

Strategic Plan for Chesterfield County Economic Development

This strategic plan for the Department of Economic Development sets a framework for the planning and delivery of services to our customers. It reviews strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities; presents a series of statements relating to the department's mission, values and goals; and sets out its proposed objectives and strategies.

Department Vision

To be recognized internationally as a model local economic development organization – an organization in which integrity, creativity, initiative and risk-taking are encouraged and valued.

Department Mission

To enhance the economic vitality of Chesterfield County by attracting business capital investment, reinvestment in established areas, and new jobs

Core Values

*To treat co-workers and diverse customers with dignity and respect
To provide timely and accurate information in cost-effective ways
To deliver excellent products and services
To stay focused on core business*

Customers

- *Business Prospects*
- *Existing businesses*
- *Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses*
- *Elected and appointed officials, county administration and county employees*
- *Chesterfield County Citizens*
- *Economic Development Allies*
- *Community organizations*

Services and Products Provided

Services

- *Expansion and relocation assistance (including site & building recommendations)*
- *Entrepreneur and Small Business Assistance*
- *Assistance with/resolution of business concerns and issues*
- *Administration of local Technology Zone Program*
- *Expertise/leadership in community and business organizations*
- *Business/economic development input into comprehensive planning process*
- *Facilitation/coordination of regulatory processes*
- *Market & demographic research and analysis*
- *Project/prospect management*
- *Facilitation of product development (sites and buildings)*
- *Staff assistance to Economic Development Authority*
- *Public education/information regarding Economic Development*
- *Project and planning assistance to established area organizations*
- *Publicly assisted redevelopment project management*

Products

- *Internet resources – web sites and customized web-based applications*
- *Online database of sites and buildings*
- *Customized Maps, photos, and site data for available properties*
- *Administrative reports (e.g. monthly investment; prospect activity)*
- *Annual Reports*
- *Site-specific marketing materials*

What Customers Expect

- *Prompt and accurate information and assistance*
- *Positive, courteous, and professional attitudes*
- *Confidentiality*
- *Sensitivity to customer needs and concerns*
- *Reliability and responsiveness to requests, including completion of consultant surveys and site questionnaires*

Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats & Opportunities

This strategic plan addresses the following key strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for the Department of Economic Development:

Strengths: (Those capabilities that can be used to promote further success and usually include areas that are directly involved in delivering what the customer wants in highly ranked areas of need.)

- *Competent, creative, and experienced staff*
- *Core business focus*

- *Strong Relationships with various groups*
- *Support and commitment from Board of Supervisors for economic development efforts*
- *Relationships with economic development allies*
- *Business support programs Flexibility, ability to adjust to market needs*
- *Solid knowledge of economic development*

Weaknesses: (Barriers to strategic success which are internal to the county.)

- *Perception by general business community that regulatory departments are too rigorous, demanding and inconsistent*
- *Awareness by community at large regarding the importance of economic development and what it really means*
- *Awareness of business assistance and resources available through economic development department*

Threats: (Issues facing the organization that, if not addressed, may have catastrophic results.)

- *General health of national and global economy*
- *Lack of product – marketable buildings and industrial zoned land*
- *Loss of industrial zoned land*
- *“No growth” attitude by some segments of community*
- *Environmental regulations*
- *Confidentiality breaches*
- *Increasing number of lower income residents*
- *Physical deterioration of older neighborhoods and business corridors*

Opportunities: (Elements most significant to growth, prosperity and well being.)

- *Understanding of the importance of what we do and why*
- *Relationships with state, regional, local, and international agencies and real estate brokers*
- *Educate brokerage community regarding Chesterfield County’s business climate/advantages*
- *Competitively priced industrial land*
- *Low-cost business environment*
- *Appropriate, targeted business incentives*
- *Expansion of business assistance services*
- *Influence tax rates, Comprehensive Plan, and county policies relevant to business and land development*
- *Development of Willis Road Interchange as a Gateway to the county*
- *Building on the Chesterfield County brand success*

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Business Goal: (County Goal Economic prosperity and educational excellence) Objective 3.1, Objective 3.2, Objective 3.3, Objective 3.4)

Expand the County's commercial and industrial tax base by successfully locating desired business and industry through varied marketing activities.

