



A PROGRAM OF THE ROWAN EDC

2025-2029  
CAMPAIGN FOR  
**ECONOMIC  
PROSPERITY**



INCREASING PROSPERITY

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

REDUCING POVERTY

An Economic Development Campaign of the



PARTNERSHIP for ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SALISBURY, NC

*Be an original.™*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CAMPAIGN LEADERS

In 2019, the Rowan Economic Development Council (Rowan EDC) proposed a new strategy for economic prosperity and vitality for the community. The Forward Rowan plan and accompanying campaign formed the blueprint that lifted us from being an economic laggard to an economic leader in the Charlotte region.


The results are evident in the tremendous growth we've witnessed. Our investment of time and money over the last five years has paid off for Rowan County with more than 2,500 new jobs, increased household income, and greater prosperity for all.

Forward Rowan also delivered impactful programs to address the need to attract new workers and address critical skills gaps. The new campaign builds on these efforts to develop and attract talent and they will be supported by ensuring a continued high quality of life through placemaking and livability initiatives.

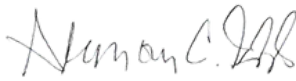
We've learned that a large inventory of available real estate and well-functioning infrastructure drives capital investment and job growth. The Rowan EDC will continue its work to maintain a steady stream of new buildings and sites in the pipeline along with the necessary infrastructure that makes a growing economy thrive.

**Forward Rowan 2** is a bold plan, and we will only be successful if businesses and stakeholders who support the vision of a more prosperous Rowan County engage in this initiative with us. We have clearly seen the value and benefit to our businesses and community the EDC provides and will continue our financial support in **Forward Rowan 2**. We ask that you join us in supporting our community by investing in **Forward Rowan 2**.

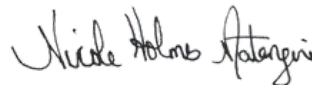
Sincerely,



**Steve Fisher**  
Forward Rowan 2  
Campaign Co-Chair



**Greg Edds**  
Forward Rowan 2  
Campaign Co-Chair



**Nicole Holmes Matangira**  
Rowan EDC  
Board Chair



**Luke Fisher**  
Rowan Growth Partners  
Board Chair





## CAMPAIGN CABINET



**Campaign Co-Chair**  
**Steve Fisher**  
F&M Bank



**Campaign Co-Chair**  
**Greg Edds**  
Rowan County  
Board of Commissioners



**Jake Alexander**  
The Alexander Companies, Inc.



**Stephen Bullock**  
Power Curbers



**Denise Hallett**  
Vulcan Materials



**Nicole Holmes Matangira**  
Holmes Iron & Metal, Inc.



**Cynthia Mynatt**  
Ben Mynatt Nissan



**Don Ruddy**  
Hexagon Agility



**Pete Teague**  
Livingstone College



**R. Victor Wallace**  
Wallace Realty

## HONORARY CABINET

Greg Alcorn, Global Contact Services  
Mayor Karen Alexander, Salisbury  
Mayor Randall Barger, Faith  
Mayor Brittany H Barnhardt, Granite Quarry  
Gary Blabon, Novant Health  
Mayor Chuck Bowman, Rockwell  
Dr. Anthony J. Davis, Livingstone College  
Luke Fisher, Carrol Fisher Construction Company  
Mayor Darrell Hinnant, Kannapolis

Mayor Barbara Mallett, East Spencer  
Dr. David Nelson, Catawba College  
Mayor Patrick Phifer, Cleveland  
Mayor Rodney Phillips, China Grove  
Mayor Meredith Smith, Landis  
Dr. Carol Spalding, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College  
Dr. Kelly W. Withers, Rowan-Salisbury School System  
Mayor Jonathan Williams, Spencer  
Teross Young, Ahold Delhaize/Food Lion



## BUILDING ON A HISTORY OF SUCCESS

*Macy's announced a new Rowan location in 2022, creating 1,300 full-time and 2,600 part-time jobs*

## OUR HISTORY

Since 1984, the Rowan EDC has led the effort to accelerate the local economy. Built on our foundational principles of **increasing prosperity, reducing poverty, and enhancing the quality of life for all**, the EDC has delivered an impressive record, especially in the last five years.

