

Commissioner Goals Update

Board of Commissioners Retreat
January 6-8, 2026



FY25 Goal List and Format

Plan Chatham Goals

Additional Goals

Commissioner Goals¶

Beginning in 2017 and continuing in the coming fiscal year, the Board of Commissioners adopted Plan Chatham goals and added three additional goals. The complete set of goals adopted is as follows:¶

Plan Chatham Goals:¶

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- → Preserve the **rural character** and lifestyle of Chatham County.¶
- → Preserve, protect, and enable **agriculture and forestry**.¶
- → Promote a **compact growth pattern** by developing in and near existing towns, communities and in designated, well-planned, walkable mixed-use centers.¶
- → **Diversify the tax base** and generate more quality, in-county jobs to reduce dependence on residential property taxes, create economic opportunity and reduce out-commuting.¶
- → Conserve **natural resources**.¶
- → Provide **recreational opportunities** and access to open space.¶
- → Provide **infrastructure** to support desired development and support economic and environmental objectives.¶
- → Become more **resilient** by mitigating, responding and adapting to emerging threats.¶
- → Provide **equitable access** to high-quality education, housing, and community options for all.¶
- → Foster a healthy **community**.¶

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Additional Commissioner Goals:¶

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- → Demonstrate **sound fiscal stewardship** to ensure we can meet the important service needs of our residents.¶
- → Provide **effective, efficient government** that is responsive to the different needs of residents and varying circumstances across the county.¶
 - → Mitigate the impacts of poverty among individuals and households in the county through programs and services that promote stabilization and resiliency.¶
- → **Ensure public safety** through adequate resources, plans, and partnerships to keep people and property safe.¶
- → **Strengthen relationships** with other boards, municipalities, and regional entities to address common challenges and opportunities.¶

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FY25 Goal List and Format

Commissioner's Areas of Focus

At the 2023 Board of Commissioners retreat, the Board of Commissioners indicated several key areas of focus for the County to prioritize in fiscal year 2024 and beyond:

- → Local Economic Development Initiatives
- → Partnerships
- → Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- → Affordable Housing
- → Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
- → Health Initiatives
- → Broadband Access
- → Organizational Excellence
- → Transportation
- → Natural Resources

Areas of Focus

Departments and Commissioner Goals

County departments with similar missions formed teams to provide better focus on achievement of these goals. To make the numerous goals, objectives, and strategies of Plan Chatham easier to track and address, high-level themes were identified and adopted by each team:

- → Safe, Vibrant, Healthy Community
- → Demand-Driven Public Services
- → Growth and Resource Management
- → Organizational Excellence and Resiliency
- → Data and Technology Gaps

Broad Goals

New Organization: BOC Goal Focus Areas

Goal Focus Area 1: Environment & Land Use

Goal Focus Area 2: Governance & Public Safety

Goal Focus Area 3: Resilience & Well-Being

Goal Focus Area 4: Economy & Infrastructure



Environment & Land Use

Goal 1: Preserve the rural character and lifestyle of Chatham County.

Chatham County values its rural identity, which is deeply rooted in its history, landscapes, and close-knit communities. To preserve this character, the County aims to guide growth in a way that respects the scenic beauty, farmland, and small-town atmosphere that residents cherish. This includes supporting rural economies, protecting open spaces, and directing new development toward existing towns and planned centers. Through thoughtful land use planning and community engagement, the County will work to maintain the rural quality of life while accommodating future growth in a way that honors local values and heritage.



Environment & Land Use



Goal 2: Preserve, protect and enable agriculture and forestry.

Agriculture and forestry are foundational to Chatham County's economy, culture, and landscape. The County is committed to supporting these sectors through policies that protect working lands, promote sustainable practices, and reduce development pressure on prime farmland and forested areas. This goal includes enhancing landowner tools such as conservation easements and agricultural districts, investing in infrastructure that supports farm viability, and fostering markets for local products. By enabling agriculture and forestry to thrive, Chatham County ensures that these industries remain central to its identity and economy while balancing land use priorities for future generations.

Environment & Land Use



Goal 3: Conserve natural resources.

Chatham County is home to rich ecosystems, including rivers, forests, and wildlife habitats that are vital to public health, recreation, and biodiversity. This goal reflects the County's intention to conserve these resources through proactive stewardship, smart development regulations, and community partnerships. Priority strategies include protecting water quality, preserving sensitive habitats, and encouraging low-impact development. Guided by science and public input, the County will integrate conservation principles into decision-making to ensure that natural resources are protected and accessible for current and future residents. Conservation is not only an environmental priority but a community investment in long-term well-being.

