



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
Partners for Better Communities

EMERGING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Community Development

Objective

Provide an overview of emerging community development opportunities within the Department of Housing and Community Development

Agency Mission

*The Department of Housing and
Community Development works in partnership
to make Virginia's communities safe, affordable,
and prosperous places in which to live,
work and do business.*



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Department Overview

- DHCD works collaboratively with Virginia's communities to help fully develop their economic potential and create a healthy, safe, and affordable living environment.
- DHCD serves as a pass-through agency for state and federal funding while working with intermediaries such as community-based organizations, nonprofits, planning district commissions, and local governments.
- DHCD takes a comprehensive approach to community development, not just focusing on single-shot solutions.

Department Overview

- DHCD adopts and administers the statewide building code with emphasis on uniformity and fostering a safe built environment at a reasonable cost.
- DHCD reviews a range of inter-local agreements, mandate assessments, and proposed local boundary changes through its Commission on Local Government staff.

Key Activities

Economic Restructuring

- DHCD provides technical assistance to communities for economic restructuring. Through this process, emphasis is placed on capitalizing each community's unique assets—asset-based development—to establish a unified vision for future development, branding and marketing.

Community Economic Development

- DHCD works to support small business growth and to create a community environment that fosters entrepreneurial development. DHCD support helps create access to capital and training for small business owners to invigorate communities. DHCD improves access to capital by working collaboratively with Virginia Community Capital, community and regional economic development entities and downtown revitalization organizations.

Key Activities

Downtown and Commercial Development

- DHCD works with communities and downtown development organizations to promote commercial district revitalization. Focus is on returning historic downtowns to economic vibrancy.

Neighborhood Revitalization

- DHCD implements comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies to improve the living conditions within communities by rehabilitating the housing stock, upgrading the infrastructure, removing blighted structures, adding new affordable housing opportunities, and increasing the safety within those areas.

Key Activities

Community Infrastructure

- DHCD partners with local, state, and federal organizations to help improve access to clean and safe drinking water and develop proper infrastructure to safely dispose of wastewater. DHCD also supports community planning efforts to assess community needs, aggregate demand, identify local assets for leveraging, and develop plans to deliver broadband services.

Affordable Housing Options

- DHCD works in collaboration with communities throughout the Commonwealth as part of its comprehensive approach to meeting the housing needs of: (a) the homeless; (b) those at risk of becoming homeless; (c) special needs populations; (d) individuals with Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and (e) those that could not otherwise afford decent housing.

Key Activities

Health and Safety of Built Environment

- The Virginia statewide building and fire regulations, including the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC), promote and ensure the safe, healthy, accessible, and affordable construction of all buildings and structures. Safe buildings and communities result from strategic partnerships between citizens, architects, builders, code officials, and trades people. DHCD supports the Board of Housing and Community Development in promulgating the Uniform Statewide Building Code and Statewide Fire Prevention Code. These codes strive to strike a reasonable balance between building affordability and safety.

Our Approach

“First Rung” Services

- DHCD’s programs and services are often viewed as the “first rungs” on the ladder of economic development in communities across Virginia.
- DHCD works to provide a foundation of understanding, planning and increased capacity to pursue economic development strategies.
- DHCD’s community development programs are designed to support economic development, infrastructure and housing improvements, and the revitalization of Virginia’s distressed areas.
- DHCD collaborates with localities and federal and state partners to make strategic investments in communities. DHCD emphasizes building the capacity of communities and regions to improve their overall quality of life.

DHCD Services

Strengthen local economies

- Economic restructuring
- Downtown revitalization
- Entrepreneurial support
- Asset-based development
- Quality of life as an economic development asset

DHCD Services

Encourage regional collaborations

- Strategic development
- Planning assistance
- Resource alignment
- Facilitation
- Support for PDCs

DHCD Services

Invest in communities

- Water and sewer
- Healthcare in underserved areas
- Broadband

DHCD Services

Improve affordable housing options

- Homeownership creation
- Substandard housing improvement
- Housing preservation
- Neighborhood stabilization
- Homeless reduction strategies

DHCD Strategies

Technical Assistance - Training - Financial Resources

- Assist in the development of potential projects
- Engage with the community planning process
- Align grant resources with technical assistance and training
- Collaborate with other funders to maximize the reach and impact of resources
- Partner with local governments, intermediaries, nonprofits, and the private sector

Emerging Opportunities

- Small business and entrepreneurship
- Broadband
- Commercial revitalization
- Regional economic development strategy

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

- **Community Business Launch**
 - Focused on downtown revitalization
 - Goal is to create entrepreneurial ecosystem in community and region
- **Virginia Velocity**
 - Virginia's first statewide business plan competition
 - Focused on energy and biosciences in 2015
 - Goal is to raise Commonwealth's visibility nationally

Small Business and Entrepreneurship Examples

- Marion Pop-Up Business Plan Competition
- Launch Gloucester
- Hopewell Community Business Launch
- Staunton Creative Fund

Broadband

- Focus on broadband as an economic development driver/essential infrastructure
- Use solid community planning as a vehicle for assisting local decision making
- DHCD has provided financing for a variety of planning and deployment projects since 2006
- Latest round of planning grants announced on October 30th
 - Albemarle, Augusta, Culpeper, New Kent, Bland, Alleghany Highlands, Pulaski, Bath and Highland and Town of Altavista

Broadband Examples

- Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority
- Nelson County
- The Wired Road – Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority
- Charles City County

Community Revitalization

- Virginia Main Street and downtown revitalization
- Focus on key buildings that are vacant or underutilized
- Prioritize developments which are a catalyst for broader revitalization
- Link back to a community or regional revitalization strategy

Community Revitalization Examples

- Ice House Building in Harrisonburg
- Henry Hotel in Martinsville
- Edith Bolling Wilson Hotel in Wythville
- Wayne Henderson School for the Arts in Marion
- Wise Inn

Regional Economic Development Strategy

- Build consensus for regional economic development strategy
- Align grant and loan investments to create critical mass of activity to drive impact

Regional Economic Development Strategy Examples

- Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation
- Fields of Gold
- Virginia's Oyster Region
- Virginia's Growth Alliance
- Fifteen Magical Miles – The Smith River
Blueway

Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Case Study



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Key Drivers

- Need for a new vision and strategies to overcome reality of declining economic base
- Emphasis on downtown revitalization as a community development ignition tool
- ARC/DHCD entrepreneurship initiative
- Adoption of an outcome-based approach to investments
- Creation of widespread network of collaborative partners

Economic Restructuring Approach

- Focus on quality of life/ sense of place
- Leverage heritage tourism assets
 - Arts
 - Music
 - Cultural Attractions
 - Outdoor Recreation
- Linkages to other emerging economic development strategies
 - High-speed telecommunications
 - Entrepreneurial Development
 - Recruitment and training for “New Economy” jobs

Major Initiatives

- The Crooked Road
- Round the Mountain
- Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway
- Appalachian Spring
- Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation

Strategic Investments

- Support for expanded regional initiatives
- Coordinated investments in venues and attractions
- Focus on revitalization of downtowns
- National and international branding and marketing

Already Having an Impact

- Southwest Virginia becoming a recognized travel destination
- Tourist visitation as measured by VTC showing steady increases
- Transient and Occupancy revenues growing
- New hospitality and tourism related businesses forming
- Cities and towns revitalizing