Five years ago, when the Rowan EDC launched the Forward Rowan campaign for economic growth, no one could have predicted it would coincide with a global pandemic. The economic impact of COVID-19 was immense. Fortunately, the EDC's Forward Rowan campaign provided the resources needed for the EDC to "pivot" and effectively help Rowan's businesses survive and thrive.

To establish a true public-private partnership, **The Rowan Growth Partnership** was established at the time of the original Forward Rowan campaign. This 501(c)3 nonprofit allows the Rowan EDC to leverage private-sector investments effectively, including tapping foundation grants.

## WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED

Fueled by the campaign, the Forward Rowan plan has exceeded its goals by attracting 2,529 new jobs and nearly a billion dollars in new capital investment to Rowan County.

**New Jobs**  
**2,529**  
**JOBS CREATED**

Goal = 2500

**101% met**

**Capital Investment**  
**\$986m**  
**NEW CAPEX**

Goal = \$350m

**281.6% met**

**New Payroll**  
**\$25.82**  
**AVG WAGE**

Goal = \$15.86 avg wage

**162% met**

We are proud that 55% of the 22 projects bringing new job growth since 2020 represent existing Rowan County businesses. We estimate the new investments from existing and new businesses have added about **\$6 million** to Rowan County's annual tax revenues.

## WE'RE NOT DONE YET!

As we wrap up the final year of the Forward Rowan strategic plan and campaign, the Rowan EDC is currently managing 25 active projects representing a potential of over 3,300 new jobs and \$2.3 billion in new capital investment. Now is the time to take the next step in strengthening Rowan County's position as one of the Charlotte region's most desirable areas for businesses and individuals to succeed.



The Rowan Growth Partnership structure has successfully brought together our public and private sectors for the implementation of a long-term economic growth strategy. This public-private partnership will continue as our blueprint to increase Rowan County's prosperity over the next five years and beyond.

## CRITICAL CHALLENGES FOR ROWAN COUNTY

**Need for Talent** – The struggle for talent grows even more heated as competition among companies and communities creates additional demands for increasing the available labor force.

**Workforce Skills Gap Solutions** – Rowan County must have broad-based workforce solutions that address the skills needed today and tomorrow. Ensuring that existing companies have access to a strong and diverse talent pipeline is critical.

**Development Capacity** – Over the last four years, Rowan County has gained nearly 20 million square feet of new industrial space, representing some 2,000 acres of land. To ensure **quality growth and job attraction**, Rowan County must identify additional parcels of land suitable for development to maintain its competitive edge and ensure that the infrastructure for water, sewer, roads, and energy are sufficient to support a growing economy.

**Quality of Life** – Quality of place and community appeal are increasingly critical factors in talent attraction and business recruitment. Local and regional assets such as transportation, entertainment, recreation, dining, and other amenities are significant factors that shape company relocation decisions or expansion choices or provide an ideal location for a remote workforce. We must continue to develop and promote our enviable lifestyle in Rowan County.

Economic development is not a sprint but a marathon. The best competitors know that the race is not over once they win. Our community must stay vigilant and focused on the quest for economic prosperity. We must build on past successes while accelerating our momentum.

**Forward Rowan 2** is the vehicle for growth in Rowan County. We invite all to help us build this together by becoming investors to fully fund this bold plan so the community we love can continue to grow and prosper.





Over the past four years, the Rowan EDC has helped 22 companies create more than 2,500 new jobs and invest more than \$986 million in Rowan County, **BUT WE ARE JUST GETTING STARTED.**







Through **Forward Rowan 2**, leaders from the public and private sectors will work with the Rowan EDC to advance the following guiding principles:

**Increasing Prosperity** – Rowan County must move towards an economy where all residents have the opportunity to work, prosper, and enjoy rising income. The plan prioritizes creating wealth, expanding the talent pool, and increasing the well-being of all residents.

**Reducing Poverty** – Rowan County’s poverty rate continues to lag state and national rates. Stronger labor markets and higher income levels will help those families living in poverty move above the poverty threshold.

