

# MOORE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Building More Than The Economy



Quarterly Progress Report  
June 30, 2023



# From Our President

In our final quarterly report for fiscal year (FY) 2023, you'll see there's been no slowdown in the level of business interest and activity we've seen recently in Moore County. Our organization continues to interact daily with existing and prospective businesses who want to expand their operations here.

Recognized as an attractive area for business, Moore County was ranked this quarter as NC's **top micropolitan** for the 6th year in a row and this fiscal year we recorded the highest number of new business leads in our organization's 20-year history.

As we closed this fiscal year, we met all of our annual goals, with the exception of one, and we advanced our key strategic initiatives, especially in our two key areas of focus:

- 1. Collaborate with existing businesses & others to address the needs of Moore County employers, and
- 2. Support & facilitate investments in infrastructure

In June, we helped an existing business in Robbins secure **\$220,000** in state incentives to help expand their workforce by 40 new employees, with average annual wages exceeding \$52,000.

In the last four years, we have been unable to respond to a client's request for a building or site **55%** of the time, making infrastructure investments, site identification, and business park development a key priority for us. This quarter, we continued to work with officials in Robbins, Carthage, Aberdeen, Southern Pines, Vass, and Moore County to identify new business park sites and conduct site planning.

In April, we reconvened the Entrepreneurship Task Force and began planning for the 2023 Moore Entrepreneurial Summit that will be held on November 14th to provide entrepreneurs with resources and information to help create new businesses in our community. We hope to have 200 attendees participate in the event and plan to aggressively market the summit in the early Fall.

We also continue to work closely with the Moore County Chamber of Commerce, Sandhills Community College, and Moore County Schools to schedule and plan workforce development meetings that will be held later this calendar year.

It remains an exciting time to be in economic development and I hope you enjoy reading about the initiatives we've advanced in the last three months in this Quarterly Progress Report!

*Natalie D. Hawkins*

Natalie D. Hawkins, PMP  
President  
Moore County Economic Development Partnership

## Inside This Report

- Business Recruitment, Retention & Expansion
- Site Development
- Workforce & Community Development
- Administrative Items



# Business Recruitment, Retention, & Expansion

MCEDP continues to respond to increasing levels of business interest in Moore County as we seek to facilitate the creation of quality jobs and capital investments in our community.

## Industry Expansion

This quarter, MCEDP staff visited three Moore County businesses, one of which is planning a significant expansion within 5 years. MCEDP was also pleased to celebrate 3 expansion announcements:

- In April, **Reliance Packaging LLC** in Aberdeen announced the purchase of a **\$3 million** printing press that will enable the company to double its production capacity of flexographic-printed rollstock and create 40 new jobs within 2 years.
- On June 9th, **Southern Pines Brewing Company** broke ground on its **\$2.5 million** expansion into the historic Buggy Factory building in downtown Carthage.
- The Town of Robbins was awarded a **\$160,000** Building Reuse Grant to support the expansion of **Carolina Growler, Inc.** The company will create at least 40 new jobs and invest almost \$340,000 in the expansion of their Robbins facility. The company will also receive customized workforce training valued at **\$60,000**.

*"The ongoing success and growth of many of Moore County's existing industries clearly communicates that Moore County is an excellent business location. We are excited about the job creation and investment these expansions will bring to the community." - Darryn Burich*

## Entrepreneurship Task Force

MCEDP's Entrepreneurship Task Force made tremendous progress this quarter with preparations for the **"2023 Moore Entrepreneurial Summit: Igniting Moore Business"** that will be held on November 14th at the Fair Barn from 5:30-8:30pm. The Summit will feature a keynote speaker, panel discussion, networking, an opportunity for entrepreneurs to "Pitch Your Business," and a Resources Expo with at least 15 entrepreneurial support organizations exhibiting. Be sure to save the **November 14th** date! More details coming soon.

## 2024 U.S. Open Hospitality

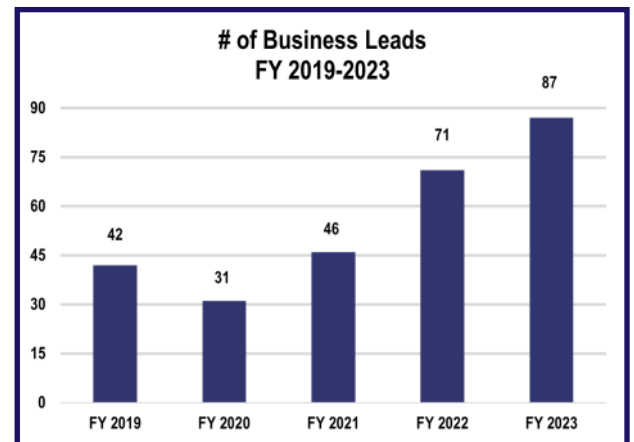
MCEDP executed a partnership agreement with the USGA, Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC) / Visit NC, and our local Convention & Visitors Bureau to share corporate hospitality space and participate in hospitality opportunities at the **2024 U.S. Open Championship** at Pinehurst No. 2 next June. The U.S. Open will be an excellent venue for leveraging our partnership with the USGA and advancing our recruitment efforts to expand Moore County's existing golf industry cluster.

