



2020: The State of Chatham County Report

Serving the Chatham County Community While Overcoming Unprecedented Times

2020 started off as a tremendous year for progress in Chatham County. Business was booming, development was advancing and the future never looked brighter. Then, the county was struck by something unprecedented—a global pandemic.

Chatham County's first confirmed case of COVID-19 in March 2020, was the second in North Carolina. Even before that first case came to Chatham, the county was aggressively preparing weeks in advance for the inevitable. Every department sprang into action to adapt so that the county could continue to provide its valuable and often life-saving services and programs to the community.

While progress temporarily pivoted to focus on available resources and support to ensure sustainment, the county never lost sight of what mattered most – the people. The county's steadfast leadership demonstrates each and every day through its passion to serve others that the Chatham community is the best place to live, work and raise a family.



Chatham Park is a 7,100 acre planned mixed-use development located adjacent to Jordan Lake and Pittsboro. At full build out, the project is expected to add 60,000 residents and to house 22 million square feet of office, research, retail and community space.

Out of North Carolina's 100 counties, Chatham is the 10th fastest-growing county (1.8%) behind Wake (1.9%). The top 3 are Brunswick (4.3%), Johnston (3.3%), and Franklin (3.0%).
Source: Carolina Demography



Chatham Comprehensive Plan Activities Underway

- ◆ The expansion of the Chatham County Animal Resources Center is under construction.
- ◆ The new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub is in design and will be located on land acquired by the county on Renaissance Drive in Pittsboro.
- ◆ Upgrades to the emergency communications system are underway.
- ◆ The county has recently released Requests for Proposal (RFPs) for the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and are anticipating selection of new firms to undertake the project by January 2021.
- ◆ Chatham County Parks and Recreation master planning continues
 - Completed the Southeast District Park master plan which is named the Parkers Ridge Park located in Moncure.
 - Completed the Northeast District Park master plan expansion.
 - Completed the Brooks Creek corridor plan study.
 - Completed the shared use agreement for the Parks & Rec Department's first community center at Chatham Grove Elementary School.

**Please note: Photos included in this report where subjects are not wearing face coverings, were taken before the pandemic or prior to the governor's executive order requiring them.*

Education Highlights

Facilities Projects

Chatham County made significant progress on major school facility projects in FY 2019-2020 in the county's Capital Improvement Plan. The County retained its AAA rating from Standard and Poor's and Aa1 bond rating from Moody's Investors Service.

- ◆ Careful planning and oversight allowed Chatham Grove Elementary School to come in under the projected budget when it opened for the 2020-21 school year.
- ◆ Seaforth High School remains on schedule to open for the 2021-22 school year.
- ◆ Chatham Health Sciences Center opened in January 2020, with medical assisting students and students completing preparatory coursework for Certified Nursing Assistant licensure attending classes.



Chatham Grove Elementary School, Pittsboro



Chatham Health Sciences Center, Pittsboro

Chatham County Schools Achievements & Improvements

- ◆ During the 2018-19 school year, Chatham County Schools students outperformed their peers across the state in:
 - * Reading, math and science end-of-grade composite for grades 3-8
 - * End-of-course composite for grades 9-12
 - * ACT
 - * SAT
 - * WorkKeys
 - * Math course rigor
 - * Four-year and five-year graduation cohort



Chatham County Promise

All eligible Chatham County residents who graduate from a public high school, private school, or homeschool for the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 will be eligible for up to two years of free in-state tuition and required fees at Central Carolina Community College.

- ◆ Students served 2019-2020 school year: 140
- ◆ Additional students being served 2020-2021 school year: 130

Improving Digital Access

- ◆ Thought leadership in prior years allowed every Chatham County Schools family who requested a digital learning device during at-home learning to receive one. Spanning pre-school through 12th grade, at least 7,800 students received a device from the district for at-home learning.
- ◆ Committed to digital access and equity for students, Chatham County Schools expanded its partnership with the 1Million Project for student hotspots and added additional Verizon hotspots through state funding. As of Sept. 9, 2020, the school system provided hotspots to at least 625 families for the fall semester of the 2020-21 school year.

COVID-19 Response

From the time Chatham County Schools closed March 16, 2020, to limit the spread of COVID-19 until the district opened August 17, 2020, Chatham County Schools Nutrition Services provided approximately 388,000 free meals to individuals 18 years old and younger.

Economic Development

New Jobs & Business Investment

	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Projected	FY 2020 Actual
Number of expanding businesses	21	17	15
Jobs created by business expansion	48	100	128
Number of referred projects	75	65	87
Number of projects responded to	49	35	57
New jobs created by new businesses relocated to Chatham County	87	400	96



Expansion of Floorazzo, Siler City

Industry Development

- ◆ Floorazzo is constructing a new facility that will enable it to increase production and its workforce.
- ◆ Brookwood Farms plans to expand its existing campus with a new office space and common area for employees and has closed on land for a new distribution center in Siler City.
- ◆ Brookwood Farms and Capital Ready Mix Concrete were named 2019 Family Business Award winners by the Triangle Business Journal.
- ◆ CTI Systems, a printed circuit board depaneling and load routers company, relocated its operations to Goldston.
- ◆ Autonetics, based in Cary, is relocating its operations to a new facility in Pittsboro.
- ◆ The NC Manufacturing Expansion Partnership awards six Manufacturing Leadership Awards at its annual conference. Chatham County was represented by two excellent employers: Alotech and 3M.