**Improving Quality of Life** – Rowan County enjoys an exceptional "quality of life" comprised of a complex set of indicators that include healthcare, housing, education, arts & culture, crime, taxes, recreation, and more. Improvements in livability factors will attract companies and people, add revenue, and boost the image of Rowan County.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- INCREASING PROSPERITY
- IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE
- REDUCING POVERTY

1

TARGETED, QUALITY GROWTH

2

TALENT ATTRACTION & DEVELOPMENT

3

SITES, BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE

4

QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACEMAKING

*Rowan's economic development surge began in 2019 with Chewy announcing a new facility here*



*Amrep Manufacturing Company announced a \$21 million project expansion in 2024 that will add 170 jobs to their existing workforce*

## Priority 1: Targeted, Quality Growth

Top-performing regions understand that many factors influence economic success – including workforce, quality of life, quality of place, and more. However, the "traditional" economic development activities of business attraction and business retention and expansion (BRE) are still the strongest strategy in helping a community compete for new business locations and expansions.

**Goal:** Grow and attract diverse, wealth-creating jobs by amplifying business recruitment and expansion efforts, advancing innovation, strengthening industry clusters, and generating more high-paying jobs.

### KEY OBJECTIVES

- Assist existing businesses in their growth efforts
- Attract new firms and investments
- Support entrepreneurial development
- Maintain a business-friendly culture and reputation

### ACTIONS

- Broaden Expand Rowan, the Rowan EDC's business retention & expansion program that proactively addresses the needs of Rowan's traded-sector businesses
- Attract new employers in Rowan County's targeted sectors
  - Advanced Manufacturing, focusing on transportation equipment and food processing
  - Logistics & Distribution
  - Life Sciences
  - Professional Services
  - Data Centers
- Ensure infrastructure and amenities are enhanced to support business expansion and development
- Work with local municipalities and elected officials to adopt policies that are welcoming to new and existing businesses





*The Rowan EDC's talent attraction campaign includes retaining area college students to work and live in Rowan after graduation*

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## Priority 2: Develop, Retain & Attract a Talented Workforce

A talented workforce is the most critical factor influencing a community's economic competitiveness. Businesses across all economic sectors prioritize the quality and availability of workers when making expansion and relocation decisions. We must develop, retain, and attract a leading workforce to grow and thrive as a region.

**Goal:** Grow the talent pool by expanding efforts to attract and retain in-demand talent and supporting regional workforce development initiatives.

### KEY OBJECTIVES

- Expand efforts to attract in-demand talent
- Align the County's talent pipeline with skills needed
- Grow and promote Career & Technical Education (CTE)
- Promote the innovation occurring in education systems across Rowan County
- Retain the County's college graduates

### ACTIONS

- Actively engage in the development of demand-driven education and training programs in high school and secondary education
- Work with education and workforce partners to increase educational attainment levels in Rowan County
- Increase awareness among Rowan County businesses about available workforce development programs
- Attract new residents and workers by promoting the job opportunities available among Rowan County employers
- Highlight the favorable working environments and career opportunities available within Rowan's major industries





*General RV announced their first North Carolina dealership and service center in 2023 with 150 full-time jobs and \$25 million investment*



*19 million square feet of speculative building space has been planned for development in Rowan County*

## Priority 3: Ensure Competitive Industrial Sites & Buildings

Rowan County's success has primarily been driven by the development of nearly 20 million SF of speculative industrial space over the past five years. The EDC will work with its community partners and the developer community to ensure a competitive supply of sites and buildings.

**Goal:** Champion the continued development of commercial and industrial real estate assets and public infrastructure improvements in Rowan County.

