



COBB
CHAMBER

Raleigh-Durham

2025 Strategic Visit

October 19-22

Raleigh-Durham

2025 Strategic Visit

October 19-22

PRESENTING SPONSOR



DINNER SPONSORS



PROGRAM SPONSORS



TRANSPORTATION SPONSOR



LANYARD SPONSOR



WELCOME ATTENDEES

Lauren Abernethy

Colin Ake

Phil Barber

Charlie Beirne

Chris Britton

Shaneak Brown

Wendy Bunch

Lindsey Burruss

Melissa Cantrell

Jason Gaines

Greer Gallagher

David Gallmon

Mark Goddard

Zach Gordon

Michele Howard

Dana Johnson

David Jones

Solomon Jordan

Melanie Kagan

Jeff Kelley

Greg King

Chad Keonig

Mark Lawson

Atlanta Braves

Kennesaw State University

Geo-Hydro Engineers, Inc.

Cobb-Marietta Coliseum & Exhibit Hall Authority

Brasfield & Gorrie

Comcast

RE/MAX PURE

Cobb Travel & Tourism

CDH Partners

Croy Engineering

Holder Construction

Cobb County Sheriff's Office

Cobb EMC

Brasfield & Gorrie

Cobb Chamber

Cobb Chamber | SelectCobb

Cobb County Sheriff's Office

Gas South

The Center for Family Resources

Colliers International

Georgia Institute of Technology

Partners Atlanta Office

Banyan Real Estate LLC | Gateway Marietta CID

Barton Lowery

Al Martin

Chris Martin

Sharon Mason

Dr. Jackie McMorris

James McNabb

Michael Oduselu

Kevin Pearson

Holly Quinlan

Drew Raessler

Bert Reeves

Dr. Karin Scarpinato

Amy Selby

Chris Sizemore

Alisha Smith

Ellen Smith

Tracy Styf

Mayor Al Thurman

Sasha Ugi

Stephen Vault

Derrick Vincent

Chris Wasserman

Sabrina Wright

Metro Atlanta Chamber

Georgia Power

Kaiser Permanente

Cobb Chamber

Cobb County Government

Pond & Company

Axis Infrastructure

Georgia Power

Cobb Travel & Tourism

Cobb County Department of Transportation

Georgia Institute of Technology

Kennesaw State University

Cobb Chamber

INCISIVE

Town Center Community Improvement District

Parker Poe

Town Center Community Improvement District

City of Powder Springs

Croy Engineering

Wellstar Health System

Jacobs

Wasserman Talent Solutions

Cobb County Government

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello and welcome to the Cobb Chamber's 2025 Strategic Visit to Raleigh-Durham!

Over the next few days, you'll explore the dynamic Triangle region, with visits to three key destinations: Raleigh, the state capital and hub of innovation; Durham, a city rich in history and cultural energy; and Research Triangle Park, a global center for research, technology, and business development. This region is known for its thriving innovation economy, talented workforce, and forward-looking approach to growth, offering valuable insights and ideas we can bring back to strengthen our own community.

During our visit, we'll meet some of North Carolina's top leaders, learn from their successes and challenges, and discover ideas we can bring back home. Expect engaging presentations, interactive tours, and plenty of opportunities to connect with fellow attendees. The relationships and insights you gain on this trip will be invaluable as we work together to continue advancing Cobb County and the Metro Atlanta region.

We have a full and exciting agenda over the next four days, so please take a few minutes to review this program for details on our itinerary, attendee list, important contacts, and dinner locations.

Thank you for joining us on this exploration of Raleigh-Durham. Take notes, stay engaged, and above all, enjoy the experience! I'm confident that this Strategic Visit will be both inspiring and rewarding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Britton".

Chris Britton

Regional President, Brasfield & Gorrie
2025 Chairman, Cobb Chamber

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Hotel Accommodations

21c Museum Hotel Durham
(919) 956-6700 | 21cmuseumhotels.com/durham/

Cobb Chamber Contacts

Primary: Michele Howard | 478.414.6318
Sharon Mason | 404.308.8181
Dana Johnson | 404.550.6220

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

- 1:34 P.M. **Group Flight Departs Atlanta**
- 2:54 P.M. **Group Flight Lands at Raleigh-Durham International Airport**
- 4:00 P.M. **Hotel Check In: 21c Museum Hotel Durham**
- 6:30 P.M. **Welcome Dinner at The Lenny**
555 S. Magnum St., 11th floor, Durham, NC 27701
Welcome: Sharon Mason, Cobb Chamber
Sponsor Remarks:
 - Chris Britton, Brasfield & Gorrie (Presenting)
 - Lauren Abernathy, Atlanta Braves (Dinner)
- 9:00 P.M. **Return to 21c Museum Hotel Durham**