More Details

From Growth to Resource Support & Sustainment

- ◆ Closing out FY 2020, the EDC team continues to work through unprecedented times.
- ◆ The year began with strong growth in its existing industries.
- ◆ In an effort to curb job loss, the EDC rapidly pivoted to providing business support in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and expanded outreach efforts to ensure businesses understood the resources and programs available to them for sustainment.

Small Business Support

- ◆ In addition to sharing frequent updates with the business community and offering one-on-one help, the EDC created a reopening guide to help businesses with safely reopening and operating (reopeninghelp.com).
- ◆ The EDC partnered with local Chamber organizations to create a source for personal protective equipment (chamberppe.com).
- ◆ Working with local business support providers and Chambers, the EDC also partnered on a campaign to encourage people to shop local (localstimulus.org).
- ◆ The EDC has developed a monthly newsletter with industry insights for larger employers and has recently launched a weekly newsletter for small and mid-sized businesses.

Chatham County Leadership

Major Changes



Public Health – **Mike Zelek** was appointed interim public health director in June 2020, succeeding the retiring Layton Long. Prior to becoming interim public health director, Zelek served the Chatham County Public Health Department for nearly eight years first as social research associate for the Department and then as Health Promotion & Policy Division director. Zelek got his start helping others in Nicaragua with a nonprofit organization called Fabretto Children’s Foundation where he first served as an English teacher and then coordinated health initiatives. That’s where he found his calling for public health, then moved to North Carolina to complete a Masters of Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Management & Information Systems (MIS) – **Nick Haffe** was appointed interim MIS director in June 2020 after longtime director Darlene Yudell retired. Haffe also serves Chatham County as the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) manager, a role he has served in since February 2015. Haffe has held GIS roles in both the public and private sector including time with Geo-Comm, Branch County MI (911), and Atos North America.



Public Information Officer – **Kara Lusk Dudley** joined Chatham County as public information officer in August 2019 with 23 years of communications experience. Dudley began her career as a broadcast journalist in 1996 and served communities across North Carolina as an anchor/reporter for 15 years. In 2011, Dudley continued her passion to make a difference in her community through public relations—first serving in communications roles at the American Red Cross both regionally and nationally, and then at her alma mater, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Chatham County Leadership Academy

Pivoting During Unprecedented Times

The Chatham Leadership Academy experienced a first in 2020—a suspension of regular training classes due to the pandemic. Although classes were suspended, the largest graduating class in the history of the academy (36 students) will graduate in October 2020. This group is facing much adversity as they complete their final projects in preparation for graduation, including a postponement of the graduation date, many students working remotely or otherwise engaged in pandemic-response activities, and preparing a project presentation to be delivered through an online meeting.



Leading by Example

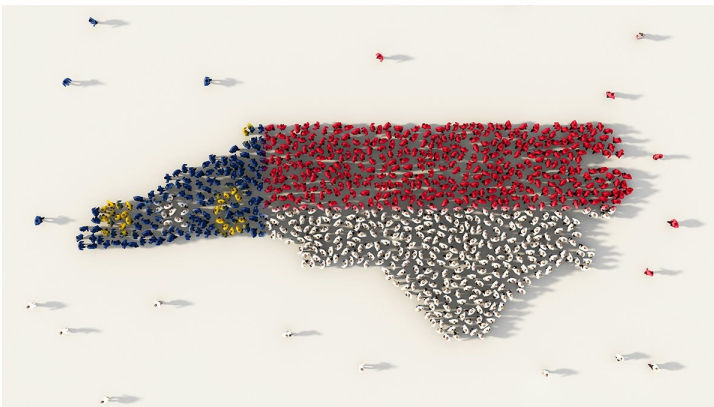
When Hurricane Isaias made landfall in NC, a rural area of Bertie County suffered significant damage. After learning news of the impacts on the families, the Chatham Leadership Academy (years 2003-2019) asked for donations of needed supplies to help fellow leadership partners in need. They responded immediately, and nearly all departments and made a donation. A small group of Leadership Academy graduates delivered an entire SUV filled with donations.

Spotlight: 2020 Census—Making Chatham Count

Chatham County's response rate for the 2010 Census was 81%, so the county is doing everything it can to surpass that and reach 100% completion for the 2020 Census.

Outreach Efforts

- ◆ The Chatham Complete Count Committee (CCCC) was formed in the summer of 2019 to bring awareness and educate the community about the importance of completing the 2020 Census. The CCCC is made up of county, municipal, church, organization, the Hispanic Liaison and business leaders across Chatham County .
- ◆ Outreach materials were created in English and Spanish.
- ◆ Committee members participated in numerous community outreach efforts for more than a year including:
 - ◆ Media outreach
 - ◆ Chatham County Census web page chathamnc.org/2020census
 - ◆ County social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor)
 - ◆ Professional and residential outreach channels of all CCCC members
 - ◆ Flyer and poster distribution across the county through efforts of each committee member (including county and municipal government buildings, businesses, non-profits and clinics)
 - ◆ Information to the Chatham Council on Aging distributed to seniors and area churches
 - ◆ Yard signs posted outside buildings across the county



Adapt & Overcome

The CCCC had its own events planned as well as attending other community events across the county to have a presence and answer questions about the census for residents.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee adapted and continued stepping up outreach efforts, reaching people across the community. Whether it be through media stories, social media outreach or various other communications and signage across the county, the CCCC maintained its focus to reach all pockets of the Chatham County community.

