



**MINUTES
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023
3:03 P.M.**

Committee Members:

Mrs. Clarence Gilbert, Chair
Mr. Doug Pauley
Mrs. Peggy Swearingen

Others Present:

Mrs. Shirley Greene
Mrs. Laura Johnson (Interim Administrator)
Mrs. Synithia Williams (Deputy Administrator)
Mrs. Ann Broadwater (Dir. Economic Development)
Mrs. Holly West (Economic Development Project Manager)

I. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Gilbert

II. INVOCATION Councilman Pauley

III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION

Mrs. Williams introduced Ann Broadwater, Economic Development Director. Mrs. Broadwater presented a power point presentation. **Please see attached.**

Mr. Gilbert said he hoped the public could see their efforts to improve the economic development of the county. He thought the plan was positive. He thanked Mrs. Broadwater and recognized Councilwoman Shirley Greene's attendance.

IV. UPDATE ON COUNTY PROPERTIES PROMOTED BY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. West presented a power point presentation. **Please see attached.** There were no questions. Mr. Gilbert thanked her.


Mrs. Williams said they were excited that the committee was happy with the action items presented. As they brought economic development projects to them, they would refer back to the action items to ensure they were staying with the plan. Per a question asked by Mrs. Swearingen, Mrs. Broadwater said from January to September they had approximately 50 RFI's (Request For Information) and 12 actual visits. RFI's were issued for hundreds of sites and if a visit was requested, it was quite an accomplishment. If there was more than one visit, they were serious. She thought they had what it took. Companies wanted to know that they could do

business in the area and had the capacity to expand. It was known that Fairfield had plans for a wastewater treatment plant but companies wanted to know when it would happen. If they could give them a 12-24 month window, it would increase their chances. The companies that they were submitting information to were suitable to meet the County's current wastewater capacity individually. If more than one company wanted to come, they would be in trouble.

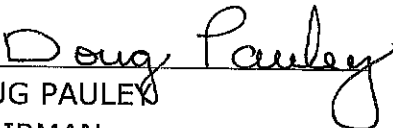
V. ADJOURN

At 3:39pm, motion made by Mrs. Swearingen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Pauley. ***The motion carried 3-0.***

PLEASE NOTE DUE TO AUDIBLE DIFFICULTIES, SOME STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS MAY HAVE BEEN MISSED.



KIM W. ROBERTS, Ed. D.
CLERK TO COUNCIL



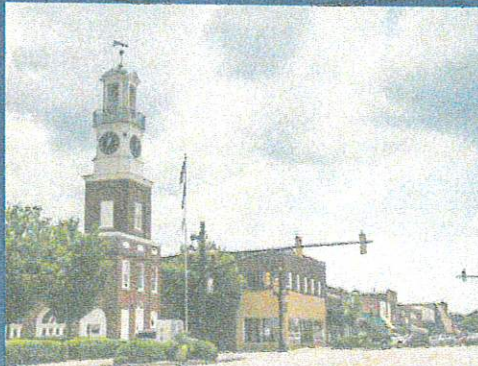
DOUG PAULEY
CHAIRMAN



FAIRFIELD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Program of Work





FAIRFIELD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Fairfield County Economic Development aims to increase economic opportunities for its residents and enhance the quality of life within its communities.

The goal of Fairfield County's economic development efforts is to create skilled, well-paying jobs. The county will achieve that goal by investing in industrial development, education and training, infrastructure, marketing, and housing. By making strategic public investments, Fairfield County will attract new, expanding, and startup businesses, tourists, and new residents that will provide new tax revenue for future investments in amenities and placemaking.

Economic Development Program of Work

- Business Attraction
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Product Development
- Marketing and Promotion

Target Industries



**Automotive &
Heavy
Equipment**



**Advanced
Manufacturing**



**Distribution &
Logistics**



**Light
Manufacturing &
Assembly**

Fairfield County Economic Development is a full-service economic development organization, providing existing industry support and site and building selection assistance for new and expanding industries. Additionally, the office provides demographic and labor statistics, wage and benefits surveys, and relocation support.

Goal: Quality Sites and Buildings to Attract and Retain Businesses

Strategy: Create an Ongoing Funding Source for Product Development

Action Steps:

- Develop a policy to re-invest proceeds from spec building sales in new spec buildings and/or site development.
- Explore using one cent sales tax funds to support priority economic development projects such as site preparation, infrastructure to sites, and spec building development.
- Develop a list of priority capital improvement projects to guide future budgeting.
- Support applications and grant matches for site development funding programs.