Primary Objective (County Objective 3.1, 3.2):

Locate new business (manufacturing and non-manufacturing) to the County.

Strategy:

Provide accurate and current information services and resources to prospects (known or unknown) through the website, customized reports and responses to RFI's, RFQ's and RFP's with the most accurate and compelling information to assist them in locating their business to the County. Provide GRP, Virginia's Gateway Region and VEDP the most accurate and compelling information about the County for their use in advertising and marketing campaigns. This strategy will be primarily website based.

Strategy:

Develop targeted business marketing initiatives covering all levels of commerce, based on the County's overall development plans, quality workforce, existing industry clusters, assets in the region and available buildings and sites, focusing our marketing outreach on the following targets:

*Office – Corporate Headquarters and F.I.R.E.
Life Sciences – R&D and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing
Information Technology – Data and Digital Communications
Advanced Materials – Materials and Chemical Manufacturing
Advanced Manufacturing – Highly Automated Technology Driven Manufacturing
Food – Food and Food Related Manufacturing
Wholesale, Distribution and Logistics – Food and Non-Food Products.
Aviation – Aviation Related Manufacturing, Office and Service
Defense Production Manufacturing
Retail – Retail Developers and Retail Operations
Neighborhood Retail - within established lower income neighborhoods
Hospitality and tourism, retail and commercial*

Strategy:

Implement comprehensive marketing plan to include participation in trade shows, marketing missions, print and web-based advertising, and prospect visits. These include selected activities in partnership with VEDP, GRP, and the Virginia Gateway Region.

Strategy:

Align Business First Chesterfield outreach effort with targeted industries, utilizing existing companies wherever possible in recruitment efforts

Strategy:

Through business intelligence gathered from business outreach program, target prospects from existing industry vendors, customers and collaborators and identify cluster growth trends and needs.

Strategy:

Expand research capabilities utilizing internal resources and GRP resources to locate and identify prospects with the most potential for growth or need of relocation.

Strategy:

Work with the Virginia Biotechnology Park, Virginia State University, and the area Universities to assist with the attraction, development and spin off of businesses and technology, and by providing information about the County and its sites and buildings that are available for use by the businesses attracted or spun off by their activities.

Primary Objective (County Objective 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4):

Expand the County's commercial and business tax base by supporting the retention, growth, and expansion of the county's existing businesses.

Strategy:

Utilize business intelligence gathered through the Business First visits to identify expansion opportunities and companies at potential risk of leaving/closing/downsizing

Strategy:

Sponsor existing industry meetings, training events and recognition events; Hold meetings/events targeting the county's top 50 wealth generators/major employers; Conduct Business Roundtables with Small/Medium business by partnering/sponsoring with county's existing business organizations

Strategy:

Strengthen Chesterfield County Economic Development Business Outreach Program by identifying companies to visit, supporting volunteer program, monitoring follow-up referrals and assisting GRP in promoting regional outreach effort

Strategy:

Assist companies in accessing business resources to overcome obstacles to growth or create business competitive advantages by providing access to procurement opportunities, providing permit process guidance and regulatory

assistance, identifying workforce resources to help companies attract and retain qualified workers and providing access to capital for business expansion.

Strategy:

Cultivate entrepreneurial spirit of Chesterfield's business community by providing training opportunities and access to business resources through programs and policies that support business development. Work with regional partners including the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Small Business Administration (SBA), Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE), Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA), Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce and all of the local business organizations to support small business and entrepreneurship development.

Business Goal:

Cultivate a positive relationship between business and residential communities

Primary Objective:

Expand the County's commercial and business tax base through a countywide tourism strategy that maximizes the county's natural, cultural, recreational and historic resources

Strategy:

Encourage business expansion and new business development of hospitality and tourism related industries through the Business First Chesterfield program.

