



Culpeper County Economic  
Development Strategic Plan  
2023-2025



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# I. Choose Culpeper

Choose Culpeper is the Department of Economic Development's effort to assist and attract companies that make up our traded-sector industries. Traded-sector industries are those whose revenues are generated outside of the local region, but who regularly employ local residents. These industries bring new money to the Culpeper County economy.

## Goal 1.1: Retain and foster expansion of current major employers

The most sustainable economic development strategy is maintaining and growing current companies who have already chosen Culpeper County.

### Objective 1.1.1: Expansion of the business visitation program

- Along with annual visits, regular check-ins is a key aspect of the program
- Keeping current tax incentive programs available and understandable for the business community
- Survey businesses workforce needs to match current or future programming

### Objective 1.1.2: Identify growth opportunities for current businesses

- Assist with site location

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- Provide guidance through permitting process

### Objective 1.1.3: Maintain a positive business climate

- Through business visitation, understand how the locality can maintain its favorable business climate
- Advocate for changes, when possible, to improve business environment

## Goal 1.2: Grow the Culpeper County economy with attraction of new businesses

Culpeper County's central location and competitive tax rates can attract expanding businesses. Working with these potential businesses can be challenging because of the issues of relocating a business. However, new businesses can grow Culpeper County's economy through an influx of revenue from outside the region.

### Objective 1.2.1: Expand the data center industry in Culpeper County

- Recruit data center developers to available land within Town Environs
- Usher data center developers through the permitting process
- Work to activate projects who have committed to Culpeper County

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## **Objective 1.2.2: Attract complementary industries to Culpeper County**

- Develop and maintain relationships with key landowners and real estate agents
- Identify industries that match workforce development programs and characteristics of Culpeper County such as CNC machining and welding operations
- Brand Culpeper County's key industrial strengths for marketing to potential expansion opportunities
- Maintain occupancy of industrial buildings through outbound recruitment trips
- Review possible new opportunities with construction of the airport access road

## **Objective 1.2.3: Recruit additional controlled environment agriculture companies**

- Assist in expansion opportunities of current users
- Recruit new CEA enterprises to Culpeper County
- Partner in a new workforce development pipeline for high-tech CEA enterprises with CCPS and GCC

## **Goal 1.3: Strengthen workforce pipeline to prepare residents for 21st century jobs**

Culpeper County is fortunate to have excellent workforce development programming. It is crucial to prepare county residents to capitalize on the evolving job market.

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## **Objective 1.3.1: Promote Culpeper County Public Schools workforce development programs**

- Support CCPS in their efforts in workforce development programs
- Develop and distribute marketing materials highlighting Culpeper Technical Education Center, tailored for businesses and attraction clients
- Discover avenues for businesses to partner with CTEC
- Develop opportunities to showcase workforce prospects with Culpeper County businesses

## **Objective 1.3.2: Grow workforce development programs**

- Encourage utilization of current programs such as New Pathways and Germanna Community College's welding school
- Coordinate expansion of programming with GCC and the business community





## II. Be A Culpeper Local

Be A Culpeper Local is the Department of Economic Development's celebration of the local business community. Service-sector industries produce services utilized by residents, recirculating money throughout Culpeper County's economy. Bolstering this sector ensures money earned by residents stays within the county.

### **Goal 2.1: Strengthen Be A Culpeper Local's reach**

The Be A Culpeper Local program celebrates local businesses and works to develop a stronger local business community.

#### **Objective 2.1.1: Continue Be A Culpeper Local Week**

- Reinforce participation in existing retail districts
- Expand BACL Week participants beyond existing retail districts
- Develop a clear marketing message for purpose of the event
- Broaden education efforts on impacts of shopping locally to the overall economy

#### **Objective 2.1.2: Work within existing programming to celebrate local businesses**

- Creatively utilize partner programs through Chamber of Commerce and CRI
- Assist businesses in their own programming and events

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### **Goal 2.2: Develop a robust business assistance program**

Lowering hurdles the business community faces can be accomplished through support and education.

