A New Approach:
Guilford County Economic Development Alliance is "collaboration not consolidation"

Twenty-four elected officials held an historic joint meeting on November 20.

An historic gathering took place in 2015 – a joint meeting of the High Point City Council, Greensboro City Council, and the Guilford County Board of Commissioners.

At that meeting, elected leaders voted overwhelmingly to create the Guilford County Economic Development Alliance.

The vote by the elected bodies was officially 23-1. One person from each government was unable to attend, but each of the three had conveyed support for the proposal. Thus, 26 of the 27 local elected officials were supporters.

The GCEDA is not a new organization but instead is a coalition of the High Point Economic Development Corporation and the Greensboro Partnership working closely and officially together, while working in concert with the three governments.

At the 2015 annual meeting of the High Point EDC, Immediate Past Chairman Charles Cain had recommended board support of the proposal, calling it "collaboration, not consolidation."

The High Point EDC board of directors unanimously supported the GCEDA proposal.

Even before the vote – since the High Point EDC board and staff welcomed Brent Christensen as the new president of the Greensboro Partnership in June – the two economic development groups had been working more closely together than ever before as they jointly handled projects, interacted with clients, and dealt with government officials.

In 2016, they will ratchet up their joint efforts – coordinating marketing, conducting research, and maintaining a countywide building-and-site database.

Overseeing the Guilford County Economic Development Alliance is its Leadership Group. The Leadership Group is composed of the High Point mayor and city manager; the chairman and president of the High Point EDC; the Greensboro counterparts for those four positions; and the Guilford County commissioners chairman and county manager.

> "[High Point Mayor Bill] Bencini credits [High Point] EDC President Loren Hill and Greensboro Partnership President and CEO Brent Christensen with taking the initiative to develop the model for the GCEDA, which has a leadership structure designed to ensure equal representation among the three governments."
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> The High Point Enterprise, October 18, 2015