

MIDDLE PENINSULA
PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

Middle Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

2026


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Creating a thriving Middle Peninsula where communities are connected, resilient, economically vibrant, and prepared for the future.

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CHAPTER A:
EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

1. REGIONAL OVERVIEW & VISION

The Middle Peninsula of Virginia—comprising the six rural coastal counties of **Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, and Middlesex**, and the three incorporated towns of **Tappahannock, Urbanna, and West Point**—is a region defined by over 1,000 miles of coastline, natural resource assets, and historic working waterfronts. Encompassing 1,388 square miles and home to just 94,732 persons, it is one of Virginia's most rural regions.

While offering a high quality of life, the region faces interconnected structural challenges: high workforce out-commuting, stagnant job growth, rising housing costs paired with limited housing diversity, severe tidal inundation, and an aging demographic base.

The **Middle Peninsula CEDS Roadmap** establishes a unified strategic vision:
"To build a resilient, modern, and diversified regional economy that capitalizes on "blue-green" resource assets, retains local workforce talent, provides superior household incomes, expands housing opportunities, welcomes new residents, fortifies coastal infrastructure, and expands wealth creation across all member jurisdictions."

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This "new economy" is characterized by:

- A robust, growing, and adaptive local economy
- Household incomes approaching the statewide average in Virginia
- A quality-of-life exceeding other rural regions
- The rural character remaining intact
- New families moving into the region,
- Visitors and transients returning frequently
- Vibrant small towns and community centers
- Abundant and sustainable natural resources
- Businesses serving national and international markets
- Numerous suitable business locations for future expansion
- An entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports business creativity and innovation
- A rural coastal resiliency program recognized as a national and international model
- A workforce with the skills needed for jobs of the future
- A thoughtful, enlightened, and dedicated local government leadership that has achieved these results.



2. STRATEGIC SNAPSHOT: ECONOMIC FABRIC & KEY CHALLENGES

THE MIDDLE PENINSULA REALITY – The following nine topics highlight the region's current conditions illustrating the challenges facing the region.

1. Economic Base. Structurally stable with little growth.

a. Employment grew just 5% over 25 years (22,932 to 24,107)
b. Four major industrial clusters
   i. Government and government contracting – 5,500 jobs – 23%
   ii. Retail and Wholesale Trade – 4,000 jobs – 18%
   iii. Healthcare/Medical – 3,000 jobs – 15%
   iv. "Blue-Green," nature-based businesses – 3,000 jobs – 15%

2. High Out-Commuting. Our most talented workers are commuting out of the region to higher-paying jobs.

a. Over 80% of workforce leaves the region daily for work
b. Hampton Roads and Richmond MSA's are the primary destinations

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3. Older Population. The advanced age of population requires continuous inflow of households to the region to support the economy.

a. Median age – 46.5 (Virginia 39.2)
b. 28.5% of population over 65
c. 2,132 more deaths than births – 2020 to 2025
d. 1,095 more people moved to the region than moved out – 2022 to 2023

4. Region is increasingly a "Bedroom Community."

a. Out-commuters – more than four times those that live and work in the region – 34,865 vs 8,096
b. King William County – one of Virginia's fastest growing (20.6% growth 2010 to 2025)
c. Gloucester County – continues to grow modestly – (5.6% growth 2010 to 2025)

5. Local Wages. Among lowest in the state.

a. Average weekly wage - $951
b. 59% of VA average
c. Tied for 5th lowest region in VA

6. Household Incomes Lag. Falling further behind Virginia.

a. Median household, median family, and per capita incomes lag VA between 15% to19%
b. Household income lag with VA increased 3% - 2021 to 2024
c. Household incomes, adjusted for inflation declined 11.2% - 2010 to 2024



7. Housing Mismatch. Affordability and type of housing.

a. 86% of housing units are single-family detached structures
b. Acute shortage of missing-middle workforce housing
c. Housing prices and rents rising faster than incomes – housing less affordable
d. Median household income ($78,848) can afford a $275,000 single-family home
e. Median home value - $315,500, Median sales price - $389,800
f. Housing production not meeting demand

8. Coastal Hazards and Flooding. Threaten economic drivers.

a. Sea level rise, land subsidence, and tidal flooding threaten coastal economic base

9. Infrastructure Gaps. Public water and sewer and broadband.

a. Limited water and wastewater infrastructure impedes future development
b. Few "shovel-ready" sites are available for business expansion
c. Gaps in broadband deployment limits business opportunities

3. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: RESILIENCE DUAL-APPROACH

The strategy approach to economic resilience balances proactive mitigation measures with crisis response measures:

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MIDDLE PENINSULA RESILIENCE DUAL FRAMEWORK

STEADY-STATE INITIATIVES (Long-Term Capacity Building)	RESPONSIVE INITIATIVES (Crisis Mitigation & Recovery)
Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center	Business Emergency Planning
Fight the Flood Expansion	Regional Emergency Revolving Loan Fund
Working Waterfront Renovations	Rapid Post-Storm Impact Assessments
Regional Housing Trust	Inter-County Logistics & Detour Routing
Missing-Middle Housing	Real-Time Business Clearinghouse Hubs
Industry Alignment & Talent Retention	
Gigabit Broadband & Utility Expansion	

4. SIX PRIORITY REGIONAL STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

To solve systemic bottlenecks and build regional capacity, the Middle Peninsula CEDS prioritizes six high-impact initiatives:

1. **Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan (RIIP):** Establishes a prioritized capital pipeline to extend municipal water and sewer lines into growth corridors, achieve 100% gigabit fiber broadband coverage, and elevate flood-prone transportation routes.

2. **Reactivation of the Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA):** Re-establishes a dedicated regional economic development marketing organization to identify and select industrial sites, unify site attraction, support existing business expansion (BRE), market regional sites, and market tourism assets alongside the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC).

3. **Creation of the Regional Housing Trust (NNMRHT):** Pools public, private, and philanthropic capital to provide gap financing for developers building workforce, starter, and multi-family "missing-middle" housing near population centers.

4. **Middle Peninsula Workforce Collaborative (MPWC):** Creates an employer-led coalition connecting local K-12 CTE programs, Rappahannock Community College (RCC), and VIMS directly with high-demand maritime, forestry, manufacturing, and healthcare careers.

5. **Establishment of the Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC):** Leverages the successful regional Fight the Flood platform into an institute for rural coastal adaptation, testing nature-based shoreline protection, and commercializing "Blue Tech" solutions.

6. **Middle Peninsula Leadership Development Program (MPLDP):** Launches an annual civic leadership program to cultivate the next generation of regional leaders across local government, non-profits, and corporate sectors.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TARGET COMPLETION/ LAUNCH	PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES
1. REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN	MPPDC, HRSD, Local, (PSAs), County/Town Administrators, VDOT, USDA Rural Development, EDA	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	EDA Public Works, USDA, VDOT, VATI, GO Virginia
2. REACTIVATE MIDDLE PENINSULA ALLIANCE	MPA Board, Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDO's), MPPDC, VEDP, GO Virginia, VTC, Local Chambers of Commerce	Immediate (Year 1)	Member Dues, VEDP, GO Virginia
3. REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST	MPPDC, Regional Partners, Bay Aging	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	Virginia Housing, DHCD CDBG, Philanthropy
4. WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE	RCC / Bay Consortium / CTE	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	GO Virginia, WIOA Funds, State Grants
5. VIRGINIA RURAL COASTAL RESILIENCY CENTER	MPPDC, MPPAA, VIMS, RISE, VA Sea Grant Program	Medium-Term (Years 2–4)	NOAA, FEMA BRIC, VA CFPF, EDA
6. LEADERSHIP PROGRAM	MPPDC / RCC / Chambers	Short-Term (Year 2	Corporate Sponsorships, Tuition, Foundations

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TAPPAHANNOCK
Historic District
TAPPAHANNOCK
Making History
CROSS ST.

5. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ACTION MATRIX

CHAPTER B: REGIONAL PROFILE

ECONOMIC, DEMOGRAPHIC, and HOUSING OVERVIEW

1. AREA DESCRIPTION

The Middle Peninsula encompasses approximately 1,388 square miles in the coastal plains of eastern central Virginia. With a 2025 population of just 94,732 persons and a population density of 68 persons per square mile, the region is one of the most rural areas of Virginia. The region includes nine local governments - the Counties of Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, and Middlesex, and the Towns of Tappahannock, Urbanna, and West Point. The region is bordered on the north by the Rappahannock River, on the east by the Chesapeake Bay, on the south by the York River, and on the west by Caroline County. The region has a relatively flat topography along the Chesapeake Bay and gently rolling hills in the western reaches of the Middle Peninsula. The eastern portions of the region have elevations close to sea level rising to almost 200 feet above sea level towards the northwest. There are thousands of acres of ecologically valuable tidal and non-tidal wetlands, forests, pastures, rivers, streams, and bays.

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DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE	HOUSING MARKET CHARACTERISTICS
Total Population: 94,732	Out-Commuting: 81.2%	Homeownership Rate: 81.9%
Median Age: 46.5	Average Weekly Wage: $951 – 59.3% of VA	Single-Family Share: 85.7%
Population 65 + : 28.5%		Median Sales Price: $388,845

MIDDLE PENINSULA REGIONAL PROFILE AT A GLANCE

2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The Middle Peninsula is a predominantly rural, coastal region situated within the Chesapeake Bay watershed in eastern Virginia. While its geographic setting offers cultural and ecological assets, the region faces demographic pressures that impact workforce sustainability and economic growth.

- **Population Size & Growth Trends:** The region is home to approximately 94,732 residents. Population growth across the Middle Peninsula lagged Virginia overall (4.3% regional growth vs. 11% statewide between 2010 and 2025). Growth is geographically concentrated: King William County (20.6% growth) and Gloucester County (5.6% growth) led regional population gains between 2010 and 2025, driven by overflow from the Richmond and Hampton Roads metropolitan areas. Between 2022 and 2023, 1,095 more people moved into the region than moved out.
- **Aging Demographic:** The Middle Peninsula's population is significantly older than state and national averages. The region's median age is 46.5 years (compared to 39.2 years for Virginia). Approximately 28.5% of the population is age 65 or older, driven by both an aging resident base and an influx of retirees drawn to coastal living.
- **Income Disparity & Social Vulnerability:** While regional poverty averages around 7.5%, significant sub-regional disparities exist. Essex and King and Queen counties have the lowest household, family, and per capita incomes in the region. These rural inland and riverine counties exhibit elevated levels of economic distress—Essex and King and Queen, and counties experience higher poverty and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation rates. Essex and King and Queen counties also fall into lower state percentiles for health outcomes and economic opportunity profiles.

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3. ECONOMIC PROFILE

The Middle Peninsula's economy is characterized by a high degree of labor out-commuting, low relative local wages, and a reliance on natural resource and service industries.

MIDDLE PENINSULA LABOR FLOWS

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT BASE (24,107 Total Jobs)	DAILY OUT-COMMUTERS (81.2% of Workers)
Government and Gov. Contracting - 5,500 (23%)	31% to Hampton Roads MSA
Retail and Wholesale Trade - 4,000 (18%)	24% to Richmond MSA
HealthCare /Medical - 3,000 (15%)	Captures Higher Metro Wages
Blue-Green / Nature-based - 3,000 (15%)	Leaks Local Spending Power

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- **HIGH OUT-COMMUTING ("BEDROOM COMMUNITY" DYNAMIC): NEARLY 81.2% OF THE EMPLOYED REGIONAL WORKFORCE COMMUTES OUT OF THE MIDDLE PENINSULA DAILY.** King and Queen County has one of the highest out-commuting rates in Virginia, 90%. Of these out-commuters, 31% travel to the Hampton Roads MSA and 24% commute to the Richmond MSA. This dynamic transforms the region into a quasi-bedroom community that exports intellectual and labor capital daily.
- **STAGNANT EMPLOYMENT -** Total local private and public employment has hovered steadily at between 23,000 and 24,000 jobs. Between 2000 and 2025 (25 years) local employment grew just 5%.
- **LOW LOCAL AVERAGE WAGES:** The regional average weekly wage ($951) is just 59.3% of the Virginia statewide average, ranking tied for the 5th lowest among all planning regions in the Commonwealth. Median household, median family, and per capita incomes lagged Virgina between 15% and 19% and have fallen further behind over time.
- **DOMINANCE OF "BLUE-GREEN" INDUSTRY CLUSTERS:** The local economy relies heavily on resource-based sectors:
    - **COMMERCIAL FISHING & AQUACULTURE:** The region is a top producer of oysters, clams, and commercial finfish, supporting docks, processing facilities, and marine trades.
    - **FORESTRY & MANUFACTURING:** Forest products, timber harvesting, and paper manufacturing (centered around the mill in West Point) provide foundational manufacturing jobs.
    - **AGRICULTURE:** Field crop operations remain primary land uses in inland counties such as Essex, King William, and King and Queen.
    - **ECO-TOURISM & MARITIME SERVICES:** Marinas, boatyards, eco-tourism, waterfront hospitality, second home and retirement living along the shoreline leverage the over 1,000 miles of shoreline.
- **RESILIENT SECTORS:** While Virginia's economy is characterized as stagnate or declining in 2026 and 2027, the four dominate industry clusters of the region; 1) government and government contracting, 2) retail and wholesale trade, 3) healthcare and medical, and 4) "blue – green" nature-based businesses, tend to be more resilient to economic downturns.

4. HOUSING OVERVIEW

Housing in the Middle Peninsula presents a structural mismatch between the existing housing stock and the financial realities of the local workforce.

HOUSING METRIC	REGIONAL PROFILE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT
Homeownership Rate	81.9% (High ownership - low availability of rental units)
Housing Stock Consumption	85.7% Single-Family Detached (Lack of "Missing-Middle" options)
Median Home Value	$315,500 (Upward cost pressures from second home and retirement buyers)
Median Sales Price	$388,845 (Unaffordable for local working families)
Secondary/Seasonal Units	Elevated in the coastal counties (Gloucester, Mathews, and Middlesex)
Infrastructure and Hazards	High reliance on private wells and septic: elevated flood risks

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- **HIGH HOMEOWNERSHIP & LOW HOUSING DIVERSITY:** The Middle Peninsula maintains a strong homeownership rate (81.9%), higher than the state average (67.3%). However, the housing stock is structurally homogeneous—over 85% of all residential units are single-family detached homes. There is an acute shortage of multi-family apartments, townhomes, or duplexes ("missing-middle" housing) suitable for young workers, seniors, and entry-level households.
- **ESCALATING COSTS & SEASONAL COMPETITION:** The median home value sits at approximately $315,500. In coastal jurisdictions like Middlesex and Mathews counties, housing costs are driven upward by out-of-region buyers seeking vacation properties, retirees, and short-term rentals (STRs). This seasonal and retirement demand inflates home prices beyond the purchasing power of workers earning local wages. The median sales price of homes is approximately $388,845. Cost of construction and working families moving to the region from neighboring metro areas are also driving up prices.
- **AFFORDABILITY DILEMMA:** The median household income of $78,848 can afford to purchase a $275,000 home. Current median sales price of $388,845 and current home value, $315,500 are well above the affordability range of the average working family. Annual residential construction has not kept up with demand putting upward pressure on home prices.
- **UTILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE BOTTLENECKS:** Most rural areas lack public water and sewer infrastructure. Residential development relies heavily on private wells and individual septic systems. In coastal low-lying areas, high water tables, coastal flooding, and strict environmental regulations limit the density of new housing projects without costly engineered wastewater solutions.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL & HAZARD VULNERABILITY:** Rising sea levels, land subsidence, and recurrent tidal flooding directly affect residential real estate. A significant portion of the coastal housing stock requires flood retrofits, elevations, or elevated insurance policies, adding operational holding costs for homeowners.

5. SUMMARY OF KEY CEDS PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

STRATEGIC TAKEAWAYS FOR CEDS INITIATIVES

STEM TALENT LEAKAGE	DIVERSIFY HOUSING	UNLOCK UTILITIES	BUILD RESILIENCY
Create local, high-wage jobs to retain workforce, attract skilled workers and stem out commuting	Build missing-middle rentals and workforce housing near population centers	Extend public water and sewer to support site development and housing growth	Protect waterfronts, infrastructure, and housing from impacts of sea level rise and flooding

1. **ECONOMIC STRATEGY:** Focus economic development on high-wage sectors (marine technology, advanced wood processing, resiliency innovations, advanced health care, digital/remote work) to capture local labor talent, attract skilled workers, and reduce out-commuting.

2. **HOUSING STRATEGY:** Expand "Missing-Middle," multi-family, and workforce housing options near population centers where utility capacity can support increased density. Increase annual production of new housing to help meet demand.

3. **INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY:** Target infrastructure investments (broadband expansion, public water, and public wastewater) to lower site development costs and defend tax bases against environmental hazards.

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CHAPTER C:
SWOT ANALYSIS

This structured SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis is based on the key findings, economic, demographic, and housing profiles, and regional assessments.

STRENGTHS (INTERNAL ADVANTAGES)

- **PROXIMITY TO MAJOR METRO MARKETS:** Located conveniently between the Hampton Roads and Richmond metropolitan areas, allowing access to larger regional labor markets, shipping corridors, and urban centers.
- **RICH NATURAL & COASTAL RESOURCES:** The region boasts extensive waterfront assets, natural ecosystems, and working lands that power a robust "Blue-Green" economy (aquaculture, seafood production, forestry, agriculture, and eco-tourism).
- **HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE & RURAL APPEAL:** Its historic character, scenic waterfront communities, and low-density environment make it highly attractive for retirees, second-home buyers, and individuals seeking a high quality of life.
- **LOWER COST & BUSINESS FRIENDLY:** The rural character of the region allows businesses to deal directly with decision makers reducing "time to market". The average weekly workers wage is highly competitive compared to neighboring metropolitan areas.
- **PRIMARY INDUSTRY CLUSTERS RESILIENT TO ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS:** Three of the four main industry clusters, government and government contracting, healthcare, and "Blue-Green" nature-based businesses, tend to be less impacted by national trends in the economy.
- **EXCELLENT TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS TO MARKETS:** Routes 17, 33, and 360 provide excellent four-lane access to regional and national markets.
- **ANCHORS IN RESEARCH & INNOVATION:** Presence of key marine science assets—most notably the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)—providing research capabilities to drive water-centric technology and coastal resilience innovation.
- **ADVANCED RESILIENCY BUSINESS SUPPORT:** MPPDC has been a national leader in supporting resiliency businesses develop new products, expand markets, and find financial resources.

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CONCLUSION

The Middle Peninsula is a lower-cost and desirable place to live, work, and operate a business.