The Importance of the Census in Chatham County

Chatham County receives approximately \$133 million in federal funds annually which support services including hospitals, schools, roads and emergency services.

It also supports federal programs such as Medicare, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Head Start.

The census is also an essential part of the democracy. Numbers obtained from the census determine the number of seats North Carolina has in the U.S. House of Representatives. The data are also used for redistricting at the national, state and local levels.

If not all Chatham County households are counted, then this funding and political representation could decrease, affecting our community for the next decade.



Spotlight: Broadband—Building a Connected Future

Ensuring that all Chatham County residents have access to reliable internet service is the county leadership's top legislative goal. While overcoming the power of the big service providers has been a tough road, and the county is restricted in what it can do to promote more options, county leaders remain committed to meeting this need and build a connected future for the community.

Successful Collaboration

- ◆ A “broadband team” consisting of representation from Chatham County Management & Information Systems (MIS), Library, Economic Development Corporation, Central Carolina Community College, K-12 Schools and others is pursuing every possibility and idea. The most promising underway are:
 - * **Creating fiber anchor points**, such as schools and parks, that could be used by private providers to serve the surrounding communities.
 - * **Developing a wireless pilot project**, that would use existing assets such as our new communications towers to extend service where needed or wanted.
 - * **Secured E-Rate funding** in partnership with the schools to fund vital fiber infrastructure to support the ideas above.



County Towers

- ◆ Chatham County has several tower-related activities underway that could help boost broadband access.
- ◆ The county budgeted significant funding to upgrade its entire emergency communications system, including towers. The system had become increasingly incompatible with other public safety agencies and some areas of the county were not well covered. This presented an increasing public safety problem.
- ◆ These emergency communications towers have the capacity to be used in the future for potential community broadband access.

More Opportunities

- ◆ Chatham County has initiated agreements with a couple of surrounding counties related to tower collaborations.
- ◆ This would allow the county to share usage of towers near county borders that could serve residents in both counties.
- ◆ Wireless technologies will be vital to getting service from the tower to local residents and businesses.
- ◆ Chatham County residents are encouraged to take a statewide broadband survey launched by NC's Broadband Infrastructure Office in the summer of 2020.
 - * To access the online survey, visit: ncbroadband.gov/survey. Residents without internet service, but with phones capable of text messaging, can text “internet” to 919-750-0553.



**SLOW internet?
NO internet?**
We need to know.

The N.C. Broadband Survey is designed to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in our community.

Your feedback directly impacts grant and infrastructure funding in your community.

For Homes & Businesses **WITH Internet Service.**
Visit NCBroadband.gov/Survey to take the survey now.

For Homes & Businesses **WITHOUT Internet Service.**
Text “internet” to **919-750-0553**.
Standard text messaging rates will apply.

The survey is a collaboration between the N.C. Department of Information Technology's Broadband Infrastructure Office and The Friday Institute for Education Innovation at North Carolina State University.

NC DIT
Broadband Infrastructure Office

Spotlight: Change in Chatham—Plans, Progress & Possibilities

Building Boom

Single family construction remains strong in Chatham County, although down about 10-20% from a couple of years ago. Multi-family construction has increased substantially, and nearly 400 dwelling units were permitted in the past year; another 400+ are in permitting as of the fall of 2020.

Commercial construction has increased steadily with a variety of projects from restaurants, retail and manufacturing to utilities. Mosaic has permitted several shell buildings which are being constructed and will soon be permitting end users such as UNC Healthcare and other retail and food/beverage businesses. Manufacturing plants such as Autonetics in Pittsboro and Floorazzo in Siler City are both nearing completion.



Sanctuary at Powell Place, Pittsboro



Article 46 to Bring Revenue

During the 2020 Primary Election, Chatham County voters approved the one-quarter cent (0.25%) sales tax referendum to take effect in the fall of 2020.

The sales tax will be used to mitigate the county's need for future property tax increases. Non-residents pay sales tax, too, lessening the burden on property owners and elderly homeowners on fixed incomes.

The one-quarter cent (0.25%) sales tax is estimated to generate 1.6 million in revenues. The revenue is expected to be a source of funding that can grow as Chatham County grows and could benefit these key areas: Education, Affordable Housing, Parks & Recreation, and Agricultural Preservation & Enhancement.

History & Healing

In November 2019, Chatham County took a historic step with the removal of the Confederate monument outside the Chatham County Historic Courthouse in downtown Pittsboro. Crews worked for several hours to safely and respectfully dismantle the monument and move it to a storage facility.

Before approving the removal of the monument in August 2019, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners heard input from hundreds of community members over several months.

Chatham County leaders hope that by moving the monument to a more appropriate historical site, the lives of Confederate soldiers can still be memorialized, while also respecting everyone in Chatham's diverse community today.



Spotlight: Housing Development and Assistance

Affordable Housing is a top priority in Chatham County. Affordable Housing is defined as housing that has a rent or mortgage that does not cost more than 30% of a household's income (this includes insurance and utilities). Everyone deserves affordable housing, which is why the county continues to invest in the creation and preservation of safe and affordable options for all residents.