## Year to Date Project Activity July 2022 – June 2023

In FY 2023, MCEDP staff responded to an unprecedented **87** business leads, an increase of almost 23% over FY 2022, and more than double historical levels. We are also seeing an uptick in the number of direct inquiries and referrals, which represent the lead source for **63%** of the 23 active projects at June 30th.

An analysis of leads received in FY 2023 indicates:

- **41%** were looking for **50,000 square feet** or less
- **50%** were looking for sites under **20 acres**



## 23 Active Projects at June 30, 2023



+2,960 Jobs



+803,000 square feet



+\$538 million investment

# Site Development

MCEDP remains intently focused on identifying and preparing sites throughout Moore County for development to meet the high level of demand for business expansion we are seeing.

Any property owner with **50** or more acres in Moore County who may be willing to sell their property for commercial/industrial uses is encouraged to contact MCEDP at [info@moorecountyedp.org](mailto:info@moorecountyedp.org).

## Northern Moore Site Identification

This quarter, MCEDP staff continued working with the Towns of Robbins and Carthage to evaluate the potential for acquiring one or more of the respective sites identified in those communities by site consultants under the Golden LEAF SITE grant MCEDP obtained last year. In total, the consultants identified **five** potential sites in Robbins and **four** sites in Carthage with development potential.



In Robbins, town staff contacted the owners of a 187-acre site identified as having the highest development potential, but the property owners were unwilling to sell. MCEDP and the Town will determine which of the four remaining site to focus efforts on next.

In Carthage, town staff met with owners of a 125-acre site and the property owners indicated a willingness to consider entering into a 5-year option to purchase agreement. The next steps are to complete an appraisal of the property and negotiate an option agreement.



*"Sites under public control may be eligible for additional grant funding to complete due diligence analyses." - Darryn Burich*

## Iron Horse Industrial Park

MCEDP was disappointed when closing did not occur last quarter on the purchase of the 73-acre parcel in the Iron Horse Industrial Park because we were unable to obtain access to the site from Carolina Road. This quarter, MCEDP staff successfully identified an alternative location for an access road and worked with the property owner on securing a dedicated right-of-way. With loan funds of \$400,000 still committed by Moore County and the Town of Aberdeen, in addition to grant funding, MCEDP hopes to resubmit our original Offer to Purchase (subject to several contingencies) with an anticipated closing by year-end.

*"We are hopeful MCEDP will be able to go back under contract on the Iron Horse Industrial Park site in the very near future."*  
- Natalie Hawkins

## Southern Pines Corporate Park

This quarter, MCEDP staff obtained a cost estimate to complete a wetland survey for the Southern Pines Corporate Park based on the wetland delineation previously completed in 2022. The survey is required to complete the next step of obtaining a Jurisdictional Determination by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which determines if the wetlands require regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.



*Area outlined in yellow shows approximate location of wetlands*

## Golf Cluster Campus

One of MCEDP's current initiatives is recruiting golf-related companies to Moore County to expand the cluster of golf companies already located here including USGA, Golf Pride, US Kids, Dunning Golf, and Donald Ross Sportswear. Recruitment targets include golf technology companies, R&D, corporate headquarters, satellite offices, and light niche manufacturers that complement the existing industry cluster.

MCEDP is looking to identify **100** or more acres that can potentially be developed as a golf cluster campus offering flex and office space to new and expanding golf companies wanting to locate in Moore County.

# Workforce & Community Development

## Workforce Housing

Many local businesses of all sizes and industry types continue to struggle with finding employees to fill their job vacancies. With Toyota, VinFast, and Wolfspeed expected to create more than 11,000 new jobs at their locations in the **NC Carolina Core** megasite corridor — all within an hour's drive of Moore County — concern is mounting about where these employees will come from and what the impact will be on Moore County's employers. The scarcity of affordable workforce housing has been cited as a deterrent to recruiting new workers to the region, particularly in Moore County.



As a result, realtor associations in the 20-county Carolina Core region, including the local Mid Caro-

lina Regional Association of Realtors, are coming together to spearhead a regional **housing needs assessment** to both quantify the need and determine how to address it. MCEDP has earmarked up to \$3,000 to contribute toward the study.



On June 6th, Amie Fraley, Executive Director of Sandhills Habitat for Humanity, spoke to the MCEDP Board about Habitat's plans to create a **mixed-use**

**workforce housing development** on the 100 acres they purchased off Hwy 15-501 in Aberdeen. A preliminary site plan includes single family and multi-family housing; open spaces; parks; and commercial development. This quarter, MCEDP staff also informed Habitat of a grant opportunity to obtain funds to help extend infrastructure to the site, which they are currently exploring.

