

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



LOCAL
ROOTS



GLOBAL
REACH

MISSIONS AND MESSAGES FROM OUR COUNTY OFFICIALS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT MISSION

To attract, retain and expand new business investment in Isle of Wight County and to provide quality employment opportunities for county citizens. Department staff assists the Economic Development Authority (EDA), administers the Enterprise Zone Program and provides funding to the Hampton Roads Alliance and the Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center (HRSBDC). The department also assists the local farming and agricultural community.



RICHARD L. "DICK" GRICE
2021 Chairman, Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors

According to the 2020 Census, Isle of Wight County is home to more than 38,600 residents, a jump of almost 10% since 2010 and higher than the average for the region. Rapid population expansion does not come without some growing pains. However, an important upside is the potential for greater prosperity for businesses in the county, as well as for businesses considering locating in Isle of Wight. In addition, the Board of Supervisors recognizes that such growth needs to be met with a balance of amenities, attractions and other great qualities. For our current residents and businesses alike, an excellent quality of life, strong schools and stable government are hallmarks of this community, and just a few of many reasons people have chosen to live and work in Isle of Wight. We are especially proud of the county's particular mix of festivals and events, which is well-known and respected throughout the region and beyond, and which also benefits our businesses. For readers considering Isle of Wight for your business' "home" – whether large scale or small, in our Intermodal Park or just starting up in a home office or garage – it is my pleasure to help present this Annual Report, which proudly showcases why the county can help your business grow and prosper in a community with Local Roots and Global Reach!



CHRISTOPHER A. "CHRIS" MORELLO
Director, Isle of Wight County Economic Development

"Inspiring!" This concept jumps to my mind when comparing business license and building permit issuances, as well as retail sales tax revenue in Isle of Wight County from 2020 to 2021. Strong upturns in these indicators tell us that our local economy is displaying its inherent resiliency and a strong resistance to the negative forces bringing slow recovery and related challenges in the wider economic world. To be sure, Isle of Wight businesses endured a period of difficulty, and especially uncertainty, brought on by the pandemic. We recognize the perseverance necessary to succeed even without the backdrop COVID-19, but it is clear the vast majority found ways to make it through to the "other side" – and some even thrived like never before. We dedicate our 2021 Annual Report to all business owners and employees who were (and are) engaged in that unending struggle to succeed. They have inspired and energized us, and we have tried to convey as much of that spirit and sentiment as we can fit into the pages of this report. The Economic Development Department is pleased and honored to have this annual opportunity to highlight Isle of Wight's economic successes with its business community, county residents and all who receive this publication, print and digital. Going forward, I want to convey my sincere wish for increasing prosperity and continued inspiration!

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MISSION

The Economic Development Authority, formerly the Industrial Development Authority, was created in 1968 to promote industrial growth in the county. As a support organization for the county's Department of Economic Development, it may authorize the issuance of tax-exempt industrial bonds to industries locating or expanding their operations in Isle of Wight.



CARROLL KEEN JR. Chairman, Isle of Wight County Economic Development Authority

It was my pleasure to serve my first term as Chairman of the Isle of Wight County Economic Development Authority (EDA) in 2021 following the retirement of long-time Chairman Ron Pack. I have served on the EDA since the early 1990s and many of those years as Vice-Chairman. As a long-time business owner, I have been involved in econom-

ic activity in the county for many years and have witnessed its unique growth in the region.

2021 was a busy year. Most importantly, the EDA, along with staff, continued its efforts to increase the site readiness of the EDA-owned land within Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park, Phase II. The EDA requested and received, from the county Board of Supervisors, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding for utility and transportation master planning and road design and construction.

In August 2021, the EDA approved a resolution of support for Riverside Health System's proposed acute care hospital to be built in the county. Several members spoke in support of the project at the public hearing and subsequent meetings.

The EDA also hired a new forestry manager and began working on a plan to harvest timber within Phase III of Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park.

From a regional perspective, the EDA continued its membership and financial support of the Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA) and its first regional project, Kings Creek Commerce Center, in York County.

I would like to thank Chris Morello, Director of Economic Development and EDA Secretary/Treasurer, and the Economic Development staff for their hard work during the year.