Strategy: Invest in Industrial Site Development

Action Steps:

- Create and implement a site development plan that includes a phased approach to control, assess, and prepare sites.
- Develop updated plan for the mega site and implement to make the site competitive and strengthen partnerships to facilitate development.
- Explore public-private partnerships for development in Fairfield Commerce Center.
- Close on Peach Road site and prepare the site.
- Conduct a site identification study to identify land for future industrial development and include identifying rail sites in the study.
- Preserve industrial zoned land and ensure the highest and best use of industrial sites, especially rail sites.
- Complete bridge repair and road improvement projects that will enhance industrial locations.

Strategy: Support Retail, Commercial, and Mixed-Use Developments

Action Step:

- Complete the Palmetto Sites Program for Exit 32 and bring those recommendations to County Council for action.

Goal: Retain and Support the Expansion of Existing Businesses

Strategy: Implement a Proactive BRE Program

Action Steps:

- Conduct regular business visits to identify barriers to growth and assess expansion potential.
- Organize networking events for existing businesses to connect.
- Complete a resource guide for existing businesses.
- Evaluate county finance and incentive programs to ensure they support existing businesses.

Goal: Develop a Strong Talent Pipeline

Strategy: Connect Business and Education to Collaborate on Education and Training

Action Steps:

- Conduct a feasibility study for a training/career center and/or center of industry excellence in Fairfield Commerce Center.

Fairfield County Economic Development Implementation Priorities

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Additional Priorities of Fairfield County

Beyond the Economic Development Program of Work, there are county priorities that support economic development.

Affordable Housing

- Complete the housing needs analysis.
- Invest in water and sewer and wastewater treatment plant.
- Make updates to the zoning ordinance to support housing development (e.g., density, accessory dwelling units, etc.).

Downtown Development

- Support Wi-Fi throughout downtowns.
- Utilize CDBG funds to assist downtown development.
- Implement the Recreation Economies for Rural Communities strategic plan.
- Invest in appearance and landscaping to improve areas connecting to downtowns.

Broadband

- Expand Wi-Fi to cover all county buildings.
- Review the map of broadband needs to identify service gaps, customer needs, and funding opportunities.



FAIRFIELD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Planning & Vision

Strategic planning & economic development go hand in hand

Where are we now?

What do we want to *preserve* in the community?

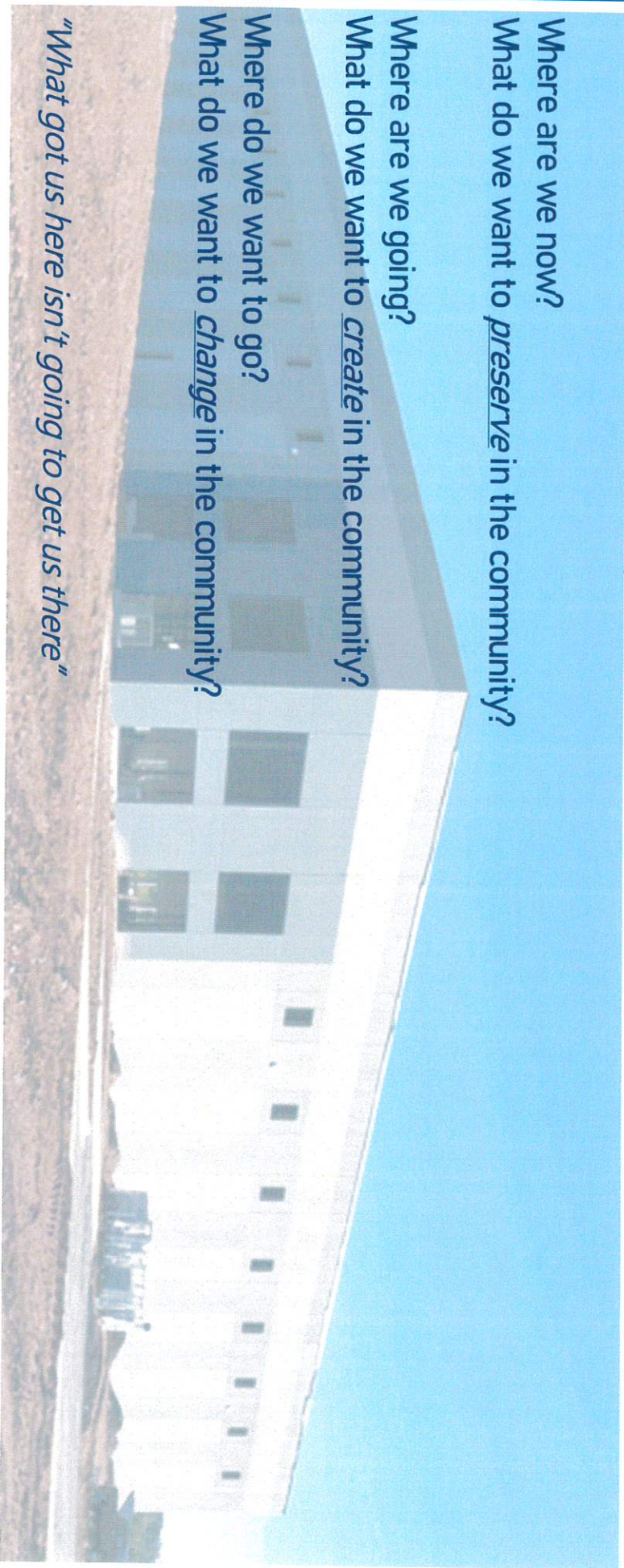
Where are we going?

