



COMMUNITY CLOSE-UP: TRIAD NORTH CAROLINA

A WIN FOR ONE IS A WIN FOR ALL

Local organizations come together to boost the Carolina Core.

We're all in this together: This phrase has become commonplace during the COVID-19 pandemic. But in the Carolina Core, this notion has been gaining momentum since August 2018.

Bridging the urban crescent between Charlotte and the Research Triangle at the heart of the state, the Carolina Core is defined not by city or county lines, but by diverse assets connected along U.S. Highway 421 (future Interstate 685) and I-85. The Carolina Core is home to four megasites and several industrial sites, urban research parks and mixed-use developments. Businesses have access

to North Carolina's fast-growing metros, while still benefiting from the quality of life of mid-sized cities and small towns.

Public and private leadership in the Carolina Core is highly engaged and aligned on a vision for the future. Central North Carolina business, education and economic development leaders have coalesced around a cohesive economic growth strategy that focuses on the cumulative impact



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COMMUNITY CLOSE-UP: TRIAD NORTH CAROLINA

#GREENSBOROSTRONG

The Greensboro Chamber of Commerce steps up during the pandemic to become a steady resource for local businesses.

Gov. Roy Cooper's March executive order limiting mass gatherings sent small businesses into flux as they tried to determine how to operate under new normals caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The Greensboro Chamber of Commerce quickly sprung into action to become a reliable resource for its member organizations while navigating the crisis, compiling an extensive online information guide and hosting daily Zoom webinars covering pandemic-related questions.

"We needed a way to talk to our membership and the wider community and let them know we're still here," says Megan Mabry, director of marketing and communications at the Greensboro Chamber. "We started getting a ton of calls asking about ... the Small Business Administration, where funding was going to come from — anything like that."

The "Daily Action Calls" webinar series, hosted every weekday at 3 p.m. with local health and elected officials, have explored topics such as securing funding and pandemic resources, improving working from home and planning for reopening. The Chamber has also provided businesses with detailed online explanations of the SBA loans' application process, unemployment insurance and other local funding resources on its website.

One major blow Greensboro suffered due to the pandemic was the cancelation of this year's ACC and NCAA basketball tournaments, which were expected to have a \$30 million impact on the city. To make up for that lost revenue, the chamber partnered with the nonprofit Downtown Greensboro Inc. to push #GreensboroStrong, an initiative to support local businesses by providing information on purchasing local business gift cards, local online shopping options, area restaurants' pickup or delivery services, and apparel products that support businesses in the community.

"It sort of morphed into something that's bigger than us," Mabry says. The Interactive Resource Center, a local nonprofit, started selling Greensboro Strong and Greensboro Local T-shirts to support the arts and service industries.

After Gov. Cooper announced North Carolina would begin reopening on May 8, the Chamber's next challenge was assisting local businesses in safely navigating the three-phase plan.

It partnered with local human resources firm ALT HR Partners to develop the Small Business Restart Guide, a checklist of all the necessary steps businesses are required to take before reopening. The chamber reached out to its members

and created a network of local companies that can provide protective gear, cleaning equipment and services, and workplace signage for businesses in the community. The "Daily Action Calls" shifted focus to best practices for reopening and were slowly phased out at the end of May. But Mabry says it has established a strong brand that can be utilized again in the future. "We want to be a valuable resource for our members and community."

of the region's globally competitive assets in transportation, education, real estate, workforce and more.

"From our companies to our people to our deep investments in our communities, the Carolina Core is a future-ready region brimming with opportunity set to transform North Carolina," says Stan Kelly, president and CEO of the Piedmont Triad Partnership. "In fact, we believe that central North Carolina is the next engine of transformational growth for the state. The public and private sector have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure, sites and higher education, positioning the region as a top destination for business and jobs. When we come together to tell our region's collective story, our potential is unlimited."

The Carolina Core strategy has yielded collaboration and regionalism, with local chamber and economic development leaders who once competed against each other joining forces to sell the region collectively.

"We take pride in working together as a team," says Brent Christensen, president and CEO of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. "What sets us apart is our belief that when one of us succeeds in landing a project, we all succeed."