- ◆ The Chatham County Housing Trust Fund (HTF) celebrated its two years of serving the community in July 2020. The HTF has provided more than \$300,000 in grants or low-interest loans to affordable housing developments and housing preservation efforts. The HTF entered into its third cycle in August and closed in October 2020.

- ◆ Since its inception, the HTF has provided funding for a wide variety of housing related projects such as: Permanent Supportive Housing (Farm at Penny Lane—bottom photo), Tax Credit – Income Restricted Housing (44 units), Fair Housing Impediments study, and housing preservation (30 households).



Siler School Square Apartments in Siler City, 44 units developed by Third Wave Housing, was once home to Henry Siler School and was funded in part by the Housing Trust Fund. The development is almost fully leased and anticipates move ins to begin as early as November.

- ◆ Henry Siler School, a Housing Trust Fund supported development is almost fully leased and will be fully online by towards the end of November 2020. The newly named Siler School Square Apartments (left photo), consists of 44 income-restricted units, 22 - 1 bedroom units, and 22 - 2 bedroom units.

- ◆ The Emergency Housing Fund (EHF) has provided continuous support for families and individuals facing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. So far the EHF has supported over 60 households with emergency hotel stays, utility assistance, and or eviction prevention through rental assistance.



Rendering of Farm at Penny Lane, a 2019-2020 Housing Trust Fund recipient. Penny Lane plans on building 15 tiny homes (five are set aside for veterans) that are permanently affordable and provide supportive on-site services for individuals living with disabilities.

Spotlight: #ChathamTogether

Throughout the challenges and uncertainties with COVID-19, one thing is more evident than ever—Chatham County's resiliency. Whether it's county staff going above and beyond to help others or residents stepping up to volunteer, the people of Chatham County are making a difference all around. Stories of partnership, hope and inspiration demonstrate that the community is #ChathamTogether!

#ChathamTogether

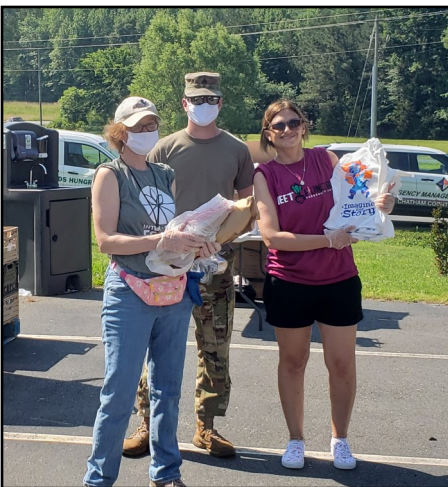


Keeping the Community Covered & Safe

With North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's executive order requiring face coverings in June 2020, the Chatham County Public Health Department partnered with Chatham County 911 / Emergency Management, Chatham Health Alliance, and many agencies, non-profit organizations and businesses to collect face coverings for the community. Over several months, tens of thousands of face coverings have been distributed throughout the county to help ensure residents and workers remain covered and safe.

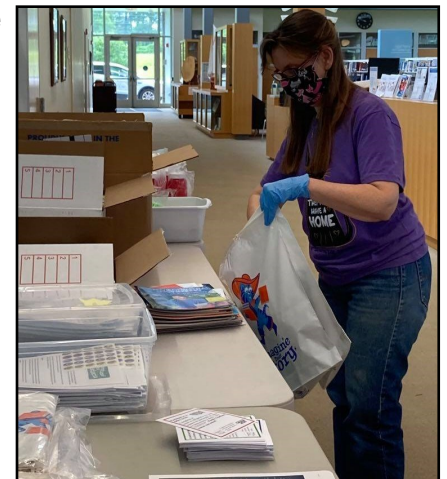
Chatham County Residents "Sew" Their Love for the Community

Two Chatham County residents have been hard at work using their talents to help those in need. Carol Kooner is dedicating her time to sew face coverings and make handmade stockings for the Christmas Wishes program at the Department of Social Services. Geneva Kinneer has also been working hard to help others. A retired educator, Kinneer donated countless creatively made hand puppets to children over the years, but during the pandemic she started crocheting lap robes for seniors and other people who are homebound. Kinneer shares her lap robes with individuals served by DSS and the Council on Aging.



Feeding and Reading: Good Food & Good Books Go Hand in Hand

In June 2020, the Inter-faith Food Shuttle's Mobile Feeding Market was at Saint Julia's Catholic Church in Siler City. Inter-faith Food Shuttle staff and members of the National Guard distributed food to 1,500 families (4,834 individuals) from the Chatham County area. Each vehicle received shelf-stable dry foods, frozen casserole meals, fresh produce and recipe booklets.



Chatham County Public Libraries employees assembled 500 bags supporting the Libraries' Summer Reading Program. The bags were distributed in conjunction with the Inter-faith Food Shuttle's Mobile Feeding Market in Siler City. The bags included free books, Summer Reading Program information, a paper craft and 2020 Census materials.

More inspiring stories can be found at chathamnc.org/chathamtogether.