Environment & Land Use



Goal 4: Advance a resilient, healthy, and sustainable Chatham County by embedding climate change awareness and climate-conscious practices into county governance, planning, development, and service delivery.

To prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, Chatham County strives to integrate climate resilience across its operations and planning frameworks. This goal aims to reduce emissions, protect vulnerable populations, and build infrastructure that can adapt to climate-related risks such as extreme heat, flooding, and drought. The County will promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, green infrastructure, and hazard mitigation while aligning efforts with Plan Chatham and state-level climate guidance. By embedding climate-conscious practices into governance and development decisions, the County advances a healthier, more sustainable future rooted in science, equity, and environmental responsibility.

Governance & Public Safety

Goal 1: Demonstrate sound fiscal stewardship to ensure we can meet the important service needs of our residents.

Chatham County is committed to responsible financial management that supports core services, maintains public trust, and prepares for future needs. This goal emphasizes transparency, accountability, and long-range financial planning to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and effectively. The County will prioritize investments that align with community priorities and support equity, sustainability, and resilience. By maintaining a strong fiscal foundation, Chatham can deliver high-quality services, adapt to economic shifts, and fund strategic initiatives that improve quality of life for all residents.



Governance & Public Safety

Goal 2: Provide effective, efficient government that is responsive to the different needs of residents and varying circumstances across the county.

Subgoal: Mitigate the impacts of poverty among individuals and households in the county through programs and services that promote stabilization and resiliency.

Chatham County strives to deliver services that are accessible, equitable, and responsive to the needs of a diverse and growing population. This goal focuses on improving service delivery through innovation, performance measurement, and community engagement. Special attention is given to addressing poverty and economic instability by expanding access to supportive programs that promote self-sufficiency and resilience. The County will work to ensure that no matter where residents live or what their circumstances may be, they can depend on government to meet their needs with dignity, efficiency, and compassion.



Governance & Public Safety

Goal 3: Ensure public safety through adequate resources, plans, and partnerships to keep people and property safe.



Protecting the safety and well-being of Chatham County residents is a foundational responsibility. This goal reflects the County's commitment to ensuring law enforcement, emergency services, and public health systems are well-resourced, professionally staffed, and prepared to respond to both everyday needs and major emergencies. The County will strengthen interagency coordination, invest in training and technology, and develop proactive plans that reduce risks and increase community resilience. Public safety is more than a service—it's a partnership between government and residents to create a secure environment where all can thrive.

Governance & Public Safety



Goal 4: Strengthen relationships with other boards, municipalities, and regional entities to address common challenges and opportunities.

Collaboration is key to solving the complex issues facing Chatham County and the region. This goal focuses on building strong partnerships with the towns, school board, regional councils, and neighboring counties to align priorities, share resources, and develop unified approaches to shared challenges. Whether addressing infrastructure, economic development, housing, or environmental concerns, regional cooperation ensures that solutions are coordinated, efficient, and more impactful. By working together, Chatham County and its partners can leverage collective strengths and build a stronger, more connected future.

Resilience & Well-Being

Goal 1: Become more resilient by mitigating, responding, and adapting to emerging threats.

Chatham County is committed to building resilience across its communities by preparing for and responding to a wide range of challenges—from natural disasters and public health crises to economic disruptions and infrastructure vulnerabilities. This goal focuses on strengthening emergency preparedness, protecting vulnerable populations, and enhancing community capacity to adapt to change. Through comprehensive planning, strategic investments, and cross-sector coordination, the County aims to reduce risk, recover quickly, and ensure continuity of critical services. Resilience is not only about response—it is about building a foundation of preparedness that protects residents, strengthens institutions, and supports long-term community well-being.