#### **Objective 2.2.1: Promote entrepreneurship**

- Partner with regional organizations to expand entrepreneur offerings
- Create encompassing collateral for future businesses to understand processes and resources available within Culpeper County
- Connect businesses with workforce development programs to encourage more residents to work within Culpeper County

#### **Objective 2.2.2: Advance business participation with area resources**

- Support the CVSBDC's counseling, business classes, and other programming
- Host an annual conference for business owners
- Implement new marketing campaign to advertise regional organization services and resources

#### **Objective 2.2.3: Assist businesses through regulatory processes**

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- Be a concierge for businesses going through Planning processes
- Connect businesses to applicable local, regional, and state officials, as needed

### **Goal 2.3: Expand retail in mixed-use developments in Culpeper County**

Culpeper County's growth has led to approved mixed-use developments. The retail portions of these developments could stay dormant for years without assistance and guidance.

#### **Objective 2.3.1: Assist in activating commercial area of Stonehaven**

- Work on adding a grocery store to Stonehaven
- Assist in other retailers coming to Stonehaven

#### **Objective 2.3.2: Recruit a hotel to Culpeper County**

- Identify developers interested in expanding to the Culpeper market
- Assist in locating a hotel

#### **Objective 2.3.3: Assist in activating any new mixed-use developments, as they are permitted**

- Help activate any new developments as they are approved by the Board of Supervisors

## III. Choose Culpeper Farms

Choose Culpeper Farms is the Department of Economic Development's effort to support the agricultural community through promotion and business education. Strengthening the agricultural community ensures Culpeper County retains its rural identity.

### **Goal 3.1: Grow the Choose Culpeper Farms brand**

The new Choose Culpeper Farms brand provides an opportunity to promote farms throughout the county, provide residents with agricultural related educational resources, promote agriculturally based community organizations and programs, and provide resources to the farming community in Culpeper County.

#### **Objective 3.1.1: Create open communication with the agricultural community**

- Listen to the needs of the agricultural producers through visitations and outreach
- Distribute key information as part of our business development efforts
- Connect farmers with resources such as grant and loan opportunities
- Provide continuously updated educational resources

#### **Objective 3.1.2: Maintain Choose Culpeper Farms website and social media**

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- Include relevant information as provided by the farms
- Keep the website current with timely events
- Highlight farm operations, with a focus on the why things are done the way they are
- Demonstrate what makes Culpeper farms unique through insight into their operations
- Maintain online job bulletin for their use
- Promote opportunities available that encourage involvement in agriculture and scholarships available to Culpeper County students through organizations

#### **Objective 3.1.3: Adapt the website over time to the needs of the agricultural community**

- Impact deficiencies in the market or operations

### **Goal 3.2: Maintain Culpeper Harvest Days Farm Tour**

Annual Farm Tour offers an opportunity for the public to experience agriculture at work. Hosted for over 25 years, the Culpeper Harvest Days Farm Tour is a tent-pole event celebrating the farming community.

#### **Objective 3.2.1: Showcase Culpeper agriculture through Culpeper Harvest Days Farm Tour**

- Continue a strong annual showing of the farms highlighted in the tour



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- Ease burdens, where possible, on host farms

## **Objective 3.2.2: Investigate new ways to shoulder programming around Culpeper Harvest Days**

- Research possible ways to highlight other aspects of the farming community

## **Goal 3.3: Advocate for the advancement of the agricultural sector in Culpeper County**

Culpeper County has long been an agricultural community and we will have to maintain this sector to continue to be the county we love.

## **Objective 3.3.1: Research the benefits of an agricultural development center**

- Tour agricultural development centers in the Commonwealth
- Understand use cases and roles of an agricultural development center

## **Objective 3.3.2: Understand successful policies across the Commonwealth**

- Network with other development offices in Virginia to maintain a fresh agricultural development mindset
- Investigate ways to publicly celebrate and recognize farming operations in Culpeper County
- Support efforts of a property development rights program







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