This Annual Report is designed to inform and educate, to provide a glimpse under the hood of our economic engine – a continuing source of great pride for our community!

PHOTO BY MIKE O'SHELL PHOTOGRAPHY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chris Morello

Director

Kristi Sutphin

Economic Development Coordinator

Nicole Talton

Economic Development Coordinator

Gloria Spratley

Administrative Assistant

2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Carroll Keen Jr.

Chairman (Newport District)

James Ford

Vice-Chairman (Hardy District)

Tony Ambrose

(Town of Windsor)

James Collins

(Smithfield District)

Tim Hillegass

(Town of Smithfield)

Sharon Corey Stallings

(Windsor District)

Amber Wells

(Carrsville District)

2021 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Richard L. "Dick" Grice

Chairman (Smithfield District)

Don Rosie

Vice-Chairman (Carrsville District)

Joel C. Acree

(Windsor District)

Rudolph Jefferson

(Hardy District)

William M. McCarty

(Newport District)

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Randy R. Keaton

County Administrator

Donald T. "Don" Robertson

Assistant County Administrator

CONTACT US

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY DEPARTMENT
OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

FRONT BOTTOM:

COURTESY OF THE PORT OF VIRGINIA

BACK: MIKE O'SHELL PHOTOGRAPHY

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE TRENDS

POPULATION ESTIMATES



2021	2020	2019
39,278	38,606	37,109

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

INCOME

\$39,024 Average Per Capita **\$77,870** Median Household



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Estimates

HOME VALUE AND SALE PRICES

2019 Median Home Value	\$266,800
2021 Average Sale Price/Existing Homes	\$353,066 +10.4% over 2020
2021 Average Sale Price/New Construction Homes	\$393,384 +5.7% over 2020

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Rein MLS, Residential Databank

NEW RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL BUILDING PERMITS

	2021	2020
Permits Issued	330	282
Value	\$80,093,587	\$58,590,681

Source: Isle of Wight County Inspections Department



PHOTO BY ELLY CONDIE

NEW BUSINESS LICENSES

	2021	2020
Isle of Wight County	213	185
Town of Smithfield	46	32
Town of Windsor	24	29
TOTAL	283	246

Sources: Isle of Wight County, Town of Smithfield, Town of Windsor

MAJOR PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS

1. Smithfield Foods & related entities
2. Keurig Dr Pepper
3. International Paper
4. Food Lion
5. World Market
6. ST Tissue
7. CR England
8. Riverside Health System
9. Kroger
10. Isle of Wight Academy
11. Packers Sanitation Service
12. Smithfield Station
13. Bennett's Creek Nursery
14. Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA
15. Farmers Bank