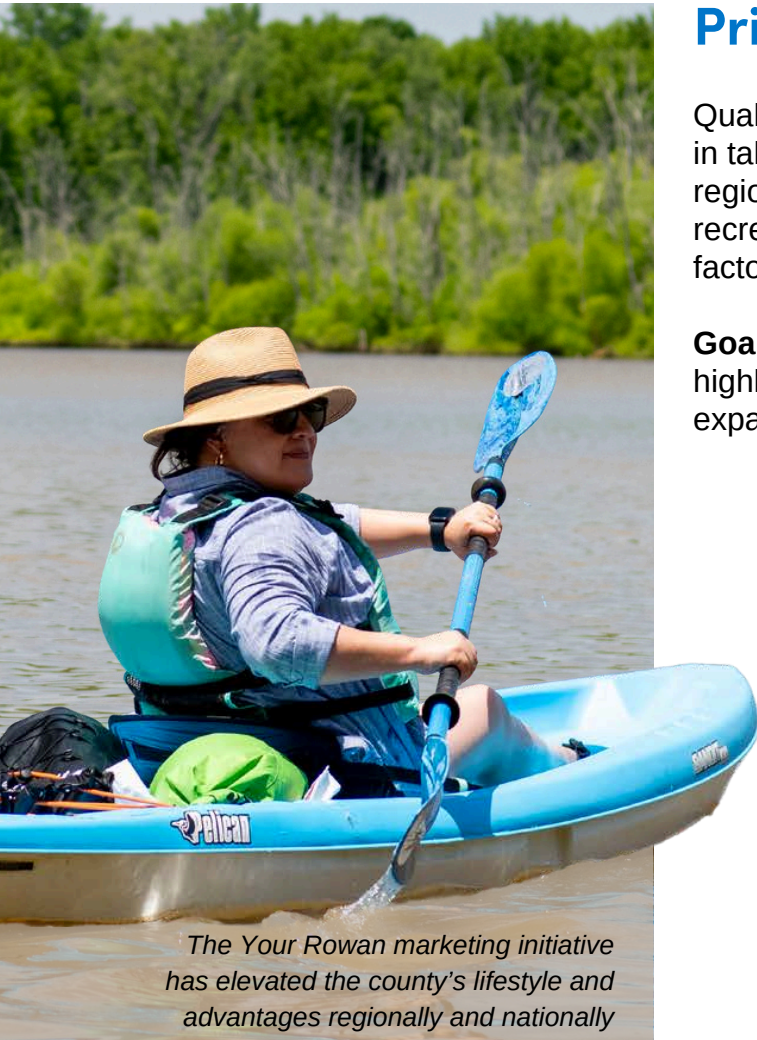
### KEY OBJECTIVES

- Maintain a supply of available spec buildings and shovel-ready sites
- Work with utility providers to ensure adequate availability of water, sewer, natural, gas, and electric power to meet growing demand
- Serve as a thought leader and advisor on critical infrastructure issues affecting economic competitiveness

### ACTIONS

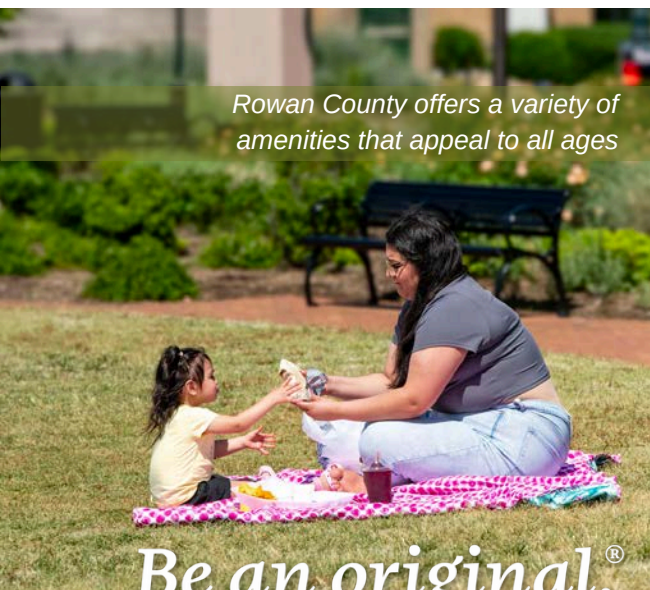
- Maintain contact with key developers and brokers to promote further investment in Rowan County
- Work with the NC Department of Commerce and EDPNC on securing a megasite designation in Rowan County
- Work with Rowan municipalities to identify sites to add to the inventory of available development opportunities
- Use the EDC Site Development Fund to assist properties in becoming more marketable
- Maintain a publicly available and up-to-date database of available sites and buildings





*The Your Rowan marketing initiative has elevated the county's lifestyle and advantages regionally and nationally*

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*Rowan County offers a variety of amenities that appeal to all ages*

*Be an original.<sup>®</sup>*

## Priority 4: Placemaking & Livability

Quality of place and community appeal are critical factors in talent attraction and business recruitment. Local and regional assets such as transportation, entertainment, recreation, dining, and other amenities are significant factors that shape decisions to relocate or expand.

