

# **Economic Development In Chesterfield County**

## **STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS**

**December 1993**

Prepared by the

**CHESTERFIELD COUNTY  
COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE**

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# CHESTERFIELD COUNTY COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE

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December 15, 1993

The Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Chesterfield County  
Chesterfield, Virginia 23832

Dear Members of the Board:

The report of the Chesterfield County Committee on the Future is transmitted herewith. The Committee's selection of economic development as its topic is the result of a concern for the county's ability to maintain those quality of life standards which residents have grown to expect. A sluggish economy coupled with the county's projected population growth will challenge the county's ability to continue to provide those services which its residents desire.

As a citizen group charged with creating a long-range vision for the county, the Committee has sought to involve county residents in the process of looking beyond the concerns of today to create a shared vision for its future. The Committee met with citizens in each of the magisterial districts to discuss the topic of economic development and further defined the topic at four focus group sessions. Discussions were also held with several civic associations, the Planning Commission, the Business Council's Focus On Our Future Education Committee, the School Board and industry leaders representing the major employers in the county.

The objectives and strategies contained within the *Economic Development In Chesterfield County: Strategies for Success* report are a synthesis of what the Committee heard as well as obtained through exhaustive research and interviews. Implementation of these strategies will strengthen the county's economy and guide Chesterfield well into the 21st century.

The Committee on the Future respectfully submits this report to the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

*Nancy S. Hudson*

Nancy S. Hudson  
Chairman  
Committee on the Future

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# **PREFACE**

## **Origins and Mission of the Committee on the Future**

The Committee on the Future was authorized by the 1987 Chesterfield County Charter. The Committee is composed of ten county residents, two from each of the county's five magisterial districts. The Committee serves at the pleasure of the Board.

The mission of the committee is to forecast comprehensive and long-range conditions facing the county in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Committee then develops recommendations concerning these forecasts and submits its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The recommendations of the Committee on the Future expand beyond present day limitations, presenting a view not necessarily bound by present constraints, but embracing the future's possibilities.

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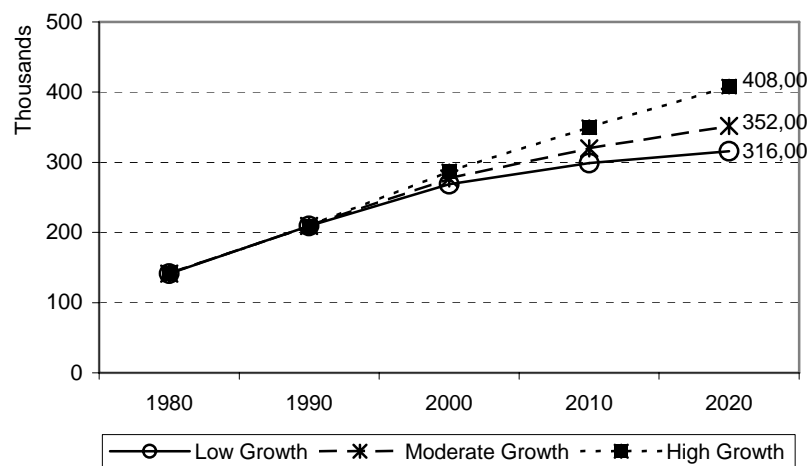
## *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHESTERFIELD COUNTY: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS*

*The character of a locality is comprised of many variables. While these variables are difficult to define, this "quality of life" best defines the character of a community. Cumulatively, these characteristics can be directly related to the reasons why people select a particular community in which to reside. A number of primary reasons why families choose to locate in Chesterfield County include excellent educational opportunities, quality housing at reasonable prices and the broad range of services provided to residents.*

**Current levels of services cannot be maintained without increasing revenues.**

During the 1980's, the county's population grew rapidly. Due to this growth, county revenues increased primarily because of the nonresidential tax base. The 1990's has brought moderate residential growth, while nonresidential development has not increased significantly. As a result, the county's population has grown and demands for services have increased, but revenues have become relatively stagnant. If this trend continues, adequate services cannot be maintained without increasing revenues. Consequently, Chesterfield's existing quality of life cannot be preserved or improved without addressing the financial security of the county's future. It is for this reason the Committee selected economic development as its topic of study.

Population Projections  
Chesterfield County, Virginia

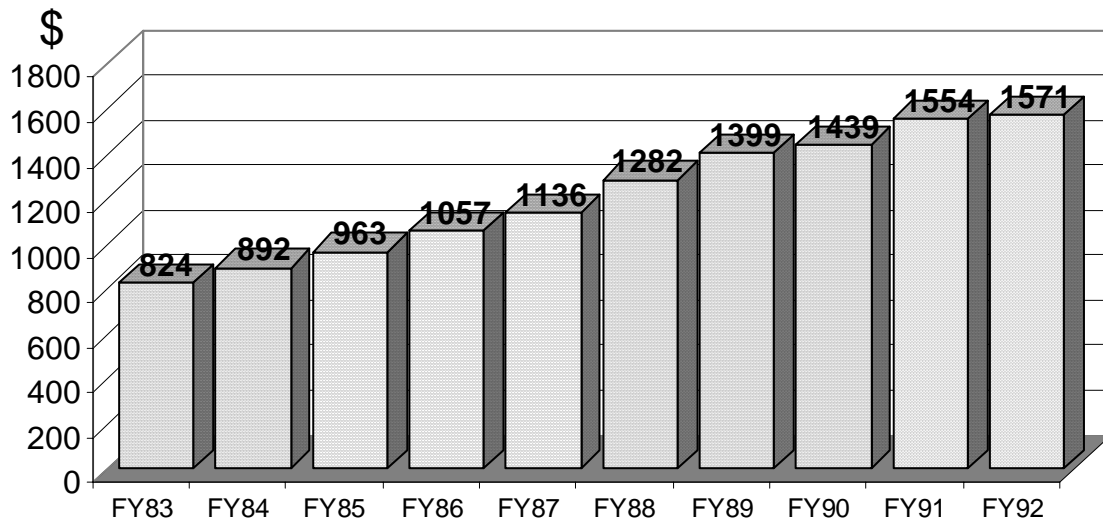


Source: Chesterfield Planning Department

**Elements of successful economic development.**

The Committee needed a logical method of narrowing the topic so that it could adequately analyze economic development and offer concrete recommendations to foster that development. In order to formulate strategies to improve economic development and the financial state of the county, the Committee identified attributes businesses seek when selecting a new locality. Of these attributes, the Committee selected as the focus of its report education, development policies, and human services.