Big Impacts in Chatham County



Visitor Impact

- ◆ Domestic visitors to and within Chatham County spent \$38.6 million in 2019, an increase of 4.5% from 2018.
- ◆ Chatham County has experienced a 10-year trend of consecutive increases in tourism economic impact.
- ◆ Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Chatham County was \$4.93 million.
- ◆ State tax revenue generated in Chatham County totaled \$2.26 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. About \$700,000 in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.



Cycle NC 2019 Stops in Siler City

The 2019 Cycle North Carolina "Mountains to Coast" Route crossed Chatham County, making an overnight stop in Siler City on **October 1, 2019**. The tour, with approximately 1,000 cyclists, started in Blowing Rock on September 28 and ended in Atlantic Beach on October 5. The event drew cyclists from around the nation and even some from other countries. It is considered an annual highlight for cyclists in the United States.



- ◆ Cyclists enjoyed Chatham County's warm hospitality, diverse culture and beautiful scenery.
- ◆ Experiences included local food, merchandise and art. Area businesses saw a boost in customers, and additional festivities were scheduled for cyclists and the general public alike to enjoy.
- ◆ Chatham County showed a 16% increase in tourism revenue for the month of October 2019 when compared to 2018, due to Cycle NC making a designated stop in Siler City.



Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Emergency Management

Chatham County Emergency Management has been engaged in coronavirus pandemic management activities since it was first confirmed in the U.S. in January 2020.

- ◆ The Chatham County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been operational since March, ensuring officials, departments, partner agencies, and other stakeholders have access to the most current and accurate information, and are working towards a common goal.
- ◆ In cooperation with Public Health, Emergency Communications, law enforcement, fire departments, and EMS, implemented emergency protocols to (1) limit the number of first responders exposed to COVID-19 cases, (2) mitigate the impact that COVID-19-related absenteeism would have on the public safety workforce, and (3) conserve personal protective equipment (PPE) for essential use.



Rendering of the new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub under construction on Renaissance Drive in Pittsboro.



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◆ With the support of the Agriculture & Conference Center staff (left photo), ensured that Public Health, public safety, long-term care facilities, and essential workplaces had access to PPE and supplies to keep their staff, residents, and clients safe.

◆ Provided support to local law enforcement and public safety agencies on numerous major incidents throughout the year, including hazmat spills, missing person searches, and major fires.

- ◆ Continued to facilitate Chatham Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Chatham AUXCOMM (Amateur Radio).
- ◆ Updated a multi-county Cape Fear Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, a strategic document that informs and guides future planning and recovery efforts.

Emergency Communications

- ◆ Chatham County Emergency Communications continues work on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) radio system upgrade project.
 - * The system should be fully operational mid-2021.
 - * It will provide greatly improved radio communications and interoperability for all public safety agencies in the county.
- ◆ Emergency Communications assisted during Hurricane Dorian by deploying personnel to the North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) Central Branch Regional Coordination Center. The team also assisted with deploying personnel and resources to multiple events throughout the county.



CHATHAM COUNTY



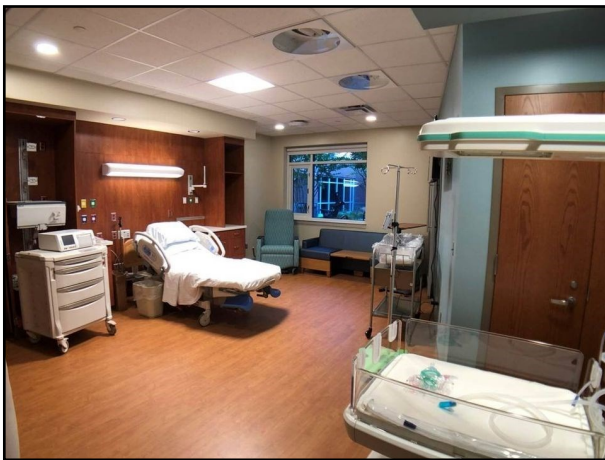
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Public Health

The Chatham County Public Health Department has been leading preparation and response efforts for COVID-19 since early 2020.

- ◆ The Environmental Health Team has worked continually with childcare centers, long-term care facilities, restaurants, and other businesses to address COVID-19 concerns and to implement infection control practices to prevent the spread of the virus.
- ◆ The CCPHD set up a hotline and email to respond to community questions and concerns about COVID19.
- ◆ The CCPHD established a Latinx COVID-19 Community Outreach Team to provide resources and information for the Latinx community related to the pandemic.
- ◆ The CCPHD partnered with the UNC Gillings School for Global Public Health and the NC Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a COVID-19 impact survey using the innovative Chatham Community Cohort. Findings can be found at chathamnc.org/coronavirusdata.



- ◆ The Chatham Health Alliance led community donation drives and resource hub events to support the Chatham community as it responds to COVID-19.
- ◆ The CCPHD worked in partnership with Chatham Hospital, UNC Family Medicine, Piedmont Health Services, and Chatham County Department of Social Services to develop the EMBRACe initiative (Equity for Moms and Babies Realized Across Chatham) that will ensure successful and equitable birth outcomes for women and babies in Chatham County. This initiative aligns with the new program at Chatham Hospital that brought Maternity Care back to Chatham County in September 2020.

