

Infrastructure and Growth

Families and businesses rely on infrastructure for their livelihood. We can't afford to stand still.

Explosive growth has put North Carolina's housing, broadband, roads, energy, waste, and water resources under tremendous strain. Even with federal funding and extensive investment by the private sector, existing mechanisms are not enough to keep pace with the growing backlog of needed repairs and significant upfront investments required to modernize core public infrastructure systems.

Despite successes in broadband investment and transportation funding over the last decade, gaps in high-speed fiber coverage and deteriorating roads and bridges continue to impact the state's ability to compete.

North Carolina cannot reduce efforts to improve its infrastructure, but no single company, industry, or community has the breadth of perspective needed to identify, prioritize, and mobilize the improvements and capital deployment most needed to secure the state's future competitiveness.

The Foundation, working with the NC Chamber and others, is uniquely positioned to bring organizations together with unbiased data to form these comprehensive solutions. This process has a proven track record of success.

NC Leads

- Provides research around where improvements are needed.
- Evaluates how improvements will impact rural and urban areas and underserved communities.
- Ensures the state's energy systems maintain a focus on reliability and affordability as new innovative, sustainable solutions are explored.

The American Society of Civil Engineers reports that 14% of the North Carolina's roads are in poor condition, and that motorists pay \$500 per year in costs due to driving on roads in need of repair.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH GOAL:

Achieve the highest grade in the American Society of Civil Engineers state infrastructure ranking relative to other states in the Southeast.

The Foundation will provide a wide range of stakeholders including industry-based associations, chambers of commerce, manufacturers, the General Assembly, local governments, utilities, and DOT with comprehensive, jobs-focused infrastructure policy recommendations that enhance the state's competitiveness.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

Advance critical infrastructure solutions in partnership with industry leaders and job creators. Continued modernization of infrastructure and its funding mechanisms is central to North Carolina's competitiveness. Rapid technological change and increasing security considerations will require policy-driven solutions to ensure the continued availability, reliability, and accessibility of our systems. The Foundation will:

- Benchmark North Carolina's state and local approach to transportation (including rail, aviation, and electric vehicles), water, sewer, broadband, and natural disaster mitigation against similarly positioned geographies in the United States, as well as global trends to identify additional investments required to increase competitiveness.
- Create a critical policy research agenda, and actively monitor, evaluate the impact of, and seek policy and regulatory solutions for the following priorities over the five year plan period: transportation funding, public-private partnerships, the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, broadband coverage, grid modernization, water, and energy.

Streamline permitting and regulation by recommending statewide policy innovations. North Carolina needs rigorous yet expeditious and transparent permitting processes to ensure future growth. When procedures become too complicated, costs increase, and jobs are lost. The Foundation will:

- Engage in targeted research to address overlapping local, state, and federal regulations, support the development of shovel-ready sites for economic development, expand existing manufacturers, and promote the efficient and effective deployment of infrastructure.
- Benchmark North Carolina's permitting and regulatory practices to competitor states and evaluate them against best practices.

Secure the state's long-term energy and infrastructure needs by surveying stakeholders and convening employer-led policy work groups around long-term planning. Sound, long-term energy and infrastructure strategy provides a path towards sustainable economic growth. The Foundation will:

- Provide expertise, research, and a neutral forum for business and public-sector leaders to collaborate on solving today's most pressing energy and infrastructure issues while planning for the future.
- Produce white papers to identify potential gaps and strategies to strengthen the system, as well as economically viable opportunities for state leaders to pursue.