Chesterfield County  
Revenue per Capita



Source: Chesterfield Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

**Quality education is critical to attracting and retaining business.**

A quality education system is a primary consideration of almost any business seeking to locate in a new community. However, because the Committee decided to study economic development and not education in general, this report focuses on adult and technical education as well as the need for regional cooperation.

**The importance of a positive business climate.**

The central theme that emerged from the Committee's study of development policies was the need to establish a business climate that would attract those businesses sought by the county and its residents. This attitude that a community holds toward growth and industry has a great deal to do with whether potential businesses will find the community attractive. The Committee developed strategies related to increasing the nonresidential tax base, broadening the county's Comprehensive Plan, revitalizing urban and infill areas, preserving environmentally sensitive areas, promoting orderly growth and encouraging regional approaches to those issues which cross governmental jurisdictions.

**Planning for the county's human service needs.**

In studying human services, the Committee quickly realized that the county's changing demographics must be addressed. For example by the year 2015, the average age of county residents will have dramatically increased. Given this reality, the human service issues which were selected for study are employment assistance for senior adults, housing needs, public transportation, the assisted living industry and the development of neighborhood community centers.

**The Economic Development Report process methodology.**

The development of a precise process to create strategies for the future improvement of economic development was crucial to the quality of the Committee's report. The process required hundreds of hours of research and interviews, as well as meetings with residents, the business community, and governmental officials. The Committee aggressively sought public comment before finalizing its recommendations because public input and support are crucial to the successful implementation of the Committee's final recommendations. After its research, the Committee began identifying potentially significant issues related to economic development through the year 2020. Once identified, these issues were translated into recommended objectives, strategies, and details.

**The importance of receiving residents' input.**

The Committee realized that if public meetings were held too early, the public would have insufficient information to form opinions and provide meaningful input. Conversely, if residents did not have an opportunity to review the report until it was finalized, the process would be too far along for significant changes to be integrated into the report. The Committee therefore developed a preliminary draft of its economic development strategies which it then presented to the public at four constituent meetings and at other meetings throughout the county. In addition, the public was encouraged to attend focus group sessions in order for the Committee to receive detailed input from county residents. This process enabled the Committee to incorporate a number of the public's ideas and suggestions into the final effort.

The Chesterfield County Committee on the Future submits the following objectives, strategies and details to strengthen the economic future of the county. By implementing these strategies, businesses will seek to locate in Chesterfield, residents will be proud of the county and the government will acquire adequate revenues to provide necessary services.

## ***STRENGTHENING THE COUNTY'S WORKFORCE***

*The Committee initially considered taking an expansive view of education as it relates to economic development and making recommendations concerning all aspects of the county's educational system. The Committee considered such an approach because quality education is a cornerstone of economic prosperity.*

### **Focus on technical and adult training and retraining requirements.**

According to many of the county's major employers, the quality of an educational system is the single biggest determining factor considered by most businesses when deciding where to locate. Unfortunately, an open-ended study of education proved to be unwieldy. The Committee could not in the time allotted make sweeping recommendations concerning education and do justice to the other elements of economic development which are addressed in this report.

The Committee ultimately decided to recommend changes in specific areas which, in the context of a quality education system, would further economic success. After adopting this methodology, the Committee then decided to address the issues of technical and adult education as well as how to efficiently deliver and market the services which are available to the county's residents and businesses. The Committee concluded that it would also have to address the issue of regional cooperation because many of the educational goals the county needs to accomplish cannot be met without regional approach.

The Committee selected the above areas because they have a direct impact on the ability of the county's residents to adapt to a continuously changing workplace. The public is justifiably concerned that the county maintain and strengthen the quality of its traditional academic curriculum. But few realize that 92% of Virginia's workforce for the year 2000 is currently in the job market, and that the average worker is now projected to change career fields seven times during the course of his or her career. Even those who remain in one job will be constantly utilizing different technologies when performing his or her responsibilities. The county must meet the needs of those already in the workforce if it is to entice prospective employers and retain those whose presence the county already enjoys.

Many likewise may not appreciate the changing role and future importance of technical education. While traditional vocational programs are important, the Committee's vision of technical education is much broader than those traditional vocational



programs. Technical education must be demanding, and we as a community must eliminate the general misperception that technical education is for slow learners and results in limited job opportunities. If done correctly, technical education will broaden a student's horizons, help him adapt to changing technologies and will often lead to higher paying jobs than those available to many students who pursue a traditional academic program. Exposure to technical training will also help to eliminate the fear of technology.

The Committee emphasizes, however, that its decision to limit its focus in no way denigrates the importance of the basics. Reading, writing, math, and science must be stressed and strengthened. Success also demands that people must be taught critical thinking skills which enable them to apply their knowledge to different situations and greatly facilitates any job retraining which may be necessary in the future. This is true for traditional academic as well as technical and adult students.

**Establish the  
Chesterfield  
Council for Adult  
Education and  
Literacy.**

In looking at adult education opportunities, the Committee began the task of learning what programs are currently available. This task proved more daunting than the Committee anticipated. Through the laborious process of identifying available programs, the Committee learned that often agencies, schools, businesses and residents either do not know what is available or misunderstand what is being offered. The result is an inefficient system which wastes resources and fails to deliver what it is capable of providing. By effectively coordinating adult educational efforts, the county can utilize resources more effectively, train our residents and market available services and programs.