Parks & Recreation

- ◆ Constructed a new paved walking trail at The Park at Briar Chapel
- ◆ Replaced 15-year-old playground with a new playground at Southwest District Park
- ◆ Improved the Southwest District Park walking trail
- ◆ Installed a new staircase at the Highway 64 Haw River access
- ◆ Planning underway for the grand opening of the Community Center at the Chatham Grove Elementary School
- ◆ Collaborated with the Town of Pittsboro to make pickle ball courts on the tennis court



- ◆ Provided CORA with 5,000 candy-filled Easter Eggs to be distributed
- ◆ Volunteered with the Council on Aging Meals on Wheels program to distribute food
- ◆ Chatham County Parks and Recreation shared daily recreational resources to engage the community at home through the social media series called #ConnectWithChathamCounty.
- ◆ Provided "Get To Know Your Parks" Virtual Park Tours

Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs



Libraries

Adapt & Overcome

When Chatham County Libraries closed in March 2020 due to the pandemic, new service delivery models quickly and seamlessly adapted to the virtual environment. Library staff rallied with enthusiasm and determination.

One of the largest and most popular events for children, Summer Reading, was quickly transformed to a virtual platform and yet was still well received by parents/caregivers and participating children. New virtual offerings were introduced such as the popular bilingual craft series, "Artes y Manualidades/Arts and Crafts" posted weekly on the new library YouTube channel.

In June, the libraries began offering curbside service for patrons to pick-up print materials or audiovisual materials.



Valuable Services

- ◆ Chatham County Libraries provided 422 programs to the community with 6,919 attendees.
- ◆ The Libraries also provided 546 Early Literacy programs, serving 11,830 children ages 0-5.
- ◆ Chatham Community Library offered 25 classes on a wide variety of technology topics; 144 participants learned how to use a computer and navigate the internet, use Microsoft programs such as Word and Excel, collaborate using Google Apps and download free library eBooks through OverDrive.
- ◆ Digital literacy classes help provide community members with the skills they need to apply for jobs, conduct research, and communicate with others in the increasingly wired world.

Elections

- ◆ In September 2019, the Chatham County Board of Elections held a public demonstration of various new voting equipment models. Vendors gave presentations of their equipment and answered questions from county leaders and residents.
- ◆ In November 2019, the Board of Elections tested voting equipment from Hart InterCivic during the Primary Election.
- ◆ In December 2019, the Board of Elections purchased the Hart InterCivic equipment.
- ◆ During the pandemic, the Chatham County Board of Elections is following the guidelines and procedures established by the State Board of Elections in conjunction with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to keep election officials and voters safe while voting during the 2020 General Election.



Tax Office

- ◆ The Chatham County Tax Office collected 98.86% of 2019 property taxes.
- ◆ A property tax assistance evaluator tool has been added to the website to evaluate if a taxpayer qualifies for a tax assistance program such as the homestead exemption, circuit breaker deferral, disabled veteran or present use value program.

Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Social Services

- ◆ During COVID-19, Department of Social Services staff partnered with the Chatham Health Alliance and other community partners in the Community Hub, a mobile and virtual Community Resource hub that helps bring multiple services and resources together to provide a safe one-stop-shop for families to get connected to services within the community.
- ◆ DSS staff worked with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and Chatham County Schools to assist families with school-age children purchase food after schools closed due to COVID-19.
 - * The program provided benefits on EBT cards to more than 897,000 North Carolina students and over 664,000 families whose children receive free and reduced lunch as part of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. Families received approximately \$5.70 per weekday equaling \$257 in total P-EBT benefits per child.
- ◆ DSS collaborated with The Chatham Food Hub, a retail hub with an online ordering system and curbside pick-up at Bray Park in Siler City, to support community members who are unable to purchase food from the hub.
 - * The hub aims to support local restaurants and food service workers and also provides free meals to families in need. DSS helped pair families with donated meals.
- ◆ In the spring 2020, DSS recognized two issues greatly impacting the lives of the county's most vulnerable residents, child and elder abuse.
 - * April is Child Abuse Awareness Month and June 15th is Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Both issues highlight the need for social supports in the lives of all residents. Meaningful connections to caring adults can reduce risks and improve outcomes.
- ◆ Increasing the number of licensed foster families has been a longstanding goal at DSS. When the pandemic hit, the DSS foster home licensing unit pivoted a 30-hour, large group training curriculum into small group virtual training within a few weeks. Since



March, more than 20 families, including several kinship families have completed training and ten more families are getting started soon. This new method of training has allowed the agency to offer the same level of high quality support to prospective foster parents and will make an impactful change in the number of licensed families in Chatham County.

Court Programs

Domestic Violence Program

- ◆ Successful implementation of 24/7 crisis hotline
- ◆ Modification of services to continually assist survivor victims virtually.
- ◆ Continued collaboration with Second Bloom for domestic violence services and volunteer training.
- ◆ Providing support with Chatham Housing Authority to staff two transitional homes for victims of domestic violence.
- ◆ Collaborating with Hispanic Liaison to increase outreach within the Latinx Community.

Visitation Center

- ◆ Creatively adapted services to safely connect non-custodial parents and children utilizing an online platform and implementing health precautions.

Child Victim Services

- ◆ Launching Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Parent and Community Education Initiative. Train the trainer events underway for local nonprofits and child care organizations that still have direct contact with children. Train the trainer event set up with DSS.

Chatham 360

- ◆ Currently working with Juvenile Justice to provide an educational curriculum for teens utilizing virtual services.

