

2022: The State of Chatham County Report



Extraordinary Opportunities Point to a Promising Future

Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022, Chatham County wrapped up a yearlong commemoration of its 250th anniversary. While honoring the past, years of hard work came together to create a future that never looked brighter. Chatham County made two major economic development announcements with a historic **\$9 billion in investments**, which will be accompanied by **9,000 new jobs**.



Vietnamese electric vehicle manufacturer VinFast announced it will build its first North American plant at the Triangle Innovation Point in Moncure. And, semiconductor manufacturer Wolfspeed announced it will build a major fabrication plant at the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site in Siler City. These extraordinary opportunities undoubtedly will bring unprecedented development and growth to the county, region, and state.

Leadership and staff are focused on ensuring that the county's development is well-monitored and aligns with the long-term vision that Plan Chatham has laid out for Chatham County. The County added more than 70 new positions to respond to the increased demand in service that accompanies growth. While planning for this growth, Chatham County is committed to serving the community and preserving its natural resources, to ensure that it remains the best place to live, work, and raise a family.

Chatham Comprehensive Plan Activities Underway

- ◆ The Chatham County Planning Department is in the second of four stages of the county's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) project, known as Recode Chatham. This project will merge, rewrite, and update multiple ordinances and regulations while evaluating and improving upon existing standards. The wide-ranging planning effort of a Small Area Plan for the Moncure area will be taken under consideration in the UDO.
- ◆ Construction of the new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub is underway and is located on Renaissance Drive near Pittsboro. Estimated completion is mid-year 2023.
- ◆ The upgrade to the county's emergency communications radio system is nearing completion.
 - ◇ New radio towers and/or associated infrastructure at eight sites across the county are being finalized.
 - ◇ Radios for all public safety agencies in the county, as well as the county school buses are being installed or distributed. Estimated project completion is early 2023.
- ◆ Construction is nearing completion for Chatham County Schools' new Central Services building on Renaissance Drive near Pittsboro. The project is expected to be finished in late 2022/early 2023.
- ◆ The Chatham County Public Utilities Department continues its work with other Western Intake Partners (City of Durham, Town of Pittsboro, and Orange Water and Sewer Authority/OWASA) in the planning, permitting, and detailed design of a future, joint water treatment plant.
- ◆ In partnership, the Chatham County Parks and Recreation Department, Chatham County Cooperative Extension, and Chatham County Council on Aging built the county's first Peaceful Pathway at Northeast District Park. This respite area features an accessible pathway, picnic shelter, and planted flower area that is dedicated to Chatham County caregivers serving individuals with dementia.



Chatham 250: Commemorating Chatham County's 250th Anniversary

Chatham County participated in a yearlong celebration of its 250th anniversary from 2021—2022. Throughout this time, there were numerous events, projects, and programs across the county designed to celebrate five key areas that make Chatham County so special – Creative Arts, Community and Diversity, Growth and Change, Agriculture, and Natural Environment.



Chatham 250 Shares Inspiring Story of Los Jets Soccer Team



Chatham 250 highlighted the incredible story of Jordan-Matthews High School's Los Jets soccer team by presenting a special exhibit to Chatham County Schools students. The exhibit, *Los Jets: Playing for the American Dream*, is based on the book, *A Home on the Field: How One Championship Soccer Team Inspires Hope for the Revival of Small Town America*, by Los Jets coach Paul Cuadros. The book tells the story of the Los Jets soccer team's formation and victory as the 2004 N.C. State Men's Soccer Class A Champions. As the first predominantly Latino sports team to win a statewide sports championship in North Carolina, Los Jets left an enduring legacy in the community and across the U.S.

Chatham 250 Agriculture Photo Contest

Chatham 250 held an agriculture photo contest to share the meaning of Chatham County's amazing farms and farm history. The contest requested photographs that highlight agriculture in Chatham County, including agricultural landscapes, livestock, farm activities like planting and harvesting, farm equipment, and farm workers. Each contestant also included a written reflection explaining the significance of the photo. Winners were selected not only for the beauty of their photograph, but also for their thoughtful and careful consideration put into their reflection. In the 11-17 age category Macy Beavers was the winner. Kristi Eskelund and Barbara Hengstenberg won the 18-64 age category, and Zen Shoemaker and Gary Simpson (photo featured on right) won the 65 and over age category.



