



# FAIRFIELD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Program of Work





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## 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.

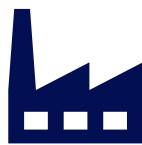
## Economic Development Program of Work

- **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.

- Promote the “teacher’s village” as a significant investment in talent attraction and development.
- Incorporate the skills needed by new regional employers (e.g., Scout Motors) in career pathways.
- Participate in regional efforts to plan and secure funding for training initiatives.

## **Goal: Raise Awareness of Fairfield County as a Choice Business Location**

### **Strategy: Market and Promote Fairfield County to Attract Investment**

#### Action Steps:

- Implement the newly developed comprehensive marketing plan.
- Continue to participate in regional and state business attraction programs, events, missions, and sales trips.
- Maintain up-to-date marketing collaterals – website, social media platforms, available properties flyers, e-communications, etc.
- Implement an internal communications strategy to socialize the “Fairfield County story” creating local ambassadors.

### **Strategy: Invest in Amenities and Placemaking Assets**

#### Action Steps:

- Issue a Request for Proposals for gateway and wayfinding signage design.
  - Fund implementation of the resulting recommendations for gateway and wayfinding signage.
  - Make Exits 32 and 42 a priority in implementation.
  - Explore corporate partnerships to design, fund, and install gateway and wayfinding signage.
- Create a uniform sign code to improve appearance.
- Update penalties for code enforcement to improve appearance.
- Continue to seek partners to develop an urgent care facility and other health care services that will close access gaps.
- Seek out best practices in blight reduction from similar communities.

## **Goal: An Innovative Economic Development Organization**

### **Strategy: Invest for Success**

#### Action Steps:

- Continue to explore the feasibility of a public-private nonprofit economic development organization to engage the private sector, be more responsive to business, and raise additional funds for economic development.
- Upfit the economic development office with marketing visuals.

### **Strategy: Strengthen Partnerships**

#### Action Step:

- Increase participation in regional economic development alliances and leverage their marketing outreach and support services.
- Strengthen connections with municipalities, adjoining counties, the region, and state to advance Fairfield County’s economic development goals.

# 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.