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 3Q 2021

TAX REVENUE HIGHLIGHTS – FISCAL YEAR 2021

Machinery & Tools Tax

\$4,762,136

-4.35% compared to FY 2020



Commercial Real Estate Tax

\$6,210,245

+0.29% compared to FY 2020



Retail Sales Tax

\$2,632,229

+11.87% compared to FY 2020



Meals Tax

\$569,370

+13.27% compared to FY 2020



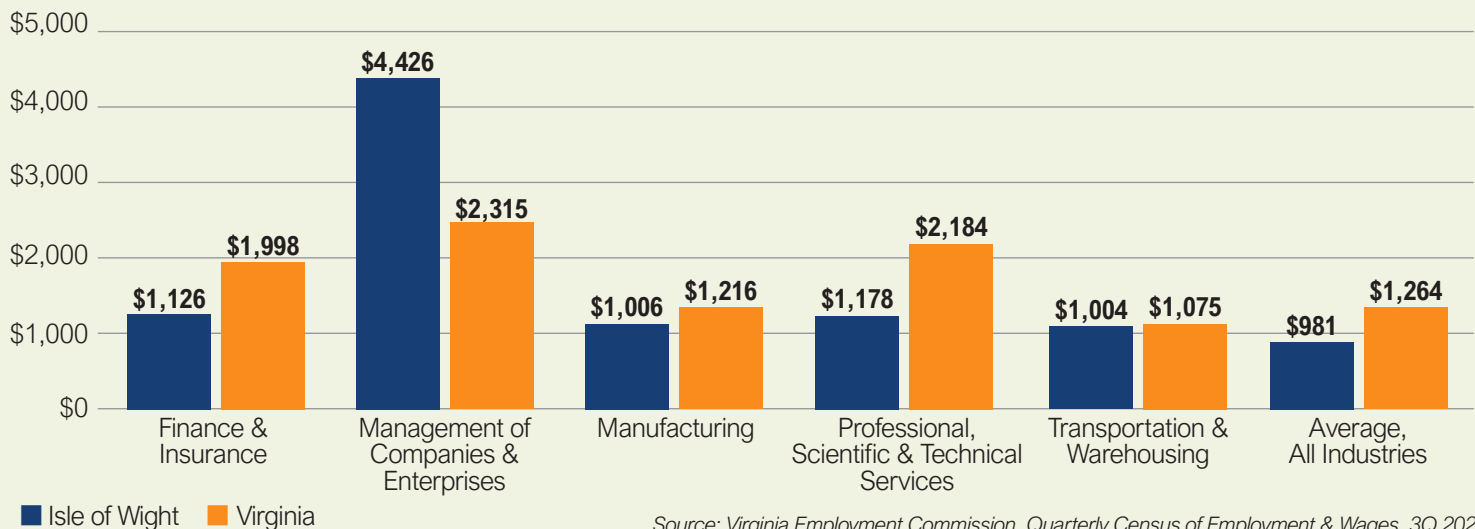
Source: Isle of Wight County Commissioner of Revenue

LARGEST EMPLOYERS BY INDUSTRY

Description	Employees		%	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Private Sector				
Manufacturing (Incl. food processing & packaging; processing of paper, wood & agricultural products)	2,972	26.8%	3,175	28.1%
Retail Trade	998	9.0%	1,012	9.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	875	7.9%	930	8.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	648	5.8%	630	5.6%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	550	5.0%	562	5.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	576	5.2%	511	4.5%
Administrative, Support, Waste Management & Remediation	494	4.5%	482	4.3%
Construction	462	4.2%	470	4.2%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	395	3.6%	405	3.6%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	335	3.0%	332	2.9%
Educational Services	239	2.2%	255	2.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	224	2.0%	227	2.0%
Finance & Insurance	213	1.9%	209	1.8%
Wholesale Trade	180	1.6%	192	1.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	153	1.4%	140	1.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	73	0.7%	73	0.6%
Unclassified Industry	43	0.4%	50	0.4%
Utilities	47	0.4%	44	0.4%
Information	19	0.2%	23	0.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Public Sector				
Government (Federal, State, Local)	1,585	14.3%	1,576	14.0%
TOTAL	11,081		11,299	

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, Q1 2022

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES – ISLE OF WIGHT VS. VIRGINIA



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 3Q 2021

ISLE OF WIGHT FARM CHARACTERISTICS 2017*

Number of Farms	237
Land in Farms (acres)	80,672
Average Size of Farm (acres)	340
Market Value of Products Sold	\$64,223,000

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture 2017 * Ag Census taken only once every 5 years.

PRIME-AGE POPULATION & LABOR FORCE

Prime-Age Population (25-54)	13,518
Civilian Labor Force	19,127
Labor Force Participation Rate (25-54)	87.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates; Hampton Roads Alliance, Updated March 29, 2022

ISLE OF WIGHT PARTNERS, PILLARS AND PROSPECTS

Target Industries



MANUFACTURING



FOOD & BEVERAGE
PROCESSING



TRANSPORTATION
& WAREHOUSING



PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
& TECHNICAL SERVICES



MANAGEMENT OF
COMPANIES & ENTERPRISES

County Invests in Regional Project

Isle of Wight County is one of six localities in Hampton Roads investing in a new regional economic development project as part of its membership in the Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA). EVRIFA was formed in 2018 so that two or more localities could work together on specific projects as regional partners and receive fiscal benefits from them. Located in York County, this project is the first one under consideration by the authority.

In December 2021, EVRIFA closed on the purchase of the former Fuel Farm property in upper York County, between Colonial Parkway and Water Country USA. EVRIFA is now leasing 250 acres of the property for a 20-megawatt solar facility and is utilizing a GO Virginia grant to facilitate development of the remaining acreage as a light industrial park. Once complete, the park will target unmanned vehicle research, development and testing companies, and will fill a need for available industrial space in the county.

