



GBA 2022 Annual Plan

Charting a Course for Prosperity

Gaston County is thriving and representative of the positive energy and growth in the greater Charlotte region. Each day, people and businesses throughout the county take advantage of opportunities to chart their course for prosperity. The Gaston Business Association (GBA) is at the center of this activity, working diligently to drive business success and economic growth.

The GBA leverages our unique position within the business community to address forward-looking, multi-year strategic priorities focused on influencing the business environment, driving business success, enhancing workforce capacity, and fostering operational excellence. Thoughtful strategy implementation will balance current realities with future aspirations while addressing identified business needs in a relevant, meaningful, and accountable manner.

INFLUENCE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Enrich Gaston's economic diversification, overall reputation, and regional position

DRIVE BUSINESS SUCCESS

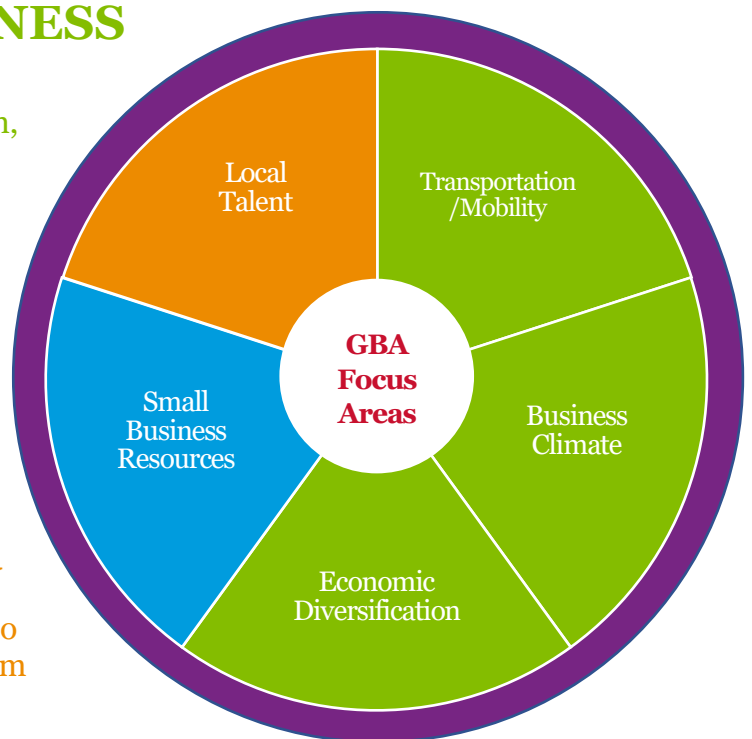
Identify and address critical business needs with innovative, impactful, and inclusive strategies

ENHANCE WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Attract, develop, and retain local talent to encourage and sustain Gaston's long-term economic vitality

FOSTER OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Enhance organizational effectiveness, Investor value, and financial strength



INFLUENCE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Local companies invest in the GBA to develop their business, grow our economy, and strengthen our community. Accordingly, the GBA unifies the collective voice of business to advocate for a healthy business climate, essential infrastructure investments, and strategic economic diversification.

Business Climate

The GBA strives to ensure Gaston County and the state of North Carolina maintain a business climate conducive to business attraction and expansion.

Strategic Objectives:

- Support business-friendly public policies
- Strengthen local, state, and federal government relations activity
- Enhance advocacy of quality pro-growth economic development opportunities

Strategic Initiatives:

- Establish GBA Advocacy Committee
- Create opportunities for Investors to engage with elected officials
- Develop a legislative agenda and communications strategy
- Define and communicate the characteristics of sound real estate development

Transportation/Mobility

Ensuring Gaston County has the infrastructure needed to support a growing population is key to maintaining an enviable quality of life and driving economic prosperity. The GBA collaborates with private and public sector partners to identify and address barriers to growth.

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop comprehensive transportation/mobility strategy
- Advance local, state, and federal infrastructure investments
- Address land use planning and implementation challenges

Strategic Initiatives:

- Work with public and private partners to identify critical transportation/mobility needs
- Determine infrastructure (water, sewer, broadband) requirements for growth
- Identify opportunities for cross-jurisdictional land use planning alignment

Economic Diversification

Diversified business growth across multiple sectors broadens the tax base, provides sustainable employment for residents, and strengthens the overall economic ecosystem.