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

- 7:15 A.M. **Breakfast**
- 7:45 A.M. **Welcome**
Chris Britton, Regional President, Brasfield & Gorrie
Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber
- 8:15 A.M. **Depart for North Hills | Raleigh**
- 9:00 A.M. **Arrive at Main District at One North Hills**
4000 Center at North Hills St., Raleigh, NC 27609
- 9:14 A.M. **Speaker Introduction**
Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber

Raleigh-Durham 2025 Strategic Visit

9:15 A.M.	Welcome to The Triangle: Setting the Stage Adrienne Cole, President & CEO, Raleigh Chamber
10:00 A.M.	Raleigh's Innovation Economy: The North Hills Story Warner Kuppin, Chief Development Officer, Kane Realty Kallie Walker, Director of Development, Kane Realty Kyle Touchstone, Director, Raleigh Economic Development Moderator: Dana Johnson, Executive Director, SelectCobb COO, Cobb Chamber
10:45 A.M.	Break & Load Bus to North Hills Innovation District
11:00 A.M.	Walking Tour: North Hills Innovation District
11:45 A.M.	Lunch Tower 5, Amenity Space, North Hills Innovation District
12:15 P.M.	Moving the Triangle Forward: Transit-Oriented Growth Shelley Curran, Assistant Town Manager, Cary, North Carolina Adjunct Professor, Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy Moderator: Drew Raessler, Director, Cobb DOT
1:00 P.M.	Depart for NC State University
1:25 P.M.	Arrive at Talley Student Union, NC State University <i>2610 Cates Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27607 (Room 3285)</i>
1:35 P.M.	Sponsor Remarks & Session Introduction Tracy Styf, Executive Director, Town Center CID
1:45 P.M.	Town & Gown: Where Campus Meets Community Jeff Murison, President & CEO, Hillsborough Street Community Service Corporation Justine Hollingshead, Assistant Vice Chancellor, NC State University Division of Academic and Student Affairs David Meeker, Partner, Trophy Brewing, Elm Partners, Carpenter Development Moderator: Tracy Styf, Executive Director, Town Center CID
2:25 P.M.	Program Sponsor Remarks & Speaker Introduction Dr. Karin Scarpinato, Executive Vice President of Research, Kennesaw State University
2:30 P.M.	NC State Partnerships Driving Value Exchange Dr. Mark Schmidt, Associate Vice Chancellor, Partnerships, NC State University
3:00 P.M.	Break and Depart for Centennial Campus, NC State University
3:25 P.M.	Arrive at Plant Science Building, NC State University <i>840 Oval Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606</i>

3:26 P.M.	Session & Speaker Introduction Colin Ake, Director of Incubation and Commercialization, Office of Research, Kennesaw State University
3:30 P.M.	Plant Science Building Tour Geoff Bock, Director of Operations, N.C. Plant Sciences Initiative, NC State University Sarah Dinger, Program Manager for Education and Extension Outreach, N.C. Plant Sciences Initiative, NC State University
4:30 P.M.	Depart for 21c Museum Hotel Durham Free Time
7:00 P.M.	Small Group Dinners in Durham (On Own)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21

7:15 A.M.	Breakfast
7:45 A.M.	Welcome & Debrief Chris Britton, Regional President, Brasfield & Gorrie Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber
8:25 A.M.	Program Sponsor Remarks Michael Oduselu, Chief Electrical Engineer, Axis Infrastructure
8:30 A.M.	Depart for Spark Research Triangle Park
9:00 A.M.	Arrive at Spark, Axis Center
9:15 A.M.	Welcome
9:30 A.M.	Research Triangle Park & Spark: A Hub of Innovation Michael Haley, Executive Director, Wake County Economic Development Tyson Strutzenberg, Managing Director, Asset Management, Trinity Capital Advisors Sarah Gaskill, Head of External Relations for NC, FUJIFILM Biotechnologies Pearl Sullivan, Life Science Community Engagement Manager, NCBiotech Moderator: Chad Koenig, Partner, Partners Atlanta Office
10:30 A.M.	Tour of Spark Campus
11:15 A.M.	Depart for the 21C Museum Hotel Durham
11:30 A.M.	Lunch at 21C Museum Hotel Durham
11:59 A.M.	Speaker Introduction Mayor Al Thurman, City of Powder Springs