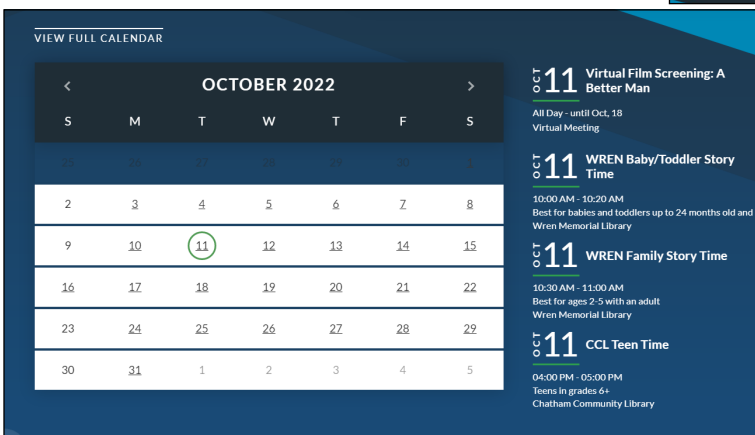
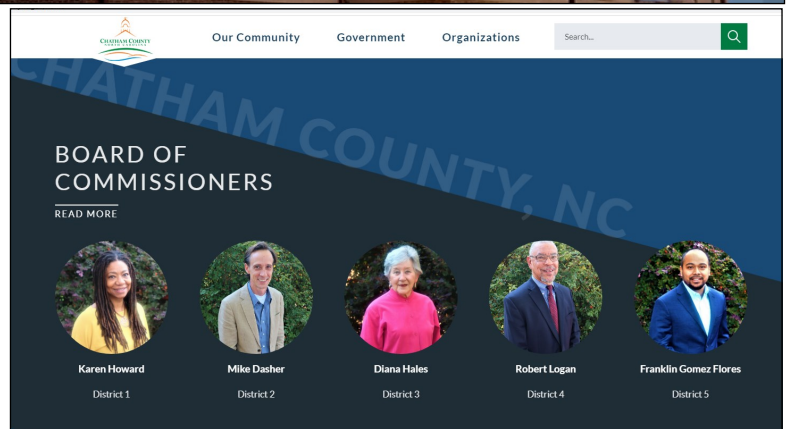
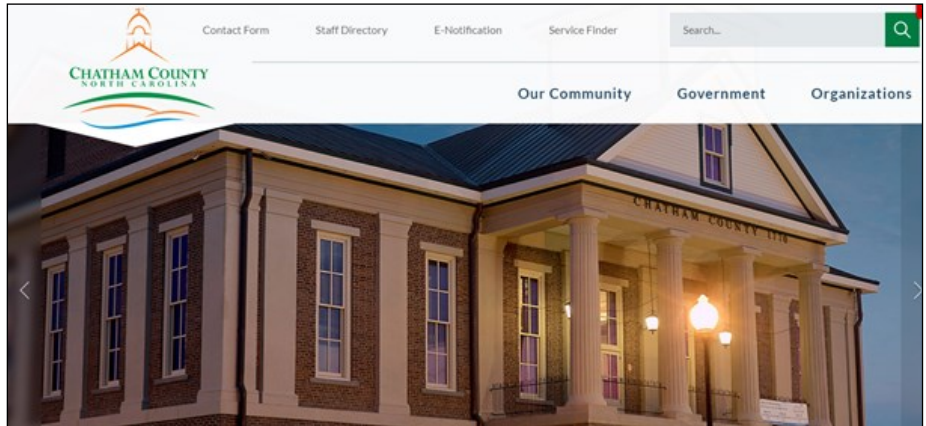
Exploring Chatham County's Unincorporated Communities

Chatham 250 and Chatham Community Library co-sponsored a virtual program "Exploring the unique history, extraordinary stories, and remarkable people of Chatham County's unincorporated communities." The program featured [Orlando Dobbin](#), Chatham County resident and school counselor at Pittsboro Elementary School, who researched and visited all 31 towns and unincorporated communities of Chatham County, as well as 5 county parks. Dobbin's adventures highlighted the unique history, extraordinary stories, and remarkable people of Chatham County's unincorporated communities.

Chatham County Launches Redesigned Website

In November 2021, Chatham County government launched a redesigned website: www.chathamcountync.gov. Along with a sleek update in appearance, the new website is designed to make it easier for residents, businesses, and other members of the public to find what they need.

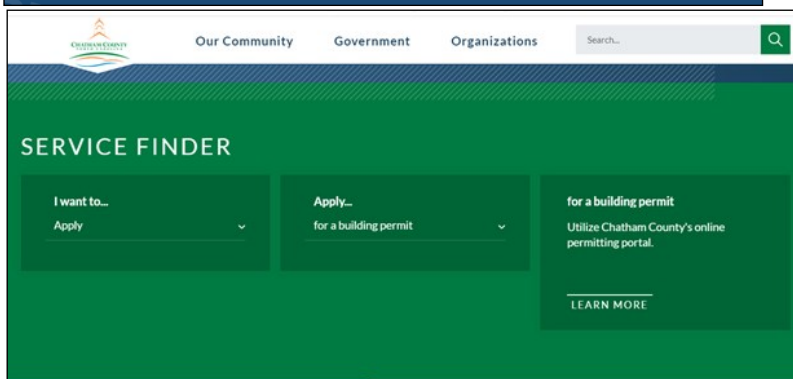
- ◆ The website redesign took nearly one year to complete.
 - ◇ The County gathered feedback from the public and staff, compiling web user data, and testing usability.
- ◆ The Chatham County homepage has several great features including:
 - ◇ simplified navigation,
 - ◇ more user-friendly calendar of events,
 - ◇ Board of Commissioners section.



www.chathamcountync.gov

Service Finder Tool

- ◆ A new feature on the homepage is the "Service Finder" tool.
 - ◇ This interactive feature takes web users to the service(s) they are looking for with just a few clicks.
 - ◇ For example, if a resident wants to pay their water bill, the prompts on the dropdown menus take them directly to the webpage to pay.



Chatham County Leadership

Major Changes



Finance – **Roy Lynch** joined Chatham County as Finance Officer in March 2022 after serving 10 years in local government, most recently as Siler City Town Manager. Lynch has experience working in various management positions as well as in accounting and finance with both the public and private sectors. Annual departmental budgeting, financial account analysis, investment activities, debt issuance, and managing have been part of his experience in both roles as a Town Manager and Finance Director.

Council on Aging – **Ashlyn Martin** began work as the director of the Chatham County Council on Aging in April 2022, filling the position vacated by Dennis Streets upon his retirement in February. Martin comes to the Council after having worked for Senior Resources of Guilford, a nonprofit or-



ganization in Guilford County, for over seven years. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work degree from UNC Greensboro and a Master of Social Work degree from the Joint Master of Social Work Program between North Carolina A&T State University and UNC Greensboro. Martin is certified in Options Counseling with the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services and is a certified Community Resource Specialist Aging/Disabilities (CRS – A/D) through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS).



