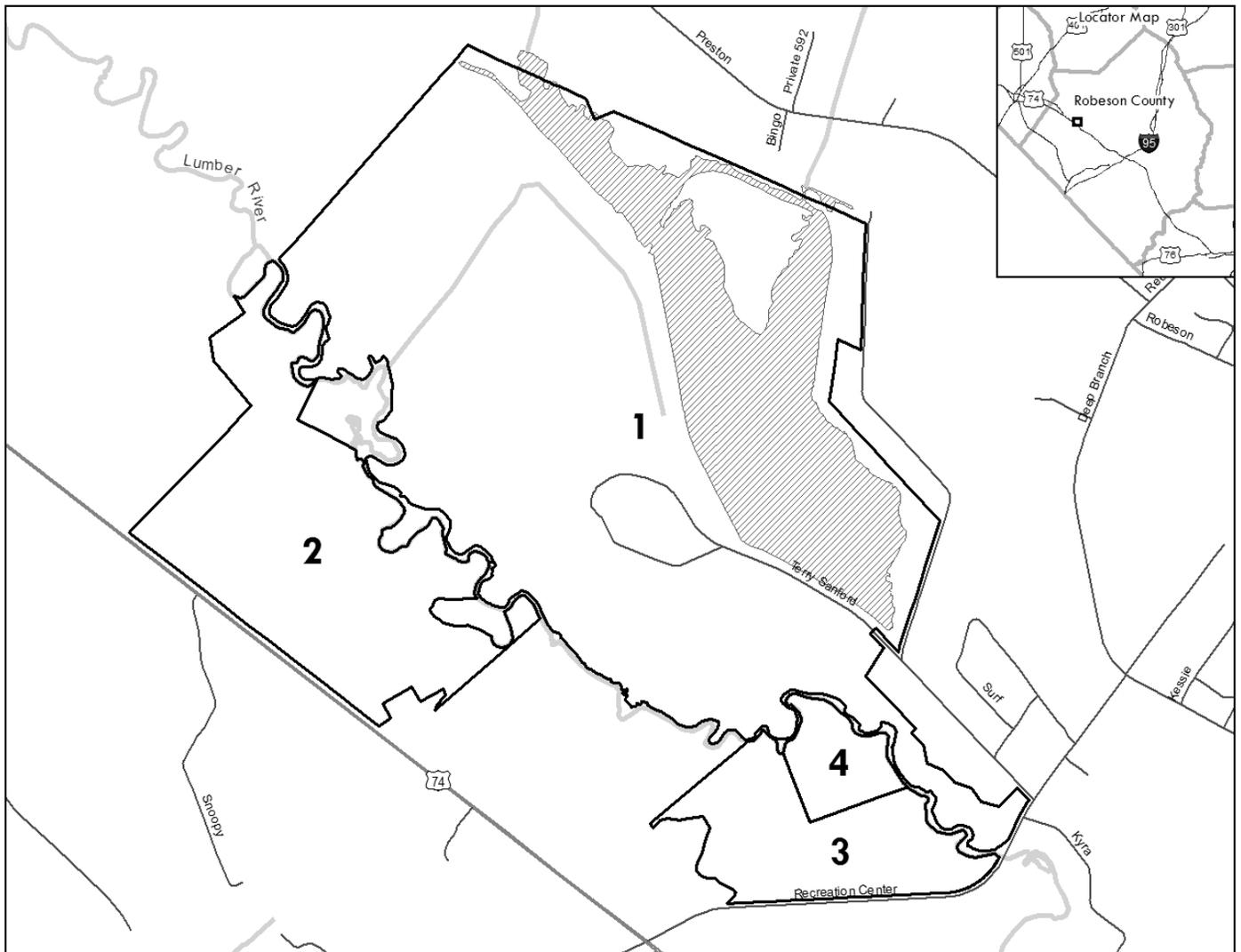
- terminated the State's leases for the Indian Cultural Center site and the Riverside Golf Course property; and
- provided instructions to the Department of Administration for the disposal and allocation of the Cultural Center parcels.

The legislation required the Department of Administration to first offer Parcel 1 (See Exhibit 1) to the Lumbee Tribal Administration for purchase, subject to restrictive covenants. The department and the Lumbee reached an agreement for the sale of the property on December 17, 2013. Consultation from JLPEOC was required for the sale to be finalized. On February 10, 2014, JLPEOC accepted the Department of Administration's transaction report, completing its consultation requirement. The transaction was then reviewed and approved by Government Operations and the Council of State.

The Tribal Council authorized the Lumbee Tribal Administration to purchase Parcel 1 in late March 2014. The tribe secured a \$351,000 loan to purchase it. Meanwhile, the State Property Office completed the reallocation of Parcels 2, 3, and 4 to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Lumber River State Park is now managing the property (See Exhibit 2).

As directed by the General Assembly, 25% of the proceeds from the sale of Parcel 1 were appropriated to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. According to the department's Division of Parks and Recreation, assessments and approvals for the demolition of dilapidated and unneeded structures on the property are underway. The next task will be to create a plan for recreational development of the property in coordination with the Lumbee Tribal Administration. Implementation of the plan, including construction of public recreation facilities, will be completed as funding becomes available.