Raleigh-Durham 2025 Strategic Visit

12:00 P.M.	Welcome to “The Bull City” Mayor Leonardo Williams, City of Durham
12:30 P.M.	Break & Debrief
1:00 P.M.	Depart for American Tobacco Campus Walking as a group – .3 miles
1:20 P.M.	Arrive at American Tobacco Campus, Power Plant Theatre <i>320 Blackwell St., Power Plant Bldg., Ste 100, Durham, NC 27701</i>
1:34 P.M.	Speaker Introduction Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber
1:30 P.M.	Durham Economic Overview Geoff Durham, President & CEO, Durham Chamber
2:00 P.M.	Destination Durham: Sports, Entertainment & Innovation Eli Bell, Director of Asset Management, Capitol Broadcasting ATC Bob Klaus, General Manager, Durham Performing Arts Center Mike Birling, Vice President of Baseball Operations – CBC Sports Durham Bulls Cara Rousseau, Chief Marketing Officer, Discover Durham Moderator: Holly Quinlan, CEO, Cobb Travel & Tourism
2:55 P.M.	Program Sponsor Remarks Lindsey Burruss, Chief Operating Officer, Cobb Travel & Tourism
3:00 P.M.	American Tobacco Campus Walking Tour
3:45 P.M.	Speaker Introduction Bert Reeves, VP for Institute Relations, Georgia Institute of Technology
3:46 P.M.	American Underground: The Start Up Capital of the South Laura Zabinski, Executive Director, American Underground Amanda Dozier, Strategic Growth Manager, American Underground
4:30 P.M.	Return to 21c Museum Hotel Durham Free Time
7:00 P.M.	Closing Dinner: Glasshouse Kitchen (Research Triangle Park) <i>5 Laboratory Dr., Research Triangle Park, NC 27709</i> Welcome: Sharon Mason & Chris Britton Sponsor Remarks: • Melissa Cantrell, CDH Partners • Kevin Pearson & Al Martin, Georgia Power

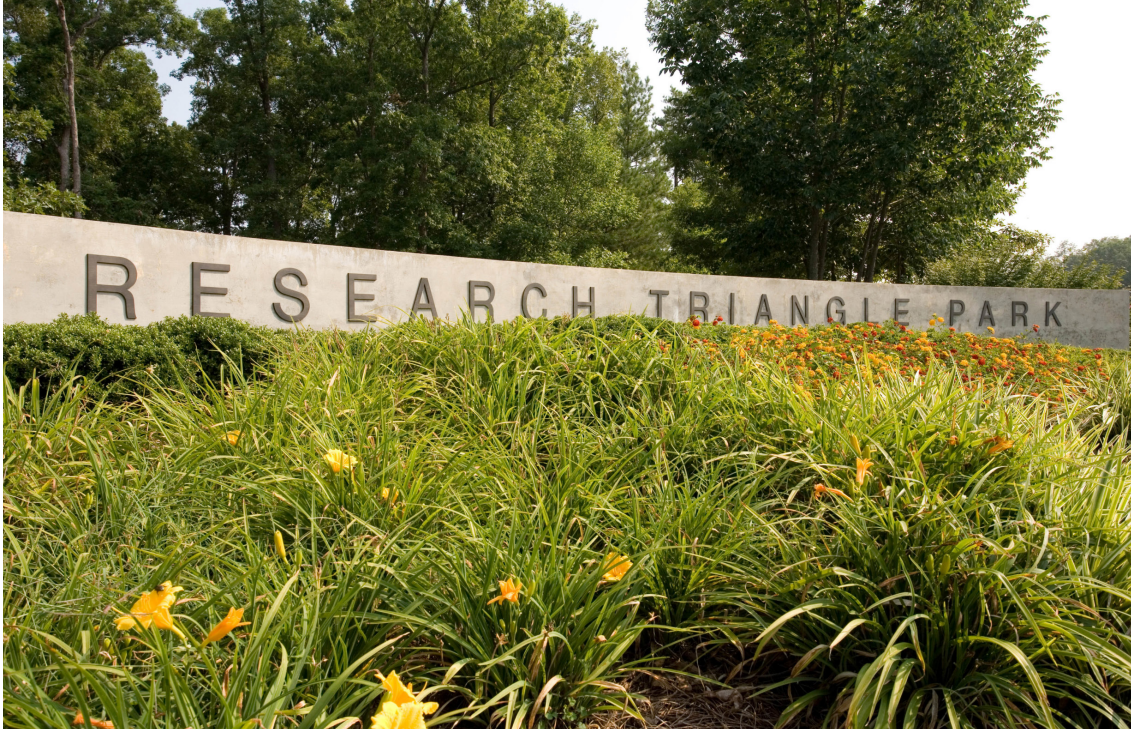
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

7:15 A.M.	Breakfast & Trip Debrief Chris Britton, Regional President, Brasfield & Gorrie Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber
8:00 A.M.	2026 Strategic Visit Trip Announcement Melissa Cantrell, President & CEO, CDH Partners
8:15 A.M.	Group Transportation to RDU
8:50 A.M.	Arrive at RDU
10:55 A.M.	Delta Flight 1699 Departs for Atlanta

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Scan the QR code to learn more about our featured speakers, and to view the trip map.