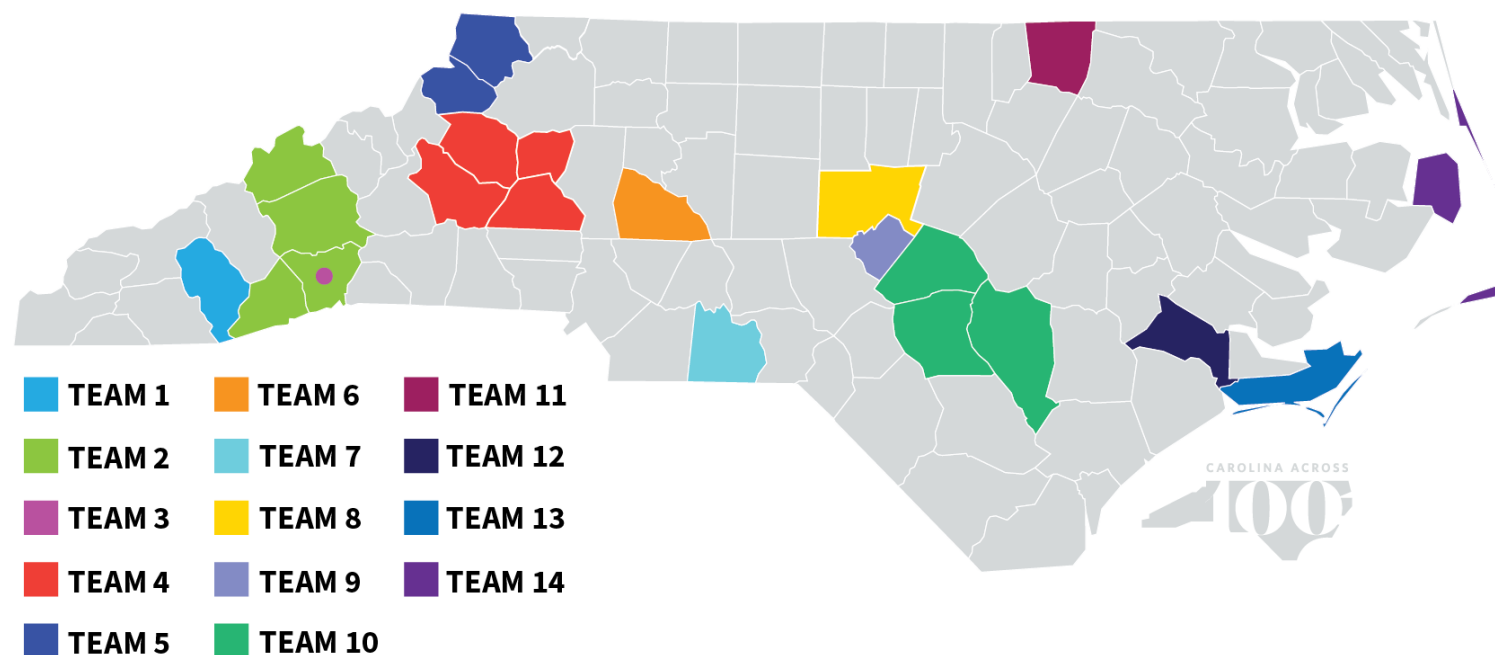


Resilience & Well-Being

Goal 2: Provide equitable access to high-quality education, housing, and community options for all.

Our State, Our Homes

Partnering to Address Housing Needs in Our Communities



Ensuring that every resident has access to opportunity is central to Chatham County's vision for the future. This goal prioritizes investments and policies that expand access to excellent public education, safe and affordable housing, and inclusive community spaces. The County will work with partners to remove barriers related to income, geography, and background, promoting equity across services and infrastructure. Strategies include supporting workforce housing, expanding early childhood education, and improving transportation access to jobs, schools, and amenities. By fostering communities where everyone can thrive, the County supports social mobility, economic growth, and a more inclusive quality of life.

Resilience & Well-Being

Goal 3: Foster a healthy community.

Chatham County recognizes that health is shaped by more than just access to healthcare, it is influenced by the environment, economy, housing, transportation, and community connection. This goal focuses on promoting physical, mental, and social well-being through a holistic, prevention-based approach. The County will work to reduce health disparities, support public health services, and create conditions that promote active living, clean air and water, and access to nutritious food. Collaboration with schools, nonprofits, and health providers will be key. A healthy community is a resilient community, and this goal ensures that health remains a shared priority across all sectors.



Resilience & Well-Being

Goal 4: Provide recreational opportunities and access to open space.

