

Google Meeting Recap – 1/15/26

Betsy Cheung
Andrew Harnish

I met with Betsy and Andrew via Zoom on January 15, 2026. It was a brief 30-minute meeting, but we were able to touch on several questions.

As we had quite a list of questions for their team, I offered to email Betsy and Andrew any questions we didn't get to in the meeting. They agreed to review the additional questions and provide the answers they can. Some of our questions are more applicable to later stages of the proposed project and won't be able to be answered at this time.

We did discuss the Commissioners meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026. The Google team indicated they were glad to get the initial information to our community and felt they had a positive response based on interactions with community members after the meeting. I said that BCD was glad they came to share the information and thought it was a good start.

Points of discussion:

Number of jobs created?

Betsy and Andrew stated that there would indeed be 500 permanent jobs created. The majority of these jobs will be onsite and full-time.

I informed the team that while we absolutely have some great candidates in our local employee pool, we don't have 500 applicants.

They stated that Google would be focused on hiring locally first and also host job fairs in our area to draw from the regional employee pool.

Betsy and Andrew also said that Google will provide training with programs like STAR (Skilled Trades and Readiness) which would be utilized for training potential employees.

The available jobs will range from technical & mechanical to maintenance & service. We do not have information on pay ranges at this time.

Local Economic Needs/Response/Capture?

Our discussion focused on the beginning phase of the proposed project. We talked about how they begin the project and what that would look like for our local economy.

The Google team said that for a project like this they have a General Contractor.

The GC, in addition to coordinating the actual build of the project, will also plan and provide all the services necessary for the onsite employees. For example, the facility when complete, will have an onsite café and gym among other employee amenities. These amenities will also be available during the build portion of the project. The GC will utilize local businesses as resources, but per the Google team, the GC will be mindful of not depleting local resources in the community. The GC will also utilize outside vendors and resources to provide for all of the necessary services.

We discussed the housing needs for the first phase of the proposed project. Betsy and Andrew stated that local temporary housing availability is considered first, but again they want to be mindful of not depleting every availability in the community. They do provide daily bus transportation for employees housed in nearby communities as well as a plan to bring in housing for a portion of the employees. They did not elaborate on the number or type of housing they would provide.

The Google Team said that the project would move in steps. We would not have 500 new people arriving all at once in Barber County. It's a gradual process and each next step is planned for to accommodate the community and the project.

Boom/Bust?

I asked how Google would prepare and assist our community to avoid a boom/bust situation. Betsy and Andrew responded that mitigation for that event would be an integral part of each phase going forward. They are aware of that potential effect and will plan with the community on the best steps. They gave an example using housing needs. Any temporary housing they are utilizing is repurposed for the permanent employees. This would be a consideration for any local temporary housing they utilize as well.

Community Benefit Agreement?

I asked if we could develop a Community Benefit Agreement so that the details of how the community will benefit and how the community should best respond would be available to everyone interested. Betsy and Andrew said that we could have a Community Benefit Agreement, but that would be later in the process. The first step is to have a Development

Agreement, and once the project is agreed upon, we can move on to making a Community Benefit Agreement.

We came to end of our 30 minutes and agreed that we will meet again, but have not set a date as of yet.

I have emailed Betsy and Andrew our remaining questions. We agreed that if the proposed project moves forward, we will use those questions as a starting point in each phase where appropriate.

I will keep you updated with any further information I receive.