WEAKNESSES (INTERNAL CHALLENGES)

- **HIGH OUT-COMMUTING RATE:** Over 80% of the working population commutes out of the region for employment, functioning largely as a "bedroom community" for Richmond and Hampton Roads.
- **LOW LOCAL WAGES & STAGNANT JOB GROWTH:** Average weekly wages rank among the lowest in Virginia (59% of the state average), and local job growth has remained relatively flat over the past 25 years.
- **AGING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE:** The median age (46.5 years) is significantly higher than the Virginia average (39.2 years), resulting in a shrinking local prime-age workforce to support economic growth.
- **GEOGRAPHIC & SOCIAL DISPARITIES:** Substantial internal income and health disparities exist across localities, with counties like Essex and King and Queen facing higher poverty, lower health rankings.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS**: Limited access to public water/sewer networks in rural sections, gaps in high-speed broadband coverage, and limited internal multi-modal transport infrastructure.
- **INSUFFICIENT POPULATION TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES:** Many national retailers require a minimum population and income structure within their service area before they will consider expanding into a community. The rural character of the region does not have the population concentrations necessary to support these establishments.
- **COMPLEX REGULATORY SYSTEMS:** The region being in the Chesapeake Bay watershed makes it subject to additional land use and building standards, increasing the difficulty, time, and cost of development. A significant portion of the region is in designated flood hazard areas that require additional building standards.
- **LIMITED CAPACITY OR WILLINGNESS TO INSTITUTE PRO-BUSINESS PROGRAMS:** The relatively small population and tax base of the localities is a barrier for undertaking costly capital projects such as industrial site development and supporting economic development efforts at appropriate scale.
- **FEW "HIGH-GROWTH" BUSINESSES THAT OFFER HIGH-PAYING JOBS:** There are few employers and employees in "high-growth" and "high-wage" industry sectors such as Information and Scientific, Professional, and Technical Services.
- **FEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS & STAFF:** Only a couple of the localities have full-time dedicated economic development staff.

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CONCLUSION

Limited resources, institutional, human, business, and financial, hinder the region's economic expansion.

OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL POSSIBILITIES)

- **EXPANSION OF THE "BLUE-GREEN" ECONOMY:** Potential to leverage federal and state grants (such as GO Virginia) to build out eco-tourism, commercial seafood technology, coastal resilience engineering, and sustainable timber/agriculture manufacturing.
- **INDUSTRIAL & BUSINESS SITE READINESS:** Capitalizing on programs like the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP) to prep industrial sites (e.g., West Point) to attract light manufacturing, distribution, and commercial investment.
- **IN-MIGRATION OF REMOTE WORKERS & FAMILIES:** Capitalizing on post-pandemic flexible work trends and modern broadband expansion to attract younger families and remote workers seeking lower cost of living and high quality of life.
- **FEDERAL & STATE GRANT PROGRAMS:** Securing targeted funding via VDOT Access Road programs, VRA, RAISE corridor grants, USDA Rural Development, EDA, etc. Investments to expand utility systems and improve transportation corridors.
- **WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT:** Transform underutilized waterfront parcels into mixed-use, economic, or recreational drivers.
- **TOURISM EXPANSION:** The abundant natural resources of the region offer significant opportunities for expansion of the existing tourism industry.
- **EXPANDED INFRASTRUCTURE, WATER, SEWER, NATURAL GAS, & HIGH-SPEED INTERNET:** Existing infrastructure systems need to be upgraded and expanded soon.
- **EXPANDED "EARN TO LEARN" WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:** There are state and federal workforce development programs that are underutilized in the region.
- **EXPANDED REMOTE WORK WITH HIGH-SPEED INTERNET CONNECTIONS:** The Pandemic accelerated remote work options. This trend continues and allows workers and businesses to move to rural areas that have broadband connectivity.
- **INCREASED POPULATION, BUSINESSES, & CAPITAL MOVING INTO RURAL AREAS:** Since the Pandemic rural areas have seen an influx of people moving to these lower-cost communities, bringing with them their money and business acumen.
- **COLLABORATIVE BUSINESS CLUSTERS EXPANDING MARKETS AND CREATING NEW PRODUCTS/ SERVICES:** Working collaboratively, businesses can often expand their markets through leveraging their supply chains and creating new products that weren't possible individually.
- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY OF EXISTING & NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES:** Integrating the power of AI into the local economic fabric to improve productivity and new business opportunities.

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CONCLUSION

Current trends offer the Middle Peninsula many opportunities for the significant economic expansion if the region can organize to capitalize on these trends.

THREATS (EXTERNAL RISKS)

- **ENVIRONMENTAL & CLIMATE VULNERABILITIES:** Coastal erosion, recurrent flooding, sea-level rise, and storm events pose severe long-term risks to infrastructure, private property, and coastal businesses.
- **REGULATORY CONSTRAINTS:** Heightened environmental, shoreline protection, and Chesapeake Bay watershed regulations can complicate and delay industrial development, increasing site preparation costs.
- **WORKFORCE DEPLETION:** Continued out-migration or retirement of skilled workers without a sufficient influx of younger replacements could strain local employers and deter new business investment.
- **REGIONAL COMPETITION:** Competing with nearby metropolitan regions (Hampton Roads, Richmond, Northern Virginia) that possess larger capital pools, broader infrastructure, and deeper talent pipelines.
- **PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH:** There is a strongly held opinion that growth and development will endanger the rural character of the region.
- **A SMALL TAX BASE LIMITING INVESTMENT IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** The relatively small tax base of the counties does not allow for them to make the large infrastructure investments required to serve potential commercial and industrial properties.
- **IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ON WORKERS:** The deployment of AI will require new skill sets for workers and will likely make certain jobs obsolete.
- **ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN OR RECESSION:** Economic slowdowns and recessions reduce markets, cause less hiring, and thwart business investment.

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CONCLUSION

Future economic growth will require businesses and governments to adapt to the changing economic landscape, use available resources strategically, and mitigate the negative effects of a changing climate and economy.




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Current trends offer the Middle Peninsula many opportunities for the significant economic expansion if the region can organize to capitalize on these trends.

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CHAPTER D:
STRATEGIC DIRECTION
(Vision, Goals, Measurable Objectives)

VISION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES

It is important to establish a clear vision of a desired economic future with stretch goals, measurable objectives, and a course of action that will achieve the vision. As the old saying goes - "if you don't know where you are going, any path will get you there." Without a clear path forward, we are condemned to an uncertain and unpredictable future out of our control.

VISION: "To build a resilient, modern, and diversified regional economy that capitalizes on "blue-green" resource assets, retains local workforce talent, provides superior household incomes, expands housing opportunities, welcomes new residents, fortifies coastal infrastructure, and expands wealth creation across all member jurisdictions."

This "new economy" is characterized by:

- A robust, growing, and adaptive local economy
- Household incomes approaching the statewide average in Virginia
- A quality-of-life exceeding other rural regions
- The rural character remaining intact
- New families moving into the region,
- Visitors and transients returning frequently
- Vibrant small towns and community centers
- Abundant and sustainable natural resources
- Businesses serving national and international markets
- Numerous suitable business locations for future expansion
- An entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports business creativity and innovation
- A rural coastal resiliency program recognized as a national and international model
- A workforce with the skills needed for jobs of the future
- A thoughtful, enlightened, and dedicated local government leadership that has achieved these results.

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GOAL: EXPAND THE REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BASE BY 1,000 EMPLOYEES OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS –

Regional employment has been relatively stagnant with only a 5% growth over 25 years (1,176 employees between 2000 to 2025). If the regional economy is to grow it will need to expand its employment base particularly in industry clusters that are projected to expand; 1) health care, 2) tourism, second home, and retirement, and 3) resiliency. Currently, the limited supply of business-ready sites and buildings is an obstacle to businesses wishing to expand or locate in the region. Another obstacle is the difficulty of businesses in finding workers with adequate knowledge and skills for the operation of the business. Given the rural character of the region, there is limited economic development staff capacity to support robust economic development programs.

OBJECTIVE

Provide three business parks, with the necessary infrastructure, to support the growth of the region's primary industry clusters and emerging industry sectors by 2031.

OBJECTIVE

Expand the number of professional and technical certificates awarded by RCC to Middle Peninsula residents by an average of 50 per year for the next five years.

OBJECTIVE

Expand the infrastructure network, water, sewer, natural gas, port, and telecommunications, for existing business expansions and future commercial and industrial locations.

OBJECTIVE

Create an operational regional economic development organization/network with professional staff by 2028.

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OBJECTIVE

Improve at least five working waterfront facilities for commercial marine ventures over the next 10 years and dredge a least five shallow channels for commercial marine activity over the next five years.

OBJECTIVE

Create a business innovation development program and fund by 2031 for growth sector companies that have products or services with the potential for significant expansion.





GOAL: INCREASE DIRECT TOURISM EXPENDITURES 5% ANNUALLY OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS.

Tourism, second home living and retirement living are all linked into a broader growth industrial cluster centered around water-based activities. This cluster is projected to continue to grow. Tourism is a significant employment base in the region accounting for 1,139 jobs and over $33M in annual payroll. Tourism also contributes an estimated $6.4M in local tax revenues to the counties. Direct tourism spending has grown on an annual pace of 4.5% over the past nine years comparable to Virginia at a 4.4% pace.

OBJECTIVE

Continue the revitalization efforts of the historic downtowns, courthouse areas, and commercial corridors of the Middle Peninsula such as the Tappahannock Main Street Project and the Gloucester Courthouse Main Street Program.

OBJECTIVE

Create a "destination marketing organization (DMO)" serving the six counties of the Middle Peninsula by 2031.

OBJECTIVE

Expand access to the region's waterways by improving 10% of existing public access sites and adding an additional five access points over the next 10 years.

OBJECTIVE

Expand the existing tourism marketing efforts of the region, such as Deltaville's "Boating Capital of the Chesapeake Bay," River Realm, and Virginia Coastal Wilds, by 50% over the next five years.

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GOAL: INCREASE WORKER'S AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE TO 75% OF VIRGINIA & INCREASE HOUSEHOLD INCOMES TO 90% OF VIRGINIA OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS.

Workers in the Middle Peninsula, on average, make only 59% of workers across Virginia. This is tied for the 5th lowest regional wage in the State. Household, family, and per capita incomes are more favorable, 85%, 83%, and 80% respectively, of Virginia. These more favorable income figures are driven primarily by higher income retirees and workers commuting to jobs in adjacent metro areas. The education and skill levels of the resident population are well below Virginia; only 33% of the Middle Peninsula population has more than a high school education versus 60% for Virgina and only 24% of the Middle Peninsula population has more than a bachelor's degree versus 42% for Virginia. If the Middle Peninsula is to increase the wages and incomes, the residents must be prepared with the education and skills required for higher paying jobs of the future.

OBJECTIVE

Increase the number of apprentices and occupational certificates awarded by 15% over five years.

OBJECTIVE

A net increase of households moving into the region by 10% per year over the next five years.

OBJECTIVE

Expand the employment in high-wage industry sectors; 1) professional, scientific, and technical services, 2) finance and insurance, 3) health care, 4) information, and 5) resiliency, by 10% over 10 years.

OBJECTIVE

Establish an integrated, employer-led, industrial sector workforce development programs, encompassing K-12 career and technical education, RCC stackable credentials, employer-based apprenticeships, earn-and learn internships, and WIB supported retraining of incumbent workers, by 2030.

GOAL: INCREASE THE PRODUCTION OF AFFORDABLE WORKFORCE HOUSING BY AN AVERAGE OF 5% PER YEAR FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS. A shortage of adequate and affordable housing supply limits the ability of the region to maintain its population base, attract workers for existing jobs, and attract higher income households to the region. Adequate housing in the Middle Peninsula is both a housing production issue as well as a housing affordability issue. For the years 2016 to 2022 annual new residential building permits average just under 400. This is well below what is required to meet the demands of an expanding economy. Of these permits few are multi-family units and even fewer are government assisted housing. Only 5% of the housing stock is multi-family units versus 23% statewide. Just 706 housing units are government assisted or 1.8% of the housing stock versus 5.4% statewide. Median household income for the region, $78,848, can only afford to purchase a $275,000 home but the median sales price of a home is $388,845, and median home value is $315,500, resulting in 27% of owner households having to spend more that 30% of their income for housing. Lack of housing options limits the attractiveness of the region to workers, retirees, and remote workers.

OBJECTIVE

Develop three workforce housing projects totaling at least 100 multi-family units over the next five years.

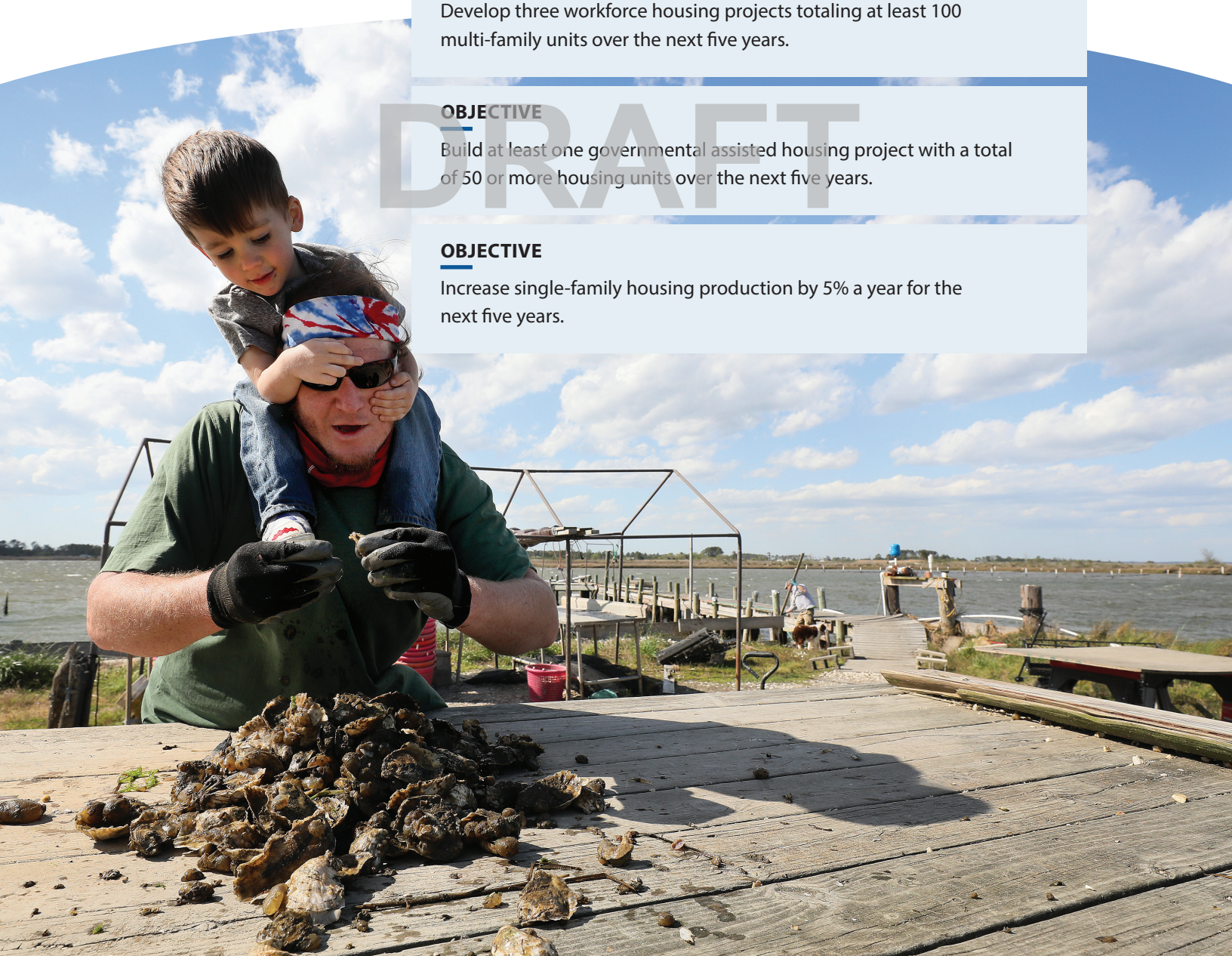
OBJECTIVE

Build at least one governmental assisted housing project with a total of 50 or more housing units over the next five years.

OBJECTIVE

Increase single-family housing production by 5% a year for the next five years.

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GOAL: THE MPPDC IS THE EPICENTER OF RURAL COASTAL RESILIENCY RESEARCH & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT. The MPPDC has received state and national recognition for its groundbreaking efforts at bringing innovative resiliency products and services to the marketplace. The "Fight the Flood" effort, the regional shallow channel dredging program, septic system repair and replacement research and assistance efforts, and working waterfront redevelopment, are but a few illustrations of the demonstrative resiliency efforts of the MPPDC. The region's over 1,000 miles of shoreline, gently sloping uplands, and wetlands immediately adjacent to these tidal waters, are experiencing increased frequency of high-tide flooding and gradual inundation from sea level rise. The predicted impacts of sea level rise that include increased storm damage, increased saltwater intrusion, and increased inundation will impact over 20% of the region's population. The results of these impacts are loss of land, damage to real and personal property, increased costs to rebuild or protect property and infrastructure, higher cost of construction, loss of local tax base, and ability to install and maintain infrastructure. It is imperative that innovative products, services, and approaches be developed at scale to mitigate risks and impacts of sea level rise in the region.

OBJECTIVE

Create "Virginia's Rural Coastal Resiliency Research Center," a formal collaborative between VIMS, Virginia Housing Research Center at VA Tech, Virginia Sea Grant Program, RISE Resiliency Innovations, ODU, Virginia Coastal Resources Program, and leading private sector resiliency partners, by 2031. This accelerates the current MPPDC resiliency efforts and brings new resiliency innovations to marketplace.

OBJECTIVE

Dredge five channels through the Regional Shallow Channel Dredging Program administered by the MPPAA over the next three years.

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OBJECTIVE

Replace or repair 50 failing septic systems with "state-of-art" single-family wastewater treatment systems per year over the next four years.

OBJECTIVE

Increase private sector participation in the "Fight the Flood" by 25% over three years.

