

**Benson Chamber | Cary Chamber | The Chamber for a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro
Chatham Chamber | Clayton Chamber | Durham Chamber | Fuquay-Varina Chamber
Hillsborough/Orange County Chamber | Morrisville Chamber | Raleigh Chamber | Rolesville Chamber
Sanford Area Growth Alliance | Triangle East Chamber | Wake Forest Chamber | Wendell Chamber
Wilson Chamber**

The regional business community values collaboration and cooperation. While we address ongoing public health and small business issues, even amid a pandemic we must also capitalize on opportunities of job creation, talent development, diversity, entrepreneurship and growth as a region. We must also embrace the challenges that are associated with that growth. The regional chambers of commerce listed above are collectively focused on the following priorities to address both the opportunities and the challenges that drive our communities forward during a time of rapid change and momentum.

Economic Development

A favorable business climate enables the region to attract and retain opportunity for all. To support our recruitment and retention efforts, we recommend:

- Preserving, expanding and promoting flexible, targeted incentive tools at the local, county and state level that support continued job growth and investment.
- Identifying additional Opportunity Zone sites that encourage business investment in areas within the region that have not maximized their developmental opportunities.
- Supporting policies that expand international trade and investment opportunities.
- Expanding Site Development Readiness throughout the region.
- Supporting policies that ensure North Carolina is a leader in emerging industry clusters including Advanced Manufacturing, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Life Sciences, AgTech, CleanTech, EdTech, FinTech, and BioTech.
- Promoting continued competitiveness, equity, efficiency, simplicity, and certainty in tax policies.

Education and Talent Supply

The region's continued competitiveness depends on our ability to maintain and expand a diverse and highly skilled workforce. Our workforce must combine technical and soft skills and the flexibility necessary to support regional job growth. To produce this skilled and flexible workforce, we support:

- Expanding access to NC Pre-K programs, targeting 75% of eligible children and support for State Funding Model changes.
- Competitive compensation for education professionals including non-instructional personnel.
- Education and workforce development strategies/services that enhance the talent pipeline including work-based learning and apprenticeship programs.
- Strategies that align universities, community colleges and schools with existing/future industry needs, including innovation and entrepreneurship in the education sector.
- Champion connection between educational attainment and digital access—including personal equipment and affordable connectivity—so that more workers and students can access education, training, and supportive services online.
- Promote NC Workforce Credentials as validated non-degree credentials in demand by business and industry in North Carolina.

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Healthcare

Our business communities' ability to continue operating and add jobs is increasingly challenged by public health issues as well as escalating healthcare costs. Moreover, attracting and retaining the best talent requires access to affordable healthcare insurance coverage and to quality healthcare services. We therefore support healthcare policies that:

- Adopt proven methods of coordinated and quality-driven “whole health” care that achieve efficiencies in the delivery of services across the care continuum.
- Ensure healthcare providers are able to meet the healthcare needs of their communities by managing the availability of services that includes a robust telehealth network.
- Continue liability protections for health care, manufacturing, and all industries involved in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.
- Encourage public-private activation to achieve goals identified in local community health needs assessments.
- Increase small business access to affordable healthcare.
- Support access to affordable health insurance options/Association Health Care plans.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Sustainability

As the population in our region continues its rapid expansion, investment in transportation and infrastructure is a necessity to both ensure our ability to compete in a global economy and maintain a high quality of life. We support:

- Regional Transportation Alliance issues that include but are not limited to, the use of Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) for infrastructure investments and the implementation of Build NC to deliver critical road improvements.
- Prioritization of initiatives that identify sustainable funding and operations for RDU and the region's air transportation network, modernize state highway funding, and promote strategic investments for congestion relief and mobility options including commuter rail exploration.
- Investments in affordable and accessible broadband, high-speed fiber and digital information infrastructure.
- Identifying and addressing critical water & wastewater infrastructure needs.
- Policies that address reductions in carbon emissions, modernize the energy grid, and keep energy prices as affordable as possible.