The problem was how to accomplish the necessary coordination in an efficient manner. The Committee was wary of simply establishing a powerless task force which would go unheeded and add an unnecessary level of bureaucracy.

The Committee resolved this dilemma by recommending that a Council for Adult Education and Literacy be established. The Council should be comprised of all relevant governmental board chairmen and department heads as well as business leaders. Anyone less than department heads or board chairman would mean the Council's recommendations could be ignored. The Committee has also recommended that the Council be responsible for seeking state and federal funds for programs related to adult education services. Currently, each county agency or department is competing for the same resources, which can lead to duplication of efforts and potential inefficiencies.

Finally, the Committee has recommended that as part of the county's budget process, the Council submit an annual adult education budget proposal to the Board of Supervisors. While individual departments could still lobby the Board of Supervisors to alter the Council's recommendations, those recommendations will give the Board a much better perspective on all the components of adult education, and will place an onus on a particular department to explain why the Council's recommendations should be modified or disregarded. By granting the Council the power to influence funding, the Board of Supervisors can ensure that the Council is taken seriously.

The Committee found during its research that the state recently realized the inefficiencies of the current adult education delivery system. To eliminated those inefficiencies, Virginia created a statewide council in 1993 which is comprised of industry leaders and all relevant state agency heads, including the Secretaries of Economic Development, Education and Health and Human Services. This state council will coordinate the relevant state agencies' budgets and services and direct where state and federal resources will be focused on the local level throughout the Commonwealth.

To date, no Virginia locality has established a comparable local council which can coordinate work with the state council as well as provide and market the available services on a local level. The executive director of the state council has expressed excitement about the possibility of working with a Chesterfield council which could be the exemplar local system in the state. By acting now to establish a local council, Chesterfield will undoubtedly enjoy invaluable support from the state council, both in terms of expertise and access to national research and data.

**Develop a  
Workforce  
Development  
Center.**

Coordinating the county's adult education and retraining efforts is vital to economic development, but it alone is not sufficient to guarantee success. The county must also ensure that the services are accessible. The Committee has therefore recommended that the county, in conjunction with the Adult Council, establish a Workforce Development Center which would serve as a "one stop shop" for adult education, training needs assessments, and retraining. The potential for such a service excited many of the area's business leaders. Workers, for example, do not normally volunteer that they are functionally illiterate. Enabling a business to identify an employee's deficiency and then correct the deficiency through training and education is a powerful marketing tool. Many businesses would gladly pay the low cost associated with such a service.

If the Workforce Development Center is implemented, people will also no longer have to suffer being shuffled through bureaucratic procedures to obtain assistance. In short, the Workforce Development Center will create a user-friendly system which will in turn mean that the system will be utilized.

**Encourage the expansion and broadening of technical education.**

In the future, technical education will expand beyond traditional vocational programs and will provide sophisticated technological and scientific training. It will also provide students with critical thinking skills so that they can succeed in the workplace and easily adapt to future retraining which might be necessary in light of new technologies. Over the next thirty years, businesses will locate in areas where the workforce can meet the exacting quality and productivity standards necessary to compete in a global economy. The demands on future workers will be high, but the rewards of meeting those demands will be equally high.

The county must recognize this trend concerning technical education and embrace it. The Committee has therefore recommended that technical education be expanded, and that those students who remain in the traditional academic program must be exposed to technology and technical training. The county should take immediate steps to encourage students to pursue a technical career by eliminating the stigma associated with a student's pursuit of a technical education. Most parents currently believe that by electing to pursue a technical education, their children will have limited options and must forgo any possibility of college. This is why, for example, the county must structure the technical education program so that its graduates are eligible for college and must expand apprenticeship programs which can serve as an entree into high paying jobs. These and other measures will make a technical education attractive. By taking such steps, the county will help provide a highly trained workforce which will attract business.

**Regional approaches to improve technical and adult education.**

The Committee has made a number of recommendations to enhance the quality of the technical and adult education services available to the county's residents. But quality technical and adult education cannot be delivered by Chesterfield alone. Quality education involves effectively managing state and federal resources available to the area. It involves working with local community colleges and universities which serve a much greater area than just Chesterfield. It involves marketing the training and educational resources that are available in the region. The Committee has therefore made several suggestions concerning specific areas where the county should cooperate in the fields of technical and adult education. Those suggestions, however, should not be viewed as an all inclusive list, but as a starting point.

# OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

**1.** *Effectively coordinate, publicize, and market the technical, training, and educational programs available to the county's adult residents and businesses.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Create a Council for Adult Education and Literacy in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should include representation from business and industry as well as such agencies as the School Board, Social Services, Economic Development, Community College, Virginia Employment Commission, and the county library system, and should be modeled after the State Council on Adult Education and Literacy.</li> <li>• As a coordinating body, the Council will formulate policies and procedures for implementing comprehensive technical, training, and educational programs to meet the needs of adult residents.</li> <li>• The Council will be responsible for seeking state and federal funds for adult education and related services.</li> <li>• As part of the county's budget process, the Council will submit an annual adult education budget to the Board of Supervisors.</li> </ul>

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>B. Establish a Workforce Development Center as the primary resource for information on employment as well as for training, workforce literacy, and technical education programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The county, in conjunction with the Chesterfield Council for Adult Education and Literacy, will establish a Workforce Development Center.</li> <li>• Develop an employment service network to connect job seekers with employers.</li> <li>• Develop a skills assessment program, in conjunction with surrounding jurisdictions and institutions, to analyze skills required for specific jobs and evaluate skills in specific career fields. The skills assessment program will link employee needs with related skills necessary for employment.</li> <li>• Assist employers in assessing and addressing the vocational and training needs of their existing labor force.</li> <li>• Identify all educational opportunities available to county residents for training and retraining.</li> <li>• Publish a consolidated directory of agencies and programs which will be available to assist county residents and/or agencies in obtaining skills in specific career fields.</li> </ul>