OBJECTIVE

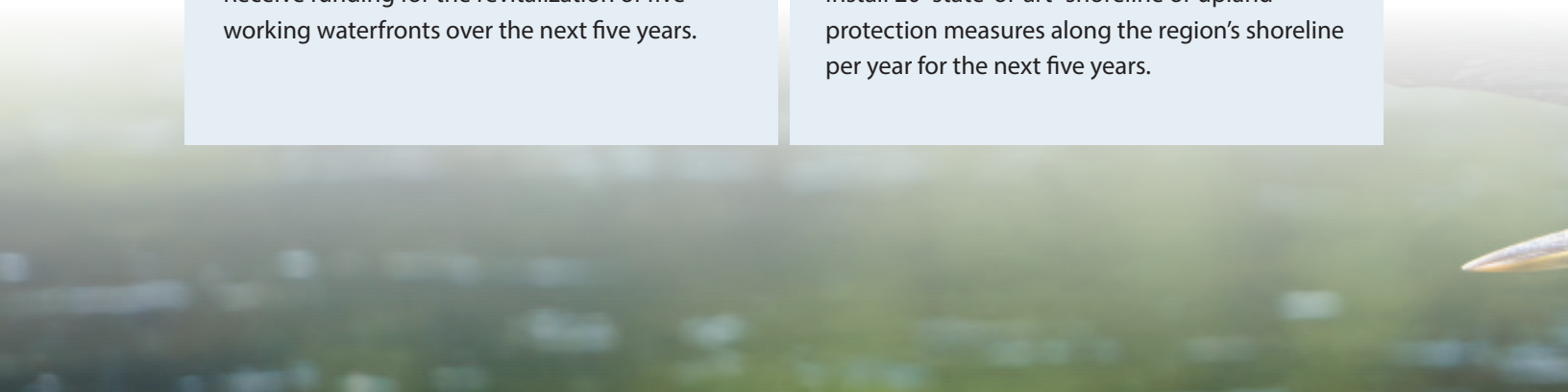
Protect 10 homes per year over five years from the threat of flooding by flood proofing or raising the homes.

OBJECTIVE

Receive funding for the revitalization of five working waterfronts over the next five years.

OBJECTIVE

Install 20 "state-of-art" shoreline or upland protection measures along the region's shoreline per year for the next five years.



CHAPTER E:
ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & VISION

1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT & VISION STATEMENT

The Middle Peninsula of Virginia is defined by its relationship with the water. Bounded by the Rappahannock and York Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, the region relies on a natural resource-driven, "Blue/Green," economy centered on commercial seafood, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, forest products, maritime trades, waterfront tourism, and a large retiree population residing along the shoreline. This "Blue/Green" economic cluster is the fourth largest employer in the region.

Geographic and economic structural factors make the region vulnerable to external shocks:

- High rate of out-commuting (over 81% of the regional workforce leaves daily for jobs out of the region, primarily the Hampton Roads and Richmond MSA's).
- Low average weekly wages relative to the Commonwealth of Virginia (fifth lowest region in the state).
- Geography with low elevation, tidal estuaries, and rural isolation.

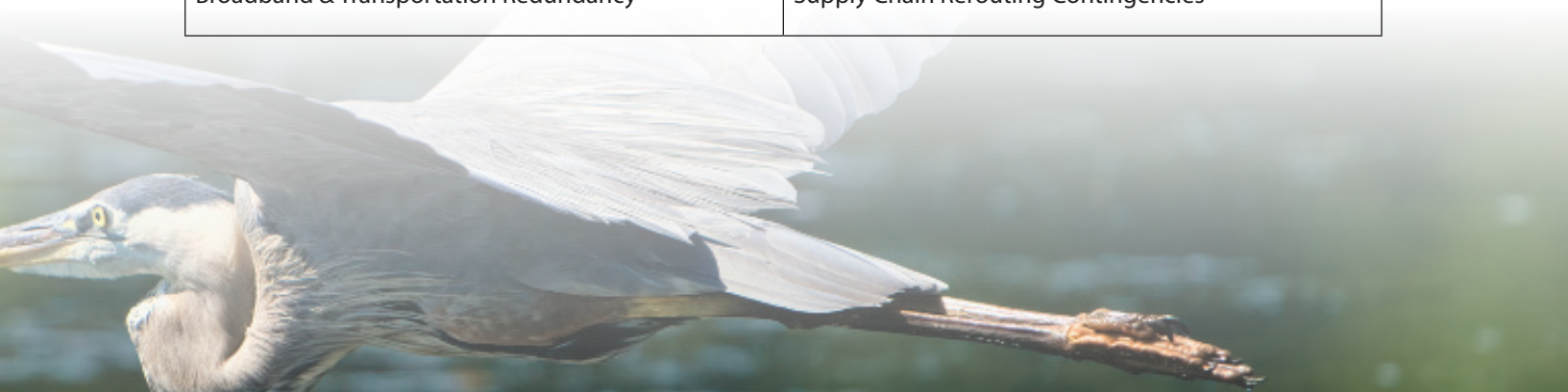
The Middle Peninsula Economic Resilience Vision is to build a durable regional economy capable of absorbing severe environmental hazards and economic shocks, protecting working waterfronts and natural assets, retaining wealth locally, and rapidly recovering from crisis events.

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1.2 DUAL FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

This resilience strategy addresses two complementary approaches: 1) Steady-State Initiatives and 2) Response Initiatives.

STEADY-STATE INITIATIVES (Proactive / Long-Term Mitigation)	RESPONSIVE INITIATIVES (Post-Disaster / Rapid Shock Response)
Resilience Innovation Development	Business Emergency Planning
Working Waterfront Infrastructure	Regional Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)
"Fight the Flood" Business Network Expansion	Rapid Post-Storm Impact Assessments
Industry & Income Diversification	Multi-Jurisdiction Emergency Response
Broadband & Transportation Redundancy	Supply Chain Rerouting Contingencies



2. RISK & VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

2.1 Environmental Hazards and Climate Vulnerabilities

- **Recurrent Tidal Flooding & Storm Surge:** Heavy dependence on low-lying roads and waterfronts makes coastal infrastructure highly vulnerable to tropical storms, nor'easters, and high-tide "sunny day" flooding.
- **Relative Sea Level Rise & Land Subsidence:** The Middle Peninsula experiences some of the highest rates of relative sea level rise on the East Coast due to land subsidence paired with global sea level changes.
- **Aquatic & Ecological Threats:** Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), water quality degradation, and saltwater intrusion threaten individual wells, aquaculture, commercial fishing, and local agriculture.

HAZARD/STRESSOR (Proactive / Long-Term Mitigation)	**ECONOMIC IMPACT AREA** (Post-Disaster / Rapid Shock Response)
Tidal Inundation and Subsidence	Real estate tax base, physical access to businesses
Storm Surge and Coastal Storms	Seafood processing facilities, marinas, agriculture
Single Corridor Road Washouts	Out-commuter travel, freight transport, tourism access
Broadband/Fiber Disruption	Remote work capabilities, local business transactions

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2.2 ECONOMIC & STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITIES

- **Out-Commuting & Leakage:** Over 80% of local workers commute out of the region daily. Disruption to primary transportation corridors (e.g., U.S. Route 17, State Route 33, Route 360 bridges across the Rappahannock, York, Pamunkey, and Mattaponi Rivers) halts the primary source of regional household income.
- **Resource Dependency:** A significant share of locally generated private jobs relies on natural resources (forestry, forest products, agriculture, and seafood), leaving the region vulnerable to market shifts, environmental degradation, and federal/state regulations.
- **Aging Population:** With a median age well above the Virginia state average, business ownership transitions, and workforce replenishment present ongoing challenges post-disaster.

3. STEADY-STATE RESILIENCE INITIATIVES (PROACTIVE MITIGATION)

Action Priority 1: Institutionalize Flood & Hazard Resilience Programs

- Establish a "Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC)" to accelerate the development, testing, and deployment of innovation resiliency products and processes applicable to rural coastal communities.
- Leverage and expand the MPPDC's "Fight the Flood" platform to connect local property and business owners with specialized flood mitigation contractors, grant channels (such as Virginia's Community Flood Preparedness Fund), low-interest loan financing, and latest "best practices".
- Incentivize nature-based solutions (living shorelines, marsh restoration, thin-layer deposition) to protect critical commercial transport corridors and real estate tax bases.

Action Priority 2: Modernize and Protect Working Waterfront Infrastructure

- Elevate, protect, and retrofit public landing docks, commercial ice houses, seafood packing plants, and boat launch facilities.
- Support the expansion of the Virginia Coastal Wilds and Blue/Green Economy initiatives, integrating sustainable aquaculture with maritime innovation.
- Secure working waterfront zoning and easements to prevent loss of commercial fishing access to residential encroachment and conversion.

Action Priority 3: Sector Diversification & Telework Infrastructure

- Accelerate middle-mile and last-mile fiber broadband deployment across rural portions of the region to support remote workers and digital enterprises.
- Promote eco-tourism, agritourism, and heritage tourism to broaden revenue streams outside the peak summer season.
- Build business succession planning programs for retiring owners in marine trades and forestry.

4. RESPONSIVE RESILIENCE INITIATIVES (CRISIS RESPONSE AND RECOVERY)

Action Priority 4: Post-Disaster Business Recovery & Capital Flow

- Expand regional Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) and micro-grant mechanisms to provide rapid bridge capital to regional business operations following disaster declarations.
- Establish pre-disaster contracts for rapid damage assessment with teams especially specializing in marine and agricultural impact documentation to accelerate FEMA, EDA, USDA, and SBA funding requests.
- Expand the number of business emergency operations plans prepared.

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Action Priority 5: Integrated Regional Disaster Communications & Emergency Management

- Integrate regional Economic Development Directors into local emergency management operations (EOCs) during hazard events.
- Establish a centralized business-clearinghouse portal for real-time post-storm transportation updates (road/bridge closures, bridge operations) and utility restoration timelines.
- Coordinate inter-county detour and logistics contingencies for primary freight corridors (U.S. 17, SR 33, U.S. 360).



5. IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN & FUNDING MATRIX

RESILIENCE ACTION PLAN

PROJECT / INITIATIVE	LEAD AGENCIES	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES
Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC)	MPPDC, MPPAA, VA Sea Grant Program, GO Virginia, VIMS, RISE Resilience, ODU, VA Tech, William and Mary	3 years	TBD
Working Waterfronts Modernizations	MPPDC, Local EDOs, VIMS	Medium-Term (2-4 Years)	EDA Public Works, Working Waterfront Elevations, NOAA, NFWF
Fight the Flood Expansion	MPPDC, Private Contractors	Ongoing (Immediate)	VA CFPF, FEMA BRIC, Parametric
Resilient Broadband Corridors	Counties, Broadband Operators	Short-Term (1-2 Years)	USDA Reconnect, VATI, EDA
Business Continuity Training	SBDC, Local Chambers	Ongoing	VEMA, FEMA, SBA, EDA Technical Assistance
Emergency RLF Establishment	Regional EDD / MPPDC	Short-Term (1-2 Years)	FEMA, EDA CARES/ARPA models, USDA

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6. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

To evaluate the ongoing success of this Economic Resilience Strategy, the Middle Peninsula will track the following metrics annually:

1. **Virginia Rural Coastal Resilience Center (VRCRC):** The annual total budget of the VRCRC.
2. **Working Waterfront Investment:** Total dollar value of public and private investment secured for waterfront infrastructure retrofits and elevation projects.
3. **Flood Mitigation Engagement:** Number of regional businesses and property owners utilizing the Fight the Flood program for mitigation projects.
4. **Broadband Expansion:** Total linear miles of fiber installed and percentage increase in high-speed rural business connections.
5. **Economic Diversification:** Share of regional employment in non-traditional sectors (e.g., tech-enabled remote work, eco-tourism, specialized aquaculture).
6. **Business Recovery Velocity:** Average time (in days) required for commercial seafood and downtown business districts to resume operation following a major storm event.


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CHAPTER F:
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT and HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & VISION

1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT & VISION STATEMENT

A skilled, adaptable, and resilient workforce is the backbone of economic prosperity in the Middle Peninsula. While the region boasts a dedicated workforce and proximity to major metropolitan talent hubs, local employers face persistent recruitment and retention challenges.

HIGH OUT-COMMUTING RATE	WAGE DISPARITY	DEMOGRAPHICS & AGING
81.2% leave daily	Regional Ave. Weekly Wage $951 (50.3% of VA)	Median age; 46.5 years (Virginia 39.2)
Primary destinations - Hampton Roads and Richmond MSA's	High local talent leakage	28.5% of population 65 +

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MIDDLE PENINSULA WORKFORCE REALITIES

The Middle Peninsula Workforce Vision is to build a modern, high-value regional workforce pipeline that aligns secondary and post-secondary education with key regional industries, reduces economic leakage by expanding high-wage local job opportunities, and leverages digital infrastructure to support remote work and entrepreneurship.



2. WORKFORCE PROFILE & LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

2.1 KEY REGIONAL LABOR DYNAMICS

- **Out-Commuting and Wage Leakage:** Over 80% of the region's employed residents leave the Middle Peninsula daily to work primarily in the Hampton Roads and Richmond MSAs. This reflects a disconnect between local housing/living options and higher-wage opportunities in surrounding urban centers.
- **Aging Demographic and Retiree Influx:** The region's median age (46.5 years) is significantly higher than Virginia's (38.1 years), with over 22% of the population aged 65 or older. This trends toward tightening local labor supply, making youth retention, career pathways, and adult upskilling vital.
- **Sector Opportunities:** Core employment remains concentrated in resource-based "blue-green" industries (commercial seafood, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, wood products), trades, public sector, and growing healthcare/elder-care needs.

TARGET WORKFORCE TRAINING CLUSTERS

MARITIME & TRADES	FORESTRY & FOREST PRODUCTS	HEALTHCARE	REMOTE/DIGITAL	AG/AQUACULTURE
Marine Tech	Mill Operator	Nursing (LN/LPN)	Cyber/IT Pathways	Climate-Smart Ag
Commercial Boat Operators	Heavy Equipment	Health Aides	Tech Entrepreneurship	Oyster/Fish culture
Electrician/ Plumbing	Advanced Logistics	Emergency Services	Digital Services	Food Processing

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3. STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES

Priority 1: Align Education & Training with Regional Industry Demand

- **Partner with Rappahannock Community College (RCC):** Expand credentialing and fast-track workforce programs (e.g., FastForward, G3) tailored to local high-demand occupations in maritime trades, healthcare, welding, commercial driving (CDL), and industrial maintenance.
- **Scale-up Youth Apprenticeships & Career and Technical Education (CTE):** Strengthen CTE offerings across all seven school districts in partnership with local employers (e.g., WestRock/Smurfit, marine businesses, local health systems, local governments).
- **Support Specialized Blue Economy Training:** Utilize expertise from RCC and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and local marine trades to offer credentialed training in aquaculture management, coastal restoration technology, and specialized boat building/repair.

Priority 2: Stem Out-Commuting & Retain Local Talent

- **Career Awareness & Local Job Placement:** Launch a regional "Work Local Middle Peninsula" campaign targeting high school students and young adults to highlight competitive local career paths in forestry, manufacturing, public safety, local government, healthcare, and maritime industries.
- **Create Employer-Led Internship Pipelines:** Facilitate paid internships and apprenticeship sponsorships connecting local high school and RCC graduates directly with Middle Peninsula businesses.

Priority 3: Capitalize on Remote Work & Telework Capabilities

- **Remote Worker Upskilling:** Partner with regional organizations to provide digital skills, software development, and remote-work readiness certifications for residents seeking high-paying remote roles while living in rural Middle Peninsula communities.
- **Co-Working & Business Incubator Hubs:** Establish telework and entrepreneurship spaces equipped with gigabit broadband in town centers (e.g., Tappahannock, Urbanna, Gloucester, Aylett) to support freelancers, remote workers, and micro-entrepreneurs.

Priority 4: Expand Supportive Services & Eliminate Barriers to Employment

- **Rural Transportation Solutions:** Collaborate with Bay Transit and Bay Consortium WDB to expand rural vanpool and micro-transit services connecting rural workers to key employment hubs and training centers.
- **Childcare Infrastructure Expansion:** Support micro-enterprise training for home-based childcare providers to alleviate the severe shortage of affordable childcare across the Middle Peninsula counties.

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4. IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN AND KEY PARTNERSHIPS

WORKFORCE ACTION PLAN

ACTION ITEM	KEY PARTNERS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL FUNDING /RESOURCES
Maritime & Trades Credentialing Expansion	RCC, Local CTE, Bay Consortium WDB, VIMS	Short-term (1 - 2 Years)	Workforce Credential Grant, GO Virginia, EDA Technical Asst
Expand Paid Youth Apprenticeships & Internships	MPA, VEDP, School Divisions, Chambers of Commerce, Local Business Community	Ongoing	Bay Consortium Youth Funds, VA Registered Apprenticeship, VEDP Internship Program
Remote Work & Digital Tech Skill Badging Program	MPPDC, RCC, Local EDOs, Private Tech Partners	Mid-term (2 -3 years)	USDA Rural Development, Broadband Expansion Grants
Rural Workforce Mobility	Bay Transit, DRPT, LEDO's	Mid-term (2 -4 years)	Federal Transit Admin (FTA), USDA
Childcare Support Network	RCC, Departments of Social Services	Mid-term (2 -4 years)	TBT

5. PERFORMANCE METRICS (KPIS)

The Middle Peninsula will evaluate the success of its workforce development strategy using the following metrics:

1. **Credential and Certification Completion Rate:** Annual number of industry-recognized credentials awarded through RCC and local CTE programs in target sectors (marine trades, healthcare, advanced manufacturing).
2. **Local Retention Rate:** Increase in the percentage of regional high school and community college graduates securing employment within the six-county area.
3. **Out-Commuting Reduction:** Decrease in the proportion of the workforce out-commuting to urban MSAs as local high-wage job availability increases.
4. **Labor Force Participation:** Measurable increase in regional labor force participation rate, particularly among young adults (ages 18–34).
5. **Registered Apprenticeship Growth:** Total number of active registered apprenticeships established with Middle Peninsula employers.
6. **Internship Participation:** Number of participants enrolled in the VEDP Internship program.

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CHAPTER G:
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT and RESIDENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & VISION

1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT & VISION STATEMENT

Housing is an essential pillar of economic development. In the Middle Peninsula the lack of diverse, affordable, and resilient housing options directly constrains business growth and workforce recruitment and retention. While the region offers attractive coastal and rural lifestyles, the local housing market faces critical structural imbalances:

- **Severe Supply Bottlenecks:** A dominant inventory of single-family detached homes, with a lack of missing-middle housing (duplexes, townhomes, garden apartments) for young professionals, essential workers, and tradespeople.
- **Cost Burden & Influx Pressures:** Rising housing costs driven by an influx of commuters in search of more affordable housing, retirees, teleworkers, and seasonal second-home buyers competing for limited inventory.
- **Infrastructure Constraints:** Limited municipal water and wastewater capacity restricts higher-density residential developments.
- **Environmental and Hazard Risks:** Increasing flood risk, rising home insurance premiums, and strict septic system regulations along low-lying coastal zones.

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MIDDLE PENINSULA HOUSING DYNAMICS

LIMITED HOUSING DIVERSITY	WORKFORCE DISCONNECT	INFRASTRUCTURE BARRIERS
Over 80% of housing units are single-family detached structures	Local workers priced out of ownership market	Dependence on private wells and engineered septic systems
Minimal multi-family/rental units	Commuters seeking more affordable housing options	Limited public water and sewer capacity

The Middle Peninsula Housing Vision is to expand the regional supply of resilient, attainable, and modern housing choices that support local workforce needs, enable young families to move to and stay in the region, accommodate senior aging-in-place, and protect coastal environmental quality.

2. HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS & REGIONAL CHALLENGES

2.1 Housing Stock & Attainability Assessment

- **Workforce Housing Shortage:** Key employer sectors (healthcare, education, manufacturing, public safety, seafood processing) report difficulty filling positions due to candidate inability to find local rental or entry-level ownership units within reasonable price points.
- **Aging Housing Inventory**: A significant portion of the region's housing stock was built prior to modern flood protection standards and energy efficiency codes, increasing utility, insurance, and maintenance costs for low-to-moderate-income households.
- **Housing Production:** New housing is not being constructed fast enough to meet housing demand of metropolitan workers moving to the region.

TARGET HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CLUSTERS

WORKFORCE RENTALS	MISSING MIDDLE	RESILIENT BUILDING	SENIOR HOUSING
Multi-family units	Townhouses and duplexes	Elevated structures	Aging-in-place
Essential worker housing	First-time home buyer starter homes	Flood proofing/adaption in high-risk areas	Assisted and independent living options

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3. STRATEGIC HOUSING PRIORITIES & ACTION ITEMS

Priority 1: Foster Regional Housing Partnerships & Funding Pipelines

- **Establish a Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck Housing Trust:** Establish a "Regional Housing Trust" as an arm of Bay Aging's Bay Housing Division. The "Regional Housing Trust" would have two primary functions; 1) serve as a regional housing land trust and 2) serve as a regional housing trust fund. The "Regional Housing Trust" would be a repositor of assets (land, financial contributions, stocks, bonds, etc.) from private, public, or foundation partners and then convert those assets into subsidies for housing development projects in the Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck. The purpose is to raise local capital that can be used to fill the gap between workforce housing costs, funding from state and federal agencies, and what local workers can afford.
- **Public-Private Land Partnerships:** Identify publicly owned underutilized land parcels that can be leased or contributed to private developers for workforce or affordable housing projects.

Priority 2: Align Land Use Policies & Zoning for Missing-Middle & Workforce Housing

- **Create a Regional Housing Advocacy Network:** Future workers and residents lack a voice when land use decisions are considered by local officials. Often the voice in support of more workforce and affordable housing is the developer of the housing. The public skeptically views the interest of the developer as being self-serving. As a result, most of the public discourse is negative towards housing development with housing projects being denied. It is important that there be a voice during the deliberations that can articulate the need and demands for more workforce and affordable housing options. The Northern Neck/ Middle Peninsula Housing Coalition (NNMPHC) is a representative group of housing related organizations that has first-hand knowledge of the housing issues facing the region. It is recommended that the NNMPHC expand its activities to include active housing advocacy.
- **Update Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Codes:** Encourage local jurisdictions to adopt flexible residential zoning provisions, by-right multi-family districts, density bonuses, and reduced parking requirements for workforce and multi-family housing near population centers and primary transportation corridors (e.g., U.S. Route 17, Route 33 and Route 360).

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Priority 3: Build Coastal Resilience into Housing Stock

- **Resilient Construction Standards:** Encourage building practices that exceed baseline flood standards, including elevated foundations, flood vents, and wind-resistant roofing materials to lower long-term insurance and maintenance costs.
- **Subsidized Retrofit and Mitigation Programs:** Leverage programs like the Middle Peninsula's Fight the Flood initiative and Virginia's Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) to help homeowners elevate or flood-proof homes in vulnerable coastal zones.

Priority 4: Expand Infrastructure to Enable Residential Investment

- **Target Utility Capacity Expansion:** Secure federal and state infrastructure grants (such as USDA Rural Development) to expand public water and sewer lines in designated growth areas, lowering site development costs for homebuilders.
- **Support Innovative Wastewater Solutions:** Utilize advanced modular residential wastewater treatment systems, community cluster wastewater treatment systems, and advanced engineered septic technologies to allow modest-density housing without compromising water quality or coastal watersheds.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN & FUNDING MATRIX

HOUSING ACTION PLAN

ACTION ITEM	KEY PARTNERS	TIMELINE	FUNDING /RESOURCES
Regional Housing Trust	Bay Aging	1st year	Virginia Housing, Foundations
Comprehensive plan and zoning review and needs assessment	Bay Aging , Northern Neck Middle Peninsula Housing Coalition, Virginia Housing, Local planning offices	Years 2 and 3	Virginia Housing
Housing advocacy program	Bay Aging, Middle Peninsula Housing Coalition, Virginia Housing, Local chambers of commerce, Local non-profit organizations	1st year	Bay Aging
Utility infrastructure expansion (see infrastructure initiative)	MPPDC, PSA's, HRSD, Localities		
Flood mitigation and elevation (see resilience initiative)			
Coastal home repair program	Bay Aging, MPPDC	Ongoing	FEMA, CFCF, FEMA, USDA Housing Repair Program

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5. PERFORMANCE METRICS (KPIS)

The Middle Peninsula will evaluate the success of its housing development strategy using the following metrics:

1. **Permitted Workforce Housing Units:** Annual increase in the number of permitted multi-family, townhome, and missing-middle housing units across the six-county region.
2. **Residential Building Permits Issued:** Increase in the number of residential building permits issued.
3. **Infrastructure-Connected Housing:** Number of new residential lots connected to public water and sewer systems.
4. **Attainability Index:** Reduction in the percentage of regional workforce households classified as "housing cost-burdened" (spending more than 30% of income on housing).
5. **Resilient Retrofits:** Number of residential structures in coastal hazard zones successfully elevated, retrofitted, or flood proofed.

CHAPTER H:
ACTION PLAN – STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & VISION

To accelerate economic momentum, address systemic infrastructure and housing deficits, and safeguard coastal communities, the Middle Peninsula has established six priority strategic initiatives. These collaborative projects bridge local boundaries to build long-term regional capacity.

The biggest obstacle to furthering economic development in the Middle Peninsula is the lack of institutional capacity to implement programs and activities that can impact the economy. There are untapped economic development resources that are available that are not being deployed because there aren't the organizations dedicated to achieving a strategic regional vision. These initiatives will establish the organizational framework necessary for attaining the CEDS goals and objectives. The action plan focuses on six key initiatives for strengthening existing organizations or creating new organizations: 1) preparing a regional infrastructure investment plan (RIIP), 2) reactivation of the Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA), 3) creation of a regional housing trust, 4) create a Middle Peninsula workforce collaborative (MPWC), 5) create a Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC), and 6) establish a Middle Peninsula leadership development program.

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1. REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN (RIIP)

Description

The **Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan (RIIP)** is a coordinated capital investment framework designed to prioritize, fund, and execute critical public infrastructure across the Middle Peninsula. Rather than local jurisdictions competing for fragmented funding, the RIIP creates a unified priority list focusing on high-impact projects:

1. **Utility Expansion:** Extending public water and wastewater service to growth areas, commercial, and industrial sites to unlock development potential of these areas.
2. **Resilient Mobility:** Elevating vulnerable flood-prone roadway corridors, low-lying coastal access points, and upgrading working waterfront infrastructure.
3. **Digital Infrastructure:** Bridging remaining middle-mile and last-mile fiber broadband gaps to achieve 100% gigabit connectivity for businesses and remote workers.

Core Objectives

- Establish a prioritized, multi-jurisdictional capital project pipeline to maximize competitive leverage for federal (EDA, USDA, FEMA) and state (VATI, VDOT, VEDP, VRA, DEQ) funding.
- Lower site development costs and accelerate "shovel-ready" site certification for industrial and commercial projects.
- Ensure infrastructure investments incorporate forward-looking sea-level rise and flood mitigation practices.

Key Lead & Partners: Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC), HRSD, Local Public Service Authorities (PSAs), County/Town Administrators, VDOT, USDA Rural Development, EDA, VRA.

2. REACTIVATION OF THE MIDDLE PENINSULA ALLIANCE (MPA)

Description

The **Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA)** served as the region's dedicated regional economic development marketing and business attraction organization. With the loss of executive leadership, the MPA has been inactive for the past several years. While the organization exists on paper, there continues to be a need at the regional level to combine resources and reactivate the MPA. Reactivating and fully funding the MPA creates a single, professional point of contact for external site selectors, business expansions, and marketing initiatives. By unifying business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts across all nine member jurisdictions, the MPA provides professional site-selection assistance, marketing of regional assets (such as airport-adjacent industrial sites, forestry assets, maritime facilities, and tourism), and alignment with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC).

Core Objectives

- **Identify and select key business sites:** Conduct a regional industrial site selection study and secure a minimum of two additional tracts of land, 100 acres or more, for industrial and commercial use.
- **Establish a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA):** Sharing the up-front capital costs of development of an industrial/business site and sharing future revenues from those investments is the only realistic way for small rural localities to accomplish commercial/industrial site development.
- **Establish MPA as a VTC designated regional "Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)":** Develop a regional tourism marketing effort within the MPA that supplements current local tourism efforts and complements VA's River Realm, VA's Coastal Wilds, Hunting VA's Coastal Wilds, and VTC's marketing efforts.
- **Position the Middle Peninsula as a prime destination for targeted growth sectors:** maritime/blue economy, wood products, ag-tech/aquaculture, and resiliency businesses.
- **Regional Business Retention and Expansion (BRE):** Implement a unified BRE program to support existing local businesses and micro-enterprises.

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Key Lead & Partners: Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA) Board, Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDO's), MPPDC, VEDP, GO Virginia, VTC, Local Chambers of Commerce.



3. CREATION OF A MIDDLE PENINSULA REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST

Description

To resolve the critical shortage of workforce, starter, and rental housing, the region will support Bay Aging creating the **Northern Neck/Middle Peninsula Regional Housing Trust (MPRHT)** as an affiliate of Bay Aging Housing Division. Operating as a flexible, public-private financial vehicle, the Trust will pool philanthropic and private assets with local, state (Virginia Housing, DHCD), federal (CDBG, USDA Rural Development), to provide gap financing, pre-development loans, low-coast land and infrastructure subsidies to non-profit and private developers. The Housing Trust specifically targets "missing-middle" housing—such as townhomes, duplexes, and multi-family units at price points accessible to local teachers, healthcare workers, tradespeople, and first-responders.

Core Objectives

- Capitalize a regional housing trust dedicated to workforce housing creation and preservation.
- Reduce private and non-profit developer risk for building multi-family and missing-middle housing in rural centers and utility-served service areas.
- Incorporate resilient, flood-adapted building standards into funded housing projects to lower long-term insurance and maintenance costs.

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Key Lead & Partners: Bay Aging, MPPDC, Virginia Housing, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Non-Profit Housing Developers, foundations and Regional Banks.

4. CREATION OF THE MIDDLE PENINSULA WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE (MPWC)

Description

The **Middle Peninsula Workforce Collaborative (MPWC)** is an employer-led coalition established to align secondary, post-secondary, and vocational training pipelines directly with the hiring needs of regional industries. Bringing together school Rappahannock Community College (RCC), K-12 superintendents, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), the Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDA XIII), and major private employers (e.g., forest products, manufacturing, maritime businesses, aquaculture producers, health systems), the Collaborative addresses labor shortages and out-commuting. It coordinates localized credentialing programs, registered apprenticeships, internships, and youth retention initiatives.

Core Objectives

- Expand fast-track, industry-recognized credentialing (FastForward/G3) in maritime trades, welding, commercial driving (CDL), industrial maintenance, and nursing.
- Establish a regional paid internship and youth apprenticeship pipeline connecting college students and local high school CTE students directly with local employers.
- Implement a "Work Local Middle Peninsula" career awareness campaign to stem youth out-migration and reduce daily out-commuting to nearby MSAs.

Key Lead & Partners: Rappahannock Community College (RCC), K-12 School Divisions, Bay Consortium WDB, VIMS, Major Regional Employers, MPPDC, MPA.

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VIRGINIA RURAL COASTAL RESILIENCY CENTER (VRCRC)

Description

Building on the success of MPPDC's suite of rural resilience programs including the nationally recognized "**Fight the Flood"** initiative, the **Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC)** will be established as a regional institute, with state, national, and international presence, dedicated to rural coastal adaptation, blue economy innovation, and flood hazard mitigation. Located within the Middle Peninsula, the Center will serve as a living laboratory for testing, commercializing, and implementing nature-based shoreline protection (e.g., living shorelines, thin-layer deposition), resilient infrastructure design, housing resiliency products and processes, flood insurance measures, and rural flood financing mechanisms. It will provide technical assistance to local governments, businesses, consultants, and private property owners adapting to sea-level rise and land subsidence.

Core Objectives

- Position the Middle Peninsula as an international model and testing ground for rural coastal resilience and "Blue Tech" commercialization.
- Expand technical assistance and grant-matching resources for property and business owners through the Fight the Flood platform.
- Collaborate with academic partners (VIMS, William & Mary Law School's Coastal Policy Center, Virginia Tech, Virginia Sea Grant Program, Rise Resiliency) to bring latest technologies to commercial application and scale-up proven resiliency technologies.

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Key Lead & Partners: MPPDC, MPPAA, Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), Virginia Sea Grant Program, RISE Resiliency, Coastal Management Program, and Private Resiliency Contractors.

6. MIDDLE PENINSULA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (MPLDP)

Description

To sustain long-term economic strategy and governance, the region will launch the **Middle Peninsula Leadership Development Program (MPLDP)**. This annual, multi-month civic leadership initiative is designed to identify, educate, and connect emerging leaders across the government, business, non-profit, and agricultural/maritime sectors. Through hands-on workshops, field site visits, and regional policy briefings, participants gain a holistic understanding of the Middle Peninsula's economic interdependencies—ranging from working waterfront management and infrastructure finance to regional housing and workforce dynamics.

Core Objectives

- Cultivate a diverse, regional network of informed civic leaders ready to serve on local boards, commissions, and elected bodies.
- Break down geographic and county-level silos by fostering inter-jurisdictional collaboration and relationships.
- Engage emerging leaders in completing annual "capstone project" solutions for real-world challenges identified in the CEDS plan.

Key Lead & Partners: MPPDC, Local Chambers of Commerce, Community Foundations, Rappahannock Community College, Regional Young Professionals Organizations.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ACTION MATRIX

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TARGET COMPLETION/ LAUNCH	PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES
1. Regional Infrastructure Plan	MPPDC, HRSD, Local, (PSAs), County/ Town Administrators, VDOT, USDA Rural Development, EDA	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	EDA Public Works, USDA, VDOT, VATI, GO Virginia
2. Reactivate Middle Peninsula Alliance	MPA Board, Local Economic Development Organizations (LEDO's), MPPDC, VEDP, GO Virginia, VTC, Local Chambers of Commerce	Immediate (Year 1)	Member Dues, VEDP, GO Virginia
3. Regional Housing Trust	Bay Aging, MPPDC, Regional Partners	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	Virginia Housing, DHCD CDBG, Philanthropy
4. Workforce Collaborative	RCC / Bay Consortium / CTE	Short-Term (Years 1–2)	GO Virginia, WIOA Funds, State Grants
5. Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center	MPPDC, MPPAA, VIMS, RISE, VA Sea Grant Program,	Medium-Term (Years 2–4)	NOAA, FEMA BRIC, VA CFPF, EDA
6. Leadership Program	MPPDC / RCC / Chambers	Short-Term (Year 2)	Corporate Sponsorships, Tuition, Foundations

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CHAPTER I:
EVALUATION FRAMEWORK and PERFORMANCE METRICS

1. OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

The Evaluation Framework provides a structured mechanism to monitor progress, ensure accountability, and measure the real-world impact of the Middle Peninsula CEDS Plan. Because regional economic development is dynamic, this framework tracks both process/activity metrics (outputs) and long-term economic outcomes. MPPDC, in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities (EDAs/LEDOs) and the reactivated Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA), will use this framework to prepare the required CEDS Annual Performance Report for the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

CEDS EVALUATION DUAL-TRACK FRAMEWORK

TRADITIONAL ED METRICS	REGIONAL IMPACT METRICS
Capital Investment ($)	Out-Commuting Rate Reduction (%)
Jobs Created or Retained	Working Waterfronts Renovated
Grant and Match $$ Leveraged	Missing-Middle Housing Units Permitted
Commercial Site Certification Level	Rural Resilience/Flood Mitigation

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2. CORE EVALUATION METRICS BY STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

To measure the success of the Middle Peninsula's priority initiatives, performance indicators are categorized into quantitative activity tracking and regional outcome measures:

Initiative 1: Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan (RIIP)

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - Number of multi-jurisdictional infrastructure projects prioritized and submitted for federal/state funding.
    - Total linear miles of high-speed fiber broadband deployed in rural unserved/underserved corridors.
    - Linear feet of public water/wastewater lines extended to growth areas and industrial parks.
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Total public and private capital investment leveraged through infrastructure improvements ($).
    - Number of commercial/industrial sites advancing in tier status under the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP).

Initiative 2: Middle Peninsula Alliance (MPA) Reactivation

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - The number of business/industrial sites identified and acquired for future development.
    - Formal adoption of regional marketing agreements across participating counties and towns.
    - Number of site-selector inquiries, prospect visits, and marketing leads generated annually.
    - Number of Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) visits conducted with existing major employers.
    - Designation by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) as a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Direct and indirectly attributable jobs created and retained (FTE).
    - Total direct and indirect attributable private investment.
    - Net growth in the local business tax base across all six member counties.

Initiative 3: Middle Peninsula Regional Housing Trust

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - Total capital raised and pooled from state (Virginia Housing, DHCD), federal, local governments, private, and philanthropic sources ($).
    - Number of pre-development loans/grants, gap financing packages, or infrastructure grants issued to developers.
    - Acres of land secured for housing development.
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Total number of new workforce, starter, and "missing-middle" residential units permitted and built.
    - Reduction in the percentage of local workforce households classified as housing cost-burdened (>30% of income spent on housing).

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Initiative 4: Middle Peninsula Workforce Collaborative (MPWC)

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - Increase in number of industry-recognized credentials awarded through Rappahannock Community College (RCC) and local CTE programs in target sectors.
    - Number of high school and college students enrolled in paid apprenticeships and internships.
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Measurable decrease in the daily out-commuting rate (baseline: 81.2%).
    - Increase in the regional average weekly wage (baseline: $951 / 59% of Virginia average).

Initiative 5: Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC)

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - Increase in number of property owners, watermen, and small businesses participating in the Fight the Flood platform.
    - Grant and loan dollars disbursed for shoreline stabilization, living shorelines, and flood elevation retrofits ($).
    - Number of tidal channels dredged.
    - Number of innovative products or services deployed.
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Total acreage or linear miles of commercial working waterfronts and public landings protected from tidal inundation.
    - Total acreage or linear miles of private property protected from tidal inundation.
    - Number of tidal waterways made navigable.
    - Number of individual advanced wastewater systems installed.
    - Value of public and private flood damages avoided during severe weather events.

