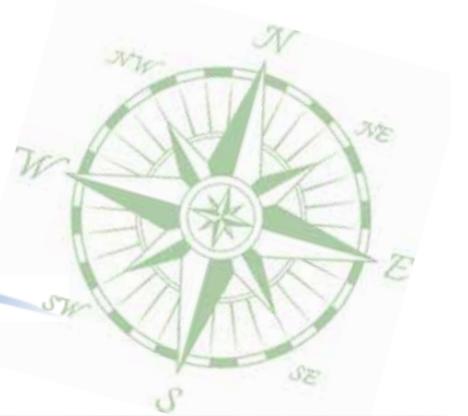




2018: The State of Chatham County Report



Follow the Compass: Plan Chatham

In November 2017, the Board of Commissioners adopted the Plan Chatham Comprehensive Plan, which focuses on the next 25 years. This adoption launched a flurry of implementation and related activities. County management organized cross-departmental collaborative impact teams that will focus on implementation. Read the plan at: www.chathamnc.org/comprehensiveplan

Comprehensive Plan Awards & News

- The Comprehensive Plan has won two major national awards and a top state award for its innovative community input, balance of rural character with job development, and inclusion of health and natural resources in the plan.
- Related plans are in the works or complete: Water & Wastewater Master Plan in partnership with the towns; Comprehensive Master Plan for Parks & Recreation; and Five-Year Aging Plan (completed by the Council on Aging).

New Jobs & Business Investment			
	FY 2017	FY 2018*	% Change
New jobs created	60	750*	↑ 1,150%
Value of jobs created by new businesses	\$2.1 million	\$21 million*	↑ 900%
New businesses capital investments	\$10.5 million	\$98 million*	↑ 833%
New business capital investment per \$1 county investment	\$61.09	\$275*	↑ 350%
Percentage of non-county funding for EDC	35%	55%*	↑ 57%

*Information from the Chatham Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Results for FY 2018 are estimates pending annual audit and final numbers from state & local partners

Economic Development

A report from the Chatham Economic Development Corporation on new jobs created and new business investment is above.

As a requirement of \$8 million in infrastructure grants from the Golden LEAF Foundation, the Board of Commissioners approved five-year options to purchase either of the two megasites if an industry is ready to locate. Also, the county assisted with two projects related to the CAM Megasite in Siler City:

- provided \$750,000 to upgrade the town's wastewater treatment plant
- helped secure an additional \$600,000 from the Golden LEAF Foundation to upgrade the town's water plant

County Leadership News

County Manager – Renee Paschal, who served as county manager since November 2015, announced her retirement effective Oct. 1, 2018 with 30 years of public service, most of it in the County Manager's Office. She played key roles in initiating many successful programs, including: an award-winning budgetary process, the Leadership Academy, capital improvement program, joint use facilities, and Citizens' College. Assistant County Manager Dan LaMontagne will be interim manager starting Oct. 1.

Cooperative Extension – On Feb. 1, 2018, Ginger Cunningham became the new director of the Chatham County Center of NC Cooperative Extension. She previously served as 4-H agent and 4-H program assistant. A native of Chatham County, she will soon earn her doctorate from NC State University, where she already has a master's.

New Departments

- We created the first county **Veteran Services Office** in October 2017. David Kennedy keeps office hours in Pittsboro and Siler City.
- Several court-related offices have been combined into a new **Courts Services Department**, led by Renita Foxx. The divisions include Chatham 360, family visitation services, child victim services and a new domestic violence program.
- **Watershed Protection** has transitioned to a full department led by Rachael Thorn. It is charged with oversight of four key environmental regulations.

Hurricane Florence Damage?
 Visit www.chathamnc.org/FlorenceRecovery to get information on filing claims and important tips.



Coming in 2021 - Seagrove High School

Education Highlights

The county made significant progress on several major school facility projects in FY 2017-18 as part of the county's Capital Improvement Plan:

- **Seaforth High School** – A design for this school has been approved. Slated to open in August 2021, it will have a core capacity of 1,400 students.
- **Chatham Grove Elementary** – This K-5 school will include a recreation center shared with the county. It also will serve as an emergency shelter. It will open August 2020.
- **Community College Health Sciences Building** – The facility will help meet the demand for health-related professionals. Opening late 2020, it will serve as an early voting location and the site includes land for a future county library branch.
- **K-12 Central Services Building** – It will house all administrative staff and provide meeting space. Construction begins in 2020.

The county provided funds to offset the impact of a 2017 state mandate to reduce K-3 class sizes, but is able to redirect the money to begin the transition of county-funded salary supplements for licensed employees from a flat-rate base to a percentage base.

Biennial Resident Phone Survey Major Improvements in Departmental Interactions			
Measure	2017 Grade	2015 Grade	Change
Overall interactions with staff	A-	B+	↑ 9.3%
Water Utilities billing & payment	B	C-	↑ 61.1%
Central Permitting & Inspections courtesy of staff	A-	B	↑ 24.1%
Planning – timely service	B	C+	↑ 26.2%
Planning – application process	B	B-	↑ 22.1%

Customer Ratings – A research firm conducted our biennial resident survey in November 2017, with calls to selected cell phones and landlines. Residents were asked to grade the county in specific areas, using grades A to F. The survey found major improvements since 2015, including several record-level improvements, based on the firm's experience.

Other Big News

Chatham County added four new staff in two departments to offer support to **victims of domestic abuse**. The county's **Child Victims Advocate** successfully offered the "Think first and Stay Safe" curriculum in all fourth grade public school classes.

A new **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee** hit the ground running. Members developed guidelines for a new Affordable Housing Trust Fund, partnered with Siler City on an assessment of housing conditions in target neighborhoods, and created both online resources and a brochure for tenants.

Central Permitting & Inspections launched public access to the online **CityView** portal December 2017. Nearly all permitting functions can be submitted and tracked online.

Chatham County Sheriff Mike Roberson and Health Director Layton Long convened more than 75 leaders for the **Chatham Opioid Prevention Leadership Summit** on Dec. 4, 2017. The **Sheriff's Prevention Partnership on Controlled Substances** led the planning effort and has continued to do important follow up work.

Just in time for Hurricane Florence, Chatham Emergency Management formed **Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)** to help communities better prepare for emergencies and disasters. Classes teach recommended actions before emergency responders arrive. CERT members provided valuable help during Hurricane Florence.

After nearly three years of effort, the county was able to attract a more reliable provider of mental health and substance abuse services for those with limited ability to pay. **Daymark Recovery** opened its Siler City Clinic on July 3, 2017.