Utilities – **Blake Mills** joined Chatham County as Director of Public Utilities in December 2021. Mills is a professional engineer and has 36 years of experience as a land development engineer, Town Engineer, and Public Works Director. Mills served as Town Engineer (5 Years) and Director of Public Works (11 Years) for the Town of Morrisville and Director of Public Works/Assistant Director of Public Works (3 Years) for the Town of Clayton. His private sector experience includes 16 years as a land development engineer working in Winnipeg, Canada, and North Carolina.

Chatham County Employee of the Year

Cristal Ocampo Ruiz was selected as Chatham County's 2021 Employee of the Year. Ocampo Ruiz was an interpreter and the immunization tracking coordinator at the Chatham County Public Health Department. Ocampo Ruiz worked with Chatham County from 2016-2022 and was a 2020 Chatham Leadership Academy graduate. "Cristal was such an important part of our team for several years. During the pandemic, she was critical to our efforts to reach the Latinx community. From translating information to tracking immunizations, we wouldn't be where we are without her," said Chatham County Public Health Director Mike Zelek.



Economic Development

Chatham County retains a large agricultural base with a mixture of industrial, tourism, and service businesses helping support the county's economy. Strong economic influences in surrounding areas including Cary, Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, and the Research Triangle Park have a positive effect on the growth of Chatham County's population and economy, especially in the northern and eastern sections of the county. A large number of Chatham County residents commute outside the county for employment, with the urban areas being the top destinations for jobs. The county experienced a 20% growth rate from 2010-2020 according to U.S. Census data and is among the 10 fastest growing counties in the state.



VinFast will manufacture the VF8 and VF9 SUV models in Chatham County.

- ◆ Shipping and distribution company FedEx also announced that it would be building in Moncure adjacent to the VinFast site and is slated to open the doors of its distribution center in early 2023.
- ◆ Coca-Cola Bottling Company announced that it will move its operations to Chatham County, locating at the intersection of Highway 751 and US 64. The company has plans to construct a 175,000-square-foot building at the site and will bring 180-200 employees with the move.
- ◆ The Chatham County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) celebrated the groundbreaking of Chatham County's first hotel, a Hampton Inn & Suites built by Malcom Bryant Corporation at Mosaic in Chatham Park. The EDC worked with the builders and the Town of Pittsboro to coordinate the project.

More EDC Updates

- ◆ In 2021, the EDC welcomed new board members Debbie Andleton (Chatham Park) and Shannon Becker (Aqua NC). Board members Chreatha Alston and Jennifer Platt were reappointed for second terms on the board.
- ◆ The Chatham EDC fundraising initiative, Accelerate 2026, concluded in spring of 2022, surpassing the initial goal of \$750,000 over five years. The work of the EDC is funded by Chatham County and a range of private investors.

Industry Development

- ◆ The biggest economic development announcement in North Carolina history took place in Chatham County, as Vietnamese electric vehicle manufacturer VinFast announced it would build its first North American plant at the Triangle Innovation Point in Moncure. The announcement will bring over 7,500 jobs and an investment of \$4 billion to the county.
- ◆ Within six months of the VinFast announcement, semiconductor manufacturer Wolfspeed announced it would build a major fabrication plant at the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site in Siler City. The announcement will bring more than 1,800 jobs and an investment of \$5 billion to the county.



Wolfspeed CEO Gregg Lowe (front second from left) joined Chatham County leaders at the Governors Mansion for the big announcement.

Workforce Development

- ◆ The EDC works closely with its partners at Central Carolina Community College to coordinate workforce readiness and to meet the needs of local employers and students. As a result of recent announcements and industry growth, CCCC has begun offering the following programs:
 - ◇ Commercial truck driving training
 - ◇ Courses on how to start a construction business
 - ◇ Industrial technician courses
 - ◇ Specialized training for specific employers, including VinFast

Change in Chatham: Plans, Progress, and Possibilities

Building Boom

Residential

- ◆ Chatham County continues to see growth in single family homes. An increasing number of homes is being constructed in the Town of Pittsboro and in the past year it accounted for nearly a third of all new, single family homes.
- ◆ Construction of multi-family units has continued with 72 additional apartments in Siler City (Oak View), 160 units Pittsboro (Mosaic) and 200 apartments in the county along US 15-501 (The Knoll).



Housing development in Chatham Park, Pittsboro



The Knoll Apartments, US 15-501 and Taylor Road



Mixed-use including condos, offices, retail; The Mosaic

Commercial

- ◆ New Commercial development has nearly tripled with 97 new commercial structure permits in FY22 versus 36 permits in FY21. The value of this construction increased significantly from \$36 million to \$133 million from FY21 to FY22.
 - ◇ US 15-501 at Taylor Road – Food Lion, ReFuel, and apartments
 - ◇ Mosaic – Retail/restaurants including Jersey Mike's and Greek Kouzina, apartments, offices, ReFuel
 - ◇ Northwoods Area – Lowe's Foods, Retail Shops
 - ◇ Moncure – FedEx Distribution Center (pictured right)
 - ◇ Briar Chapel & Fearington – Expansion of sewer treatment facilities (Old North State Waste Water and Aqua)



Housing Development and Assistance

Affordable Housing continues to be a top priority in Chatham County. Affordable Housing is defined widely as housing that does not cost – rent or mortgage – more than 30% of a person’s gross annual income (including utilities and insurance). 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.

2022 Highlights

- ◆ Wallick Communities Inc. was selected in August 2021 for tax credits to build 72 units in Siler City behind UNC Hospital in Chatham Business Park (right). This income-restricted development, which is expected to come online in 2023, is receiving approximately \$400,000 from the Housing Trust Fund and will be built on formerly County-owned land.
- ◆ Homelessness and Housing Instability Workgroup began to bring together more than 10 nonprofit organizations, various local government agencies, and community advocates to work on a collective impact model to address the rising issue of homelessness in Chatham County.