**2.** *Promote the development of quality technical education that provides a strong academic base and meets international standards and requirements.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Restructure the Chesterfield Technical Center to expand its use of technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the Chesterfield Technical Center has full access to integrated support technologies (e.g. voice, video, and data), as well as specialized career specific equipment.</li> <li>• Provide mechanisms for the distribution of technical information from the Center to other schools within the area.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Develop a strategic plan for the educational needs and training requirements of the county's workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the labor force needs which impact the area.</li> <li>• Monitor labor force trends in order to influence educational and training policy decisions.</li> <li>• Assess the impact of changing demographic patterns upon training requirements.</li> <li>• The strategic plan should be developed in coordination with such agencies as the School Board, Economic Development and the Chesterfield Council for Adult Education and Literacy.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Encourage the development of state-of-the-art "Tech Prep" programs that result in an associate college degree by combining two years of technology-based high school education with two years of vocational / technical education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to complete a two-year program at the Technical Center, followed by a two-year associate degree at an area community college, such as John Tyler.</li> <li>• Establish articulation agreements between the high school "Tech Prep" program and the community colleges to eliminate unnecessary duplication of courses and provide continuity between the two.</li> </ul>

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>D. Structure the secondary Technical Education Program to ensure that students graduating from the program can meet minimum college entrance requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen math, writing, and foreign language skills to ensure that students are prepared for college admittance.</li> <li>• Integrate academic subject matter with technical subject matter in such a way that each reinforces and builds upon the other.</li> </ul>
<p>E. Increase the integration of higher academic standards and requirements into traditional vocational programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate higher levers of math and science instruction into the preparation of vocational educational programs.</li> <li>• Ensure that vocational students have developed the computation and communication skills necessary to compete successfully in the job market. Standards must be established for each vocational career field.</li> </ul>
<p>F. Integrate international standards into applicable school curriculums and programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students should acquire the skills necessary to satisfy evolving quality standards (such as ISO 9000) in the workplace.</li> <li>• Establish an initial pilot project at the Technical Center to integrate industrial quality programs into technical and vocational curriculum.</li> <li>• Incorporate these related programs into the academic curriculum, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p>G. Establish apprenticeship, internship, and co-op experiences as an integral part of the students' technical education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure the program to include blocks of time for academic instruction and work experiences as opposed to half day experiences.</li> </ul>

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
H. Implement effective marketing strategies for the technical education system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish incentives and provide recognition for those businesses participating in the program.</li><li>• Utilize a marketing expert to develop a plan to promote the program and available services.</li><li>• Expand career and vocational awareness activities and services within the K through 10 curriculum.</li><li>• Expand the use of tracking data, such as college placement, employment, and salary histories, to evaluate and promote the technical education programs.</li><li>• Expand opportunities for youth to visit different types of business, industry, government, and professional work environments throughout their school program.</li></ul>



3.

*Promote regional cooperation in establishing technical and adult education programs and services.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Work with other localities to encourage the establishment of an undergraduate professional engineering program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This engineering program should be supported by area colleges, universities, and industries.</li> <li>• Future engineering programs should be applicable to the needs of area businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Encourage regional research, development, and training networks for economic development initiatives..</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research, development, and training networks similar to the facilities at the Raleigh-Durham Research Triangle and the Charlotte Research and Development Complex should be considered when designing a regional model.</li> <li>• Promote a regional approach in responding to economic development efforts in the pursuit of common educational and training goals.</li> <li>• Evaluate the state and regional employment markets to better promote the region to prospective businesses.</li> <li>• Evaluate data regarding major service industries and the public and private sectors within the region that impact economic development.</li> </ul>

## ***GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT***

*Economic growth is vital to the health of the county. Attraction of businesses and the encouragement of orderly growth are needed to maintain or improve the quality of services provided to the residents of the county. The Committee found that stagnant commercial growth or rapid, disorganized residential growth will decrease the quality of life in the county or result in a significant increase in taxes or other fees to maintain the county's infrastructure and governmental services.*

During the past two decades, the county has grown at a rapid pace. Residential growth has out-paced necessary nonresidential growth, producing an ever increasing demand for capital improvements and governmental services. In addition, rapid growth has raised some concerns regarding the protection of the environment and the historic resources of the County.

**Encourage  
responsible  
nonresidential  
growth.**

While there may be a perception among some residents of the county that growth should be stifled or even discouraged, this perception may lead to undesirable results. Rather, growth should be encouraged along a well defined plan so that the county may shape itself to become that which its residents wish it to be.

The Committee recognized that residential growth, in general, does not itself pay for the increase in infrastructure and services demanded by new residents. Therefore, the county needs to encourage and attract commercial and other nonresidential development. However, some studies suggest that not all nonresidential growth has a positive impact on a jurisdiction's economic well being. For example, some nonresidential growth may indirectly increase the demands for county services and capital outlay. Should a new commercial entity be accompanied by a great influx of new residents, the indirect effect of the new residents, with the increase on the demand for services, may offset any positive tax impact that the business may have otherwise generated.

Economic development in the county is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Economic Development. This department takes great strides to market the County as a location for businesses and industries. In addition, the department assists existing businesses and attempts to ensure that county services are available when necessary.

In order to adequately coordinate these efforts and focus on the needs of the county in the future, the Committee recommends that department develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan which will encourage orderly and positive nonresidential growth. For this Plan to remain vital, it should be reviewed on a periodic basis to reflect any changes in the economic climate in the county. The Plan would allow the county to concentrate its efforts of encouragement and marketing towards those types of nonresidential concerns that would generally have a positive impact upon the county.

**Initiate intensive programs to assist small business.**

The county has experienced a growth in the number of small businesses during the past two decades. These types of businesses, which include professional and service entities, can help the county grow in a positive manner. During the period of time in which the Committee studied the services offered by the county to small businesses, the Economic Development Department dedicated an employee to assist and encourage small businesses. Due to this growing trend towards small businesses, the Committee recommends that the department devote a larger portion of its resources to assisting these entrepreneurs. In addition, the county should encourage the development of public and private partnerships to further assist small businesses. The partnerships can encourage the location of small businesses in the county and mentor present and prospective businesses.