Strategy:

Create and maintain an integrated year-round system of visitor information, including a dedicated tourism web site, expanded visitor information at the Chesterfield County Airport and coordination of visitor services under a single point of contact that will provide a better system to attract, greet and retain visitors.

Strategy:

Implement a comprehensive tourism business industry inventory evaluation and assessment to help capitalize on existing opportunities and identify gaps for targeted recruitment and development.

Primary Objective (County Objective 5.1):

Monitor internal development activities and policies to ensure a balance of business, retail, industrial and residential communities in the county

Strategy:

Participate and encourage involvement by businesses in Comprehensive Plan reviews, including community meetings. Facilitate zoning process.

Primary Objective:

Increase public awareness and understanding of economic development purpose and benefits

Strategy:

*Make presentations to various citizen and business organizations, as invited
Proactively offer to address community groups
Encourage business to participate in community outreach
Attend community meetings relevant to economic development efforts (e.g. zoning/rezoning cases)*

Business Goal: (County Objective 3.1)

Promote a positive business climate

Primary Objective:

Work with county departments to maintain policies and processes that minimize obstacles for business and industry

Strategy:

*Participate in development and revision of Comprehensive Plans
Develop county procedures to simplify and expedite permitting, site plan approval and building inspection (Fast Track)
Identify and recommend tax rates and business classifications that maintain the county's competitive position*

Business Goal (County Objective 3.1, 3.3, 5.1, 5.4):

Facilitate and encourage processes and policies that are more attractive to current and prospective businesses

Primary Objective:

Guide businesses through county development requirements and procedures

Strategy:

*Assist companies with permitting, zoning, and planning issues; Educate consultants (e.g. engineers, architects, attorneys) on department services relevant to development process; recommend changes to make the process more "business friendly"
Make businesses aware of our services; Utilize business intelligence from business outreach efforts to identify process improvement areas; identify issues that impact the business climate*

Business Goal (County Objective 3.2, 3.4):

Support regional workforce development initiatives to ensure the availability of a qualified workforce

Primary Objective:

Strengthen business/school partnerships

Strategy:

Participate on Chesterfield County Career Development Advisory Committee; Work with Community College Workforce Alliance, John Tyler Community College, Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University to ensure that curriculum and programs of study are aligned with the workforce needs of the business community;

Strategy:

Participate in workforce development initiatives of the Workforce Development Boards; Identify workforce resources to help companies attract and retain qualified workers and actively participate in workforce initiatives of the area Workforce Investment Boards

Business Goal (County Objective 5.1, 5.3, 5.4):

Promote development of quality product to attract new business and industry

Primary Objective:

Identify and implement programs and incentives to stimulate new development and redevelopment activities

Strategy:

Offer Technology Zone benefits and incentives; Utilize Utility Inducement Funds, Industrial Access Road, and Railroad Industrial Access Programs; Develop Defense Zones and Tourism Zones to encourage development that support targeted industries; Develop special commercial and industrial zone benefits for redevelopment areas (e.g. Eastern Midlothian, Technology Zone, Foreign Trade Zone); Market Technology Zone Program; assist companies in accessing available business incentives; Encourage private sector development in revitalization areas of speculative development, support services and revitalization of existing structures by working with existing landowners to identify redevelopment opportunities.

Primary Objective:

Encourage private and public-sector development of product (e.g. Smart Buildings, Incubators, speculative development) and support business (e.g. hotels, restaurants, and services)

Strategy: *Provide research and data on market trends, growth patterns and demographics; Recommend appropriate sites and buildings for private sector development.*

Primary Objective:

Encourage public and private sector development of product including “ready-to-go” sites, county-owned and/or controlled sites such as Meadowville Technology Park, Chesterfield Airport Industrial Park and Stonebridge redevelopment project.

Strategy:

*Oversee development of and actively market county-owned sites such as Stonebridge, Meadowville Technology Park and Chesterfield Industrial Air Park
Initiate and implement infrastructure projects (including water, wastewater, road, and storm water management) in keeping with the Master Plan for Meadowville Technology Park and other development opportunities as necessary.*