Initiative 6: Middle Peninsula Leadership Development Program (MPLDP)

- **Output / Activity Metrics:**
    - Number of cohorts and individuals graduating from the annual leadership program.
    - Diversity of participants representing government, business, non-profit, maritime, and agricultural sectors.
- **Long-Term Impact Metrics:**
    - Percentage of program alumni serving on local boards, commissions, EDAs, or elected bodies within three years of graduation.
    - Number of CEDS "capstone project" recommendations adopted by local government organizations.

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3. GOVERNANCE, ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW, & DATA COLLECTION

ANNUAL EVALUATION & REPORTING TIMELINE

1ST Q	2ND Q	3RD AND 4TH Q
Data Collection & Surveying	CEDS Committee Evaluation	Annual Report Publication
Partner Metric Submissions	Gap Analysis & Strategy Shift	Submission to U.S. EDA

3.1 Data Collection Responsibilities

- **Lead Entity:** The MPPDC staff will act as the central clearinghouse for CEDS monitoring.
- **Partner Submissions:** MPA, Bay Aging, Rappahannock Community College (RCC), the Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board, local economic development directors, Public Service Authorities (PSAs), HRSD, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) will supply annual metric data.
- **Secondary Data Sources:** Annual progress will be baselined against objective data from the U.S. Census Bureau (ACS), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and StatsAmerica.

3.2 Continuous Improvement Protocol ("What Can We Do Better?")

The evaluation framework is designed as a continuous improvement loop, not a static scorecard:

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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

DATA COLLECTION	EVALUATION	STRATEGIC ADJUSTMENT
Gather output and outcome metrics across counties/towns.	CEDS Strategy Committee compares actuals to targets.	Reallocate resources, update project pipeline, or modify policy.

1. **Annual Strategy Review:** The regional CEDS Strategy Committee will meet annually to review performance metric outcomes against baseline goals.
2. **Corrective Action Triggers:** If a specific strategic priority falls significantly short of its 2-year target (e.g., zero missing-middle housing units constructed or delay in utility extension), the CEDS Committee will initiate a tactical review to identify bottleneck drivers (e.g., zoning barriers, funding match shortfalls) and adjust strategy accordingly.
3. **Five-Year Major Update:** This annual monitoring process culminates in the comprehensive 5-year CEDS update required by the EDA, incorporating updated SWOT analyses and regional economic data.


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CHAPTER J:
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

1. CEDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In accordance with EDA guidelines, this 2026 CEDS plan was developed using the CEDS Strategy Committee. The CEDS Committee is comprised of the local administrators of the nine member localities. During the CEDS development the Strategy Committee (LGA) has been periodically briefed on the progress of the CEDS and some of the key provision, vision, goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives. The LGA group, having representation of all nine localities, served as the primary sounding board for drafts of the sections of the CEDS. The analysis of the demographic, economic and housing data, the vision, goals and objectives, and the strategic initiatives have been reviewed and comments received from the LGA. In addition to consultation with the LGA, interviews were conducted with the local economic development staff of each locality, presentation was made to the quarterly meeting of the local economic development organizations (LEDO's), and a series of one-on-one interviews with key stakeholder groups were conducted.

Once the draft CEDS document was completed a presentation to the LGA and MPPDC was conducted. In addition, the draft was published on the MPPDC website for public comment.

After receipt of comments from the LGA, MPPDC, LEDO's, stakeholders, and the public, the draft CEDS document was amended and presented to the MPPDC Commission for final adoption.

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2. OVERVIEW & ENGAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

The successful implementation of the Middle Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) depends on strong, multi-jurisdictional alignment across the region's nine member jurisdictions—comprising the six counties of Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, and Middlesex, and the three incorporated towns of Tappahannock, Urbanna, and West Point.

Because rural local governments operate within constrained fiscal environments, local elected and appointed officials serve as primary decision-makers for policy adoption, land-use zoning, public utility funding, and regional inter-local agreements.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENT

ELECTED OFFICIALS	APPOINTED ADMINISTRATORS	ADVISORY & AUTHORITY LEADS
County Boards of Supervisors	County Administrators	Economic Development Authorities
Town Councils	Town Managers	Planning Commissions
General Assembly Delegation	Department Directors (Planning/Public Works/Emergency Mgmt./Local School Boards / CTE/School Superintendents)	Public Service Authorities

3. TARGETED STAKEHOLDER MATRICES & ENGAGEMENT ROLES

To ensure systematic outreach, engagement strategies are segmented by the distinct roles and statutory authorities of local officials:

A. Local Elected Officials (Boards of Supervisors and Town Councils)

- **Primary Role:** Policy adoption, ordinance updates (zoning), local budget appropriations, regional agreement execution, and capital improvement program (CIP) alignment.
- **Key Messaging:** Emphasize how regional coordination leverages state and federal grant dollars (EDA, VDOT, USDA, Virginia Housing) to solve local challenges (e.g., wastewater capacity, flood risks, tax base diversification) without placing an undue burden on local real estate tax rates.

B. Appointed Executive Leadership (County Administrators, Town Managers, & Staff)

- **Primary Role:** Operational execution, grant administration, inter-agency coordination, technical project vetting, and daily administrative leadership.
- **Key Messaging:** Focus on administrative efficiency, shared regional technical capacity (via the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission - MPPDC), streamlined site readiness, and synchronized infrastructure planning.

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C. Appointed Boards, Authorities, & Commissions

- **Primary Role:**
    - **Economic Development Authorities (EDAs/IDAs):** Business retention, site acquisition, and commercial deal-structuring.
    - **Planning Commissions:** Comprehensive plan alignment, missing-middle housing zoning, and corridor land-use policies.
    - **Public Service Authorities (PSAs):** Utility capacity expansion, water/wastewater capital infrastructure, and grant-matching leverage.
    - **Local School Boards:** Aligning K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways with regional industry needs.

3. STRUCTURAL ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION MECHANISMS

To maintain continuous, meaningful engagement throughout the CEDS lifecycle, the region utilizes a structured governance and consultation framework:

STRUCTURED ENGAGEMENT PIPELINE

CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE	QUARTERLY WORKSHOPS	ANNUAL LOCAL BOARD BRIEFINGS
Jurisdiction-appointed Representatives guiding priority implementation	Administrator and ED Director coordination meeting on regional progress/wins	MPPDC Staff and CEDS Leads delivering customized local progress to Boards of Supervisors

1. The CEDS Strategy and Executive Committee
In accordance with EDA guidelines, each of the nine member jurisdictions formally appoints representatives to the CEDS Strategy Committee. This body includes local elected leaders, county administrators, and local EDA directors to ensure equal jurisdictional representation in vetting regional priority projects.

2. Quarterly Local Administrator and EDA Working Group
Holding quarterly working sessions with County Administrators, Town Managers, and local Economic Development Directors allows staff to align regional initiatives (e.g., the Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan, Middle Peninsula Alliance reactivation) with individual county capital improvement priorities and local board agendas.

3. Annual "State of the Region" Board Briefings
MPPDC staff or CEDS committee representatives will present an annual in-person update to each of the six County Boards of Supervisors and three Town Councils during regularly scheduled public meetings. These briefings report on regional KPIs, highlight localized grant awards, and review progress on the six priority strategic initiatives.

4. ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN & TIMELINE

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MILESTONE/ACTION ITEM	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIMELINE	PRIMARY DELIVERABLE/OUTCOME
CEDS Orientation and Resolution of Support	BOS & Town Councils	Quarter 1	Formal endorsement
Joint Infrastructure & Land Use Polices Alignment Workshops	Local Planning Directors, PSA's	Quarter 2 - Year 1	Priority identification of utility and housing corridors
Local Administrator Roundtables	County Administrators and Town Managers	Quarterly (ongoing)	Synchronized grant applications and project execution
Annual BOS and Council Progress Presentations	Elected officials, Press, and General Public	Annually (Q4 Each Year)	Performance report and metric review

5. FEEDBACK LOOP & DECISION-MAKING PROTOCOL

To ensure local sovereignty and regional consensus, the stakeholder engagement process follows a three-step feedback protocol:

1. **Local Consultation:** Prior to submitting multi-jurisdictional grant applications or regional policy initiatives (such as the Regional Housing Trust Fund or Rural Coastal Resiliency Center), draft proposals are submitted to local administrators and attorney teams for legal and operational review.
2. **Board Briefings & Input:** Concerns raised by local elected officials during public presentations are integrated directly into project scopes, ensuring local land-use, utility, or financial conditions are met.
3. **Formal Resolution:** Regional initiatives requiring financial match or policy adoption proceed only upon approval of formal resolutions by participating local governing bodies.

Appendix A – County Overviews

ESSEX COUNTY

Essex County is predominantly a rural county located at the northwestern portion of the Middle Peninsula bounded on the northeast by the Rappahannock River, the southeast by Middlesex County, the west by Caroline and south by King and Queen Counties. The County is approximately 261 square miles. Residential developments exist as small rural communities along the Rappahannock River or along the primary and many secondary roads. With a history of slow/gradual growth and strong land use control regulations, the County has remained mostly rural. Residential and commercial development is concentrated in and around the Town of Tappahannock.

The 2025 estimate of population is 10,494, a decrease of 105 people (1%) from 2020. The population is 52.4% female and 47.6% male. African Americans comprise 37.1% of the population, and Hispanics 4.6%. The median age is 47.9 years old versus Virginia at 39 years old. 31.1% of the population is over 65 versus Virginia at 20%. The population is projected to decline by 7.2% over the next 30 years. These trends suggest that County programs may require additional services (i.e. health care, transportation) serving an advanced aged population.
The largest employer is Essex County School system with MCV Hospital being the largest private sector employer.

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GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Gloucester County, located in the southeastern portion of Virginia's Middle Peninsula, is bounded on the south by the York River, the north by the Piankatank River, and the east by the Mobjack and Chesapeake Bays. The County is one of the northern most counties in the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Gloucester County continues to experience the outward population growth from the MSA. Gloucester County's industries have traditionally been associated with the abundant natural resources found in the area.

The 2025 estimated population of 38,932 people is an increase of 222 (.6%) from 2020. African Americans are 8.1% of the population and Hispanics 4.3%. The County is expected to grow to 43,512 (11.8%) by 2055.

The migration of population from urban centers to the south has transformed the southeastern portion of the County into a suburban landscape.

The largest employer in Gloucester County is the Gloucester County School system with Riverside Hospital and Cannon Virginia being the largest private sector employers. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science is also a major employer in the County.

Census Tract ID: 51073100301, in southern Gloucester County, received Federal designation as an Opportunity Zones (OZ). Investors receive Federal tax benefits for investments made in the area.

KING AND QUEEN COUNTY

King and Queen County, located in the north-central portion of the Middle Peninsula, is bounded on the west by the York and Mattaponi Rivers which separates King and Queen from King William County. The Dragon Swamp separates King and Queen County from Essex, Middlesex, and Gloucester Counties on the east. Often called the "shoestring county," King and Queen County is about 65 miles long and less than 10 miles wide. Farming and logging continue to be the mainstays of the local economy.

King and Queen County is the least populous county of the Middle Peninsula and one of the most rural counties in Virginia. In 1990, the population density was only 20 people per square mile. Nearly three-fourths of the County's 318.1 square miles of land area is timberland. Over the past four decades, King and Queen County has experienced slow, but steady population growth. In 2010 the population density was 22 people per square mile.

The 2020 Census showed the King and Queen County population to be 6,608 people, a decrease of 337 (4.9%) from the 2010 census. The population is 48.9% female and 51.1% male. African Americans make up 24% of the population, whites 69.8% and Hispanics 3.9%. The median age of the population is 48 years old compared to Virginia at 38 years old. 20% of the population is over 65. The overall population distribution appears to be experiencing a gradual shift to the upper and lower ends of the County where transportation routes to jobs and retail markets are more accessible. The County population is projected to decline 7% over the next 12 years. The largest employer in King and Queen County is the King and Queen County Public School system.

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A Census tract in King and Queen County received Federal designation as a qualified Opportunity Zone. These zones are low-income Census tracts nominated by governors and certified by the U.S. Department of Treasury. The zone and associated funds will allow investors to receive tax benefits on currently unrealized capital gains that are invested in the Opportunity Zone. Census Tract 51097950500, located in the lower third of King and Queen County, is the designated Opportunity Zone.

KING WILLIAM COUNTY

Located approximately 20 miles northeast of the City of Richmond, King William County is one of Virginia's faster growing counties. It has become a bedroom community of the metro-Richmond area. Much of the county's 286 square miles are made up of gently rolling farmland and scenic timberland located between the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers. Farming and wood products continue to be the mainstays of the local economy. King William is home to two Native American Indian Reservations, Mattaponi and Pamunkey, and the oldest courthouse in continuous use in the United States. The Mattaponi and Pamunkey Tribes operate fish hatcheries on the rivers. Residents and visitors enjoy the numerous recreational opportunities that the rivers provide.

King William County's 2025 estimate of population,19,216, is an increase of 1,406 (7.9%) from 2020. African Americans make up 15% of the population, and Hispanics 3.3%. King William County is projected to outpace Virginia in population growth over the next 30 years at a rate of 29.4%.

The largest employer is Alliance Group Rock Tenn, a pulp-paper manufacturing plant, in the Town of West Point.

MATHEWS COUNTY

Mathews County is located at the eastern tip of the Middle Peninsula fronting on the Chesapeake Bay. The County is bordered mostly by water, with the Chesapeake Bay to the east, the Mobjack Bay to the south, the North River to the west, and the Piankatank River to the north. Except for approximately five miles that border with Gloucester County, the County's perimeter is formed by 217 miles shoreline. Mathews is predominantly a rural community that has attracted an increasing number of retirees, second home dwellers, and vacationers. More than three fourths of the working residents earn their living outside the County. The mainstays of the local economy are agriculture, retail trade, seafood, and tourism.

The 2025 estimate of population, 8,322 people, is a decrease of 211 from the 2020 census. Mathews has one of the oldest median age of any Virginia locality at 54.6 years. African Americans represent 9.7% of the population, and Hispanics 2.7%. It is estimated that the County's population will continue to decline by 15.8% over the next 30 years.

Local government is the largest employer in Mathews County with 23% of the local employees. Health care is another 17% of local employment.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

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Middlesex County, comprising 132 square miles with 135 linear miles of shoreline, is located at the eastern end of the Middle Peninsula. The County is bounded by the Rappahannock River to the northeast, the Piankatank River, and Dragon Swamp to the southwest, the Chesapeake Bay to the east, and Essex County to the north. The village of Deltaville is located between the mouths of the Rappahannock and Piankatank Rivers and once was a major center for wooden boat building. The village remains a maritime and recreational center today.

Middlesex has remained largely rural over the years with farming, forestry, tourism, retirement, and fishing providing the principal elements of its economic base. Its relatively remote geographical location helped it retain its rural character.

The 2025 estimate of population was 10,978 people, an increase of 353 (3.3%) from 2020 census. While the County's median age of 55.7 years is one of the oldest in Virginia, it has been able to attract new residents to the County leading to recent population growth. African Americans are 16.1% of the population, and Hispanics 3.2%. Given the advanced median age of the population, Middlesex County is projected to decline slightly by 2.3% over the next 30 years.

The largest employer in Middlesex County is the Middle Peninsula Northern Neck Mental Health Center, a community services board.


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Appendix B – Fight the Flood

Website Growth & Impact Summary

OVERVIEW

In just over three years, the Fight the Flood website has grown from a low-traffic launch into a consistent driver of coastal-resilience engagement. Monthly visitors have climbed from roughly 145 at launch to a routine 700–2,000 today, and the site now actively connects property owners with contractors, funding resources, and program milestones.

AUDIENCE GROWTH

Traffic has increased six- to seven-fold since launch, and growth has accelerated every year:

Average monthly visitors: 178 (2023) > 416 (2024) > 590 (2025) > ~1,170 (2026)
Year-over-year totals: the most recent 12 months drew ~11,500 visitors versus ~3,500 in the first 12 — more than tripling.
2026 pace: through only seven months, the site logged 8,187 visitors — already surpassing all of 2025 (7,078), with peaks of 2,114 (June) and 1,815 (July).

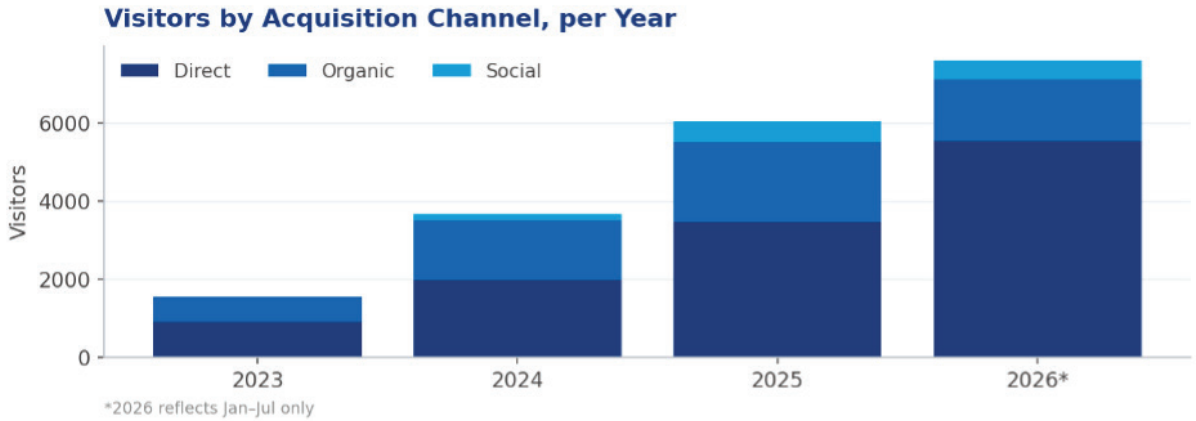
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A DIVERSIFYING TRAFFIC BASE

Every acquisition channel grew, and the audience is no longer dependent on a single source. Direct traffic — the brand's backbone — rose from ~1,260 visits in the first year to ~7,300 in the last 12 months. Organic search roughly tripled, a sign the content is being indexed and found. Social, still the smallest channel, climbed from just 16 first-year visits to 849, showing that promotion is beginning to convert into real site traffic.



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HOW USERS INTERACT WITH THE SITE

The site tracks two distinct behaviors: the pages where visits begin (acquisition/landing pages) and the pages people navigate to once on the site (most-visited pages). Comparing them reveals a clear, healthy funnel.

Search brings people in through contractor pages. Vendor listings dominate how visits begin — Bay Design Group is a top entry page in 20 of 40 months and Meredith Marine in 15 — yet neither ranks among the most-visited pages. Visitors are finding specific contractors directly through search rather than browsing to them.

The Directory is the hub. It is a top-five most-visited page in 35 of 40 months and the most common destination after the Home page. People rarely land on it directly; they arrive elsewhere and then seek it out to find contractor options.

