

When I first ran for office in 2009, I indicated that my goal was to advance economic development in Sanford and Lee County. Immediately after being seated on the City Council in December 2009, I became involved with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). During the tense times when Lee County was threatening to remove their support for the EDC, I pressed the issue that if they did so, we could set up our own economic development organization through the City of Sanford alone. At that time, private interests stepped up along with the City, the County, and the Town of Broadway, and what is now the Sanford Area Growth Alliance was formed. I was involved with the creation of SAGA and have sat on their Board of Directors since their inception. The results are obvious. It was recently announced that we have had \$1.7 billion in new businesses and expansions in the past five years alone.

I championed funding the parking lot behind the Chatham Street businesses to improve the appearance of the downtown area and followed that with proposals for bond referenda that included the major streetscape project to further beautify downtown Sanford. From a downtown that had fewer than half the storefronts filled, we now have all available space full in our Central Business District.

I worked through the State Legislature to obtain an occupancy tax to fund tourism development for the City of Sanford, which has already helped make Sanford a destination. The results have shown that even during the pandemic, our sales tax revenues have increased, which is a major indicator of increased revenues for Sanford businesses. No business failed in downtown Sanford due to the pandemic. In fact, several new businesses opened and have survived during these past two years.

The new growth has brought new challenges. We must manage this new growth and meet those challenges to maintain our identity while continuing to expand the tax base, which will enable the City of Sanford to lower the tax rates and lower the taxes on residential properties to the benefit of all our citizens.

My 30 years experience as an industrial scientist and technology manager and my 18 years as a chemistry professor working with chemical process technology and biotechnology, together with my three terms as a Member of the City Council and my three terms as Mayor Pro Tem, put me in an excellent position to help direct Sanford. My having retired from industry and academia provide me with the time to work with the City and with SAGA to continue Sanford's *Open for Business* policy.