Over the last year, local economic development leaders from the region have participated in joint marketing missions to Chicago, Dallas, Greenville, S.C., and Atlanta to share the Carolina Core story with site-selection consultants. The coalition of leaders has also hosted site-selection consultants and the state's top economic development leaders on visits to the region. Together, these and other collaborative marketing efforts are increasing the visibility of a region on the rise.

"Through the Carolina Core, our

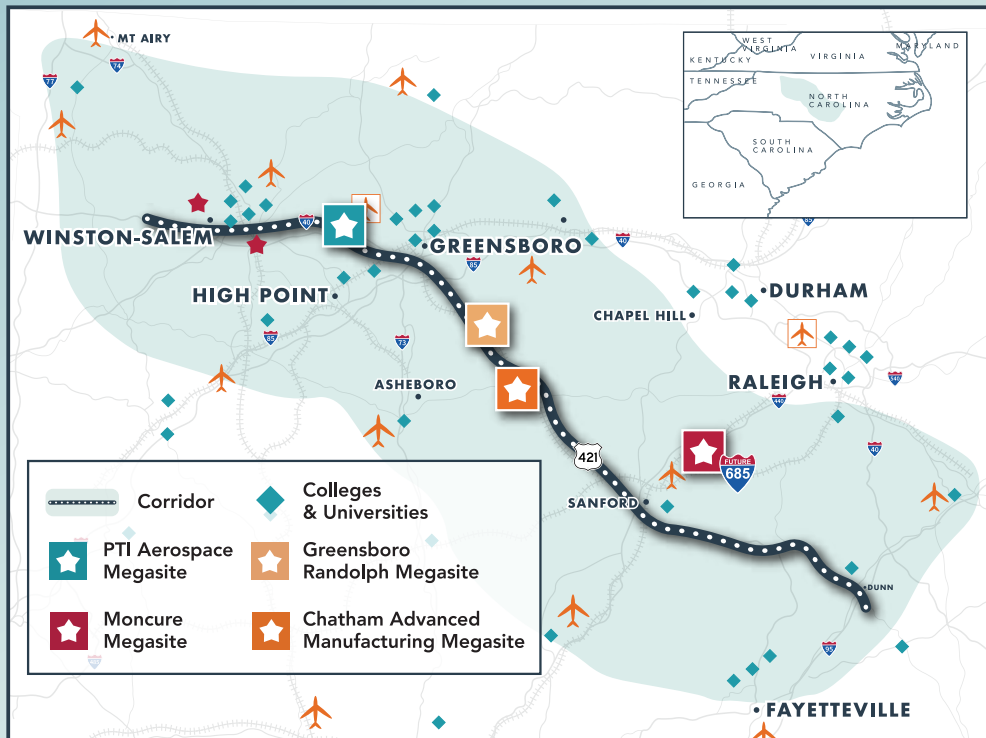


The city's chamber of commerce is providing resources to aid small businesses during the pandemic.



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Bridging the urban crescent between Charlotte and the Research Triangle in the center of the state, the Carolina Core is defined, not by city or county lines, but by diverse assets connected along future Interstate 685.

Anchored by four megasites, research parks and mixed-use developments, the corridor draws from a deep pool of manufacturing and engineering talent fueled by top-notch colleges and universities. Little wonder that global companies, corporate headquarters and startups alike call the region home.

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COMMUNITY CLOSE-UP: TRIAD NORTH CAROLINA



Regional business, higher education and economic development leaders joined NCDOT Board Chairman Mike Fox to unveil the official Carolina Core highway signs installed on U.S. 421 (future I-685).

region can present a unified voice of our many strengths including prime available sites and land, a diverse and educated workforce, and our innovative mindset," says Mark Owens, president and CEO of Greater Winston-Salem Inc. "When you pull together our unique assets, we are a strong and complete region that is ready for any project."

Today, leaders from the public and private sectors in the Carolina Core come together to fund large development efforts that attract and retain the best talent and entice new companies that want to build out industry clusters.

"Our collaborative, proactive approach through the Carolina Core provides an opportunity to differentiate central North Carolina in a highly competitive economic development landscape to attract businesses and new jobs," says Kirk Bradley, president and CEO of Lee-Moore Capital.