The funnel works as intended. Search delivers a visitor to a specific contractor or resource page, and they move to the Directory to explore more — exactly the property-owner-to-contractor connection the program exists to make.



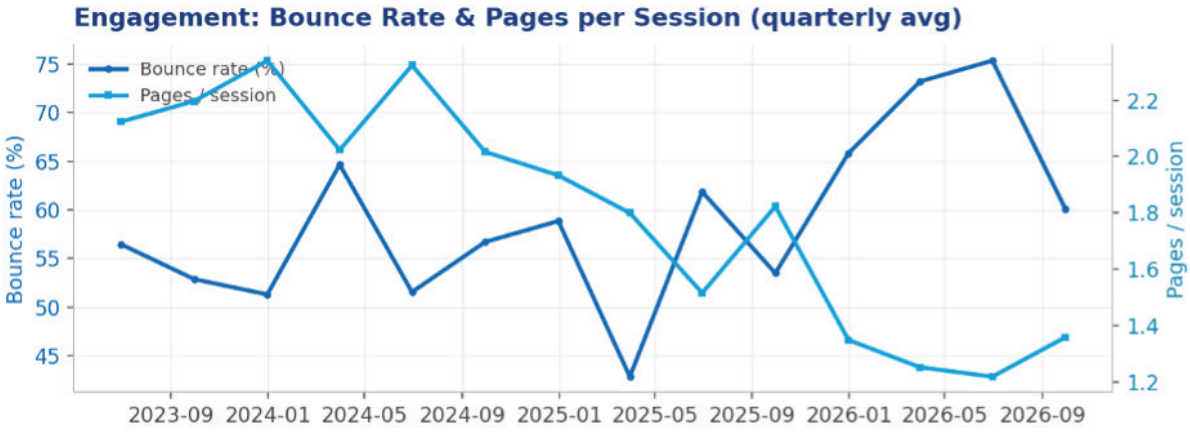


Four pages carry the site's substantive engagement across the entire period: Grants & Loans (top-five most-visited in 23 of 40 months), About (26), Property Owners (18), and Contractors and Consultants (13). Their staying power over three years reflects steady, repeat interest rather than one-off spikes. The reason people visit has also matured — from general navigation pages early on toward specific resources and news (Septic, Living Shoreline, Flood Preparedness Grants, and the "$50 Million in Grants and Loans" milestone), signaling that visitors increasingly arrive for a specific answer rather than to browse.

ENGAGEMENT NOTE

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As raw traffic climbed, bounce rate edged up (mid-50s% to low-60s%) and pages-per-session eased (from ~2.7 to ~1.4). This is the behavioral flip side of the trend above: more visitors now arrive on a specific target page, find what they came for, and leave. It reflects a shift from general browsing toward landing on the right answer, and is worth monitoring if deeper on-site engagement becomes a goal.



BOTTOM LINE

The website has evolved from a quiet launch into a measurable engine for the Fight the Flood program — growing its audience six-fold, diversifying how people find it, connecting property owners to contractors through a well-used Directory, and amplifying the program's $50M grants-and-loans milestone to a steadily expanding audience.


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Appendix D – Demographic Data

Population Estimate 2025 and Change

Locality	April 1, 2020 Census	July 1, 2025 Estimate	Change since 2020 Census		April 1, 2010 Census	Change since 2010 Census	
			Number	*%*		*Number*	*%*
Virginia	**8,644,727**	**8,880,107**	**248,714**	**2.9%**	**8,001,024**	**879,083**	**10.99%**
Essex	10,599	10,494	-105	-1.0%	11,151	-657	-5.89%
Gloucester	38,711	38,933	222	0.6%	36,858	2,075	5.63%
King and Queen	6,608	6,789	181	2.7%	6,945	-156	-2.24%
King William	17,810	19,216	1,406	7.9%	15,935	3,281	20.59%
Mathews	8,533	8,322	-211	-2.5%	8,978	-656	-7.30%
Middlesex	10,625	10,978	353	3.3%	10,959	19	0.17%
MPPDC	**92,886**	**94,732**	**1,846**	**2.0%**	**90,826**	**3,906**	**4.30%**

Source - Demographics Research Group of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, July 2025

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Population Projections for 2030, 2040, 2050

Locality	Total Population						
	2025	2030	% Increase 2025 -2030	2040	% Increase 2025-2040	2050	% Increase 2025 - 2050
Virginia	**8,880,107**	**9,060,433**	**2.0%**	**9,628,974**	**8.4%**	**10,343,481**	**16.5%**
Essex	10,494	9,982	-4.9%	9,370	-10.7%	9,617	-8.4%
Gloucester	38,933	39,357	1.1%	40,947	5.2%	42,657	9.6%
King and Queen	6,789	6,596	-2.9%	6,219	-8.4%	6,171	-9.1%
King William	19,216	19,849	3.3%	21,585	12.3%	23,775	23.7%
Mathews	8,322	8,070	-3.0%	7,577	-9.0%	7,197	-13.5%
Middlesex	10,978	10,698	-2.5%	10,298	-6.2%	10,581	-3.6%
MPPDC	**94,732**	**94,552**	**-0.2%**	**95,996**	**1.3%**	**99,998**	**5.6%**

Source - Demographics Research Group of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, July 2025

Population Projections for 2035, 2045, 2055

Locality	Total Population						
	2025	2035	% Increase 2025 -2035	2045	% Increase 2025-2045	2055	% Increase 2025-2055
Virginia	**8,880,107**	**9,344,703**	**5.2%**	**9,986,227**	**12.5%**	**10,700,735**	**20.5%**
Essex	10,494	9,676	-7.8%	9,494	-9.5%	9,741	**-7.2%**
Gloucester	38,933	40,152	3.1%	41,802	7.4%	43,512	**11.8%**
King and Queen	6,789	6,407	-5.6%	6,195	-8.8%	6,147	**-9.5%**
King William	19,216	20,717	7.8%	22,680	18.0%	24,870	**29.4%**
Mathews	8,322	7,823	-6.0%	7,387	-11.2%	7,007	**-15.8%**
Middlesex	10,978	10,498	-4.4%	10,439	-4.9%	10,722	**-2.3%**
MPPDC	**94,732**	**95,274**	**0.6%**	**97,997**	**3.4%**	**101,999**	**7.7%**

Source - Demographics Research Group of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, July 2025

Population by Age

Locality	Median Age 2023	Population 2030 Estimate	Percentage (%)					Number				
			Under 5	5 to 19	20 to 54	55 to 64	65 +	Under 5	5 to 19	20 to 54	55 to 64	65 +
Virginia	**39.2**	**9,060,433**	**5.3%**	**17.7%**	**45.7%**	**11.2%**	**20.2%**	**475,714**	**1,599,356**	**4,140,884**	**1,018,415**	**1,826,064**
Essex	47.9	9,982	5.4%	15.2%	34.3%	14.0%	31.1%	540	1,514	3,420	1,400	3,108
Gloucester	44.4	39,357	4.5%	15.7%	39.2%	13.0%	27.6%	1,758	6,186	15,439	5,101	10,874
King and Queen	48.8	6,596	4.9%	13.9%	36.5%	14.9%	29.9%	322	914	2,409	981	1,971
King William	40	19,849	5.5%	17.1%	43.1%	12.2%	22.1%	1,096	3,392	8,547	2,428	4,386
Mathews	54.6	8,070	4.2%	12.8%	33.0%	15.2%	34.9%	335	1,030	2,664	1,227	2,814
Middlesex	55.7	10,698	3.8%	13.1%	33.7%	14.0%	35.4%	406	1,399	3,608	1,494	3,791
MPPDC	**46.5**	**94,552**	**4.7%**	**15.3%**	**38.2%**	**13.4%**	**28.5%**	**4,457**	**14,433**	**36,087**	**12,631**	**26,944**

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Source: United States Census Bureau Formatted by Demographics Research Group of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

Population by Race and Ethnicity - 2024

Locality	Population 2024	Race								Ethnicity	
		White		Black/African American		Multiple		Other		Hispanic	
Virginia	**8,705,170**	**5,240,020**	**60.2%**	**1,616,256**	**18.6%**	**823,611**	**9.5%**	**1,025,283**	**11.8%**	**959,089**	**11.0%**
Essex	10,623	5,819	54.8%	3,941	37.1%	542	5.1%	**321**	3.0%	488	4.6%
Gloucester	39,526	32,612	82.5%	3,215	8.1%	2,760	7.0%	**939**	2.4%	1,680	4.3%
King and Queen	6,695	4,504	67.3%	1,463	21.9%	563	8.4%	**165**	2.5%	221	3.3%
King William	18,593	14,420	77.6%	2,795	15.0%	893	4.8%	**485**	2.6%	612	3.3%
Mathews	8,540	7,326	85.8%	825	9.7%	256	3.0%	**133**	1.6%	228	2.7%
Middlesex	10,847	8,556	78.9%	1,747	16.1%	449	4.1%	**95**	0.9%	349	3.2%
MPPDC	**94,824**	**73,237**	**77.2%**	**13,986**	**14.7%**	**5,463**	**5.8%**	**2,138**	**2.3%**	**3,578**	**3.8%**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Educational Attainment - Population 25 and older - 2024

Locality	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade	High School or Greater	Bachelor's Degree or Greater
Virginia	**3.6%**	**4.8%**	**91.6%**	**42.2%**
Essex	5.8%	9.3%	84.9%	16.6%
Gloucester	2.0%	6.3%	91.7%	25.3%
King and Queen	2.3%	7.1%	90.6%	18.6%
King William	2.2%	4.6%	93.2%	23.0%
Mathews	2.6%	6.6%	90.8%	28.4%
Middlesex	2.9%	5.8%	91.3%	33.8%
MPPDC	**2.6%**	**6.2%**	**91.0%**	**23.8%**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Population Change -
Birth vs. Death and Net Migration - 2020-2025

Locality	2020 - 2025		
	Population Change %	Births vs Deaths	Net Migration
Essex	-1.0%	-302	197
Gloucester	0.6%	-782	1004
King and Queer	2.7%	-194	375
King William	7.9%	200	1206
Mathews	-2.5%	-436	225
Middlesex	3.3%	-618	971
MPPDC	**2.0%**	**-2132**	**3978**

Source - Cardinal News and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Demographics Research Group

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On-Time Graduation Rates - 2024/2025

Locality	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
Virginia	**92.7%**	**5.1%**
Essex	94.8%	2.1%
Gloucester	96.2%	1.4%
King and Queen	94.4%	1.9%
King William	93.8%	4.5%
Mathews	90.8%	4.0%
Middlesex	93.6%	1.1%

Source: VA Department of Education

Voter Registration/Turnout

Locality	Population 18+	Registered Voters		Voter Turnout	
	2024	2024	%	2024	%
Virginia	**8,705,170**	**6,434,637**	**73.9%**	**4,535,314**	**70.5%**
Essex	10,623	8,499	80.0%	6,102	71.8%
Gloucester	39,526	31,496	79.7%	23,288	73.9%
King and Queen	6,695	5,637	84.2%	4,208	74.6%
King William	18,593	14762	79.4%	11,636	78.8%
Mathews	8,540	7,576	88.7%	5,983	79.0%
Middlesex	10,847	9,004	83.0%	6,967	77.4%
MPPDC	**94,824**	**76974**	**81.2%**	**58,184**	**75.6%**

Source: VA Department of Elections

Migration Patterns 2022 - 2023

Locality	Net Migration	Migration Into Locality			
		Total	From Out of State	From Other Virginia Localities	Moved From - Top Localities
Essex	58	513	78	435	Henrico, Westmoreland, Richmond Co., Spotsylvania
Gloucester	225	2,162	765	1397	Newport News, York, James City, Hampton, Middlesex
King and Queen	84	377	39	338	King William
King William	310	1,150	114	1036	Hanover, Henrico, Chesterfield, King and Queen, New Kent
Mathews	35	404	77	327	Gloucester
Middlesex	73	566	125	441	Gloucester, Henrico
MPPDC	**1,095**	**4,663**	**1,198**	**3465**	

Source: IRS Individual Master File, Statistics of Income, March 2026.

Locality	Migration Out of Locality			
	Total	To Out of State	To Other Virginia Locality	Moved To - Top Localities
Essex	455	86	369	Henrico, Richmond Co.
Gloucester	1,937	651	1286	Newport News, York, Mathews, Middlesex, James City
King and Queen	293	-	293	King William
King William	840	125	715	Hanover, Henrico, King and Queen, New Kent
Mathews	369	94	275	Gloucester
Middlesex	493	90	403	Gloucester
MPPDC	**3,568**	**1,046**	**2522**	

Source: IRS Individual Master File, Statistics of Income, March 2026.

Migration Patterns - Income of Migrants - 2022 - 2023

Locality	Adjusted Gross Income Per Return		
	County Residents	People Moving Into County	People Moving out of County
Essex	$72,178	$60,412	$50,392
Gloucester	$81,055	$76,267	$64,915
King and Queen	$69,544	$54,065	$60,510
King William	$78,732	$63,112	$57,570
Mathews	$88,838	$67,075	$73,961
Middlesex	$85,051	$82,012	$72,185
MPPDC	**$79,975**	**$69,979**	**$63,288**

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Source: IRS Individual Master File, Statistics of Income, March 2026.

Educational Attainment Percentage								
	VA	Essex	Gloucester	K&Q	KW	Mathews	Midd	MPPDC
Population 25+	**6,007,678**	**7,840**	**29,103**	**5,271**	**13,085**	**6,687**	**8,664**	**70,650**
Less than 9th	3.6%	5.8%	2.0%	2.3%	2.2%	2.6%	2.9%	2.6%
9th to 12th	4.8%	9.3%	6.3%	7.1%	4.6%	6.6%	5.8%	6.2%
Less than 12th	8.4%	15.1%	8.3%	9.4%	6.8%	9.2%	8.7%	8.8%
HS Grard	23.9%	42.0%	34.4%	42.5%	37.5%	31.1%	29.0%	34.5%
Some college	17.7%	21.7%	23.2%	21.8%	24.8%	24.5%	21.4%	22.5%
Associates	7.8%	4.7%	8.8%	7.7%	8.0%	6.8%	7.1%	23.4%
Bachelor's	23.7%	9.5%	15.7%	14.1%	16.3%	20.0%	22.5%	15.8%
Grad or Proff	18.5%	7.1%	9.6%	4.5%	6.7%	8.4%	11.3%	8.3%
HS+	91.6%	84.9%	91.7%	90.6%	93.2%	90.8%	91.3%	91.0%
Bachelor's+	42.2%	16.6%	25.3%	18.6%	23.0%	28.4%	33.8%	23.8%
Post HS 25 - 64	**59.7%**	**22.6%**	**34.2%**	**30.5%**	**32.6%**	**34.9%**	**38.0%**	**33%**

Appendix E – Economic Data

Unemployment - 2025

Locality	Laborforce	Unemployed	
		Number	%
Virginia	**4,490,034**	**153029**	**3.4%**
Essex	4,831	198	4.1%
Gloucester	19,824	589	3.0%
King and Queen	3,507	109	3.1%
King William	10,354	282	2.7%
Mathews	3,485	127	3.6%
Middlesex	4,897	146	3.0%
MPPDC	**46,898**	**1451**	**3.1%**

Source: VA Employment Commission

Laborforce Participation - 2024

Locality	Population 16 +	Laborforce	
		#	%
Virginia	**7,037,245**	**4,598,854**	**65.4%**
Essex	8,894	4,460	50.1%
Gloucester	32,552	19,479	59.8%
King and Queer	5,617	3,378	60.1%
King William	14,841	10115	68.2%
Mathews	7,438	3,620	48.7%
Middlesex	9,329	4,582	49.1%
MPPDC	**78,671**	**45,634**	**58.0%**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Household, Family and Per Capita Income - 2024

Locality	Household Income			Family Income			Per Capita Income	
	Households	Median Income	% of VA	Families	Median Income	% of VA	Amout	% of VA
Virginia	**3,365,732**	**$93,170**		**2,181,475**	**$115,213**		**$50,666**	
Essex	4,447	$56,520	60.7%	2,485	$83,281	72.3%	$37,139	73.3%
Gloucester	15,274	$84,306	90.5%	10,571	$99,146	86.1%	$41,316	81.5%
King and Queer	3,003	$70,469	75.6%	2,074	$85,962	74.6%	$37,430	73.9%
King William	7352	$86,056	92.4%	5395	$98,408	85.4%	$39,260	77.5%
Mathews	3,987	$75,880	81.4%	2,301	$95,740	83.1%	$46,972	92.7%
Middlesex	4,772	$75,060	80.6%	3,173	$96,928	84.1%	$41,083	81.1%
MPPDC	**38,835**	**$78,848**	**84.6%**	**25,999**	**$95,853**	**83.2%**	**$40,628**	**80.2%**

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Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Poverty Rates - 2024

Locality	Poverty Rate %	
	Families	Persons
Virginia	**6.8%**	**9.9%**
Essex	6.3%	12.3%
Gloucester	3.2%	5.2%
King and Queer	11.3%	17.9%
King William	4.6%	5.9%
Mathews	4.1%	7.8%
Middlesex	5.9%	7.3%
MPPDC	**4.8%**	**7.5%**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Work From Home

Locality	2020	2024			2020 to 2024 Increase
	Worked From Home	Employed 16+	Worked From Home		
			Number	%	%
Virginia	**765,782**	**4,327,663**	**793,664**	**18.3%**	**3.6%**
Essex	478	4,257	542	10.6%	13.4%
Gloucester	1,739	18,618	2,027	10.9%	16.6%
King and Queen	269	3,113	397	12.8%	47.6%
King William	817	9,698	1059	10.9%	29.6%
Mathews	460	3,379	594	17.6%	29.1%
Middlesex	463	4,422	1,003	22.7%	116.6%
MPPDC	**4,226**	**43,487**	**5,622**	**12.9%**	**33.0%**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Commute Time - Mean

Locality	Minutes
Virginia	**27.3**
Essex	38.5
Gloucester	34.8
King and Queen	37.0
King William	36.4
Mathews	30.7
Middlesex	34.0
MPPDC	**35.2**

Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

Employers by Size of Establishment
1st Quarter 2025

Locality	Establishments	Size of Establishment				
	Number	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 99	100 to 249	250 +
		%	%	%	%	%
Virginia	**315,112**	**66.2%**	**22.6%**	**9.5%**	**1.3%**	**0.5%**
Essex	391	61.9%	29.7%	6.9%	ND	ND
Gloucester	1,084	63.8%	27.7%	7.5%	0.6%	ND
King and Queen	203	72.9%	20.7%	ND	ND	0.0%
King William	478	66.5%	27.0%	5.2%	0.6%	ND
Mathews	254	74.8%	18.9%	ND	ND	0.0%
Middlesex	387	63.0%	30.0%	ND	ND	ND
MPPDC	**2,800**	**67.8%**	**26.9%**	**7.2%**	**0.7%**	