Program Highlights

- ◆ The Chatham County Housing Trust Fund (HTF) entered its 4th year of existence. In addition to the contribution to the Wallick Communities Inc. investment, since its creation in 2018, the HTF has provided nearly \$700,000 in grants and low-interest loans to projects that create and preserve affordable housing units across Chatham County. Projects that received awards have ranged from supportive housing, tax credit properties, affordable single-family housing, and emergency home repair and rehabilitation.



The Retreat at Pittsboro apartments is a 48-unit tax credit development by Third Wave Housing. This is the second property Third Wave Housing has developed in Chatham County since 2018. The first was Siler School Square (44 apartments) in Siler City, another HTF recipient.

- ◆ The HTF has invested in the creation of 272 new affordable housing units, 90 of which are now open and online. The remaining units are expected to open in 2023 or shortly after.
- ◆ The HTF has invested in the preservation and repair of more than 120 homes in Chatham County for low-and-moderate income households by partnering with Rebuilding Together of the Triangle.
- ◆ In 2022, the Emergency Housing Fund (EHF) served more than 40 households by working with community partners, the Chatham County Department of Social Services and Court Programs to assist with emergency hotel stays, utility assistance, as well as eviction and foreclosure prevention.

Education Highlights

Chatham County Schools

The Chatham County Board of Education approved the **One Chatham Strategic Plan**, which will focus on five priority areas over the next five years: Curriculum & Innovation, Student Health & Safety, Faculty & Staff, Facilities & Infrastructure, and Communications & Information Sharing.

The priority areas were determined through One Chatham focus groups and the Superintendent's Listening and Learning Tour that spanned the county. Parent, student, staff and community member opinions were critical in determining the goals for the district.

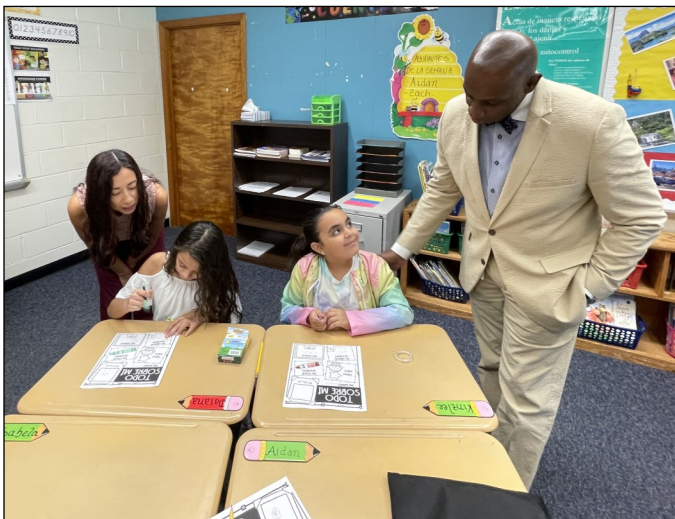
The district has established clear goals that will be met with measurable metrics through clear strategies. The plan is available on the school district website: www.chatham.k12.nc.us.



Chatham County Schools' new Central Services building, near Pittsboro, expected completion late 2022/early 2023.

Chatham County Schools Achievements & Honors

- ◆ Chatham County students made significant gains during the 2021-22 school year, with 17 out of 19 schools meeting or exceeding growth expectations.
- ◆ 89.5% of Chatham County schools increased their performance composite, a score that combines all assessment



measures; schools grew in every subject and every grade for the year.

- ◆ 74% of students enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses earned industry-recognized credentials.
- ◆ The Chatham County Class of 2022 earned \$14.348 million in scholarships.
- ◆ Northwood High School, Chatham Central, and Jordan-Matthews had 100% college acceptance for Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students.
- ◆ The 2021-22 Teacher Working Conditions survey placed CCS ahead of the state average in every category.
- ◆ As of 2022, CCS had 11 years of clean financial audits, earning national and international recognition for stewardship and transparency.

Chatham County Schools Leadership

Dr. Kelly Batten was named the new Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources with Chatham County Schools. Dr. Batten served as Executive Director for High Schools and Career and Technical Education since 2012 and has 26 years of experience in public education. Batten also has experience as a High School Principal with Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and as Assistant Principal for Instruction and teacher with the Wake County Public School System. Recently, Dr. Batten completed the North Carolina Aspiring Superintendents Program and has previously been recognized as an ACT K-12 Champion, NCASA Administrator of the Year, NC Principal Fellows, and NC Teaching Fellows.



Education Highlights

Central Carolina Community College (CCCC)

Highlights

- ◆ Central Carolina Community College serves approximately 6,700 credential-seeking students annually through its on-site and distance-learning programs.
- ◆ A total of 3,122 firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, police and correctional officers received continuing education training through CCCC's Public Safety program in 2021-22.
- ◆ The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Central Carolina Community College a \$2.13 million competitive grant to be dispersed over the next five years. The funding is part of the department's Title III Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP), which aims to help institutions bolster their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds that help them become self-sufficient, expand capacity to serve students, and improve and strengthen the institution.



Workforce Development

- ◆ Central Carolina Community College will take the lead in providing customized training to help meet the regional workforce needs that both the VinFast and Wolfspeed plants will bring to Chatham and surrounding counties. The College will partner with these companies to provide customized training to help fill the jobs that the companies will bring to Chatham County.
- ◆ CCCC workforce development efforts to support VinFast, Wolfspeed, and existing businesses in Chatham County are designed to also support members of the community in accessing the training needed to take advantage of the great career opportunities in the region.
- ◆ The E. Eugene Moore Manufacturing and Biotech Solutions Center, adjacent to the Lee Main Campus of Central Carolina Community College (in Sanford), sits in the middle of a region experiencing an explosion of economic development. When renovation is complete, the facility will be transformed to a one-of-a-kind, world-class education center – the largest facility in the state focused on addressing the workforce needs of advanced manufacturing and biotechnology. The Moore Center's 220,000 square feet of training space also boasts access to nearby four-lane limited-access highways leading to industries throughout the region.