# Exhibit 1: The North Carolina Indian Cultural Center Site was Composed of Four Individual Parcels



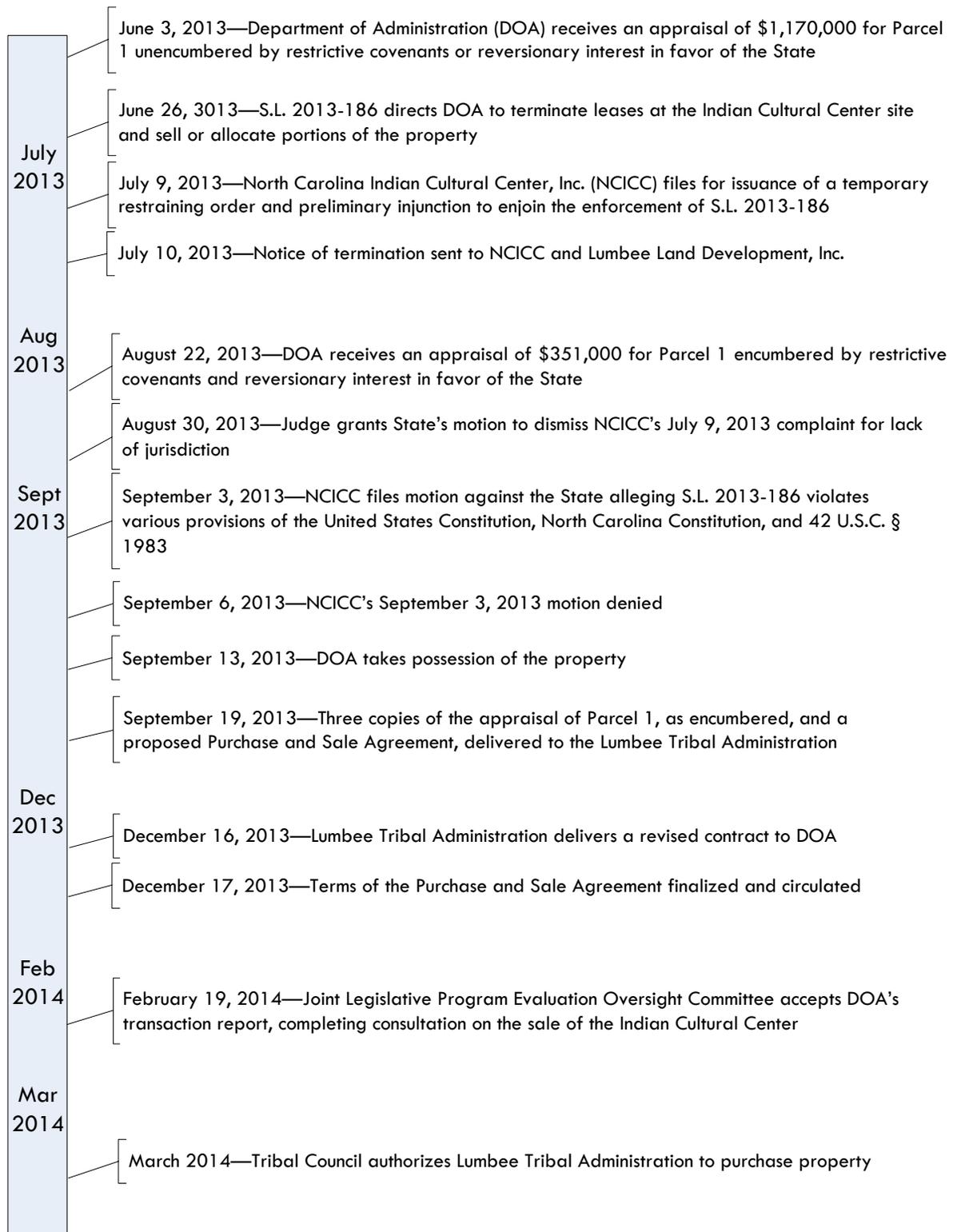
Source: Program Evaluation Division based on Robeson County Tax Office data.

## Exhibit 2: Current Status of the Four Former Indian Cultural Center Parcels

Parcel	Deeded acres	Assessed value	Current ownership	Current/proposed usage
1	384.1	\$1,675,000	Lumbee Tribal Administration purchased in March 2014 for \$351,000, subject to restrictive covenants and reversion to the State as provided in Section 4(a) of S.L. 2013-186	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed name is Lumbee Tribal Cultural Complex</li> <li>Plan to improve lake site (adding camping and RV areas)</li> <li>Cultural/recreational grounds will be used for pow wows, outdoor concerts, and special events</li> <li>Covered stage area will be improved for musical performances</li> <li>Plan to improve amphitheater for musical and theatrical productions such as Strike at the Wind</li> <li>Plan to improve pool area</li> </ul>
2	91.5	\$174,000	Division of Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocated to Division of Parks and Recreation to be used as part of Lumber River State Park</li> <li>Plan for recreational development of property will be created with public input and in coordination with owners of Parcel 1</li> </ul>
3	42	\$374,500	Division of Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocated to Division of Parks and Recreation to be used as part of Lumber River State Park</li> <li>Plan for recreational development of property will be created with public input and in coordination with owners of Parcel 1</li> </ul>
4	10	\$47,000	Division of Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocated to Division of Parks and Recreation to be used as part of Lumber River State Park</li> <li>Plan for recreational development of property will be created with public input and in coordination with owners of Parcel 1</li> </ul>

Source: Program Evaluation Division based on information from the Robeson County Tax Office, Lumbee Tribal Administration, and N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

## Exhibit 3: Timeline for the Sale of Indian Cultural Center Property to Lumbee Tribal Administration



For more information on this follow-up report, please contact the lead evaluator, Sean Hamel, at [sean.hamel@ncleg.net](mailto:sean.hamel@ncleg.net).

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