**Create an Ombudsman for business concerns.**

An Ombudsman is needed to assist businesses in the county, and act as a special problem solver to the business community. This position should be located in the Community Development Administration Department because the majority of potential problems which may arise within the department's jurisdiction. The Ombudsman would act on behalf of all businesses, regardless of size.

**Develop and periodically review a broad, county-wide Comprehensive Plan.**

One of the main tools that drive and encourage positive economic growth is the Comprehensive Plan. The county currently produces what basically is a land use comprehensive plan and plans that cover specific areas of the county (e.g., the new Southwestern Plan). The Committee encourages the creation of a truly comprehensive county-wide plan that would incorporate, among other things, transportation, resource protection and economic development goals, and would serve to coordinate the long range plans of various departments or agencies. This Plan could act as "the" development guide for the county and would encourage commercial, industrial and residential economic growth in those areas of the county best suited for such growth.

While the Plan must be expected to be followed when zoning or planning decisions are made, the Plan cannot be made permanent or inflexible. Conditions, both economic and social, may change rendering a visionary Plan out-dated or, under then existing conditions, ill-advised. Therefore, the Plan should be reviewed every five years and, if necessary, updated to reflect changing conditions. During the Plan's review process, all affected agencies should be involved. More importantly, because the Plan will serve as a development guide, input from the public should be encouraged at the review stage.

**Protect existing urban areas.**

During the county's rapid growth, the county cannot forget that it must protect existing urban areas. The county is a diverse one - from vast, undeveloped areas to areas that have already grown to capacity. While comprehensive planning can provide development guidelines in undeveloped areas throughout the county, the Committee suggests that special consideration is required to ensure that the county's existing urban areas are also protected.

The Committee recommends the location of special magnet school programs and projects in these areas may serve to help existing residential areas. At the same time, the encouragement of redevelopment projects in established commercial areas will promote the continuing commercial viability of these areas.

Many existing urban areas are presently governed by separate village plans. These plans, which are more detailed than the existing county Comprehensive Plan, can be used to protect the character of these villages. The county should encourage private participation in the comprehensive planning process at either the Comprehensive Plan periodic review stage, or at the review stage of any separate village plan. By fostering a public and private partnership in this process, the village identities may be maintained and, in many cases, enhanced.

**Encourage development in infill areas.**

During the county's rapid growth since the 1970's, many areas of the county experienced "leap-frog" development. That is, development sometimes passed by potential areas of location and went further west or south. In certain areas, this has left viable development areas untouched and vacant.

Usually these infill areas are locations that already have the county's infrastructure in place (e.g., water and sewer lines). As a result, development in these areas may have less of a negative impact on the county's capital and service costs than development which is completed in a leap-frog fashion. Therefore, the Committee

recommends that the county identify these infill areas in a separate report or in the Comprehensive Plan review process. Once identified, development in these areas could be encouraged by the use of differential cash proffers or hook-up fees or similar financial inducements.

**Riverfront Plan.**

While encouraging economic development, the Committee recognized that it is important to protect the environment and the county's cultural and historical resources. For example, the county enjoys the unique benefit of being located between two great waterways - the James and Appomattox Rivers. These vital resources need to be protected. Moreover, the county should ensure that these areas are utilized to the fullest and most beneficial ways. Therefore, the Committee suggests that the county, along with the support of neighboring jurisdictions and those businesses and industries that presently exist along the riverfronts, should develop a comprehensive Riverfront Plan that addresses both of these natural resources. The Riverfront Plan, when developed, should be addressed and its impacts reflected in the county's Comprehensive Plan.

**Protect other sensitive areas.**

In addition to the riverfronts, the county's natural beauty should be maintained. Open areas can be protected through the use of such techniques as the encouragement of cluster zoning. Cluster zoning allows a decrease in the size of lots in a subdivision, providing that the number of permitted lots remains the same and the remaining land is devoted to undeveloped, open space. In addition, the county's environmental health should be preserved by closer monitoring of the county's environmental condition and by periodic reports to the Board of Supervisors.

**Innovative land use techniques.**

The county is a governmental entity with limited power. Generally, the county can only do those things that are authorized by the Virginia General Assembly. As a result, the county is presently hampered in the ways in which it can ensure orderly growth.

Due to this limited power, the Committee researched other jurisdictions throughout the nation which are utilizing a variety of land use planning techniques that may be beneficial to our county. Some jurisdictions have adopted Adequate Public Facility Ordinances. These Ordinances target development in only those areas which possess adequate infrastructure. Adequate Public Facility Ordinances, when combined with differential impact fees, tend to encourage growth where the infrastructure is already in place, thus focusing growth while effectively using county resources.

Other localities use Transfer of Development Rights Ordinances which foster less costly growth where that growth should be encouraged. When using T.D.R's, the locality defines a rural area from which development credits can be sold. These purchased credits are transferred to a more urban area which possesses an adequate carrying capacity for the additional density.

Still other jurisdictions use a type of Official Map legislation that permits the locality to designate in advance the location of certain capital improvements, including schools and other facilities, and to exercise a first option to purchase the designated property when development is about to occur.

The Committee found that these various land use techniques sound promising. However, they should be studied in light of the county's unique and diverse land use patterns. Some may prove more conducive to positive growth than others. If these devices would be beneficial to the county, enabling legislation should be sought in the General Assembly. In the meantime, the county should continue to encourage impact fee enabling legislation. In addition to this effort, the county should continue to use its Capital Improvement Program as a basis for encouraging orderly growth.

**Cooperate with  
neighboring  
jurisdictions.**

Economic development and land use planning do not occur in a vacuum. Decisions regarding economic development strategies and land use issues, not to mention a Riverfront Plan or open space planning, will have a direct impact on neighboring jurisdictions. Conversely, what our neighbors do will have a direct impact on the success of the county's economic growth.