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 are eligible for up to two years of free in-state tuition and required fees at Central Carolina Community College. During its first three years, 336 Chatham County residents have benefited from the program while staying within the budget allocated by the Chatham County Commissioners. On average over the last three years, a third of the students have been first-generation college students, and just over half have come from economically-disadvantaged situations. Two-thirds of the students have been enrolled in career and technical programming, and a third have been enrolled in university-transfer programs. The College anticipates continued success as the 2022 high school graduates enter the program in Fall 2022.

Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Emergency Management



- ◆ Chatham County emerged from the emergency phase of the COVID-19 response, after 881 days under a State of Emergency, the longest incident on record for the County. Beginning in March 2020, Emergency Management and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) supported the County's response to the pandemic. The EOC team is made up of decisionmakers, subject matter experts, County staff, and local partners who tackle the most challenging incidents and threats the community faces.



The new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub under construction on Renaissance Drive near Pittsboro.

- ◆ Chatham County Emergency Management, Emergency Communications, Facilities & Construction, and Management Information Systems (MIS) continue to work with the design and construction team on a new Emergency Operations Center facility which will house the 911 Center and EOC by mid-year 2023.
- ◆ Emergency Management continues to support the Chatham County Emergency Response Team (Chatham CERT) and Chatham Auxiliary Communications (Chatham AUXCOMM). Both organizations provide residents opportunities to improve their neighborhood and community resilience as well as support local public safety activities. Chatham CERT and

AUXCOMM both resumed in-person meetings, including Severe Weather Spotter, Personal Safety, and hands-on training with radios, light towers, and shelter trailers.



Emergency Communications

- ◆ The upgrade to the county's emergency communications radio system is nearing completion.
 - ◇ New radio towers and/or associated infrastructure at eight sites across the county are being finalized (left).
 - ◇ Radios for all public safety agencies in the county, as well as the county school buses are being installed or distributed.
 - ◇ Estimated project completion is early 2023.



Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Public Health

COVID-19: The Chatham County Public Health Department (CCPHD) continued to vaccinate the community against COVID-19, offering vaccines at its Siler City clinic. The Public Health Department also coordinated with state-contracted testing vendors to provide no-cost COVID-19 testing sites with extended hours in Siler City and Pittsboro and continues to offer no-cost at-home rapid tests. The CCPHD also participated in many community outreach events, including the Community Day & Vaccine Event at Mitchell Chapel AME Zion Church in April (pictured right).

Chatham County Community Assessment: The 2021 Chatham County Community Assessment, which compiles data on health and well-being in Chatham County, was published in July 2022, giving a “snapshot” of Chatham County in several areas, including access to health care, poverty, leading causes of death, mental health, and substance use. The report was a collaborative effort between the Chatham County Public Health Department, Chatham Health Alliance, and Chatham Hospital and can be found at www.chathamcountync.gov/healthreports.



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: The Chatham County Public Health Department hired its first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, who will be the point person for diversity and inclusion initiatives at the Public Health Department, and will also collaborate with County departments and community partners. The DEI Officer will be responsible for creating, managing, and optimizing all efforts related to making the workplace a fairer, more-equitable environment for all employees with the goal of achieving the Public Health Department’s vision of a fair and inclusive community.



Environmental Health: Chatham County Environmental Health partnered with Lee County Environmental Health to host a virtual Food Safety Summit (pictured left) for food service operators and staff. Environmental Health staff issued 50% more septic system permits than the previous year for the third year in a row.

Nutrition Services: The Chatham County Public Health Department continues to offer one-on-one nutrition counseling services, Diabetes Prevention Programming for those with pre-diabetes or those at-risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, and the Diabetes Self-Management Education services (in both individual and group formats).

- ◆ CCPHD continues to grow the Safe Kids Chatham Car Seat Program. The program’s goals are to reduce the number of childhood injuries and fatalities of children in Chatham County due to motor vehicle accidents by increasing accessibility of child passenger safety education and car seats/booster seats.
- ◆ CCPHD relaunched the Newborn Postpartum Home Visiting Program. All mothers and newborns who live in Chatham County are eligible for services, which include a home visit by a public health nurse, health assessment for both mother and newborn, social support and education resources, assistance with doctor’s appointments, discussion of family planning options, information on immunizations, baby safety, breast and formula feeding, safe sleep and more.

EMBRACe: CCPHD, in partnership with many agencies and organizations, received a \$500,000 BCBSNC Foundation grant for Equity for Moms and Babies Realized Across Chatham (EMBRACe), a collaborative initiative focused on advancing birth equity in Chatham County.

Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Board of Elections

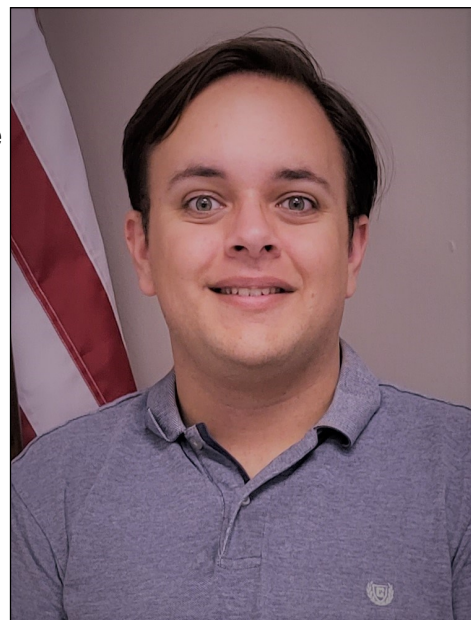
- ◆ The Chatham County Board of Elections and the elections staff held a successful Primary Election in May 2022, amid postponement of 2021 Municipal elections and the March Primary because of delayed census information and maps which caused districts in Siler City, and Cary to be redrawn. The GIS department assisted with updating all geocode changes that were affected by redistricting to ensure voters were placed in the correct districts.
- ◆ The Chatham County Board of Elections office successfully completed the North Carolina State Board of Elections Wellness Check and was recognized with a certificate for having a healthy NC Board of Elections Department.



**Chatham County Elections
Director Pandora Paschal**

- ◆ In January 2022, Director Pandora Paschal was presented a plaque at the North Carolina State Board of Elections Winter Conference from the North Carolina Association of Directors of Elections for five dedicated years as Director of Elections with wisdom and integrity to the elections process of North Carolina 2017-2022.

- ◆ Election Specialist Chance Mashburn completed all course work and was certified as a North Carolina Elections Administrator in August 2021. He also received his Notary Public certification in February 2022.



**Chatham County Elections
Specialist Chance Mashburn**



**Chatham County Elections
Board Member Frank Dunphy II**

- ◆ Board Member Frank Dunphy II completed all course work and was certified by the North Carolina State Board of Elections in August 2021.

Tax Office

- ◆ The Chatham County Tax Office collected 99.18% of 2021 property taxes.

Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Social Services

- ◆ The Chatham County Department of Social Services (DSS) launched the Low-Income Water Assistance Program in collaboration with local water providers including the Town of Siler City, Chatham County Water Department, Aqua, NC, and Town of Pittsboro. More than 100 residents received help through the new, federally funded program that provides emergency assistance to low-income households that pay a high proportion of household income for drinking water and wastewater services.
- ◆ In partnership with Youth Villages and Vaya Health, children receiving child welfare services at DSS now have easier access to behavioral health assessments, connecting them with appropriate services. A clinician is available each week to meet with children and families.
- ◆ During the spring, DSS recognized Child Abuse Prevention Month (April) and Elder Abuse Prevention Month (from Mother's Day through Father's Day). Pinwheel gardens, Wear Blue and Purple Days, and an elder abuse awareness event were all part of acknowledging these important community issues.
- ◆ DSS, with the Division of Health Benefits, worked to transition most Medicaid beneficiaries from a fee for service to a managed care model. The goal of managed care is to improve health outcomes for North Carolinians and includes integration of physical and behavioral health services.



On March 21, 2022, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.



Court Programs

Several County departments and Chatham Drug Free joined together with the Chatham County Sheriff's Prevention Partnership on Controlled Substances to host a Recovery Celebration on April 30, 2022. The Recovery Celebration partnered with Chatham Charter's 7th grade art students to create artwork for raising awareness on mental health.

Libraries

- ◆ Received > 57,800 library visitors
- ◆ Answered > 9,900 reference questions including those related to employment and technology
- ◆ Circulated more than 202,500 items (print and electronic)
- ◆ Created 11,110 new library card accounts
- ◆ Improved accessibility by removing a barrier and eliminating late fees, after a year-long pilot program
- ◆ 2022 Summer Reading Program concluded with a total of 222 active participants who read >216,000 minutes and checked out 23,370 books
- ◆ The number of Youth Services programs offered increased by 140% from the previous year. In that same period, attendance at Youth programs increased 267%, and is anticipated to continue an upward trend



Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Pittsboro-Siler City Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)



- ◆ The Pittsboro-Siler City Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) focused on continued support for visitor businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry as travel showed robust economic returns.
- ◆ Focusing on resources online, the CVB employs full use of tourism websites (CVB website and Visit North Carolina's web presence), social media, press



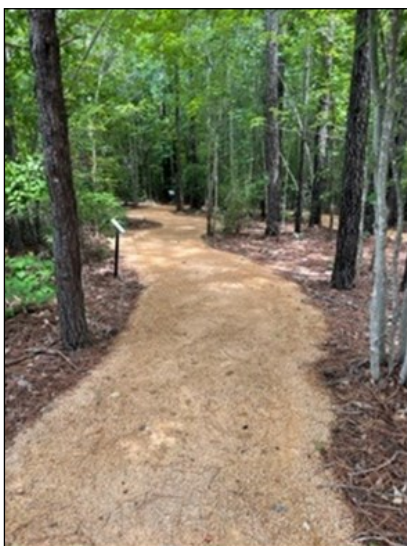
Groundbreaking of Chatham County's first hotel, Hampton Inn & Suites, Mosaic in Chatham Park

trips, working with social media influencers, enews, and blog.

- ◆ The CVB successfully garnered publicity in more than 43 national or international media (online, print) including Vine-Pair, Travel + Leisure, Garden & Gun, AAA Living, Wine Spectator, and more.
- ◆ The travel and tourism industry directly employs more than **576** in Chatham County.
- ◆ Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Chatham County was **\$19.1 million**.
- ◆ State tax revenue generated in Chatham County totaled **\$3.1 million** through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. About **\$2.7 million** in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.
- ◆ Visitor spending results in a **\$74.45** tax savings per resident.

Parks and Recreation

- ◆ Hosted nine special events in the 2022 Fiscal Year, serving a total of 2,134 community members. The events took place at all four of the county's district parks.
- ◆ Introduced nine brand new programs and saw 1,349 participants across all athletic and instructional programs.
- ◆ Hosted a Grand Opening for Kids in Parks TRACK Trails



and the trail extension at Southwest District Park. (pictured right). Kids in Parks TRACK Trails feature self-guided brochures and signs that offer a fun and exciting outdoors experience while learning about various plants and animals.