Chatham County recognizes that access to recreational opportunities and open space is essential to physical health, mental well-being, and overall quality of life. Parks, trails, greenways, and natural areas provide places for exercise, relaxation, social connection, and connection to the County's rural and natural character. As the County continues to grow, ensuring that residents of all ages and abilities can safely and conveniently access these spaces remains a priority. This goal focuses on expanding and maintaining recreational assets, preserving open space, and improving connectivity so that outdoor amenities are equitably distributed and accessible across the community. Through thoughtful planning, partnerships, and long-term stewardship, the County aims to support active lifestyles, protect natural resources, and create welcoming spaces that enhance resilience and well-being for current and future residents.



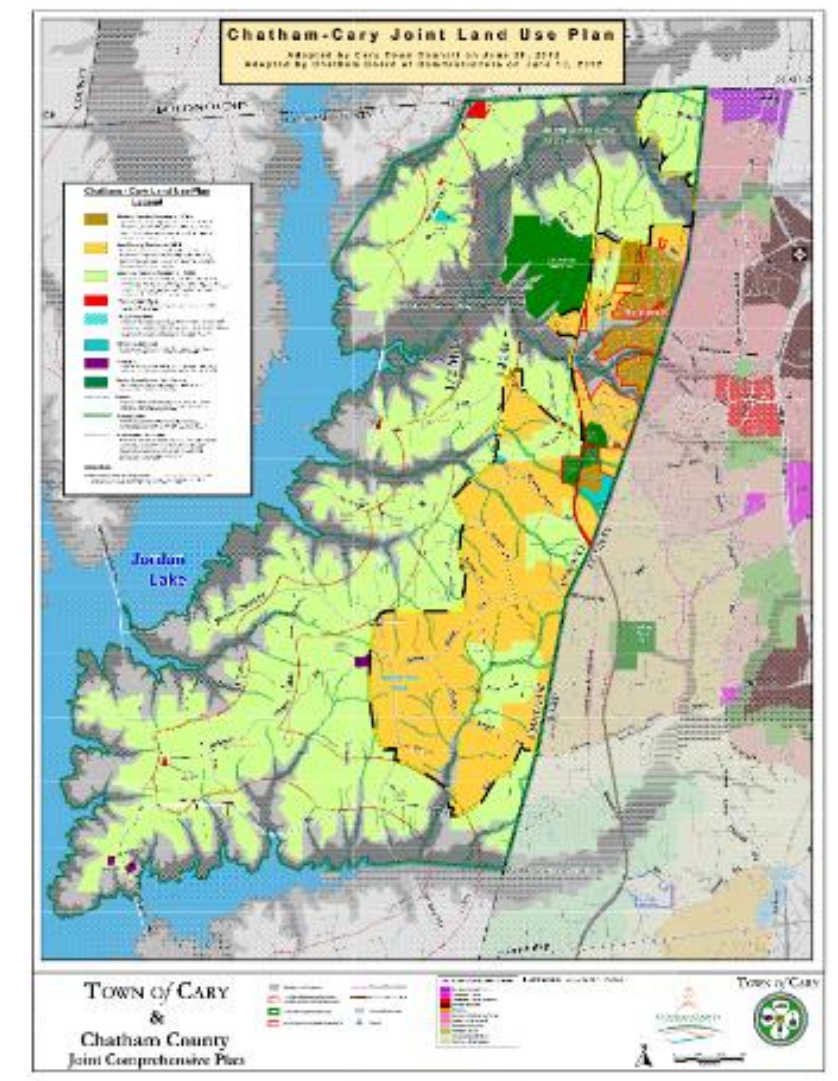
Economy & Infrastructure

Goal 1: Promote a compact growth pattern by developing in and near existing towns, communities, and in designated, well-planned, walkable, mixed-use centers.



