Our Economic Development Practice Group is working statewide on business and economic development to help our clients, citizens, and communities and to build a stronger North Carolina.

With communities now having funding available following the coronavirus pandemic through the American Rescue Plan, and with expanding opportunities on the horizon through additional monies being made available by the return of Congressionally-directed spending for community projects, through agencies such as the EDA and through other new federal and state financial opportunities, as well as through potential federal infrastructure legislation, new economic opportunities abound for consideration.

We work with local, regional, state, and federal economic development programs, including the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership for North Carolina (“EDPNC”) and the Governor’s Office, as well as federal agencies, such as EDA and USDA Rural Development, to help clients locate or expand their operations in our state. Members of our Economic Development Practice Group have assisted companies with significant real estate transactions, negotiation of sales contracts, utility company compliance, applications for economic incentives at the state and county levels, and formation of North Carolina entities.

Ward and Smith is also recognized as a premier law firm when it comes to assisting the military with its presence in North Carolina since we have attorneys who have a variety of backgrounds related to the military, including those who have served in the military, as well as those who have worked on Capitol Hill on military matters and a former Member of Congress who served on the U.S. House Armed Services Committee for 18 years.

The members of our practice group have spent many years working with clients to expand and to locate new operations in North Carolina. Our team includes one member who worked in the North Carolina Department of Commerce, helping companies with government and communications issues—and another member who chaired the subcommittee in Congress which had oversight of USDA Rural Development, which included economic development opportunities for small businesses and private companies, as well as for community facilities and for electric and telephone cooperatives, having also done work recognized by the National Association of Development Organizations, the Southern Economic Development Council and local, regional and state economic development groups.

We have team members who have worked closely with companies on state and local incentives packages and with local communities as they worked with companies and prepared for public announcements of new opportunities. Other team members have spent years working with clients in every aspect of doing business in the state, including, without limitation, business litigation, banking, business and commercial law, developing and executing contracts, and dealing with environmental issues at the local, state, and federal levels.
Our team’s experience includes the following:

- Working with an Israeli company to locate its U.S. headquarters in North Carolina;
- Assisting a globally-renowned small engine company to expand its operations in North Carolina;
- Coordinating economic incentives at the city, county, and state level for two textile-related manufacturing operations;
- Negotiating contracts related to transportation improvement incentives for a home appliance manufacturer;
- Recruiting companies for industrial parks by working with regional, city, and county economic developers;
- Developing a comprehensive military-related economic development plan;
- Assisting in site selection and location;
- Negotiating water/sewer access and upgrades with city and regional water authorities;
- Addressing zoning and entitlement issues at city and county levels;
- Managing roadway, driveway, and bridge improvements through state and local transportation authorities;
- Coordinating city, county, and state incentives, including North Carolina Job Development Grants and tax rebates; and
- Administering Community College training grants for training new employees.

In addition to government relations, real estate, and environmental experience, our team consists of attorneys with experience in tax, labor and employment, financial transactions and regulations, health care, intellectual property, international, zoning and land use, technology, agribusiness, and alcoholic beverage control laws.