

Meeting Summary
Chatham County Economic Development Community Meeting

North Chatham School
Northeast Chatham, NC
6:00-7:30pm
June 26, 2007

6:00 Introduction/ Greetings

6:10 Overview of ED Plan
(PowerPoint Presentation)

6:30 Public Input: What types of jobs or businesses would you most like to see in your community?
(Feedback was solicited from attendees and written on a flip chart at the front of the room. The attendee feedback is detailed in the table below.)

6:45 Rank Jobs and Businesses
(Attendees were asked to place blue stickers next to desirable businesses/ jobs, and red stickers next to businesses/ jobs they would not like in Chatham.)

Jobs/ Businesses	# of Blue Dots (priority)	# of Red Dots (do not want)
Arts & B&B's- arts heritage tourism	9	
21 st Century jobs – high-tech/ biotech	9	
Form a non-profit focused on recruiting retired persons to do business and related consulting	7	
Alternative Energy	7	1
Knowledge based jobs	5	
Sustainable agriculture/ Agro-tourism	5	
Biotech tied to agriculture/ energy	5	1
R&D	4	
Sustainable; jobs that will stay here, and will be environmentally responsible	4	
Telecommuting	4	
Arts education institution	4	
Green Building	4	
Biolex; growing this existing business	4	
Specialty agriculture	3	
Hospitality focused business	1	
Businesses in historic district	1	

6:50 BREAK

6:55 Breakout sessions- Public Input

(The room was divided into 2 groups and each group was asked to answer the series of questions detailed below.)

Are there any additional jobs/ businesses you would like to see in Chatham?

- Senior Services- consolidated and centralized- good business opportunities.
- Match business and workforce.
- Retail to service population growth- balance of locally owned and chain stores- preference against predatory retail.
- Venture capital
- Start-ups
- Recreation-Tobacco Trail related
- Development Professionals

What changes need to happen related to Economic Development to create these jobs or businesses?

- Better pay for teachers/ better education
- Infrastructure
- Healthcare throughout county
- Appropriate Training for 21st Century jobs,
- Supportive environment for business development- streamline regulations and fees.
- Public transportation
- affordable/ workforce housing
- Economic housing development (mixed-use)
- Infrastructure (roads, sewer, telecommunications, broadband, legal)
- Incentives for green businesses
- Transparency in local government.
- Businesses to serve incoming businesses scouting new sites (hotels, restaurants, etc.)
- Opportunistic leadership
- A plan for preserving what citizens love about the county (i.e., rural character)

What do you most like, or want to preserve in your community?

- Expanses of public land for recreation/ parks (NYC; Chicago)
- Preserve rural character
- Preserve economic diversity of population.

- Hassle free, laid back pace
- “Small business” community
- Strong sense of community among citizens
- Greenways/ parks

7:15 Breakout Reporting and Discussion

7:30 Closing

NOTE: Approximately 40 people in attendance.