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Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
Note: ND = Non Disclosure of Data

Employment by Establishment Size
1st Quarter 2025

Locality	Employment	Size of Employment				
	#	0 to 4	5 to 19	20 to 99	100 to 249	250 +
		%	%	%	%	%
Virginia	**4,091,946**	**6.4%**	**16.7%**	**29.1%**	**14.4%**	**33.5%**
Essex	3,457	9.6%	29.4%	29.0%	ND	ND
Gloucester	10,056	9.3%	29.1%	29.9%	0.6%	ND
King and Queen	1,123	18.1%	32.8%	ND	ND	0.0%
King William	4,182	11.0%	29.1%	19.3%	0.6%	ND
Mathews	1,543	16.9%	26.7%	ND	0.0%	0.0%
Middlesex	3,130	10.9%	35.0%	24.5%	ND	ND
MPPDC	**24,107**	**10.9%**	**29.1%**	**28.6%**	**0.7%**	**19.3%**

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Largest Employers - 1st Quarter 2025

Rank	MPPDC	Essex	Gloucester	King & Queen	King William	Mathews	Middlesex
1	Riverside Reg. Medical Ct.	Essex Co. Sch. Board	Gloucester Co. Sch.	King &Queen Public Sch.	Alliance Group Rock Tenn	Mathews Co. Sch. Bd.	MPNN Mental health Ct.
2	Gloucester. Co. Sch.	MCV Hospital	Riverside Reg. Medical Ct.	King & Queen Co.	King William Sch.	Paychex Peo Ix LLC	Middlesex Co. Sch.
3	Wal Mart	Wal Mart	Gloucester Co.	United Laboratory Co.	Nestle Purina Petcare	Mathews Co.	Ches. Bay Agency on Aging
4	Alliance Gr. Rock Tenn	Essex Co.	VIMS	C.P. Andeson Trucking	West Point Sch. Board	Riverside Reg. Medical Ct.	Middlesex Co.
5	Food Lion	Lowe's	Wal Mart	Nick's Spaghetti & Steak	Upper Mattaponi Tribe	Food Lion	Riverside Reg. Medical Ct.
6	Gloucester Co.	James River Group	RCC	Walter C. Via Ent.	Food Lion	Sea Farms	Dockside Health & Rehab Ct.
7	King William Co. Sch.	O'malley Timber Products	York Convalesent Ct.	Crop Production Services	King William Co.	Star Fields	MP Eegiona Security Ct.
8	VIMS	FDP Virginia	Food Lion	Push of Newton	West Point Veneer	Msc Development	Food Lion
9	MPNN Mental Health Ct.	Ball Lumber Co.	Tidal Wave Auto Spa	Soft Bank	Augusta Lumber	Zimmerman Marine	VDOT
10	Nestle Purina Petcare	Service Master	Home Depot	Wendy's	Town of West Point	Hole In The Wall Grill	Newbern Transport
11	Middlesex Co. Sch.	Food Lion	Lowe's	Automation Solutions Co	Burns King	Mathews Volunteer Rescue	Rappahannock River Oyster
12	Essex Co. Sch.	Essex Rehab.	Hope in Home Care	Savanna's Lawncare	McDonald's	Richardson Café	MHC Proper
13	MCV Hospital	McDonald's	Chick-fil-A	BFI Waste Systems	Parent Child Dev.	Bay Disposal	Peninsula YMCA
14	Lowe's	Tidewarter Lumber	Millers Septic Service	Rappahannock Tribe	Carolina Builders Corp.	Dolgencorp LLC	Abernathy Const. Corp.
15	Matews Co. Sch.	Tappahannock	Kroger	Premier Horticulture	J Sanders Construction	East River Construction	Hardee's
16	Ches. Bay Agency on Aging	Historyland Nursery	JL Jkm Enterprises	The Nautical Dog	Baylands Credit Union	Hardee's	Deltaville Hometown IGA
17	Raeppahannock Community Colle	Allet Country Day Sch.	T J Maxx	Albaro Pizzeria	Postal Service	Peninsula YMCA	M&M Building Supply
18	King & Queen Co. Sch.	Synargo WWT	Dominion Virginia Power	Leslie P. Riggsby Lumber	Bojangles'	Best Value Supermarket	Auto Spa Groug
19	West Point Sch. Board	The Management Co.	Gloucester House	Raceway #981	Port Richmond Auto	US Postal Service	Sage Dining Services
20	Middlesex Co. Sch.	WaWa	Thistle Holdings LLC	Kiddie Korner Day Care	Subway Number 16962	Mathews Co. Social Services	Atlantic Metals
21	York Convalescent Ct.						
22	Tidal Wave Auto Spa						
23	Essex co.						
24	US Postal Service						
25	Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe						

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Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Employment by Industry Sector
% of Locality Employment - 2nd Quarter 2025

Industry	Virginia	MPPDC	Essex	Gloucester	King & Queen	King William	Mathews	Middlesex
	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total	% of Total
Ag, and Forestry	0.3%	1.7%	2.0%	0.8%	7.2%	1.3%	1.4%	2.6%
Mining & Quarrying	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	ND	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Utilities	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	ND	ND	0.0%	ND	0.0%
Construction	5.3%	6.0%	2.3%	6.0%	11.6%	5.4%	7.6%	7.2%
Manufacturing	5.8%	6.1%	8.1%	1.3%	4.4%	18.1%	6.6%	3.9%
Wholesale Trade	2.8%	2.6%	5.8%	1.9%	4.8%	2.0%	1.2%	0.7%
Retail Trade	9.4%	15.5%	23.4%	18.6%	6.0%	10.2%	12.1%	9.8%
Trans. & Warehousing	3.7%	3.3%	0.9%	2.0%	6.6%	ND	1.4%	2.8%
Information	1.7%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	ND	0.2%	1.0%	1.0%
Finance & Insurance	3.5%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%	3.3%	2.6%	1.6%	1.7%
Real Estate	1.5%	1.0%	0.9%	1.5%	0.2%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Prof. Sci. & Tech. Ser.	11.5%	2.9%	1.6%	3.0%	8.9%	2.6%	2.2%	3.0%
Management of Co.	2.2%	0.9%	ND	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	ND	ND
Admin. & Waste Man.	5.9%	3.9%	6.1%	3.1%	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	2.0%
Educational Ser.	1.7%	0.6%	1.5%	0.8%	ND	ND	ND	ND
Health Care & Soc. Asst.	12.4%	12.7%	14.4%	17.5%	4.3%	5.0%	17.4%	9.3%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	1.5%	1.7%	0.6%	0.9%	ND	1.3%	4.3%	4.1%
Accom. & Food Ser.	8.2%	10.4%	9.8%	11.5%	6.7%	7.8%	8.6%	9.3%
Other Servies	3.3%	4.7%	4.1%	5.3%	2.7%	4.6%	4.4%	3.7%
Government - Total	18.3%	22.7%	15.4%	22.1%	28.6%	24.5%	26.1%	29.9%
Federal	4.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	1.2%	0.6%
State	3.6%	4.1%	1.6%	7.2%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	2.7%
Local	10.0%	17.8%	13.2%	14.1%	26.2%	22.0%	23.2%	26.5%
Unclassified	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	ND	0.4%
Total Employment	**4,091,946**	**24,106**	**3,456**	**10,057**	**1,124**	**4,182**	**1,543**	**3,131**

Note: ND = Non Disclosure of Data

Green is 2% or greater than Virginia

Red is 2% or more less than Virginia

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

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Average Weekly Wage by Industry
2nd Quarter 2025

Industry	Virginia	MPPDC	Essex	Gloucester	King & Queen	King William	Mathews	Middlesex
	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$
Ag, and Forestry	$888	$959	$1,045	$776	$869	$1,438	$869	$844
Mining and Quarrying	$1,757	$1,421	ND	ND	ND	$1,397	ND	ND
Utilities	$3,166	$2,201	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Construction	$1,539	$1,124	$838	$1,079	$997	$1,146	$886	$1,100
Manufacturing	$1,557	$1,408	$936	$798	$1,085	$1,973	$720	$899
Wholesale Trade	$2,218	$1,211	$1,206	$1,022	$1,715	$1,795	$803	$1,028
Retail Trade	$778	$668	$731	$703	$413	$615	$603	$609
Trans. & Warehousing	$1,232	$1,331	$749	$767	$1,056	ND	$593	$1,446
Information	$3,378	$738	$745	$646	ND	$720	$1,906	$715
Finance & Insurance	$3,432	$1,541	$1,563	$1,360	$4,735	$1,288	$1,462	$2,270
Real Estate	$1,717	$805	$724	$788	$701	$924	$169	$652
Prof. Sci. & Tech. Ser.	$2,735	$1,297	$1,134	$1,061	$1,762	$1,364	$837	$1,635
Management of Co.	$4,085	$943	ND	$3,006	ND	ND	ND	ND
Admin. &Waste Man.	$1,247	$919	$893	$946	$980	$689	$1,164	$741
Educational Ser.	$1,043	$874	$524	$801	ND	ND	ND	ND
Health Care & Soc. Asst.	$1,282	$1,089	$1,282	$1,301	$504	$879	$973	$1,081
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	$771	$534	$703	$579	ND	$249	$488	$655
Accom. & Food Ser.	$533	$461	$409	$431	$335	$339	$364	$492
Other Servies	$1,184	$753	$720	$713	$739	$738	$867	$702
Government - Total	$1,636	$1,087	$1,065	$1,194	$1,121	$1,167	$1,008	$1,172
Federal	$2,353	$1,233	$1,195	$1,443	$1,054	$1,260	$1,188	$1,409
State	$1,371	$1,030	$1,170	$1,151	$1,369	$1,978	$1,053	$1,177
Local	$1,184	$998	$830	$987	$939	$1,163	$784	$929
Unclassified	$1,403	$926	$1,420	$804	ND	$360	ND	$1,105
Total, All Industries	**$1,605**	**$951**	**$900**	**$933**	**$1,110**	**$1,207**	**$819**	**$909**

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Note: ND = Non Disclosure of Data

Green is $200 or more than the weekly average wage of all industries for that locality

Red is $200 or less than the weekly average wage of all industries for that locality

Average Weekly Wage by Industry - % of Virginia
2nd Quarter 2025

Industry	Virginia	MPPDC	Essex	Gloucester	King and Queen	King William	Mathews	Middlesex
	$	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ag, and Forestry	$888	108.0%	117.7%	87.4%	97.9%	161.9%	97.9%	95.0%
Mining and Quarrying	$1,757	80.9%	ND	ND	ND	79.5%	ND	ND
Utilities	$3,166	69.5%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Construction	$1,539	73.0%	54.5%	70.1%	64.8%	74.5%	57.6%	71.5%
Manufacturing	$1,557	90.4%	60.1%	51.3%	69.7%	126.7%	46.2%	57.7%
Wholesale Trade	$2,218	54.6%	54.4%	46.1%	77.3%	80.9%	36.2%	46.3%
Retail Trade	$778	85.9%	94.0%	90.4%	53.1%	79.0%	77.5%	78.3%
Trans. & Warehousing	$1,232	108.0%	60.8%	62.3%	85.7%	ND	48.1%	117.4%
Information	$3,378	21.8%	22.1%	19.1%	ND	21.3%	56.4%	21.2%
Finance & Insurance	$3,432	44.9%	45.5%	39.6%	138.0%	37.5%	42.6%	66.1%
Real Estate	$1,717	46.9%	42.2%	45.9%	40.8%	53.8%	9.8%	38.0%
Prof. Sci. & Tech. Ser.	$2,735	47.4%	41.5%	38.8%	64.4%	49.9%	30.6%	59.8%
Management of Co.	$4,085	23.1%	ND	73.6%	ND	ND	ND	ND
Admin. & Waste Man.	$1,247	73.7%	71.6%	75.9%	78.6%	55.3%	93.3%	59.4%
Educational Ser.	$1,043	83.8%	50.2%	76.8%	ND	ND	ND	ND
Health Care & Soc. Asst.	$1,282	84.9%	100.0%	101.5%	39.3%	68.6%	75.9%	84.3%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	$771	69.3%	91.2%	75.1%	ND	32.3%	63.3%	85.0%
Accom. & Food Ser.	$533	86.5%	76.7%	80.9%	62.9%	63.6%	68.3%	92.3%
Other Servies	$1,184	63.6%	60.8%	60.2%	62.4%	62.3%	73.2%	59.3%
Government - Total	$1,636	66.4%	65.1%	73.0%	68.5%	71.3%	61.6%	71.6%
Federal	$2,353	52.4%	50.8%	61.3%	44.8%	53.5%	50.5%	59.9%
State	$1,371	75.1%	85.3%	84.0%	99.9%	144.3%	76.8%	85.8%
Local	$1,184	84.3%	70.1%	83.4%	79.3%	98.2%	66.2%	78.5%
Unclassified	$1,403	66.0%	101.2%	57.3%	ND	66.0%	ND	ND
Total, All Industries	**$1,605**	**59.3%**	**56.1%**	**58.1%**	**69.2%**	**75.2%**	**51.0%**	**56.6%**

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Note: ND = Non Disclosure of Data

Green is a weekly wage greater than Virginia

Red is a weekly wage less than 50% of Virginia

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Average Weekly Wage
2nd Quarter 2025

Locality	$	% of VA
Virginia	**$1,605**	
MPPDC	**$951**	**59.3%**
Essex	$900	56.1%
Gloucester	$933	58.1%
King & Queen	$1,110	69.2%
King William	$1,207	75.2%
Mathews	$819	51.0%
Middlesex	$909	56.6%

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Average Weekly Wage - Virginia Regions
2nd Quarter 2025

PDC	Region	$	% of VA	Rank
	Virginia	**$1,605**		
18	Middle Peninsula PDC	**$951**	**59.3%**	**16**
1	Lenowisco PDC	$893	55.6%	21
2	Cumberland Plateau PDC	$978	60.9%	14
3	Mount Rodgers PDC	$902	56.2%	20
4	New River Valley RC	$1,062	66.2%	11
5	Roanoke Valley-Allegany RC	$1,108	69.0%	9
6	Central Shenandoah PDC	$1,031	64.2%	12
7	Northern Chenandoah RC	$1,111	69.2%	8
8	Northern Virgiia RC	$1,920	119.6%	1
9	Rappahannock Rapidan RC	$1,104	68.8%	10
10	Thomas Jefferson PDC	$1,331	82.9%	3
11	Region 2000	$1,114	69.4%	7
12	West Piedmont PDC	$950	59.2%	18
13	Southside PDC	$988	61.6%	13
14	Commonwealth RC	$937	58.4%	19
15	Plan RVA	$1,361	84.8%	2
16	George Washington RC	$1,208	75.3%	4
17	Northern Neck PDC	$951	59.3%	16
19	Crater PDC	$1,162	72.4%	6
21	Accomac-Northampton PDC	$977	60.9%	15
22	Hampton Roads PDC	$1,193	74.3%	5

Red = Lowest Six Regions

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Employment and Average Wage Comparison 2020 to 2025

Locality	Employment				Average Weekly Wage		
	2000	2020 1st Q	2025 2nd Q	2000-2025 % Increase	2020 1st Q	2025 2nd Q	% increase
Virginia	**3,485,100**	**3,920,952**	**4,091,946**	**17.4%**	**$1,233**	**$1,605**	**30.2%**
Essex	3,603	3,610	3,457	-4.1%	$674	$900	33.5%
Gloucester	10,067	9,474	10,056	-0.1%	$689	$933	35.4%
King and Queen	1,115	1,093	1,123	0.7%	$740	$1,110	50.0%
King William	4,307	3958	4,102	-4.8%	$869	$1,207	38.9%
Mathews	1,574	1,581	1,543	-2.0%	$554	$819	47.8%
Middlesex	2,265	3,168	3,130	38.2%	$664	$909	36.9%
MPPDC	**22,931**	**22,965**	**24,107**	**5.1%**	**$704**	**$951**	**35.1%**

Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Self Employed 2020 to 2025

Locality	2000			2025		
	Total Employment	Self Employed	%	Total Employment	Self Employed	%
Essex	5,716	2,113	37.0%	4,187	730	17.4%
Gloucester	13,915	3,848	27.7%	13,336	3,280	24.6%
King and Queen	2,185	1,070	49.0%	1,853	730	39.4%
King William	4,821	514	10.7%	5,257	1,155	22.0%
Mathews	3,314	1,740	52.5%	2,381	838	35.2%
Middlesex	4,443	2,178	49.0%	4,020	890	22.1%
MPPDC	**34,394**	**11,463**	**33.3%**	**31,730**	**7,623**	**24.0%**

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Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information and Analytics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Local Option Sales Tax - 2025

Locality	2025	% of Region
Essex	$2,980,272	18.2%
Gloucester	$7,704,513	47.0%
King and Queen	$475,916	2.9%
King William	$2,529,090	15.4%
Mathews	$979,402	6.0%
Middlesex	$1,736,080	10.6%
MPPDC	**$16,405,272**	

Commuting Patterns - 2022

Locality	Workers				
	Live and Work in County	Commute to Jobs in Locality	In-commuter Rate - %	Commute to Jobs Out of Locality	Out-commuter Rate - %
Essex	929	2,202	70.3%	4,506	82.9%
Gloucester	3,860	5,227	57.5%	12,293	76.1%
King and Queen	366	808	68.8%	3,389	90.3%
King William	1,209	3,012	71.4%	9,273	88.5%
Mathews	730	843	53.6%	2,535	77.6%
Middlesex	1,002	1,851	64.9%	4,494	81.8%
MPPDC	**8,096**	**13,943**	**63.3%**	**34,865**	**81.2%**

Source: US Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center

Note: MPPDC total out-commuters is an estimate based on available data

Commuting Patterns In-Commuters Destination - 2022

Locality	In-commuters	In-commuters Coming From												In-commuter Rate
	Total	Other MPPDC Localities		Northern Neck		Richmond MSA		Hampton Roads MSA		Washington DC MSA		Elsewhere		
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			#	%	%
Essex	2,202	280	12.7%	559	25.4%	208	9.4%		0.0%	44	2.0%	1,111	50.5%	70.3%
Gloucester	5,227	709	13.6%		0.0%	109	2.1%	2,254	43.1%		0.0%	2,155	41.2%	57.5%
King and Queen	808	354	43.8%	19	2.4%	142	17.6%	44	5.4%		0.0%	249	30.8%	68.8%
King William	3,012	634	21.0%		0.0%	1,120	37.2%	142	4.7%		0.0%	1,116	37.1%	71.4%
Mathews	843	364	43.2%	48	5.7%	18	2.1%	157	18.6%		0.0%	256	30.4%	53.6%
Middlesex	1,851	751	40.6%	285	15.4%		0.0%	140	7.6%		0.0%	675	36.5%	64.9%
MPPDC	10,851			911	8.4%	1,597	14.7%	2,737	25.2%	44	0.4%	5,562	51.3%	63.3%

Source: US Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center

Note: The In-commuter rate is the number of incommuters / total workers living inside and outside the locality

Commuting Patterns Out-Commuters Destination - 2022

Locality	Out-commuters	Out-commuters Going To												Out-commuting Rate
	Total	Other MPPDC Localities		Northern Neck		Richmond MSA		Hampton Roads MSA		Washington DC MSA		Elsewhere		
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			#	%	%
Essex	4,506	-	0.0%	174	3.9%	1,236	27.4%	139	3.1%	654	14.5%	2,303	51.1%	82.9%
Gloucester	12,293	378	3.1%		0.0%	365	3.0%	7,684	62.5%	370	3.0%	3,496	28.4%	76.1%
King and Queen	3,389	385	11.4%		0.0%	1,006	29.7%	359	10.6%	154	4.5%	1,485	43.8%	90.3%
King William	9,273		0.0%		0.0%	4,804	51.8%	904	9.7%	518	5.6%	3,047	32.9%	88.5%
Mathews	2,535	579	22.8%		0.0%	82	3.2%	1,001	39.5%	101	4.0%	772	30.5%	77.6%
Middlesex	4,494	283	6.3%	233	5.2%	725	16.1%	575	12.8%	375	8.3%	2,303	51.2%	81.8%
MPPDC	34,865			407	1.2%	8,218	23.6%	10,662	30.6%	2,216	6.4%	13,406	38.5%	81.2%

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Source: US Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center

Note: The out-commuter rate is the number of residents working outside the locality / total workers living inside and outside the locality

Maritime Economy

Locality	Employed				Self-employed	Total Employment
	Establishments	Employment	Wages (000)	GDP (000)		
MPPDC	188	1,868	$32,547	$64,771	343	2,211
Essex	24	390	$6,210	$12,270	12	402
Gloucester	92	1,088	$18,481	$36,822	156	1,244
King and Queer	ND	ND	ND	ND	11	ND
King William	ND	ND	ND	ND	12	ND
Mathews	25	107	$1,386	$2,819	72	179
Middlesex	47	283	$6,470	$12,860	72	355

Note: ND = Non Disclosure of Data

Source: NOAA Ocean Economy Snapshots - 2018 data

Note: King and Queen and King William did not have any employed data repored or the data was supressed.

