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Community Profile: Lee, Chatham, and Harnett Counties

Overview

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Carolina serves three dynamic and rapidly growing counties in central North Carolina: Lee, Chatham, and Harnett. Each county offers unique characteristics, a strong sense of community, and an array of opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Lee County

Lee County, centered around the county seat of Sanford, is a burgeoning hub for industry and commerce. The county has seen substantial economic growth, driven by strategic investments in infrastructure and the manufacturing sector. Sanford, often referred to as the "Brick Capital of the U.S.," is experiencing a renaissance with new projects like the **Sanford Area Growth Alliance (SAGA)**, which has successfully attracted over \$1 billion in investments since its inception. Major employers such as Pfizer, Caterpillar, and Pentair contribute to a robust job market, and the county's unemployment rate has consistently remained below the state average.

Recent projects include the expansion of **Central Carolina Enterprise Park**, a key industrial site that has attracted advanced manufacturing companies, adding hundreds of jobs and boosting local economic growth. The county's focus on education, with Central Carolina Community College leading workforce development initiatives, has made Lee County a model for balancing industrial growth with community development.

Chatham County

Chatham County is at the forefront of transformative growth, largely due to its strategic location and progressive planning. The county is home to the **Chatham Park** project, one of the largest mixed-use developments in the Southeast, covering over 7,000 acres. This ambitious project is expected to create up to 60,000 new jobs and bring in approximately \$15 billion in private investment over the next few decades. The development includes residential areas, commercial

spaces, healthcare facilities, and extensive green spaces, reflecting the county's commitment to sustainable growth.

The economic landscape of Chatham County is further bolstered by its proximity to the Research Triangle, attracting high-tech companies and fostering innovation. With the recent announcement of the **Wolfspeed** semiconductor manufacturing facility, a \$5 billion investment, Chatham County is poised to become a key player in the global technology supply chain. This project alone is expected to create over 1,800 jobs, marking a significant milestone in the county's economic trajectory.

Harnett County

Harnett County, with its rich agricultural heritage, is embracing new economic opportunities while maintaining its rural charm. The county has seen a surge in residential development, particularly in areas like **Anderson Creek** and **Angier**, as families are drawn to the region's affordable housing and quality schools. The county's strategic location between Raleigh and Fayetteville has also made it an attractive site for businesses and logistics operations.

The **Harnett Business Park** in Lillington is a focal point for the county's economic development, attracting diverse industries including advanced manufacturing, distribution, and technology. The county is also investing in infrastructure, with recent upgrades to the **U.S. Highway 401** corridor, enhancing connectivity and supporting further economic expansion. Harnett's commitment to fostering a business-friendly environment has resulted in a 10% increase in new business registrations over the past year, with a significant portion of these in the small business sector.

Quality of Life

All three counties boast affordable housing, excellent schools, and a variety of recreational activities, making them ideal places for families to live and thrive. The region offers a balance of rural charm and urban convenience, with access to major cities like Raleigh, Durham, and Fayetteville. Residents enjoy a strong sense of community, with numerous events, festivals, and volunteer opportunities that bring people together.

Economic Growth

The combined economic growth of Lee, Chatham, and Harnett Counties has been impressive, with billions in investments, thousands of new jobs, and a continued focus on sustainable and inclusive development. The area is becoming increasingly attractive to both businesses and residents, contributing to a robust and resilient local economy.

Conclusion

Lee, Chatham, and Harnett Counties offer an exceptional quality of life with a strong sense of community and a promising future. As the Chief Executive Officer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Carolina, you will have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the lives of young people in these vibrant and growing communities.