## Mid-Carolina WDB



**MID-CAROLINA  
WORKFORCE & TALENT  
DEVELOPMENT**

As of July 1st, Moore County transitioned to the Mid-Carolina Workforce Development Board (WDB) that also serves the counties of Cumberland, Harnett, Montgomery, and Sampson.

Moore County was formerly served by the Regional Partnership WDB that was dissolved on June 30th as part of the realignment of North Carolina's workforce development boards to more closely correspond to the state's economic prosperity zones.

WDBs are appointed by county commissioners to bring together stakeholders who can deliver workforce solutions, assist job seekers, and help businesses develop a qualified workforce for regional economies and labor markets.

## Boomtown: Moore County's Tri-Cities



As part of its "Boomtowns" series, ABC 11 Eyewitness News interviewed MCEDP President Natalie Hawkins to gain insight into Moore County's thriving **Tri-Cities towns of Pinehurst,**

**Southern Pines, and Aberdeen.** The interview aired on June 28th and can be viewed [here](#).

*"We are seeing a notable migration of population under the age of 44 into Moore County." - Natalie Hawkins*

## NC's #1 Micropolitan for 6th Year

For the 6th consecutive year, the Pinehurst-Southern Pines micropolitan was ranked as North Carolina's **top micropolitan** in POLICOM's Economic Strength Rankings and is in the top 7% nationally of communities with a stable and consistently growing economy in 2023. The Pinehurst-Southern Pines micropolitan includes all of Moore County.

*"Our consistent ranking as the #1 micropolitan in North Carolina indicates the collective strength and success of Moore County's businesses that are the solid foundation of our local economy."*

*- Natalie Hawkins*

## Duke Energy Small Business Grant



The Moore County Chamber of Commerce is administering a \$100,000 Small Business/Non-Profit Grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to help Moore County's

small businesses thrive and grow. Funding between \$500 and \$5,000 is available to eligible small businesses and non-profits that have a storefront presence in Moore County and employ less than 100 employees. Funds can be used to enhance service or commerce opportunities, support storefront beautification projects, support workforce needs, and/or for marketing.

Application guidelines are available [here](#). The application form is available [here](#). The deadline to apply is August 31st.

# Administrative Items

## About Us

Moore County Economic Development Partnership is a not for profit public/private partnership for economic development in Moore County, NC.

Our mission is to increase economic prosperity and improve the quality of life for Moore County's citizens through the creation of quality jobs and capital investment in our communities.

## Our Staff

### Natalie Hawkins

President  
nhawkins@moorecountyedp.com

### Darryn Burich

Business Development Director  
dburich@moorecountyedp.com

### Melanie Thompson

Office Manager  
mthompson@moorecountyedp.com

## Our Contact Info

15 Chinquapin Rd, 2nd Floor  
PO Box 5885  
Pinehurst, NC 28370-5885

moorecountyedp.com  
(910) 246-0311

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

### Moore 100 Members Meeting

Sean Suggs, President of Toyota Battery Manufacturing, North Carolina  
October 30, 2023 (4:00pm)  
Carolina Hotel, Pinehurst

## Quarterly Performance Indicators

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, MCEDP met all of our annual goals with the exception of one. Moore 100 membership lagged the established goal level of 50 members.

Category	FY 2023 Staff Performance Goals	FY 2023 Goal	FY 2023 YTD Actual (Q4)
Business Visits	# of in-person business visits	12	14
Moore 100	# of Moore 100 members	50	38
	Moore 100 retention rate	75%	79%
Financial	Actual revenues as a % of budget	>100%	102%
	Actual expenditures as a % of budget	<100%	31%
Satisfaction	% of employers who agree MCEDP provides responsive services	80%	98%
	% of employers who agree MCEDP provides a high level of service & support	80%	97%

Goal Status	
Met annual goal	Did not met annual goal

## New MCEDP Brand

Formerly Moore County Partners in Progress, MCEDP unveiled its new name, logo, and website in April. MCEDP contracted with First Flight Agency in Southern Pines to complete a rebranding campaign that included changing the organization's name to **Moore County Economic Development Partnership (MCEDP)**, creating a more contemporary logo, and adopting a new tagline, "Building More Than the Economy." Our Moore 100 logo was also refreshed.



Our new website, [www.moorecountyedp.org](http://www.moorecountyedp.org), consolidated our previous moore-business.org and moorealive.com sites to provide one central location for all users and better market Moore County as a great place for business.

*"We have received a lot of positive feedback from the community on our new name and brand." - Natalie Hawkins*

## Moore 100

On June 21st, MCEDP hosted a Moore 100 Members Meeting at Pinehurst Resort with a record attendance of over **120** members, elected officials, and guests. Tom Pashley, President of Pinehurst LLC, spoke about the Resort's plans for course No. 10 and about preparations for the 2024 U.S. Open Championship next June.



Guest speaker Tom Pashley