What do we want to *create* in the community?

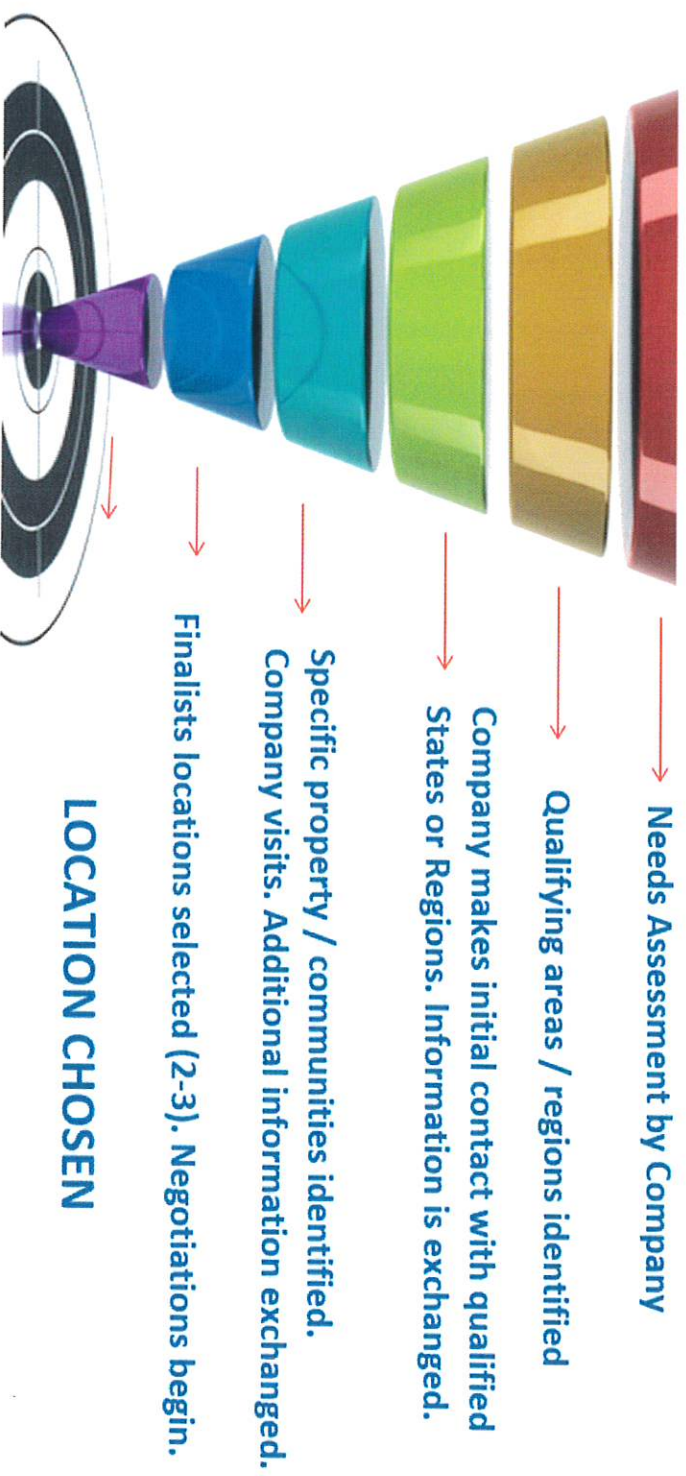
Where do we want to go?