RALEIGH-DURHAM OVERVIEW

Raleigh and Durham are two major cities in North Carolina’s “Research Triangle” region, known for their strong academic institutions, technology, and life sciences industries, concentrated around the Research Triangle Park (RTP). Fueled by a highly educated workforce and anchored by top-tier universities, the region has developed a strong, diverse economy centered around technology, life sciences, healthcare, and education. With a favorable business climate, low corporate taxes, and steady population and job growth, Raleigh-Durham continues to attract major employers and investment, positioning itself as a model for sustainable economic development.

“The Research Triangle Region of North Carolina is not only home to some of the fastest growing companies and communities in the world, it’s home to an educated workforce, limitless room for growth, and some of the highest quality of living you can find in the United States.” - *Research Triangle Regional Partnership*

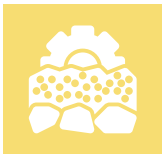
RALEIGH-DURHAM VS. COBB COUNTY

	RALEIGH-DURHAM	COBB
COUNTY POP	Raleigh 474,069 / Durham 321,488	766,149
TRANSIT	GoRaleigh, GoDurham, Triangle Transit	CobbLinc, Circulator, Managed Lanes
TRAILS	American Tobacco Trail, Neuse River Trail, Eno River State Park	Expansive trail networks and a Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park
EDUCATION	Duke University – 16,000+ / UNC Chapel Hill – 31,000+ / NC State University – 36,000+ / Durham Technical Community College – 5,600+	KSU – 45,000+ / Chatt Tech – 9,800+ / Life University – 2,700+
INCUBATOR	American Underground, HQ Raleigh, Bull City Forward	HatchBridge, Comcast SportsTech
EC DEV ORG	Wake County Economic Development, Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Raleigh Economic Development (Raleigh Chamber), Durham Economic Development	SelectCobb Cobb County Government Development Authority of Cobb County
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	Raleigh \$85,276 / Durham \$64,276	\$97,084
DEMOGRAPHICS	WHITE: 54%	WHITE: 63%
	BLACK: 28%	BLACK: 28.4%
	ASIAN: 6%	ASIAN: 5.5%
	LATIN/HISPANIC: 13%	LATIN/HISPANIC: 13.1%
	MEDIAN AGE: 34	MEDIAN AGE: 37
SPORTS	MLB: Durham Bulls	MLB: Atlanta Braves
		MLS: HQ & Training Ground: Atlanta United Football Club
		NFL: Atlanta Falcons
MAJOR EMPLOYERS:	Duke University	Cobb County School District
	State of North Carolina	The Home Depot
	Wake County Public School System	Lockheed Martin
	Walmart	Walmart
	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Cobb County Government
	WakeMed Health & Hospitals	Wellstar Health System
	Aisin	Kennesaw State University
	Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina	Manhattan Associates
	Wolfspeed	GE Vernova
	IQVIA	Assurant Solutions
	Biogen	Publix
Sources: U.S. Census, World Atlas, Durham Economic Development, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce		



**GREAT CLIENTS.
GREAT PROJECTS.
GREAT PEOPLE.**

Since 1980, Geo-Hydro Engineers, with six offices across Georgia and the Carolinas and a dedicated team of over 150 employees, has been a trusted leader in geotechnical engineering, environmental consulting, and construction materials testing across the southeast.



Geotechnical Engineering

Subsurface Exploration • Electrical Resistivity Surveys • Pavement Design • Pile Foundation Analysis • Rock Coring • Test Pits • Seismic Refraction Surveys • Slope Stability Analysis • Settlement Analysis • Groundwater Seepage Evaluations • Pressuremeter Testing • Dilatometer



Environmental Consulting

Site Assessments & Investigations • Asbestos & Mold Inspection • Underground Storage Tank Consulting & Testing • RCRA Facility Investigations • Contamination Assessments & Delineation • Environmental Auditing • Correction Action Plans • Lead-Based Paint Testing • Brownfield Consulting • Monitoring Well Installations • Indoor Air Quality Consulting



Construction Materials Testing

Soil Density Testing • Foundation Inspection • New Pavement Testing • Existing Pavement Evaluations • Reinforcing Steel & Post-Tension Inspections • MSE Wall Inspections • Concrete Testing • Steel Inspection • Pile Load Testing • Fireproofing Testing • Laboratory Testing • Masonry Inspections • Limited Building Envelope Inspections



GEORGIA: Athens, Kennesaw, Lawrenceville | **CAROLINAS:** Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh

NOTES

