



OPPORTUNITIES | EDUCATION | EVENTS | UPDATES

May 2024

HIGHLIGHTS

- Marketing Minute
- Why Economic Development Matters
- Funding Opportunities and Resources
- ICYMI: Workforce Development Summit
- Myth Buster Series
- Commerce Park Receives Tier 4 Site Designation
- Clean Business Awards & Free Receptacles
- You're Invited: Business After Hours Event
- June Home-Based Business Lunch & Learn
- Company Callouts
- For Lease: Prime Retail Space in Lightfoot



Celebrating Tourism & Economic Development

Each May, the country celebrates National Economic Development Week and National Travel and Tourism Week. Since York County merged our **Economic and Tourism Development** offices into one department, we think this is even more reason to celebrate!

Economic Development Week was created by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2016 to increase awareness of local programs that create jobs, advance career development opportunities and improve the quality of life in communities everywhere.

National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) is an annual industry tradition celebrating the value travel holds for our economy, businesses, personal well-being and more.

So, why does economic development matter to local citizens and businesses? Keep reading for more details...

MARKETING MINUTE

Respond to reviews!

88% of consumers say that reading an online review has influenced their buying decision, and 55% read at least four reviews prior to making a purchase.



Business review sites have quickly gained popularity, and your business may have reviews online you never knew about.

To show your potential customers that you care about their experience and your reputation, it's critical to monitor and respond to comments on customer review sites like Google, Yelp, Facebook and the Better Business Bureau. Be sure to display positive reviews on your own website, which can increase conversion rates by up to 270%! Think you should simply ignore the negative reviews? Think again! Potential customers are watching to see what you do about them. Not replying could give the impression you don't care about the customer's concerns, or even that you're validating their accusations.

Wondering if its worth your time to manage your online reviews? Check out even more [staggering statistics](#) on consumer behavior related to reviews!

Actively manage and respond to your company's online reviews and display positive reviews prominently on your website!

MORE MARKETING TIPS

Why does economic development matter?



Believe it or not, all too often our staff hears business owners say, "I didn't even know you guys existed," or "what is economic development anyway?" Economic development touches every facet of our communities, and yet many people still wonder what economic developers do.

"At its core, **economic development** is about activities that foster a better quality of life for citizens of a community," wrote the Virginia Economic Developers Association. "This can mean economic security through new jobs, recreation and education opportunities at tourist attractions, new tax revenues for governments to support needed services, enhanced skills for workers to increase their competitiveness, revitalization of blighted areas, or even new shopping opportunities for eager consumers."

When we prioritize economic development, we're investing in our own future and that of our kids and grandkids. Let's make sure everyone has the opportunity to thrive! Economic development is everyone's business! Learn more by visiting the [Virginia Economic Developers Association website](#). #GoVEDA

Benefits of Economic Development TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Economic development programs exist to improve the community's economic health and quality of life.

York County's economic development efforts support the community by:

1 Promoting a diversified and stable tax base.

Employer payroll flows through the local economy—supporting retailers, service providers and other business. Expanding the business tax base can lower the dependence on residential taxes.

2 Generating funds for education and public services.

By supporting business investment and growth, we receive more dollars for schools, fire and rescue, libraries and law enforcement.

3 Shaping a vibrant, resilient community.

Economic development works to attract/support shops, restaurants and entertainment, making York County a place where people want to live, work and play.

FEATURED BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Funding opportunities for your business

ETD not only offers our own **financial assistance programs**, but our staff also connects businesses to the appropriate external organizations for assistance with additional funding opportunities.

If you're looking for funding to help grow your business, then you'll want to take a look at this list of **hundreds of grant resources** updated monthly by Cornell University.

Be sure to check out **grants.gov** for federal funding opportunities and **opengrants.io** for private opportunities. **The US Chamber of Commerce site** also lists funding opportunities available to businesses of all types.

Lastly, if your business wants to win contracts to do business with the Commonwealth and/or localities within it—including school systems—make sure your business is registered in the **eVA system**.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Small Business & Workforce Development Summit

On May 16, the York County Chamber of Commerce, Hampton Roads Workforce Council, and York County Economic & Tourism Development (ETD) joined forces to present the Small Business and Workforce Development Summit at the Yorktown Freight Shed.

The program included a presentation by the **Hampton Roads Workforce Council** on the workforce challenges facing businesses today and the solutions and resources available to overcome them. Representatives presented information about programs and services available to both job seekers and employers.

The **York County Chamber of Commerce**, the **Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center**, and ETD then gave overviews of the local programs available to support small business growth in the County and the surrounding areas.

Following the presentations, attendees were able to enjoy breakfast, networking and one-on-one discussions with resource partners.



BUSINESS MYTH BUSTERS

"Buying local doesn't matter anymore"

MYTH: The County gets tax dollars from online purchases now, so shopping local doesn't matter anymore.

FACT: Yes, it is true that Virginia now collects sales tax from purchases made online and some of that revenue trickles down to the localities. But buying local is about so much more than just taxes.

By purchasing local goods and services, we stimulate our economy, create and retain jobs, support families and cultures, and help our overall community thrive and grow. Learn more [here](#).

WHY BUY LOCAL?

Economic Strength

Each dollar spent locally returns up to 3½ times more money to the local economy

keepitinyorkcounty.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Kings Creek Commerce Center achieves Tier 4 in state's Business Ready Sites Program

ETD is pleased to announce that Kings Creek Commerce Center, located at 1801 Penniman Road, has been upgraded from a Tier 2 site to a Tier 4 site under the **Virginia Business Ready Sites Program** (VBRSP).