What do we want to *change* in the community?

"What got us here isn't going to get us there"



Site Selection Process



Source: SC Dept. of Commerce

Site Selection Factors

- Availability of skilled labor
- Labor Costs
- Highway accessibility
- Corporate tax rate
- Tax exemptions
- Quality of life
- Energy availability and costs
- Occupancy or construction costs
- Accessibility to major airport
- Expedited or “fast-track” permitting
- Low union profile
- Proximity to suppliers
- Proximity to major markets
- Right-to-work state
- Training programs/technical colleges
- Environmental regulations
- Inbound/outbound shipping costs
- State and local incentives

Source: 15th Annual Consultant Survey Results, 2019

Ready for Business



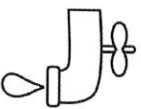
A revolving, re-investment Economic Development fund is essential for our growth.

Having the following helps us stay competitive when companies are looking to locate:

- **Buildings & Sites Ready**
- **Land Graded**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Due Diligence Studies Completed**

Ready for Business

Ready Infrastructure - These are **EXPECTED** when a company is looking to locate



Water



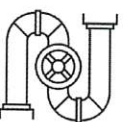
Sewer



Electric



Roads



Natural Gas



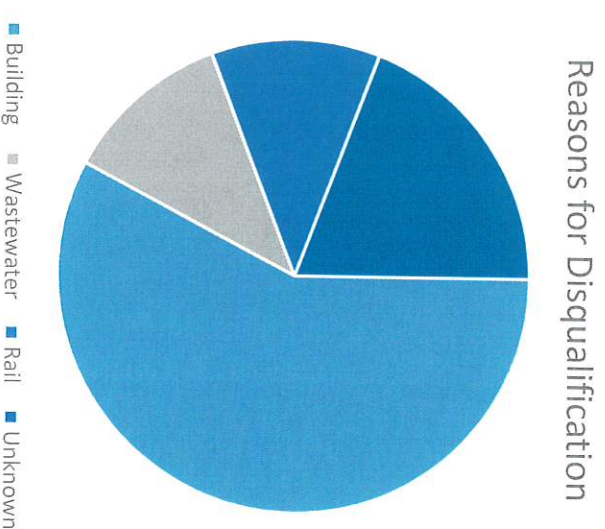
Broadband

FC Industrial Properties Overview

Property	Acreage	Distance to Highway (miles)	Positive	Status/Notes/Challenges
Peach Rd. Industrial Site	449	3.4	Partially County Owned	County owns 30 acres; additional 30 under contract for purchase Remaining land is privately owned with county option to purchase
Gum Springs	392	2.4	Rail Access	Privately Owned
Walter B. Brown II Park	2 parcels	2.5	Partially County Owned	County owns parcels 3 and 4 (6.6 acres and 18.8 acres). Oldcastle owns Parcel 2 (11.2 acres)
I-77 Mega Site - Valencia Rd.	1544	Adjacent	Rail Access, County Owned	Road improvements underway-funds received from SC Dept. of Commerce. CHALLENGE: Land owners not allowing easement/access to allow utilities through
Fairfield Commerce Center	478	1	County owned, our only spec building. Parcel 7 is graded	Spec Building to be complete Nov. 2023, 91k sq. ft. (+ Expandable) Park as drawn: 4.6 M Sq. Ft. total building space. CHALLENGE: Bridge repair needed, road only partially complete
Averyt Tract	478	0.5	County owns portion	County owns portion - Remaining privately owned. 2 lakes on property: 35 acres and 14 acres