**Goal:** Reinforce Rowan County's brand identity while highlighting prominent lifestyle features and supporting expanding quality-of-life amenities.

*Your* **ROWAN**  
BE AN ORIGINAL

### KEY OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen the positive reputation and image of Rowan County to external and internal audiences
- Promote housing options, improved transportation assets, increased cultural amenities, and recreational options
- Support the sustainability of the natural environment and agricultural assets of Rowan County

### ACTIONS

- Build on the success of the "Your Rowan" campaign with continued marketing and the development additional funding
- Leverage the "Be an original." brand and communications to promote the diverse character and amenities of the region to a broader audience of residents and future residents
- Monitor emerging quality-of-life concerns and serve as a thought leader on matters related to placemaking and livability, identifying issues of concern such as housing availability and quality childcare
- Align economic development, downtown development, tourism, and the Rowan Chamber of Commerce around quality-of-life initiatives



## The Outcomes

The Forward Rowan initiative expects these proven strategies will increase local prosperity, decrease poverty, and improve quality-of-life and has set these measures of success.

**By the end of 2029, the Rowan EDC will:**

- Attract 3,000 new primary jobs, targeting the following industrial clusters of:

<i>Food Processing</i>	<i>Logistics &amp; Distribution</i>
<i>Life Sciences</i>	<i>Professional Services</i>
<i>Data Centers</i>	<i>Transportation Equipment</i>

- Attract new jobs that pay in excess of the county average wage as determined annually by the NC Department of Commerce<sup>1</sup>.
- Secure \$500 million in capital investment from new industries or existing industry expansions.
- Attract 1 million SF of new spec space annually, announced or completed.

## Economic Impact

Implementing the projects outlined in the Forward Rowan 2 plan is expected to create 3,000 direct jobs.

**Once realized, these jobs will create:**



**MORE THAN 2,000 INDIRECT JOBS WITH AVERAGE WAGES OF NEARLY \$20 PER HOUR**



**TOTAL PAYROLL FOR DIRECT AND INDIRECT JOBS OF NEARLY \$255 MILLION**



**ANNUAL CONSUMER EXPENDITURES OF NEARLY \$141 MILLION**

<sup>1</sup> County Average Wage, as determined by the NC Dept. Of Commerce for 2023 was \$52,100.



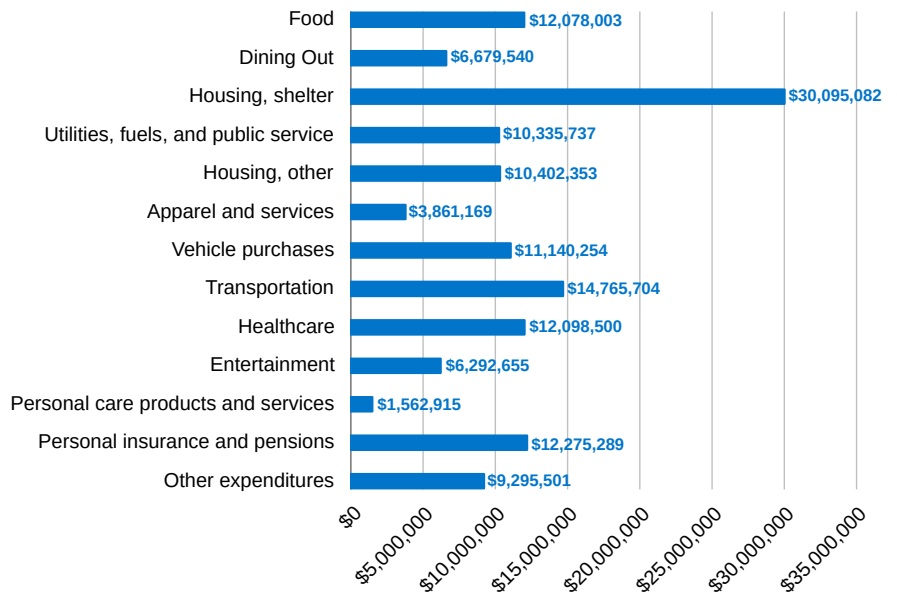


## TIME TO INVEST

To continue improving Rowan County's economy, the Rowan EDC needs resources for marketing, talent attraction, technology, existing business assistance, workforce development initiatives, quality-of-life development, and the staff to carry out these programs. A public-private investment of **\$6.0 million over the next five years** will provide the operating funds needed to execute the **Forward Rowan** plan for the continued growth of Rowan County.