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- ◆ Built the county's first Peaceful Pathway at Northeast District Park, in partnership with the Chatham County Council on Aging and Chatham County Cooperative Extension (pictured left). This respite area features an accessible pathway and picnic shelter and planted flower area that is dedicated to Chatham County caregivers serving individuals with dementia.
- ◆ Partnered with the Chatham County Council on Aging to co-coordinate the Senior Games and Silver Arts, with 264 senior participants.

Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Council on Aging

The Chatham County Council on Aging welcomed clients back to its renovated and expanded Eastern Chatham Senior Center in Pittsboro in August 2022. In addition to a new exercise space, the Dennis W. Streets Eastern Center Addition also includes an expanded multipurpose room and new restrooms.

Highlights of Service and Outreach

- ◆ 33,709 total meals served (Congregate, Shelf Stable, Frozen and Home Delivered)
- ◆ In-home aide hours of personal care: 18,549
- ◆ Medical Transportation: 2,816 rides
- ◆ Hours of family caregiver respite: 1,531 hours
- ◆ Information and Referrals: 15,333 (over 1,277 per month)
- ◆ Incontinence supplies: Averaged 95 requests per month at 30 adult diapers per client
- ◆ Medical equipment loans: 296 devices
- ◆ The Council's Minor Home Repair team provided repairs to 32 homes during the 2021-22 fiscal year



Chatham County Assistant Manager Bryan Thompson delivering a meal with the Meals on Wheels program.

Housing Development and Assistance

- ◆ The Chatham County Council on Aging continued its work with Meals on Wheels America and the Home Depot Foundation, receiving a third round of funding (\$100,000) via the Helping Homebound Heroes grant to assist veterans with needed home modification and repairs to help them continue living safely at home.
- ◆ Through its work in Helping Homebound Heroes, the Council was invited to present at the 2022 Meals on Wheels Annual Conference in Baltimore on the topic of "Effective Community Partnerships for a Seamless Client Experience."



Council Changes

◆ **Ashlyn Martin** (left) became the Council's new director in April 2022, filling the position vacated by Dennis Streets upon his retirement in January. Martin came to the Council after having worked for Senior Resources of Guilford, a non-profit organization in Guilford County. See Martin's full bio on page 4 of the report.

◆ **Kathryn Walters** (right), a Siler City native, became manager of the Western Chatham Senior Center in June 2022. She assumed the role upon the retirement of Faye Tillman, who recorded 18 years of service to the Council.

- ◆ Also in June, the Council started the year-long process of transitioning from a nonprofit to a full Chatham County department with the official onboarding of its staff. The process will be complete and the Council fully integrated into the county by July 1, 2023.



Chatham County Senior Games

Chatham County Senior Games (left), open to those 50 years of age "and better," attracted a record 266 participants in 2022 and was honored by North Carolina Senior Games for having the highest five-year participation percentage increase in the state. A total of 106 participants took part for the first time in 2022.

Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Cooperative Extension

The Chatham County Cooperative Extension continued to support the community through online, in-person, and hybrid educational platforms to keep farmers/producers safe and informed, to support parents, teachers, and caregivers, to provide exceptional hands-on learning and leadership opportunities for youth, and to nurture a new wave of home gardeners, cooks, and local entrepreneurs.

- ◆ Through the past fiscal year, the Chatham County Center assisted 17,802 direct contacts through educational programs, consultations, and facilitation work offered through agriculture, 4-H youth development, and family and consumer sciences disciplines. Through an influx of video and multimedia created by Cooperative Extension staff, more than 2,892,110 indirect contacts were generated through mass and digital media platforms for visitors across the country and globe.
- ◆ Volunteers remained critical for the Chatham County Center's community outreach efforts. Over the course of the past year, volunteers provided 4,001 volunteer hours that resulted in 6,989 known client contacts within Chatham County; this equated to service in the amount of \$103,947.
- ◆ The Visit NC Farms App, ran in conjunction with the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences and NC Cooperative Extension – Chatham County Center, has been going strong with the Chatham app being one of the top 10 in the state over the course of the past year with asset views and usage. The app connects millions of residents and visitors across North Carolina – and specifically here in Chatham County - to farmers, farmers' markets, and local food one community at a time.



Join today!



- ◆ The N.C. Cooperative Extension Annual Report is available online. For more information on local efforts of the Chatham County Center and how that impacts Cooperative Extension on a state level, check out the 2021-2022 report found here: https://issuu.com/tjmoore3/docs/2021extensionannualreport-web_version-reduced
- ◆ Easy access to the Chatham County Center's website for articles, event/class offerings, monthly newsletters, and more, check out the NC Cooperative Extension - Chatham County Center website utilizing the QR code or link provided here: <https://chatham.ces.ncsu.edu/>



Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Environmental Quality

Solid Waste & Recycling

- ◆ Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling has a bin at its main facility (28 County Services Road, Pittsboro) dedicated to Styrofoam collection for recycling. The Styrofoam is taken to a Dart Container recycling location in Randolph County. The Styrofoam is recycled into items like picture frames and fishing bobbers.



Don't Waste It!



- ◆ Over the past two years, Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling, Environmental Educators of North Carolina (EENC), and the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA), have worked to expand *Don't Waste It!* across the southeast.

Don't Waste It! is an educator guide to waste management, recycling, composting, and waste reduction, for formal and non-formal educators with lessons for pre-K to 12th graders. Thanks to a \$100,000 environmental education grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded SEEA, the program was brought to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

- ◇ Each state developed a customized *Don't Waste It!* guide, with state-specific resources, references, and curriculum correlations.