Community leaders have rallied around several projects that have helped transform the region such as Winston-Salem's Innovation Quarter, one of the nation's foremost urban research parks; Greensboro's Tanger Center for Performing Arts; and High Point's downtown Catalyst Project.

A REGION ON THE RISE

Companies such as Amazon, Publix and Pfizer have plans to invest and grow in the Carolina Core. Many other companies including Honda Aircraft, FedEx, HAECO and Aetna are continuing to grow in the region.

The companies cited the Carolina Core's robust workforce, strategic location, vast transportation and logistics networks, readily available sites and excellent quality of life as what attracted them to the area.

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FULL SPEED AHEAD: PROGRESS ON FUTURE I-685

Partners in the Carolina Core are collectively rallying behind a game-changing future interstate designation for Highway 421 to spur economic growth and make the region more competitive on the global stage. A future interstate designation will further enhance the region's robust transportation network by improving safety and mobility while providing the vital connection of Interstates 77, 85 and 95.

Support for Future I-685 is building, with the N.C. Department of Transportation and seven counties along the route unanimously passing resolutions endorsing the effort. The area's metropolitan and rural planning organizations have also given the green light in support of the interstate designation.

In partnership with members of North Carolina's congressional delegation, a bill of support for the future I-685 designation was drafted and approved by the Senate Transportation Subcommittee. The next step is inclusion in a bill that will be voted on in the future. While the language still has a long path to becoming law, this marks significant positive progress.



The Carolina Core is home to four megasites, industrial sites, urban research parks and mixed-use developments.

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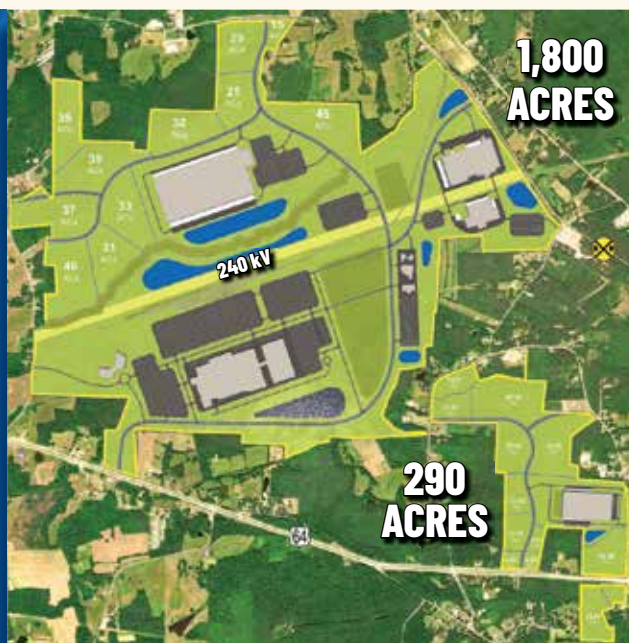
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THE SWIPEBY SOLUTION

A Winston-Salem startup helping small restaurants offer curbside takeout has turned into an overnight success during the coronavirus pandemic.

North Carolina's restaurant industry has been devastated by the coronavirus pandemic. Gov. Roy Cooper's stay-at-home order forced more than 18,000 establishments in the state to close their dining rooms. Swipeby, an app startup developed in Winston-Salem's Innovation Quarter, is helping keep small restaurants running with affordable, app-enabled curbside takeout.

Customers can browse menus and order, pay for and pick up food using the Swipeby app. It's become a safer option for restaurants to do business while social distancing.

Founder and CEO Carl Turner says he created Swipeby "with the mission to provide a better, more convenient and affordable takeout solution for eaters and restaurants." While popular delivery services such as GrubHub, DoorDash and Uber Eats charge customers \$5 to \$8 and upward of 25% to businesses, Swipeby's businesses fees are usually 4% or less. Since the pandemic started, Swipeby has waived its fees to help as many restaurants as possible, Turner says.

Turner, a native of Berlin, graduated from Wake Forest University with a degrees in finance and computer science

and a minor in entrepreneurship in 2017. That year, he began developing what would become Swipeby, using Winston-Salem's downtown coworking space, Flywheel, and gaining initial support from the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce. Swipeby became one of the first in a cohort of companies at the nonprofit Winston Starts incubator.