As stressed throughout this report, regional approaches and cooperation are necessary and beneficial to all areas. A board composed of regional economic development professionals could better coordinate an area development plan. Annual forums of planning officials may also foster a more coordinated land use planning effort.

# OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

**1.** *Increase and diversify the nonresidential tax base through the attraction, retention, and growth of new and existing businesses.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan to create a vision for such development in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Chesterfield County as a location for businesses that would tend to employ existing residents.</li> <li>• Promote Chesterfield County as a location for businesses that export goods and services across county, state, and / or national boundaries.</li> <li>• Target small businesses that provide goods and services that support existing larger industrial or manufacturing businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Devote a section of the county’s Economic Development Department to assist small businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This section of the Economic Development Department will assist small businesses with county ordinances and regulations relating to such matters as licensing, taxation, and zoning.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Establish an ombudsman to assist businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ombudsman should be located in the Community Development Administration Office.</li> <li>• The Ombudsman will help resolve and mediate conflicts between businesses and government agencies.</li> </ul>

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>D. Seek public / private initiatives between the county’s Economic Development Department and members of the business community to provide encouragement and support to businesses seeking to locate in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish informational networks and mentor programs.</li> </ul>
<p>E.. Effectively market the strengths of the county to prospective businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record all inquiries and survey all prospects to determine how they learned about the county and what they consider its strengths and weaknesses. If warranted, make appropriate changes to the Economic Development Strategic Plan.</li> <li>• Market the county’s educational, recreational, economic development, and human services programs to prospective businesses. For example, the county’s state-of-the-art mental health-mental retardation-substance abuse services could be used to assist businesses with employees who require these related services.</li> </ul>



**2. *Broaden the county-wide Comprehensive Plan to include land use planning, transportation, public infrastructure, resource protection, neighborhood revitalization, and goals for economic development.***

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Review the county-wide Comprehensive plan at least every five years in light of growth and development impacts and revise as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to major revisions, the Deputy for Community Development and the Director of Planning will facilitate forums with representatives from Planning, Transportation, Utilities, Engineering, Economic Development, Human Services, and the School Board.</li> <li>• County staff will solicit input from citizen groups operating under the auspices of the county government, such as the Watershed Management Committee, as part of this review.</li> <li>• Local organizations and community groups will be encouraged to provide input prior to and during the Plan’s formal revision process.</li> <li>• Provide educational forums to the public regarding significant ordinance changes.</li> <li>• The Transportation and Planning Departments will analyze the necessity, feasibility, and potential modes of public transportation as part of the five-year review process.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Promote Chesterfield County’s Comprehensive Plan as the growth and development guide for the county</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rezoning should follow the direction of the Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>• The county’s village and area plans will be consistent with the county-wide Comprehensive Plan..</li> </ul>

**3. *Improve, maintain, and utilize to the fullest, existing urban neighborhoods and infill areas.***

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Identify infill areas and encourage development in those areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Planning Department shall identify infill areas in the county and develop guidelines to define such areas in the future.</li> <li>• Utilize differential cash proffers and similar inducements to encourage development in infill areas.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Encourage redevelopment projects in established commercial areas to preserve and/or increase desirable community services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Planning Department shall identify commercial redevelopment areas in the county and develop guidelines to assist existing business expansions, attract new businesses or redevelop existing buildings for other compatible uses in those areas.</li> <li>• Use existing techniques such as Enterprise Zones to promote economic development.</li> <li>• Establish a Community Development Corporation to oversee all redevelopment and revitalization activities.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Encourage private and public partnerships to protect and maintain the character of the county’s villages as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a network of neighborhood partnerships between businesses and residents.</li> <li>• Utilize these neighborhood partnerships to undertake such community revitalization activities as house exterior improvements and maintenance of open spaces.</li> </ul>
<p>D. Locate special school programs and projects in existing urban neighborhoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special magnet school programs should be located in urban areas. These programs could concentrate on such areas as math, science, or the performing arts.</li> </ul>

**4.** *Protect sensitive, natural, cultural, and historical resources in land use planning.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Develop and implement a comprehensive Riverfront Plan along the James and Appomattox Rivers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate public-private financial support of the Plan’s development cost by encouraging fifty percent of these costs to be contributed by private and corporate donations.</li> <li>• Promote private sector involvement in the implementation of the plan.</li> <li>• Reflect the recommendations of the Riverfront Plan in the county’s Comprehensive Plan by including land use changes to the riverfront, adjacent areas, and the corridors leading to the riverfront.</li> <li>• Involve adjacent jurisdictions in the development of the plan and the preservation of the river corridor.</li> <li>• The Riverfront Plan should protect the county’s environmental and aesthetic resources, protect the existing industrial base, and provide public access and exposure to the rivers.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Encourage cluster zoning where appropriate to enhance environmental preservation and maintain open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate cluster zoning techniques into the county’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance in order to maintain open space.</li> <li>• The county’s Planning Department shall analyze the effectiveness of the Agricultural and Forestal District with relation to maintaining open space, and amend if necessary.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Monitor on a continual basis the state of the environment and the quality of the region’s land, air, water resources, groundwater, and waste management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The county’s Engineering Department shall analyze and report on a semi-annual basis to the Board of Supervisors regarding the state of the environment and the quality of the region’s land, air, water resources, groundwater, and waste management.</li> </ul>

**5.** *Analyze and where needed promote in the General Assembly those land use planning techniques which will enable the county to encourage orderly growth.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Analyze the potential benefits and burdens of future land use planning enabling legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of potential land use planning enabling legislation shall be completed by the county’s Planning Department.</li> <li>• Planning Department should study and report to the Planning Commission on the potential benefits and burdens of enacting Transfer of Development Rights and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances.</li> <li>• The County should study the potential benefits of the state strengthening its Official Map legislation.</li> <li>• Continue to pursue Impact Fee enabling legislation in the General Assembly.</li> <li>• The Planning Commission should continue the use of Land Banking for the expansion of utilities and transportation systems as part of the proffer process.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Utilize the County’s Capital Improvement Program in the absence of new enabling legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Planning Commission should be involved in the development of the Capital Improvement Program to assist in orderly growth.</li> </ul>

