



Gaston Business Association Update

Gaston County Board of
Commissioners Meeting

April 13, 2021

- **Overview**
- **Organization Design Drivers**
- **GBA**
- **Strategic Planning Considerations**
- **Strategy Framework**
- **Strategic Plan**
- **Upcoming Activity**



- **Gaston County Board of Commissioners laid critical groundwork**
 - Historical collaboration with business sector
 - Gaston Economic Development Strategy Committee
 - Economic Development Competitive Positioning & Organizational Delivery Assessment (Abernathy)
 - Identified need for unified **economic development** strategy and effective utilization of resources

Economic development has been defined as the creation of places where people want to invest, work, live, and thrive



- **Key questions**

- What are the compelling economic challenges and opportunities facing Gaston County?
- As a business sector organization, what unique role does the GBA fill within a collaborative county-wide economic development strategy?
- How can partnerships with travel & tourism and economic development organizations be enhanced to eliminate redundancy and maximize impact?
- What intentional approaches must be utilized to serve all business segments and sizes effectively?



- **Purpose**

- We exist to foster a prosperous and inclusive Gaston County economy for business, residents, and visitors

- **Vision**

- We aspire to be an essential driver of Gaston County's transformation into a regional business and economic leader

- **Mission**

- We collaboratively promote business success and economic growth through leadership, marketing, programs & services, talent attraction & development, and advocacy



- **Guided by 15-member Board representing diverse businesses, experience, and perspectives**

Chris Peek, Co-Chair

Greg Botner, Co-Chair

Dan Boyd, Vice Chair

John Forgan, Treasurer

Lucy Talley, Secretary

Dara Hartman

Kerri Massey

Eric Clay

Moses Nueman Jr.

Joel Long

John Hauser

Terry Cox

Brian Gwyn

Janet Sytz

Jim Morasso



- **Deliberate effort to make fundamental decisions which shape and guide group identity, actions, and purpose**
- **Align resources to bridge the gap between current conditions and the envisioned future state**
- **Limit a reliance on past practices and accomplishments**
- **Comprehensive in nature**
- **Anticipate threats and leverage opportunities**



- **Guided by Purpose/Vision/Mission**
- **Informed by diverse input from Board of Directors and community leaders**
- **Focused on five strategic priorities**
 1. Influence the Business Environment
 2. Promote Business Success
 3. Enhance Workforce Capacity
 4. Drive Economic Diversification
 5. Foster Organizational Excellence



Influence the Business Environment

Unify the collective voice of business in support of forward-looking policies and infrastructure investments

- **Strengthen local, state, and federal government relations activity**
- **Enhance advocacy of public/private economic growth efforts**

County Strategic Objective
Support Land Development and Planning Programs



Promote Business Success

Identify the changing needs of business and respond with innovative, effective, and inclusive strategies

- **Identify and Address the Needs of Business**
- **Engage and Support Underrepresented Businesses**

County Strategic Objective

Improve Access/Services for a Diverse Community



Enhance Workforce Capacity

Prepare and retain talent to encourage and sustain long-term economic vitality

- **Align and optimize talent development activity**
- **Retain homegrown talent**

County Strategic Objective

Prepare for Accelerating Growth and Development



Drive Economic Diversification

Enrich Gaston County's economy, overall reputation, and regional position

- **Attract Remote Workers and Tech Talent to Gaston County**

County Strategic Objective

Grow and Diversify the Economy



- **Expand engagement of business and community partners to inform required actions to meet objectives**
- **Develop outcomes and success measures**
- **Deepen partnerships and collaboration in support of private, Municipal, and County efforts**
 - Align and leverage communication/marketing activities with County
 - Broaden opportunities to work with County T&T and EDC