By the end of 2019, Swipeby had several hundred restaurants using its service, and Turner was seeking venture capital to take the company nationwide. The app was growing at a month-to-month rate of 30% before the pandemic. When the virus outbreak struck and restaurants were forced to close their doors for dine-in services, Swipeby's popularity skyrocketed. Demand was doubling by the day in late April. The app has been downloaded "tens of thousands of times," Turner says, and is on track to have more than 2,000 U.S. restaurants utilizing its services.

"As a startup, it's always nice to see growth, but in times like this, ... our attention is truly not focused on the app's success," Turner says. "Right now, our sole focus is on how we can help the biggest number of people and businesses."

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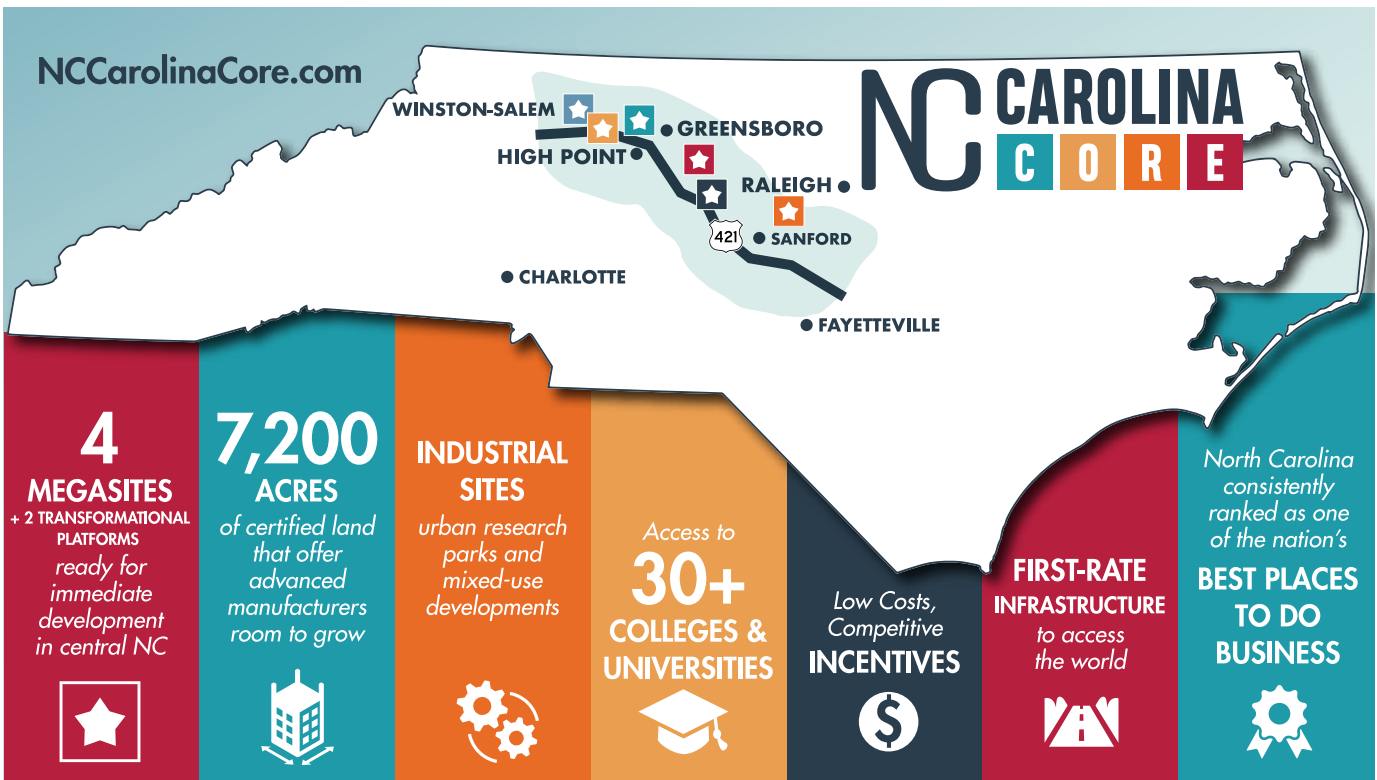
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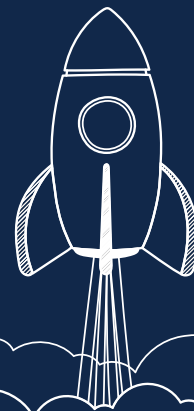
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Carolina Core's boundaries are built by the assets that make the region a globally competitive market: multiple airports, a talent pool of more than 2 million people, more than 30 colleges and universities with 250,000 students and more. These assets have long served companies from the era of producing goods such as tobacco and textiles to the current global tech-based economy.