Note: Data is provided on six marine economic sectors dependent on the oceans, Marine Construction, Living Resources, Offshore Mineral Extraction, Ship and Boat Building, Tourism and Recreation, and Marine Transportation.

Broadband Availability in the Home - %

Locality	2024
Essex	81.2%
Gloucester	89.0%
King and Queen	74.5%
King William	78.4%
Mathews	75.5%
Middlesex	84.3%
MPPDC	**83.0%**

Tourism Economic Impact and Spending by Industries - 2024

Locality	2024 Direct Impacts										
	Direct Visitor Spending, 2024 (in millions)										
	Lodging*	F&B	Retail	Recreation	Transport**	Total Spending	Spending % Change (2024/2023)	Employment	Labor Income (in millions)	State Taxes (in millions)	Local Taxes (in millions)
VIRGINIA	**$6,618.6**	**$9,941.8**	**$3,573.8**	**$4,559.1**	**$10,435.9**	**$35,129.3**	**5.4%**	**229,170**	**$10,188.2**	**$951.1**	**$1,566.2**
Essex	$10.5	$8.5	$14.0	$2.4	$5.5	$40.8	-2.5%	278	$8.2	$0.9	$1.2
Gloucester	$14.2	$16.8	$3.8	$3.9	$10.2	$48.8	3.4%	427	$12.8	$1.2	$2.1
King and Queen	$2.5	$0.6	$0.5	$0.2	$0.6	$4.4	3.2%	30	$0.8	$0.1	$0.1
King William	$3.9	$4.9	$7.4	$1.6	$5.5	$23.3	7.9%	202	$5.4	$0.6	$0.9
Mathews	$13.9	$2.1	$0.3	$1.2	$1.8	$19.2	5.9%	70	$1.9	$0.2	$1.1
Middlesex	$16.8	$3.3	$4.5	$3.2	$2.9	$30.8	2.4%	132	$4.5	$0.4	$1.0
MPPDC	**$61.8**	**$36.2**	**$30.5**	**$12.4**	**$26.5**	**$167.4**	**2.6%**	**1139**	**$33.6**	**$3.4**	**$6.4**

*Lodging includes short-term rentals and second home spending
**Transportation includes both ground and air transportation
Source: Tourism Economics

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Impact of Tourism - 2016-2024
Direct Visitor Spending

Locality	Direct Visitor Spending (in millions)						
	2016	2019	2023	2024	Percent Change (2024/2023)	Percent Change (2024/2019)	Percent Change (2024/2016)
VIRGINIA	**$25,194.5**	**$29,064.7**	**$33,326.59**	**$35,129.3**	**5.4%**	**20.9%**	**39.4%**
Essex	$27.3	$29.7	$41.9	$40.8	-2.5%	37.5%	**49.6%**
Gloucester	$33.2	$39.3	$47.3	$48.8	3.4%	24.4%	**47.2%**
King and Queen	$3.6	$4.1	$4.3	$4.4	3.2%	9.0%	**23.6%**
King William	$18.2	$21.7	$21.6	$23.3	7.9%	7.5%	**27.8%**
Mathews	$13.3	$14.4	$18.2	$19.2	5.9%	33.8%	**44.9%**
Middlesex	$23.6	$26.5	$30.0	$30.8	2.4%	16.1%	**30.4%**
MPPDC	**$119.2**	**$135.6**	**$163.2**	**$167.4**	**2.6%**	**23.5%**	**40.5%**

Source: Tourism Economics
*Lodging includes short-term rentals and second home spending
**Transportation includes both ground and air transportation

Annual Change Average	**3.92%**	**4.50%**

Appendix F – Housing Data

Quarterly Home Sales Prices

Locality	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Jan - Feb
Virginia	**$365,000**	**$405,000**	**$395,000**	**$387,000**	**$385,000**	**$425,000**	**$420,000**	**$415,000**	**$405,000**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**
Essex	$255,000	$276,800	$274,950	$295,000	$309,500	$312,500	$288,500	$279,000	$333,333	$314,950	$364,482	$330,333	$290,500
Gloucester	$306,000	$340,100	$342,000	$330,000	$315,000	$358,900	$364,000	$375,000	$343,317	$365,667	$388,317	$379,833	$429,450
King and Queen	$237,000	$266,612	$274,000	$274,950	$269,000	$276,725	$202,000	$318,725	$309,992	$336,929	$376,617	$312,500	$222,463
King William	$312,500	$337,545	$335,000	$314,950	$359,475	$351,000	$349,975	$357,000	$346,333	$369,808	$362,483	$378,231	$379,950
Mathews	$264,950	$380,000	$350,000	$301,450	$349,900	$330,000	$357,500	$410,000	$421,900	$440,083	$315,475	$391,583	$260,000
Middlesex	$348,750	$378,000	$350,000	$369,000	$392,000	$378,750	$392,000	$359,728	$355,910	$393,451	$406,333	$424,500	$518,500
MPPDC	**$299,150**	**$339,097**	**$331,959**	**$322,781**	**$337,910**	**$348,584**	**$349,994**	**$361,581**	**$350,842**	**$371,522**	**$374,885**	**$378,663**	**$388,845**

Source: Virginia REALTORS - MPPDC and 2025, 2026 data estimates from monthly sales reports

Annual Home Sales - 2020 - present

Locality	2020 %	2021 %	2022 %	2023 %	2024 %	2025 %	Jan - Feb 2026 %
Essex County	9.6%	9.4%	9.8%	11.5%	9.3%	10.3%	17.0%
Gloucester County	38.3%	37.3%	37.4%	39.8%	37.2%	35.0%	31.4%
King and Queen County	3.9%	4.8%	3.8%	4.7%	4.5%	5.9%	5.2%
King William County	20.9%	22.0%	23.4%	17.8%	21.6%	22.8%	22.2%
Mathews County	11.8%	12.1%	12.4%	12.1%	12.3%	10.0%	9.2%
Middlesex County	15.4%	14.4%	13.2%	14.1%	15.1%	16.0%	15.0%
MPPDC	**1768**	**1881**	**1598**	**1218**	**1297**	**1364**	**153**

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Source: Virginia REALTORS

Annual Residential Building Permits

Locality	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Yearly Ave
Essex	24	29	40	33	36	0	41	29
Gloucester	185	161	158	100	139	168	171	155
King and Queen	25	18	15	26	26	23	37	24
King William	129	223	129	118	169	0	127	128
Mathews	26	26	19	9	31	43	23	25
Middlesex	33	38	35	38	34	0	45	32
MPPDC	**422**	**495**	**396**	**324**	**435**	**234**	**444**	**393**

Source: Virginia REALTORS

Annual Change in Housing Units 2020 to 2025

Locality	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Virginia	0.3%	2.5%	1.3%	0.8%	0.3%
Essex	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%
Gloucester	0.7%	0.9%	0.9%	0.4%	0.4%
King and Queen	0.7%	0.6%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
King William	2.1%	2.4%	1.3%	1.6%	1.5%
Mathews	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%
Middlesex	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	1.2%

Source: VAPA, US Census, Housing Unit Total

Housing Occupancy and Structure Type

Locality	Vacancy Rate		Type of Structure		
	Occupied	Vacant	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home
Virginia	**91.3%**	**8.7%**	**72.6%**	**23.1%**	**4.3%**
Essex	76.5%	25.5%	78.2%	9.2%	12.6%
Gloucester	88.2%	11.8%	82.8%	8.1%	9.2%
King and Queen	85.5%	14.5%	77.8%	1.3%	20.9%
King William	95.1%	4.9%	93.4%	3.6%	3.0%
Mathews	72.6%	27.4%	91.6%	3.5%	4.9%
Middlesex	66.7%	33.3%	87.2%	4.2%	8.5%
MPPDC	**82.6%**	**17.4%**	**85.7%**	**5.5%**	**8.9%**

Source: US Census Bereau - 2023 data

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Home Ownership 2024

Locality	Ownership Rate	Ownership Rate by Age			
	Occupied Homes	Under 25	25 to 44	46 - 54	65 +
Virginia	**67%**	**15%**	**53%**	**75%**	**81%**
Essex	68.9%	38%	42%	67%	89%
Gloucester	79.8%	66%	67%	81%	89%
King and Queen	77.4%	60%	77%	67%	88%
King William	88.8%	*	84%	87%	96%
Mathews	85.6%	10%	69%	84%	95%
Middlesex	85.7%	38%	73%	89%	90%
MPPDC	**81.9%**				

Source: US Census Bereau

Household Size

Locality	All Households		Owner		Renter	
	2010	2023	2010	2023	2010	2023
Virginia	2.56	2.53	2.63	2.64	2.39	2.32
Essex	2.41	2.38	2.42	2.43	2.37	2.29
Gloucester	2.58	2.58	2.61	2.64	2.42	2.33
King and Queen	2.46	2.37	2.48	2.18	2.40	3.03
King William	2.62	2.55	2.60	2.58	2.72	2.32
Mathews	2.37	2.22	2.37	2.19	2.33	2.42
Middlesex	2.62	2.55	2.60	2.58	2.72	2.32
MPPDC		**2.41**		**2.43**		**2.33**

Source: US Census Bereau

Overcrowding - Persons per Room

Locality	All Households	
	Overcrowed	Very Overcrowed
	%	%
Virginia	1.4	0.7
Essex	0.4	0.3
Gloucester	0.5	0.0
King and Queen	0.1	0.0
King William	0.2	0.0
Mathews	0.0	0.0
Middlesex	1.1	0.5
MPPDC	**0.4**	**0.1**

Source: US Census Bereau

Overcrowed - 1.0 to 1.5 persons per room

Very Over Crowed - 1.5 + persons per room

Lacking Plumbing - 2023

Locality	Lacking Complete Plumbing	
	#	% of Occupied Units
Virginia	10399	0.3%
Essex	10	0.2%
Gloucester	9	0.1%
King and Queen	17	0.6%
King William	8	0.1%
Mathews	28	0.7%
Middlesex	13	0.3%
MPPDC	**85**	**0.2%**

Source: US Census Bereau 2023

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Home Value - 2023

Locality	Median Home Value	
	#	% of VA
Virginia	$383,700	
Essex	$238,100	62.1%
Gloucester	$331,000	86.3%
King and Queen	$231,600	60.4%
King William	$315,700	82.3%
Mathews	$360,900	94.1%
Middlesex	$352,200	91.8%
MPPDC	**$315,500**	**82.2%**

Source: US Census Bereau 2023

Assisted Housing Units

Locality	Assisted Housing Units		
	#	% of MPPDC	% of Occupied Housing
Virginia	180,823		5.4%
Essex	111	15.7%	2.5%
Gloucester	308	43.6%	2.0%
King and Queen	0	0.0%	0.0%
King William	205	29.0%	2.8%
Mathews	30	4.2%	0.8%
Middlesex	52	7.4%	1.3%
MPPDC	**706**		**1.8%**

Source: National Housing Preservation Database 2024

Rents

Locality	Median 2023	Fair Market Rent - 2 bedroom		
		HUD 2026	National Non-metro	VHDA - MTSP
Virginia	**$1,579**		**$1,482**	
Essex	$972	$1,113	$1,482	$1,422
Gloucester	$1,096	$1,713	$1,482	$1,918
King and Queen	$1,004	$1,256	$1,482	$1,626
King William	$1,166	$1,655	$1,482	$2,044
Mathews	$1,032	$1,713	$1,482	$1,918
Middlesex	$1,059	$1,291	$1,482	$1,722
MPPDC	**$1,081**		$1,482	

Source: US Bureau of the Census, HUD, Virginia Housing

MTSP - Multifamily Tax Subsidy Program - 80% of Median Income limit

Cost Burdened Households

Locality	Owners		Renters
	With Mortage	No Mortage	
	%	%	%
Virginia	**25.1%**	**11.1%**	**48.5%**
Essex	30.9%	13.3%	52.9%
Gloucester	27.8%	8.9%	37.7%
King and Queen	27.3%	10.0%	46.4%
King William	19.9%	12.3%	72.4%
Mathews	22.7%	10.5%	42.0%
Middlesex	30.4%	10.2%	63.7%
MPPDC	**26.6%**	**10.8%**	**50.3%**

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Source: US Census Bereau

Cost Burdened = Spending 30% or more of income on housing

Housing Affordability
Spending 30% of Income on Housing

Locality	Housing Affordability at Median Household Income			Median Home Value 2023	Median Sales Price 1st Q 2026
	2024 Median HH Income	Monthly Rent	SF Home Price		
Virginia	**$93,170**	**$2,329**	**$314,000**	$383,700	**NA**
Essex	$56,520	$1,413	$192,000	$238,100	$290,500
Gloucester	$84,306	$2,108	$290,000	$331,000	$429,450
King and Queen	$76,469	$1,912	$244,000	$231,600	$222,463
King William	$86,056	$2,151	$296,000	$315,700	$379,950
Mathews	$75,880	$1,897	$264,000	$360,900	$260,000
Middlesex	$75,060	$1,877	$261,000	$352,200	$518,500
MPPDC	**$78,848**	**$1,971**	**$275,000**	**$315,500**	**$388,845**

Source: US Census Bereau

Ownership Home Price Assumes; PITI, 7% interest, 30 year mortage, $30,000 down and $250/month debt payments

Appendix G – CEDS Project List - 2026

#	Project	Location	Lead Organization
1	Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan - Water & Sewer, Transportation, and Broadband	MP	MPPDC
2	Middle Peninsula Alliance - Reactivation	MP	
3	Industrial Site Identification Study	MP	MPA
4	Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA) Creation	MP	MPPDC
5	Industrial Site Acquistion(s)	MP	MPA, RIFA
6	Industrial Site Development	MP	MPA, RIFA
7	Tourism Marketing Program - DMO Designation	MP	MPA
8	Regional Housing Trust creation	MP & NN	Bay Aging - Housing Division
9	Virginia Rural Coastal Resiliency Center (VRCRC)	MP	MPPDC, MPPAA
10	Middle Peninsula Leadership Development Program	MP	MPPDC
11	Lower Bay Rowing	Gloucester, Mathews	MPPAA
12	Lighthouse at New Point	Mathews	
13	Regional Dredging Program	MP	MPPAA
14	Dredge Material Placement Locations - designate, permit, etc.	MP	MPPAA
15	Regional Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad Recruitment and Retention Program	MP	Middle Peninsula Emergency Management Services Center
16	Rail Service - feasibility study	MP	MPPDC
17	Aquaculture Equipment Manufacturing Feasibility Study	MP	MPPDC< MPPAA
18	Regional Farmers Markets – feasibility study		
19	Regional Power Generation Plant - at the local landfills	Gloucester, King and Queen	MPPDC
20	Regional MP Fair - implementation	MP	REDO
21	Woodville School Renovation	Gloucester	Gloucester
22	Gloucester Sewer Extension	Gloucester	HRSD, Gloucester
23	Adult Day Care Facility - feasibility study	MP	Bay Aging
24	Day Care Facility Feasibility Study	MP	MPPDC, MPA

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#	Project	Location	Lead Organization
25	ATV Trails Plan	MP	MPPDC
26	Hanger Construction at Regional Airports	King and Queen, Essex, Middlesex	MP Regional Airport Authority
27	Marine Science Corridor development at Gloucester Point	Gloucester	Gloucester, VIMS, Inc.
28	Pellet Plant – feasibility analysis	MP	REDO, MPPDC
29	Regional Kayak Destination Map/Marketing plan	MP	MPPDC, MPA
30	Tappahannock, West Point, Urbanna, Gloucester Courthouse, Mathews Courthouse, Deltaville, Main Street – revitalization	MP	MPPDC, Towns and Counties
31	Navigation Beacons and Channel Markers - shallow channel navigation	MP	MPPDC
32	"Project Access" - Deltaville	Middlesex	Middlesex
33	Public Access to the Waterfront - "Blue Ways"	MP	MPPDC
34	Resiliency Planning and Demonstration	MP	MPPAA, MPPDC
35	Resiliency Revolving Loan and Grant Program	MP	MPPDC
36	Town of Urbanna Water System Upgrade	Urbanna	Urbanna
37	Middlesex Water Authority Water System	Middlesex	Middlesex
38	Deltaville Pedestrian/Bike Trail	Middlesex	Middlesex
39	Route 17 Tourism Bike Path	Gloucester, Middlesex, Essex, and Tappahannock	MPPDC
40	Improvements to at Local Museums	MP	All MP localities
41	VASG Coastal Resilience & Adaptation Economy	MP	MPPDC, MPPAA
42	Redevelopment of publicly owned vacant and blighted waterfront properties	MP	MPPDC
43	Redevelopment of the Tappahannock Airport Site	Tappahannock	Tappahannock

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