The Forward Rowan campaign made the difference in the success of the Rowan EDC over the last five years. The future of Rowan County requires that the private and public sectors continue and expand their support of the **Forward Rowan 2** plan by financially supporting the campaign.

### Forward Rowan 2 Economic Impact by Industry Sectors



### Forward Rowan 2: Five-Year Budget

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVE		ANNUAL BUDGET	5-YEAR BUDGET
Targeted, Quality Growth	40%	\$480,000	\$2,400,000
Talent Attraction	30%	\$360,000	\$1,800,000
Product Development	10%	\$120,000	\$600,000
Placemaking and Livability	20%	\$240,000	\$1,200,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>		<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>

## Oversight & Governance

Our commitment to our investors is to provide regular updates on the plan's overall performance. The Rowan EDC staff and Board of Directors will implement the five-year plan with continued input from investors and the Rowan Growth Partnership board.

## About the Rowan EDC

Economic development benefits Rowan County and its residents. The Rowan EDC is the County's primary organization for facilitating business growth by assisting existing business expansion and attracting new jobs and investment from outside businesses. The Rowan EDC works with government agencies, business leaders, regional economic development organizations, site selection consultants, and others to facilitate expansion and development strategies for existing businesses and to recruit target industries to Rowan County. Our mission is to promote a vital economy to improve the overall quality of life for residents of Rowan.

The Rowan County Board of Commissioners established the Rowan EDC in 1984 by resolution. In 2003, an affiliate 501(c)3 organization was created to provide private-sector support for Rowan's investment promotion activities and is now called Rowan Growth Partners.

The Rowan EDC team includes an experienced staff of five professionals who work with the board of directors to execute the strategic plan. Combined, the staff has more than 75 years of economic development experience.

*Rowan EDC Team (left to right):  
Kendall Henderson, Mollie Ruf, Rod Crider,  
Joanie Michael, and Scott Shelton*





## ROWAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greg Alcorn  
Global Contact Services

Cynthia Mynatt  
Ben Mynatt Nissan

Gary Blabon  
Novant Health Rowan Medical Center

Terry Osborne  
Rowan / Kannapolis ABC Board

Dr. Anthony Davis  
Livingstone College

Tim Proper  
F&M Bank

Luke Fisher  
Carrol Fisher Construction

Larry Roth  
Shuckin' Shack

Nicole Holmes Matangira  
Holmes Iron & Metal, Inc.

Ashley Stewart  
Town of Landis  
USI Insurance Services

Karla Foster Leonard  
New Pointe Properties, Inc.

R. Victor Wallace  
Wallace Realty

## ROWAN GROWTH PARTNERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Alexander Companies, Inc.

Stephen Kidd  
Kidd Financial Investments

Gary Blabon  
Novant Health

Bryan Overcash  
Global Contact Services

John Carr  
Salisbury Post

Don Ruddy  
Hexagon/Agility

Greg Edds  
Rowan County  
Board of Commissioners

Pete Teague  
Livingstone College

Luke Fisher  
Carrol Fisher Construction  
Fisher Realty Inc.

Brad Walser  
Walser Technology Group, Inc.

Steve Fisher  
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Jason Walser  
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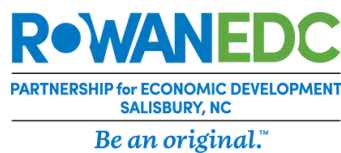
A PROGRAM OF THE ROWAN EDC

# We thank you for choosing to build a **QUALITY FUTURE** for Rowan County.

*The Forward Rowan 2 campaign will fund a \$6 million, five-year initiative designed to proactively support the growth of our existing businesses, aggressively promote Rowan County as premier business destination, attract top talent to the region, spur capital investment, and high-wage job creation.*



Carlotta Ungaro, Campaign Director



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