VBRSP is a discretionary program administered by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) to identify, characterize, and enhance more shovel-ready sites in Virginia, and to promote those sites to prospects looking to locate in the Commonwealth.

This new designation means the site is positioned to support development, such that building construction can take place in 12-18 months or less, with all infrastructure improvements in place, and all permit issues identified and quantified.

If your business is looking for a nearly shovel-ready site in upper York County to build industrial space, you won't want to miss this opportunity. The property is adjacent to Interstate 64 and has all utilities and infrastructure on site.

Parcels range in size up to 43 acres and can be subdivided.

[PROPERTY FLYER](#)

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

FEATURED BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Keeping York County green



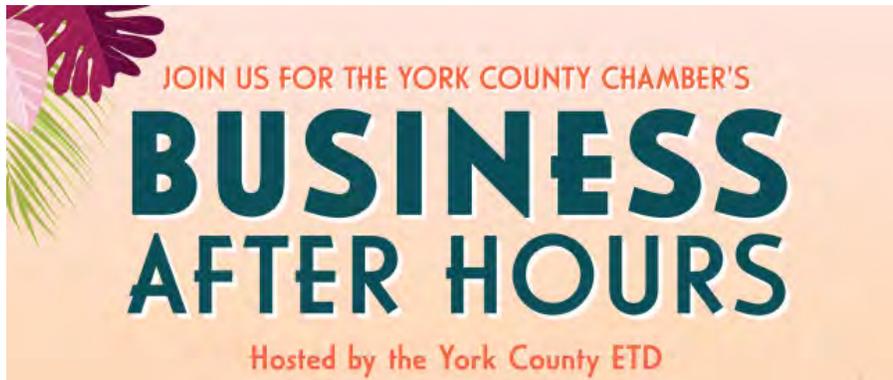
York County is now a chapter member of **Virginia Green**, a statewide effort that encourages green initiatives in tourism. As part of this initiative, ETD has worked with businesses and local organizations to achieve many new green practices, including encouraging:

- **Lodging/Rental properties** to replace disposable body products with refillable dispensers
- **Eateries** to replace plastic and Styrofoam containers and utensils with recycled paper products
- **Retail establishments** to email receipts instead of printing them

The York County Beautification Committee recognizes a **Clean Business of the Quarter**, and offers a limited number of **FREE cigarette receptacles** to qualifying businesses and organizations.

The County's public libraries now offer **electric vehicle charging** and reusable water bottle refill stations. They also host the Trex Plastic Bag Recycling Challenge, which collects bags to repurpose into benches.

YOU'RE INVITED
EDA to host Business After Hours



A night of fun, food & business networking

Save the Date! Each August, the Economic Development Authority hosts a Business After Hours networking event for the York County Chamber of Commerce. All local business owners and operators are invited to attend. Chamber members are free; non-members cost \$10. Registration link coming soon.

Monday, Aug. 12, 2024
5:30–7:30pm
Yorktown Freight Shed
331 Water Street in Historic Yorktown

HOME-BASED BUSINESS EVENT
Lunch & Learn to discuss scaling your business

The popular Home-Based Business Lunch & Learn Series is back!
The third session of the 2024 series:



REGISTER (FREE)

COMPANY CALLOUTS

York County businesses in the news



Shorty's Diner owners Gil and Bonnie Short bought art created by local auto body student Ben Hipple. They will display it in their restaurant and donated \$500 to **New Horizons Career and Technical Education Center**.

[FULL ARTICLE](#)



D'Shawn Wright, owner of **Body by D Gym**, received an Everyday Hero Award from News 3 Anchor Erin Miller, after his recent appointment by Governor Youngkin to the state's **Advisory Board on Athletic Training**.

[FULL ARTICLE](#)



Local custom home builder, **Wayne Harbin Builder**, had one of their beautiful bathroom designs featured in the cover foldout section of the May 2024 edition of Southern Living magazine!

[FULL ARTICLE](#)

FEATURED PROPERTY
Prime retail space for lease in Lightfoot
800 E. Rochembeau Drive in upper York County



FOR LEASE
THE SHOPS AT CEDAR VALLEY



Property Details:

The Shops at Cedar Valley has two available units to choose from: Unit C offers 1,420 SF of open space, and Unit E offers 2,088 SF of fully customizable space. Join existing tenants—including Starbucks, Original Mattress Factory and GameStop—in this ideal location for serving both locals and tourists alike.

Prime Location:

The center is located less than a mile from Interstate 64 at the Lightfoot exit (#234A) and boasts direct exposure on Mooretown Road in Williamsburg. Nearby businesses include Great Wolf Lodge, Chick-fil-A, Lowes and Home Depot.

[CONTACT LEASING AGENT](#)

[PROPERTY FLYER](#)

Thanks to our partner organizations:



HAMPTONROADS
WORKFORCECOUNCIL
ONE REGION. ONE WORKFORCE. ONE ECONOMY.

York County's Department of Economic & Tourism Development is here to assist you with all your business needs, from funding, to expansion, to education.

121 Alexander Hamilton Blvd.
PO Box 612
Yorktown, VA 23690
yesyorkcounty.com
(757) 890-3317
econdev@yorkcounty.gov

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

FOLLOW US



York County Economic & Tourism Development | 121 Alexander Hamilton Blvd. | Yorktown, VA
23690 US



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