- ◇ Trained 44 new *Don't Waste It!* facilitators who went on to provide training to hundreds of educators in both in-person workshops and online training across the southeast.
- ◇ Brought the *Don't Waste It!* curriculum to a total of 602 educators across the southeast.



Sustainability

- ◆ Two Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations were installed by the County for public use in April 2021. The purchase and installation of these stations was largely funded by a grant from the Volkswagen Settlement fund administered through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. One is located at the Smithfield's Chicken 'N BBQ restaurant in Siler City (right) and the other is at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center in Pittsboro.



Highlights from Departments, Offices, and Programs

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

Education Outreach

- ◆ Coordinated Creek Geeks Field Day (right), held at Boling Lane Park, in partnership with Outdoor Science Labs, Loves Creek Watershed Stewards, and Town of Siler City. Included lessons on aquatic macroinvertebrates, watersheds, non-point source pollution, and native plants along with a tour of the nearby buffer area.
- ◆ Taught a soil science class at Central Carolina Community College's Sustainable Agriculture Program.



- ◆ Provided a soil science lesson at Jordan Matthews High School, including how to take a soil sample to send for testing (left).
- ◆ Provided educational materials to Chatham County Public School educators.
- ◆ Taught watershed lessons to 5th grade students at Perry Harrison Elementary.
- ◆ Attended Perry Harrison Elementary School's Fall Festival and provided quick lessons about non-point source pollution to attendees.
- ◆ Sponsored two Chatham County high school students to attend the Resource Conservation Workshop held annually at North Carolina State University.
- ◆ Sponsored 8 middle and high school teams to attend the Area 3 Envirothon competition.
- ◆ Sponsored 6 middle and high school teams to attend the NC Envirothon competition.
- ◆ In total, Chatham SWCD reached approximately 270 students and 30 teachers throughout the fiscal year.

Cost Share Programs

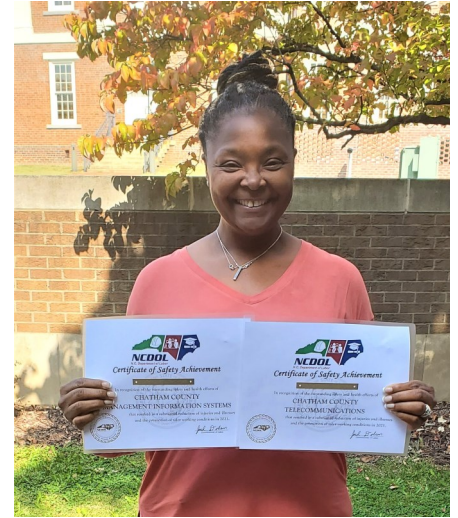
- ◆ Through the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP) Chatham SWCD was able to help fund several Best Management Practices (BMPs) including Livestock Exclusion Fencing, Stock Trail Stabilization, and an Abandoned Well Closure totaling \$26,002.
- ◆ Through the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) Chatham SWCD awarded \$50,000 towards Impervious Surface Conversion and Permeable Pavement Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- ◆ Through the Agricultural Water Resources Program (AgWRAP) \$22,500 was encumbered and will be used to help fund a Water Collection Reuse System and a Water Supply Well.
- ◆ One major project this year included the installation of over 13,600 square feet of permeable pavement at The Plant (right). The Plant is a diverse 17-acre eco-industrial park located on the east side of Pittsboro. Permeable pavement is an alternative to conventional concrete and asphalt paving materials that allows infiltration of stormwater in the ground.
- ◆ Chatham SWCD was awarded \$256,689 through the Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP). Funds will be used to remove debris such as log jams and beaver dams from 3 stream segments located in the county.



Chatham County Awards and Honors

For the 9th straight year, Chatham County received several top awards from the North Carolina Department of Labor for outstanding safety practices. Safety & Risk Manager Julie Farrington-Cheek, pictured right.

- ◆ Gold Second Year Facilities
- ◆ Gold Second Year Recreation
- ◆ Gold Second Year Public Health Department
- ◆ Gold Fourth Consecutive Year Social Services
- ◆ Gold Fourth Consecutive Year Solid Waste & Recycling
- ◆ Gold Sixth Consecutive Year Water & Water Treatment Plant
- ◆ Gold Seventh Consecutive Year Chatham County (which includes, Register of Deeds, County Manager's Office, Finance, Permitting, Planning, and all others not listed)
- ◆ Gold Ninth Consecutive Year Chatham County Library
- ◆ Gold Ninth Consecutive Year MIS
- ◆ Gold Ninth Consecutive Year Tax
- ◆ Gold Ninth Consecutive Year Telecommunications



Jennie Kristiansen (third from left), director of the Chatham County Department of Social Services, was named Director of the Year for 2022 by the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS). She received the award at the NCACDSS annual directors' meeting in May 2022 in Blowing Rock. Kristiansen has served the Chatham County Department of Social Services for 15 years and has been director since 2014.

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 32nd 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.

Shannon Culpepper (below), Recycling & Education Specialist, received the Outstanding Service Award from Environmental Educators of North Carolina (EENC) in September 2021. This award recognizes an active member who has served in several key leadership roles making a significant contribution to further the mission of EENC. Culpepper served on the board of directors of EENC for seven years as President, Policy Chair, and Conference Chair.



Chatham County Board of Elections Director Pandora Paschal was selected as a "Woman of Achievement" and was featured in the 5th annual Women's Issue of the April/May Chatham Magazine. She attended the annual Women of Achievement Luncheon at the Carolina Inn in June 2022. Also in June, the Chatham Chamber of Commerce held a Women's Event to honor her and the other Women of Achievement as their distinguished guest at Starrlight Mead.