Pretrial Program

- ◆ Continues to work alongside Chatham Detention Center, Sheriff's Office and Criminal Justice Professionals to provide supervision and support to those criminally involved. Services are being offered virtually and face-to-face.



Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Cooperative Extension

By moving in-person educational programs to online programs, the N.C. Cooperative Extension Chatham County Center found that it is able to help people beyond Chatham County, including overseas.

Highlights of Service and Reach

- ◆ \$103,804 secured in grants, donations, sponsorships, etc. to support programming
- ◆ 1,339,971 face-to-face and non-face-to-face contacts
- ◆ 1,515 volunteers gave 10,163 hours valued at \$258,445
- ◆ Chatham County is now home to twelve 4-H community clubs, with subject matter related to S.T.E.M. concepts, equine, wilderness, and shooting sports.



Commitment to Enriching Lives, Land and Economy

- ◆ 4-H and Youth Development
- ◆ Family and Consumer Sciences Program
- ◆ Agriculture Profitability
- ◆ Sustainable/Organic Agriculture
- ◆ Livestock, Equine, Forages and Field Crops
- ◆ Poultry



Council on Aging

Founded in July 1974, the Chatham County Council on Aging celebrated its 45th anniversary.

Highlights of Service and Reach

- ◆ The Council provided 38,760 meals;
- ◆ supported 20,437 Chatham Transit rides;
- ◆ offered 19,029 hours of in-home personal care and 2,981 hours of caregiver respite; repaired 72 homes (with Rebuilding Together of the Triangle);
- ◆ and presented nearly 41,000 health and fitness opportunities.



- ◆ In response to COVID-19, the Council immediately responded to do all it could to assist seniors sheltering in place. It continued providing meals, assistive equipment, incontinence supplies and other provisions to promote the health and safety of seniors.
- ◆ The Council held a faith-based summit in August 2019 at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center. Thirty local pastors and faith leaders joined other community partners in discussing social isolation, ways to help seniors remain living safely at home, and financial and health issues.
- ◆ The Council received a grant of \$35,400 from the Cannon Foundation to support facility improvements at the Eastern and Western Senior Centers.
- ◆ The Council was selected by a third Capstone Team of graduate students from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health to help with implementing Chatham County's 2018-2023 Aging Plan.

Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Solid Waste & Recycling

- ◆ The Solid Waste & Recycling division (SW&R) conducted a recyclables characterization study (RCS) in September 2019.
 - ◆ While SW&R has conducted a waste characterization study every three years to learn what is being thrown away, this was the first study of the recyclables.
 - ◆ Recycling containers from all 12 Collection Centers were sampled and the items were sorted into 39 different categories.
 - ◆ Contaminants are items that cannot or should not be recycled, for example non-recyclable plastics, paper towels, plastic bags, and containers that are full.
 - ◆ Curbside recycling programs in the U.S. typically have a contamination rate of 30-40%; however, Chatham County Collection Centers are substantially lower with a contamination rate of 9%.



How do I dispose of...?



Soil & Water Conservation

- ◆ Technical and program assistance to agricultural operations included assisting 11 Chatham County Animal Feeding Operations under North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) General Permits to complete annual reports this spring. Additionally, there were 13 applications to the NC Cost Share Programs (Ag Cost Share Program, Ag Water Resources Program) in program year 2020 for \$128,624 state-allocated funding to Chatham.
- ◆ SWCD staff continued to assist agricultural operations affected by Hurricanes Florence and Michael. Agricultural Road Repairs and Pasture Renovations were completed for a total of \$55,369 paid from NC disaster funds. Assistance was also provided to farmers seeking Federal disaster assistance through USDA FSA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program.



- ◆ Completed Best Management Practices (totaling \$106,161) include a poultry litter dry stack and composter (above photo) and three poultry litter spreaders which allows for the proper management of poultry generated nutrients. Other BMPs completed to reduce non-point source pollution include Livestock Exclusion Systems, Livestock water supply wells, and Livestock Heavy Use Area Protections. Support was also provided to farmers seeking Federal assistance through USDA NRCS programs EQIP and CSP.
- ◆ Partnerships with Loves Creek Watershed Stewards, the Town of Siler City and Piedmont Conservation Council (PCC), included providing support and technical assistance in the Loves Creek Watershed (left photo) to improve water quality and reduce non-point source pollution in an urban environment. The PCC concluded a stormwater study around Siler City's Park Shopping Center, which was funded with \$101,219 from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. The recommendations of the resulting report are now being implemented with \$221,012 received from the EPA's 319 program. PCC also expects to complete this year its Loves Creek Watershed restoration work supported by \$270,000 received from the Environmental Enhancement Grant program administered by the North Carolina Department of Justice (NCDOJ).

Highlights from Departments, Offices & Programs

Management & Information Systems (MIS)

Server/SAN Upgrade

MIS worked with an outside vendor to upgrade the county's old server and storage infrastructure. Newer servers and flash-based storage, along with 25gb networking between them, were implemented. The newer equipment provides a smaller footprint, requires less cooling, and uses less power than the previous equipment. The network speed from the servers to the county network was increased to 10gb which provides more bandwidth for county departments to access these newer resources.