Fairfield County Factors

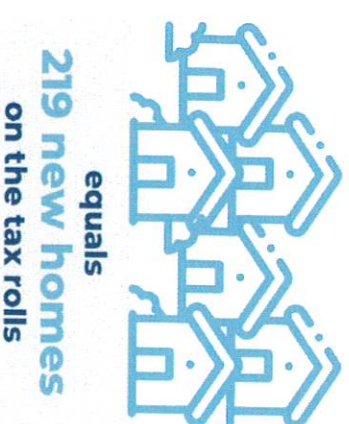
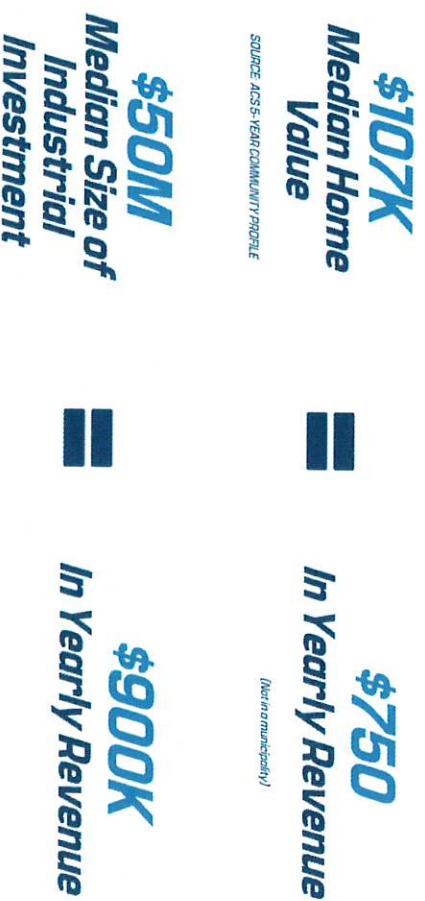
- 77 most recent projects
 - 37 Active, 26 Disqualified from Start
- 20 prospects have submitted job creation numbers
 - Average = 374
- Currently we have been “shortlisted” on more projects and have had more 2nd visits from prospects than the past several years



Impact of Economic Development

Capital investment from new companies (or expanding companies) increases the tax base which helps pay for essential services such as schools, police, fire and other local government functions.

Attracting new businesses spreads the tax burden, alleviating some of the burden on home owners.



Source: SC Dept. of Commerce

Wastewater

Remaining Capacity: 89 - 175k GPD

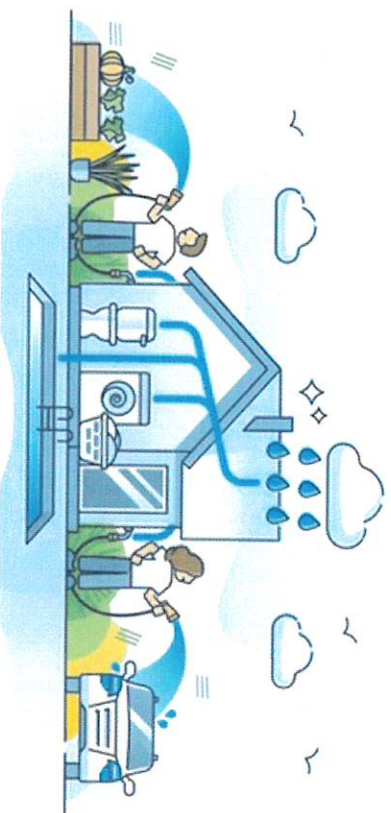
24/7 Operations = 175k GPD

Normal Business Hours = 89k GPD

Average Household Usage per day: 250 GPD

200 Homes x 250 GPD = 50,000 GPD

400 Homes x 250 GPD = 100,000 GPD



Active Project Sewer Requirements

These companies have visited more than once

Project Name	Investment	Sewer Need	Location of Interest
Bedrock	\$8 M	Very little (domestic sanitation only)	WBII
Greenstar	\$150 M	74k GPD	FCC Parcel 7
Maverick	\$210 M	(domestic sanitation only)	FCC Parcel 7
Sunny	\$20 M	30k GPD	FCC Spec Building

Priority Action Items

- Complete agreements to get Waste Water plant moving and intermediary solutions for increased capacity. This will allow industry to still locate in Fairfield County along with housing and commercial users until the plant is complete
- Gain occupant for Spec Building/keep ED funds revolving to get more sites ready (land graded in Fairfield Commerce Center and roads repaired, Mega Site work, Spec Buildings etc.)

