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**Contact:** Susan Weis

[sweis@fuquay-varina.org](mailto:sweis@fuquay-varina.org)

(o) 919-552-1417 (c) 919-605-0765

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## **Mayor Pro Tem Massengill Speaks to Chamber's Government Affairs Committee**

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, Fuquay-Varina Mayor Pro-Tem Blake Massengill addressed the Government Affairs Committee of the Fuquay-Varina Chamber of Commerce. Massengill's remarks included a variety of topics with an emphasis on the dynamic growth our town is experiencing and the many ways in which the Town is addressing the challenges and opportunities of that growth.

Fuquay-Varina continues to be one of the fastest growing municipalities in North Carolina with an estimated population of 26,178. By 2020, the town's projected population is expected to grow to more than 34,000.

During his Chamber address, Mayor Pro Tem Massengill highlighted the following Town of Fuquay-Varina achievements for 2016:

- The Town issued 606 single family permits; approved two new multi-family market rate apartment complexes bringing \$141 million in residential investments;
- Thirty new commercial businesses opened in Fuquay-Varina leading to commercial investments of \$58 million, a 170% increase over the prior year.
- The Town is advancing a strong economic development strategy to increase jobs, help create business and recruit high-end retailers in Fuquay-Varina. Massengill said, "The Bob Barker Company just broke ground on a \$4.7 million expansion that will provide 40 new full-time positions."
- The Town secured \$12,335,000 in grants and appropriations for transportation projects. Mayor Pro Tem Massengill highlighted the following transportation projects and their status:
  - The Judd/Main intersection is in the process of securing right-of-way with construction anticipated in fall 2017.
  - The final leg of NW Judd Parkway is in the right-of-way acquisition phase and is anticipated to begin construction mid-2018.
  - The Judd/Sunset/Purfoy intersection is in the design phase to be followed by right-of-way acquisition, construction bidding and construction to begin in early 2019.
  - The Sunset/Bass Lake/Hilltop Needmore intersection is being designed and right-of-way secured with construction set to begin in spring 2018.
  - The Town is working with NCDOT on a conceptual design for improvements to the Five Points Intersection as well as the schedule for NC-540 and impacts to surrounding transportation infrastructure.

Massengill also highlighted the town's comprehensive approach to planning in 2016 which includes a new Land Development Ordinance and an overhaul of both the Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan.

“These three plans will work hand-in-hand to modernize the Town’s planning to ensure a bright future,” said Massengill. In 2017, the Town will make efforts to expand its planning jurisdiction by 2-miles from the contiguous corporate limits.

Other major Town accomplishments include a major focus on building infrastructure to accommodate growth including:

- Opening of the Public Service Center;
- Construction began on the \$34 million Terrible Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion which will triple the treatment capacity;
- Continuing to make investments in extending water and sewer to Preferred Growth Areas.
- Design and construction plans for a new Arts Center which will feature a 300+ seat expandable theater, art gallery and dance studio, and is set to begin construction in early 2017.
- Upgrades at several parks including Falcon, Action and South Park.
- Working with Wake County to secure a new community library which will open in 2018.

“Working together makes Fuquay-Varina stronger,” said Massengill. “The WRAL Freedom Balloon is a great example of working with partners to support Fuquay-Varina. The festival brought 80,000 people to Fuquay-Varina. “The Chamber played a critical role in helping with volunteers and supporting a vendor site during the festival.” Massengill praised the Chamber for taking on important programs such as the Leadership Program, small business development and Innovate Fuquay.

In the first week of March, the Town will release an annual Citizen Report, which will showcase highlights from 2016.