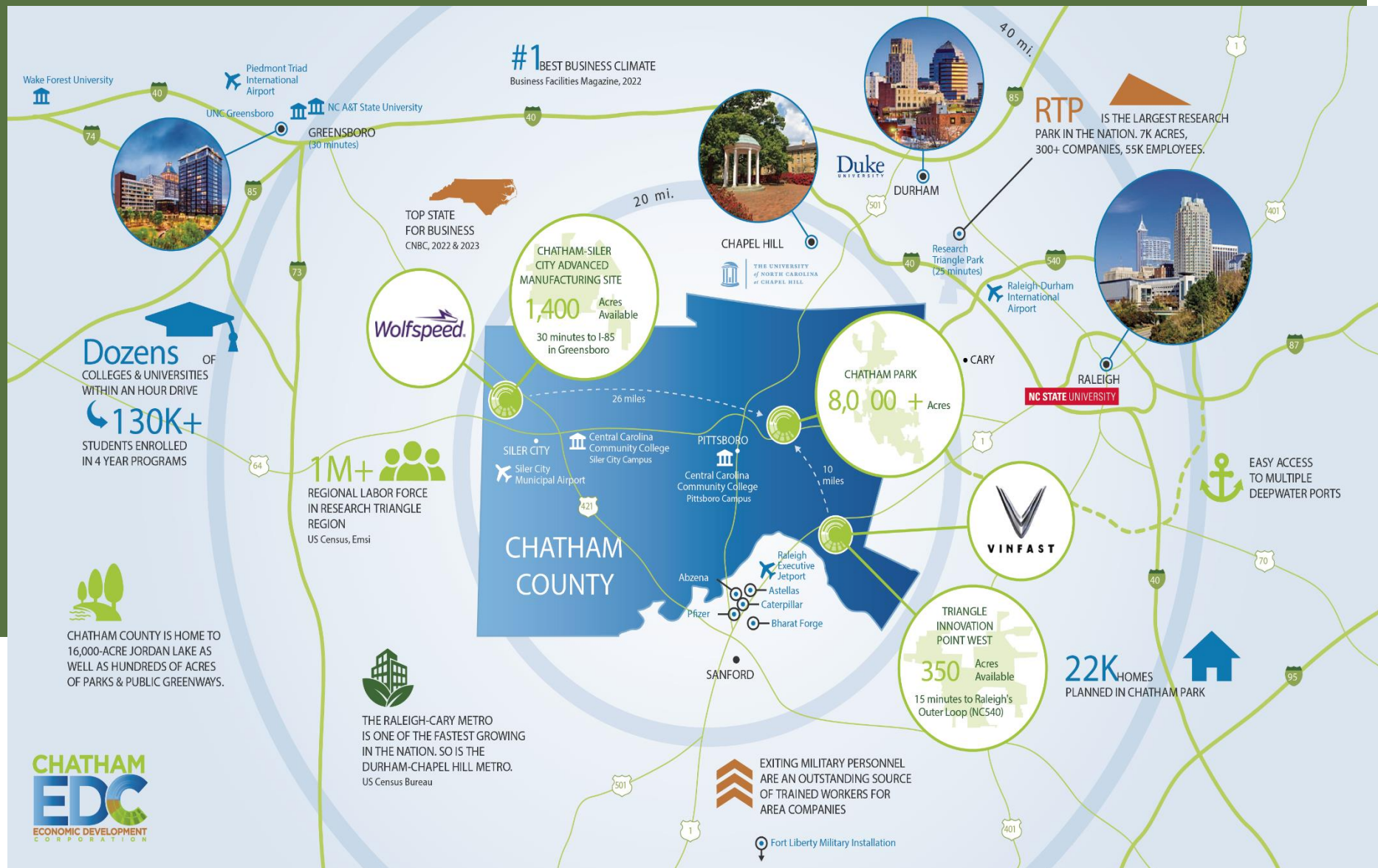
**RECODE
CHATHAM**

**PLAN
MONCURE**



Economy & Infrastructure

Goal 2: Diversify the tax base and generate more high-quality, in-county jobs to reduce dependence on residential property taxes, create economic opportunity, and reduce out-commuting.



Chatham County is committed to building a stronger, more resilient economy by expanding business opportunities and creating jobs that allow residents to live and work locally. This goal focuses on reducing the County's reliance on residential property taxes by attracting and retaining employers, especially in target sectors such as clean energy, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing. Strategic investments in workforce development, broadband, and business infrastructure are key to this effort. By fostering economic growth that is inclusive and aligned with community values, the County can support upward mobility, reduce out-commuting, and broaden its fiscal base for long-term stability.

Economy & Infrastructure

Goal 3: Provide infrastructure to support desired development and support economic and environmental objectives.



Infrastructure is the backbone of sustainable growth and economic competitiveness. Chatham County aims to proactively plan for and invest in critical systems that support the County's development goals. This includes aligning infrastructure expansion with areas targeted for growth and ensuring that systems are resilient, efficient, and environmentally sound. Coordinating infrastructure with land use and environmental stewardship allows the County to maximize public investment while protecting natural resources. By building infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and businesses, Chatham can support economic opportunity, enhance quality of life, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Questions?