Strategic Objectives:

- Attract talent to Gaston County
- Lead strategic economic development activity in the technology sector

Strategic Initiatives:

- Highlight Gaston's unique quality-of-life benefits
- Determine the need for technology jobs
- Identify local venture capital and private equity opportunities for emerging high-growth potential businesses

DRIVE BUSINESS SUCCESS

Connecting existing businesses with resources and services designed to meet their unique, growth needs fuels a vibrant, sustainable, economy.

Small Business Resources

The GBA works with business and community leaders, as well as nonprofit and government partners, to create a healthy ecosystem for small business growth in Gaston County. Programs, events, and connections to various service providers support business growth goals.

Strategic Objectives:

- Deliver exceptional and relevant programs and events
- Connect small businesses with partner service organizations
- Rapidly assess & respond to real-time business needs
- Support underrepresented businesses
- Champion and celebrate Gaston business successes

Strategic Initiatives:

- Streamline program offerings
- Enhance the Leadership Gaston program
- Partner with Gaston College Small Business Center and SBTDC
- Create and launch GBA Chapters in the East, Central, and West geographies
- Execute a robust peer to peer Investor onboarding process
- Identify and establish relationships with minority owned businesses
- Deliver highly effective, multichannel content

ENHANCE WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Essential to Gaston County's future economic prosperity is the ability to educate, recruit, and maintain a skilled workforce. Coordination between public schools, higher education, and business stakeholders allows for the creation of sustainable talent pipelines in various industry sectors.

Local Talent

In collaboration with our education and business partners, the GBA focuses on developing and retaining Gaston County residents to strengthen the local economy and provide economic mobility opportunities.

Strategic Objectives:

- Address critical workforce needs for identified sectors
- Ensure strong partnerships with critical public, nonprofit, and education partners
- Generate data-driven, future-focused policy outcomes
- Ensure policy agenda and process is directly responsive to business demands

Strategic Initiatives:

- Launch the Talent Pipeline Management program for the manufacturing sector
- Participate as essential member of Gaston's Business Employment Services Team, Workforce Solutions Action Team, and additional relevant workforce groups
- Collaborate with educators and training partners to close identified skills gaps
- Facilitate solutions for workforce transportation, childcare, and housing needs

FOSTER OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The GBA is focused on producing exceptional results, delivering distinct Investor value, and enhancing economic prosperity for all. This level of performance is most effectively achieved when our organization culture aligns directly with our strategy, initiatives, goals, and actions.

Culture

The unique culture of the GBA is shaped by the shared perception of how we function in pursuit of accomplishing our goals. It is further characterized by our collective learning experiences, which lead to a set of shared beliefs, values, and assumptions influencing our behaviors, rules, and norms.

Strategic Objectives:

- Foster innovative thinking and collaboration
- Encourage continuous learning and change readiness
- Promote transparency and accountability
- Establish and commit to a constancy of purpose
- Enhance and sustain financial strength

Strategic Initiatives:

- Align team members with strategic priorities and objectives
- Quantify service and program value for Investors
- Earn 5 Star US Chamber Accreditation
- Develop and utilize a performance review tool
- Increase annual aggregate number of Investors
- Increase overall Investor revenue
- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy

2022 Annual Plan Metrics

Strategic Initiatives	Performance Measure
Business Climate	
Establish GBA Advocacy Committee	
Create opportunities for Investors to engage with elected officials	
Develop a legislative agenda and communications strategy	
Define and communicate the characteristics of sound real estate development	
Transportation/Mobility	
Work with public and private partners to identify critical mobility needs	
Determine infrastructure (water, sewer, broadband) requirements for growth	
Identify opportunities for cross-jurisdictional land use planning alignment	
Economic Diversification	
Highlight Gaston's unique quality-of-life benefits	
Determine the need for technology jobs	
Identify local venture capital and private equity opportunities for emerging high-growth potential businesses	
Small Business Resources	
Streamline program offerings	
Enhance the Leadership Gaston program	
Partner with Gaston College Small Business Center and SBTDC	
Create and launch GBA Chapters in the East, Central, and West geographies	
Execute a robust peer to peer Investor onboarding process	
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Deliver highly effective, multichannel content	
Local Talent	
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