

Turning strategy into action

Recently our Raeford/Hoke Economic Development Commission asked me to coordinate development of a three-year Strategic Action Plan (July 2001 through June 2004). We engaged the services of the Stanford Holshouser Business Development Group, LLC, to assist in the planning process. Local, regional, state officials, and economic developers helped improve and refine the plan. We are now turning that strategy into action.

Our Economic Development Board has adopted the FY 2001-

2004 Strategic Action Plan that reexamines the 1995 Hoke County Strategic Plan and retains those planned economic development activities that remain valid goals and objectives. We have briefed the plan to key leaders and stakeholders in the community and it was well received. However, those in attendance were informed that we would proceed cautiously in this endeavor since the bottom line rests with ways and means.

The master key to economic development is product. All that marketing and advertising may

bring the prospect to town, but in the end we must show a Raeford/Hoke County Industrial Park. The park must be certified by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, which will answer many technical questions and give us DOC's preferred marketing over other counties' similar sites without certifications. Another critical area is infrastructure. Water and sewer services are the lifeblood of any economic development.

Next is the shell (speculative) building. The Department of Commerce estimated that around 80 percent of its inquiries are for buildings. That means that without a building, even if we have the best industrial park in North Carolina, we are automatically eliminated by 80 of every 100 prospects attracted to North Carolina. So, rather than having a shot at all 100, we end up competing with the other counties for the remaining 20 prospects.

The tragic events of September 11th are affecting our City and County, just as it is the rest of the country. Issues such as high unemployment, downsizing, and plant closings lurk in the tall grass of the current economic landscape. But we still have options when it comes to how we will deal with them. One thing is certain: We are not alone. Everywhere people are facing tough times, but tough times don't last; tough people do. Evidence seems to indicate that while companies



Donald L. Porter

may be sitting still at the moment, they are still doing their homework on our community. This means that our job is now more important than ever. We must update the materials in our handouts and website. Now is the time to make sure all is current. We are a small city and county with limited resources and we face tremendous competition within North Carolina as well as nationally and internationally.

However, if we continue to work together cooperatively and keep focused on visions for improving our economy, we can create a dynamic entrepreneurial economic development engine that helps realize the aspirations of all the citizens of Raeford and Hoke County. I applaud and thank those who have assisted us in our efforts.

— Donald L. Porter
Executive Director
Raeford Hoke Economic
Development Commission

Business & Industry Directory

Hoke Center



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About this directory

The 13th edition of The News-Journal's Business and Industry Guide was created with much the same goal as previous editions: to showcase the products produced and the services offered by people and businesses in Hoke County. If we missed your company in the business listings in the pages to come, please let us know.

We hope this directory will prove useful to newcomers, prospective businesses, local businessmen and other citizens.