**6. *Promote a regional approach toward land use planning, economic development, transportation, and the environment.***

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Establish an advisory board composed of regional economic development professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and make recommendations to the Virginia Department of Economic Development, Metropolitan Economic Development Council, and Appomattox Basin Industrial Development Corporation.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Conduct annual forums with regional planning officials and professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss related land use issues that will impact neighboring jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Encourage regional support of a greenways and/or open space plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend land use plans and offer financial support regarding regional cooperation for the development of an open space strategy and/or a regional greenways plan.</li> </ul>
<p>D. Develop a regional environmental board to discuss issues which impact the Richmond metropolitan area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The environmental board will meet on a regular basis to discuss and make policy decisions regarding the state of the region’s environment.</li> <li>• Issues to be discussed by the Board will be those environmental topics which impact the entire region, such as the area’s limitations on air pollution emission.</li> <li>• Board membership should include citizens and representatives from industry, environmental groups, and the government.</li> </ul>

## RESIDENTS' NEEDS AND THEIR IMPACT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*During the Committee's research of economic development, the group sought to identify the reasons for businesses choosing to locate in the county. Many of these reasons are obvious: business climate, the education system, the workforce and the transportation infrastructure, for example. There is an additional characteristic which companies seek that defines a community and which is more difficult to define than the aforementioned attributes. This nebulous variable is often referred to as a community's quality of life.*

**Positive quality of life can assist in attracting businesses.**

The Committee studied the quality of life because the health of our communities, good or bad, will eventually impact the health of our businesses. Ignored, quality of life can negatively impact communities, schools and the business environment. Improvement of quality of life, on the other hand, can transform Chesterfield into a community where existing and new businesses can not only find a positive business climate and an appropriate building site, but a place where employees wish to live and prosper. For these reasons, quality of life was determined to be a crucial segment of the county's entire economic development structure.

**Focus of the quality of life study.**

While studying the relationship between economic development and quality of life, the Committee narrowed its focus to employment assistance for senior adults, housing needs, public transportation, the assisted living industry, and neighborhood community centers. While there are certainly other areas which define a locality's quality of life, such as public safety, the library system and social services, variables such as these warrant their own strategic plan.

In 1990, 6.1% of the county's population will be 65 years old or older. This represents a 96.7% increase since 1980. The county projects that by the year 2020, the percent of county residents over the age of 65 will more than double. Combine this statistic with the fact that many older Americans opt for early retirement, and the potential economic and labor power of senior adults becomes apparent. For these economic and statistical reasons, the Committee sought to develop strategies which would make the most of senior adults in the work place, offer a wider range of housing opportunities and make public transportation an option to insure a more independent future for these residents.

**Maintaining an independent lifestyle for senior adults.**

The Committee recommends the implementation of programs which allow senior adults to maintain an independent lifestyle. This program should focus on employment needs as well as housing and transportation opportunities.

**Develop the Senior Adult Resume Clearinghouse.**

The first strategy relates to seniors having access to employment opportunities and offering businesses a service which will join their special needs with the multitude of experiences that seniors possess. This service would be comprised of a computerized clearinghouse for senior adults' resumes. The clearinghouse service shall be offered in conjunction with the county's Workforce Development Center, which is discussed on page 6. The service will be equally beneficial to seniors as it will be to businesses. During the Committee's interviews with major county employers, businesses informed the Committee that the workforce and employment needs are constantly changing. For this reason, many businesses seek to hire consultants and part-time employees. The Senior Adult Resume Clearinghouse can thus be utilized to connect adults seeking employment with companies which can make the optimum use of seniors' talents, experience and flexible work hours.

**Housing needs assessment.**

Housing requirements for senior adults are often dissimilar to those of younger households. During the Committee's discussions with county's mental health and nursing home officials, it was found that the county does not possess an abundance of housing categories between the single family or and nursing home facilities, such as apartments for seniors, multi-family units near health care providers, congregate housing (apartment living environments without kitchens and a central kitchen facility), and nursing homes. Seniors require this range of housing needs which accommodate their transition from single family dwelling through nursing home stages.

The Committee does not recommend that the county itself provide these facilities. However, the county should develop its Comprehensive Plan and land use ordinances to allow for these different residential categories. The Committee recommends that during the county's five year review of the Comprehensive Plan, the County Health Center Commission should report to the Planning Commission on the state of senior housing needs. The Planning Commission should consider these housing needs and opportunities in order to encourage the ease of locating these housing types within the county.

**Create public transportation opportunities.**

Public transportation was a much discussed issue with relation to senior residents and the needs of the community. Because Chesterfield's population is spread over its 446 square miles, the topic was not limited to a discussion of bus and rail transportation. The Committee recommended that the potential for future public transportation be assessed every five years in conjunction with the review of the county-wide Comprehensive Plan.

**Foster additional assisted living facilities.**

Employment opportunities are often closely related to workers being able to obtain adequate day care services for children and the elderly. Addressing the day care and nursing home issue pertains to economic development in the county for two primary reasons. First, employees in the county must have access to adequate day care providers in order to establish a reliable workforce. Second, actuarially in the future, the health care industry will increasingly become economically important to a community and its tax base.

There is currently a 194-bed nursing home facility in the county which is operated by the Chesterfield Health Center Commission. Existing plans are to increase this facility to 388 beds by the year 1997. The newly expanded nursing home will possess state-of-the-art services and facilities which can be used for regional teaching programs in geriatric nursing, hospital administration and physical therapy.

The Committee recommends that the private sector business community assist in the development of the nursing home. This cooperation will benefit all. Through joint training opportunities, the nursing home will benefit from the use of the facility as a practical teaching laboratory. Individuals in the related health care professions will benefit through their access to modern teaching programs in a field with great potential for growth in the future. Businesses and their employees will benefit through the modern programs provided at the nursing home.