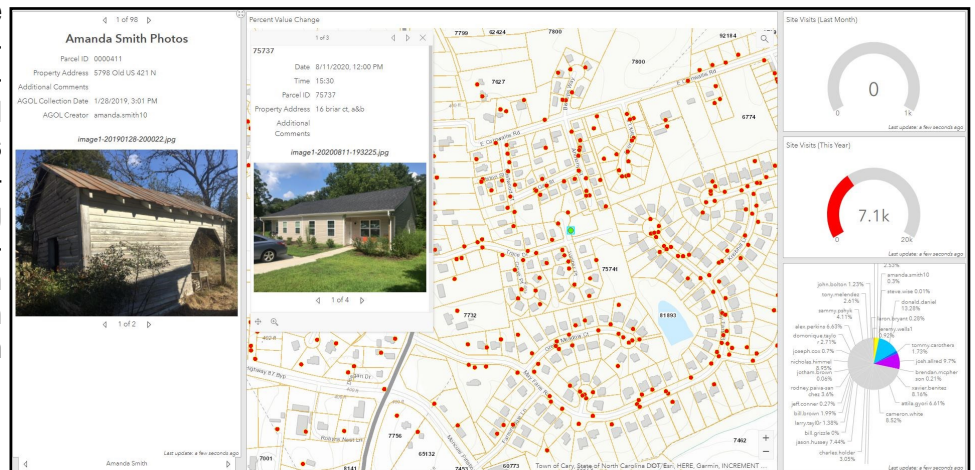
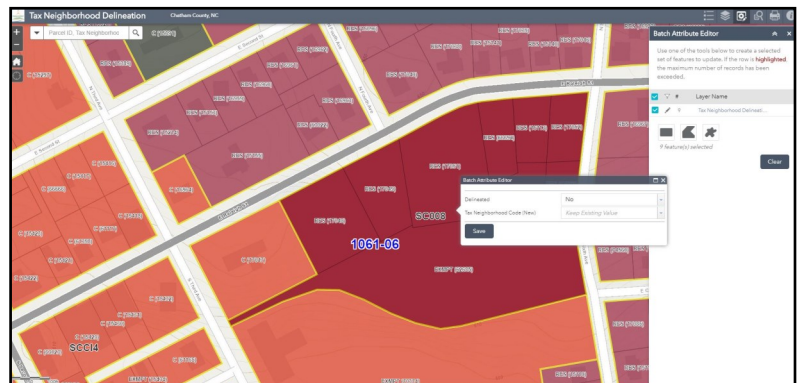
VPN Capacity Increase

MIS worked with Palo Alto to upgrade the county's firewall environment. MIS deployed a failover configuration which provides network security and protection along with an increase in the VPN connection capacity. The upgraded infrastructure allowed VPN connection capacity to increase from 100 concurrent users to 250 concurrent users which has been very beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic allowing for greater remote work opportunities for various county departments. The newer firewalls also provided more bandwidth in and out of the county network allowing connected users to work more efficiently.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Tax Revaluation Support

In conjunction with the Tax Department and the tax revaluation contractor, the GIS department developed and supported various applications utilized as part of the ongoing 2021 tax revaluation project. GIS developed a comprehensive office and fieldwork solution to streamline the acquisition of updated property photos and track the progress of the field staff in an operations dashboard application. Administrative staff were able to view real-time progress of the field staff and view the data being collected as it was occurring. Additionally, the GIS staff automated the process of creating data required by the revaluation contractor to conduct a more thorough and comprehensive review of property values in Chatham County. These data are utilized in a couple of different web mapping applications to allow for review and correction of property assessment information leading to a more accurate representation of property values throughout Chatham County.



Chatham County Awards & Honors

The **Chatham County Public Health Department** Communicable Disease Team, Bonnie Dukeman, Beverly Allen and Lou Ann Vasquez, have led the COVID-19 response, working in the trenches from the notification of the first Chatham County case in March 2020. These employees embody public health, public service, and selflessness, and were named Chatham County Employees of the Quarter for the Spring 2020.



Central Carolina Community College

- ◆ Best Colleges ranked CCCC among nation's Top 25 Best Community Colleges & Trade Schools of 2020
- ◆ College Consensus ranked CCCC among nation's Top 50 community colleges
- ◆ Bellwether College Consortium (BCC) named CCCC one of ten finalists in the nation for the Instructional Programs and Services category.
- ◆ Niche's ranked CCCC as the Best Community Colleges in N.C. for 2020

For the second consecutive year, **Chatham County Schools** earned national recognition with a Best Communities for Music Education designation from The NAMM Foundation, a nonprofit organization supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants.



Chatham County Board of Elections Director Pandora Paschal received the Humanitarian Award for Outstanding Citizenship from the West Chatham Branch of the NAACP. Paschal received the prestigious award for being an exemplary civil servant who provides skillful administration of complex voting laws and procedures, respect for all voters, and personal and professional integrity. She is an outstanding example of a public servant who continues to make a significant positive impact on the voters of Chatham County.



For the seventh straight year, **Chatham County** received several top awards from the North Carolina Department of Labor for outstanding safety practices. For 2019, Chatham County received 12 total—8 Gold Awards and 4 Silver Awards.

The **Chatham County Finance Department** received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). This is the 29th consecutive year the County received this national recognition. This is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. According to GFOA, its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