In Greensboro and Winston-Salem, more than 800,000 square feet of Class A office space is available, and the Innovation Quarter in Winston-Salem has 2.1 million square feet of office, laboratory and educational space. Industrial operations have their pick of Whitaker Park, a 220-acre mixed-use campus, or one of four megasites that total 7,200 acres of certified land. The Greensboro-Randolph Megasite is a certified site located minutes from I-40 and I-85. At the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site, 1,800 acres of certified, shovel-ready land are powered by excellent logistics and high-capacity utilities. The 2,500-acre Moncure Megasite offers close proximity to the state capital, Research Triangle and three Tier 1 research universities. At the Piedmont Triad International Airport, the PTI Aerospace Megasite's 1,000 acres include runway access and preliminary approval for development by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

SMART AND GROWING WORKFORCE

The Carolina Core's population is fast-growing. The key working age population of 25- to 34-year-olds is projected to grow 7.3% between 2019 and 2024. The workforce continues to become more educated, with a 6.7% increase in degrees between 2013 and 2018. With access to more than 30

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colleges and universities, the Carolina Core is a hotbed for higher education. These institutions not only fuel the region's workforce, but also contribute to an innovation mindset and inject a vibrancy into communities with academic lectures, sports games and performances available to the public. Kontoor Brands President and CEO Scott Baxter says the talent at "our local universities is incredible, particularly around tech."

Talent in the Carolina Core "has a strong work ethic as we have seen in interns from nearby colleges as well as associates that have been with us for over a decade," says Michimasa Fujino, president and CEO of Honda Aircraft.

STILL FIRST IN FLIGHT

The more than 200 aerospace companies in the Carolina Core are

experiencing tremendous success thanks to an educated and productive workforce, high-value cost of real estate and utilities, and access to suppliers and market.

The region's community colleges are taking a central role to ensure North Carolina is still first in flight. This fall, Forsyth Technical Community College will welcome its first class of 25 students at the new, state-of-the-art Mazie S. Woodruff Aviation Technology Lab at Smith Reynolds Airport. The \$16 million, 53,000-square-foot lab can accommodate eight airframes and will help meet the growing demand for aviation technicians and mechanics. Starting salaries for graduates are expected to exceed \$60,000. Graduates of this program and aviation programs at Guilford Technical Community College are critical to the continued growth of the regional aerospace industry.

More than 18,000 people are employed in regional aerospace and supply chain companies. Aerospace leaders thriving in the Carolina Core include Honda Aircraft, headquartered in the region since 2006 and operating R&D, manufacturing and customer-service facilities; HAECO Americas, with 600,000 square feet of facilities including a new hangar that is one of the largest in the HAECO family; Textron Aviation, operating one of only 15 service centers for Cessna business jets worldwide; and Collins Aerospace Systems, operating the aircraft interiors division with 1,500 employees. ■

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT THE CAROLINA CORE

What makes the Carolina Core unique in the words of executives:

"There's a lot of momentum here, and things are starting to take hold. Be a leader and get in on the ground floor of what's to come for this community."

— Scott Baxter, president and CEO of Kontoor Brands

"A strong work ethic is critical to Honda Aircraft Company achieving its goals, and we are lucky to have found it here in the Carolina Core."

— Michimasa Fujino, president and CEO of Honda Aircraft Co.

"This is a place where you can get involved and have great prospects for your career as well as start and raise a family."

— Elise Peters Carey, president of Bethany Medical

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