**Assess day care needs.**

Similar to the county-wide review of senior adult housing needs, the Committee recommends that the Human Services Administration Department coordinate an assessment of the need for additional child and adult day care and nursing home facilities in the county. This assessment will be conducted in conjunction with the review of the county's Comprehensive Plan every five years. If additional day care and nursing home facilities are deemed necessary, the Planning Commission shall recommend strategies within the county Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance to encourage the increase of these facilities located in the county.



During the Committee's research, county hospital officials stated that within ten to twenty years, the hospital industry will not be consistent with the traditional definition of a hospital. Hospitals will dramatically increase the amount of out-patient care, reducing the number of traditional hospital rooms needed. Due to this change in the industry, the Committee recommends that hospitals develop day care and nursing home facilities. In addition to this strategy, the Committee further concludes that the Chesterfield Economic Development Department should actively promote the county to child and adult day care and nursing home businesses. Through the abundance of child and adult day care facilities, the county's workforce will have accessible day care and the county will increase its tax base.

The Committee found in its research that businesses which provide day care services to its employees attract and retain distinguished workers. Businesses should be encouraged to develop in-house day care facilities for their employees in order for the county to be able to possess the most elite workforce in the region.

**Develop  
neighborhood  
community center.**

During the Committee's meetings with the county's human services officials, it was discussed that one current need of lower income neighborhoods is the establishment of community centers. This need exists for three primary reasons. First, many county youths do not have access to adequate recreational or activity areas. Second, many urban areas do not possess sufficient facilities to hold community meetings and other civic activities. Lastly, within low-income areas, the county could provide on site services, such as health and social services, if there existed neighborhood facilities to house these programs.

In 1992, the county became eligible to receive Community Development Block Grant funds, (CDBG). These federal funds can be used to assist in the improvement of facilities in low and moderate income areas of the county. The Committee recommends utilizing CDBG funds to establish community centers in low and moderate income areas of the county. These centers will be used for adult and youth services, county satellite facilities and civic activities. One source of facilities for potential use as community centers are existing and future county schools which are no longer needed due to demographic changes or redistricting. The Committee further recommends that in the future design of schools, plans should be made for the conversion of school facilities to other uses, such as community centers. By using these obsolete facilities and utilizing CDBG funds when eligible, the county can provide necessary neighborhood community centers with existing resources at minimal county cost.

# OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

## 1. *Implement programs which will allow senior adults to maintain an independent lifestyle.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Assist senior adults in the location of part-time employment and consulting opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a service of the Workforce Development Center, create a clearinghouse for senior adult resumes.</li> <li>• Encourage volunteer work within the county.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Develop zoning criteria to encourage the construction of housing for senior adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chesterfield Health Care Commission should report to the Planning Commission, in connection with the five-year review of the Comprehensive Plan, on the opportunities and needs for senior housing.</li> <li>• Such housing types to be considered within this review shall include apartments, congregate housing, and nursing homes.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Pursue opportunities to develop public transportation in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Transportation and Planning Departments will analyze the need for public transportation in conjunction with the five-year review of the Comprehensive Plan.</li> </ul>

**2.** *Foster additional child and adult day care and nursing home facilities in the county*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Continue to encourage private sector assistance in the development of the current and future County nursing home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize and promote the nursing home as a practical laboratory for geriatric nursing, hospital administration, and physical therapy programs for area colleges and universities.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Promote additional private sector child and adult day care and nursing home care facilities in the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Human Services Administration office will coordinate an assessment every five years, in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan review, regarding the need for additional child and adult day care and nursing home facilities.</li> <li>• Encourage hospitals to develop child and adult day care and nursing home facilities.</li> <li>• The Chesterfield Economic Development Department will actively market the county to child and adult day care and nursing home businesses.</li> <li>• Encourage businesses to explore and develop in-house day care facilities for their employees.</li> </ul>

### 3. *Establish Community Centers.*

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Details</i>
<p>A. Utilize state and federal funds to locate citizen community centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize Community Development Block Grant funds to establish community centers.</li> <li>• Centers to be used for adult and youth services, county satellite facilities and civic activities.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Promote the development of neighborhood community centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify potential community center sites in the Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>• Allow for area youths to assist in the development of related activities and programs.</li> </ul>
<p>C. Study the future use of schools and other public buildings for community centers and other public uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the future design of schools, plan for the conversion of school facilities to other uses, such as community centers.</li> </ul>

## **SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Strategic planning is a long-range and continuous process. The Committee's success depends upon its ability to improve existing conditions by providing visionary projections, approaches and recommendations. The success of this economic development report will be determined by the implementation of its strategies. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the community and the Board of Supervisors to implement the report's recommendations.

This report will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on December 14, 1993. During this meeting, implementation strategies and the Committee's subsequent role in this process will be discussed.

In January 1994, the Committee will hold a public meeting to review the report and discuss potential Board actions related to the report. By responding to the input of county residents, the Committee hopes to create reports which reflect their needs and concerns and to develop a loyal citizenry who will contribute their visions of what Chesterfield should be in the future.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In preparing this report, the Committee met with numerous County officials and employees, including members of the Planning Commission, the School Board, the Budget and Management Department, the Economic Development Department, the Planning Department, and various human service departments. The Committee also met with members of the State Department of Adult Education, the Business Council, John Tyler Community College, and local business leaders. Without the assistance of these professionals, the Committee could not have accomplished its task.

The Committee also received valuable input from a number of citizens who attended the various public meetings conducted after the preliminary draft of the report was prepared. During constituent meetings, focus group sessions, and other meetings, these citizens took the time to evaluate the preliminary outline of the report and offer comments and suggestions to the Committee. The Committee wishes to thank those citizens for their assistance.

This report would not have been possible without the dedicated and insightful help of the Committee's Strategic Planning Analyst, Lynne Wasz. Mrs. Wasz, with the assistance of Deborah Saltz, Tammi Phelps, and Claire Lau, devoted countless hours during all phases of the preparation of this report, and the Committee wishes to express its sincere gratitude for their help.

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