All tax and other revenues that would normally have been collected by York County, the host locality, will instead be shared by the participating localities on a basis proportional to their investments. Other participating localities are Poquoson, Williamsburg, Hampton and Newport News.

Reuse Study of Former Academy Continues



In cooperation with the property owner, the Economic Development Department continues to lead a community effort

to study and determine the best potential community-oriented uses for the former 24,000-square-foot James River Christian Academy campus.

A market and feasibility study was completed in 2020. It surveyed the community services landscape and analyzed current “supply and demand” for these vital services. The study received fiscal support from a Community Development Block Grant Planning Grant obtained through the Commonwealth’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

In February 2021, the county was awarded a second DHCD grant to fund more in-depth community surveys meant to help narrow the list of best-use candidates. As part of the grant agreement, the county hired VIA Design (Norfolk) to complete a preliminary architectural review. The review will ensure optimal site and building redevelopment scenarios are considered.

Camp College Celebrates 50th Anniversary

In 2021, Paul D. Camp Community College (PDCCC) celebrated 50 years of service to the Western Tidewater region. With campuses in Franklin and Suffolk and a center in Smithfield, this community asset offers a range of educational opportunities



including general studies, high school dual-enrollment opportunities, nursing, phlebotomy, cybersecurity, mechatronics, early childhood studies, GED/adult education, criminal justice, truck driver training, welding, machinist, business of farming, photography, parenting and much more.

Local economic development officials acknowledge and appreciate that PDCCC has helped at-

Strategic Partners

- Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce
- Town of Smithfield
- Town of Windsor
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)
- The Port of Virginia
- Hampton Roads Alliance
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA)
- Hampton Roads Workforce Council
- Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center (HRSBDC)
- Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)
- Paul D. Camp Community College
- Blackwater Regional Library



tract new businesses and industries to the area. PDCCC has championed regional economic development through customized training programs, job fairs and mass interviews. Regional employers utilize a wide variety of training opportunities for their personnel, and certification programs are added when there is a specific need. The ACT

WorkKeys program, for example, helps employers hire, train and retain a skilled workforce.

Camp College exemplifies the mission of the Virginia Community College system by giving everyone the opportunity to learn and develop the right skills so lives and communities are strengthened.

Isle of Wight – Pillars of the Economy

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is the leading pillar of Isle of Wight County's economy. Manufacturing sales account for more than 52% of total sales for the county. Moreover, more than 28% of industry jobs are manufacturing jobs. Average earnings per manufacturing job are \$60,093, almost 10% above the county average. Goods and services purchased from county firms by entities outside the county (exported sales) increased by 12% over 2020, accounting for a flow of \$1.51 billion into the economy. Sector performance continues to be largely driven by the presence of Smithfield Foods.

Management of Companies & Enterprises

Management of Companies & Enterprises maintains as a leading pillar for Isle of Wight County. Industry sales make up 5.8% of total sales, only exceeded by Manufacturing & Government (9%). 2020 to 2021 industry total sales decreased by -11.3%. In-region sales, purchases from county firms by entities inside the county, increased slightly by 0.4%. Total sales were \$184.9 million, with \$140.4 million coming from exported sales, the third-largest generator of sales in the county.

Real Estate & Rental & Leasing

Total sales for *Real Estate & Rental & Leasing* are 3.7% of all industry sales for Isle of Wight

County. 2021 total sales were \$117.8 million. The industry is the third-largest industry for in-region sales, generating most of the industry's total sales from purchases by entities within the county (\$85.9 million).

Transportation & Warehousing

2021 total sales for *Transportation & Warehousing* were \$95.6 million. Exported sales were \$39.4 million. In-region sales were \$56.2 million. Year-over-year total sales declined by -21.7%. However, the industry maintains as a mainstay for Isle of Wight, accounting for 3% of all industry sales for the county.

Agriculture

With approximately 85% of the county's land zoned as Rural Agricultural Conservation (RAC), *Agriculture* is a significant part of Isle of Wight County life and culture. Isle of Wight produced \$67.8 million in total sales within the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting sector. The industry brought \$26.6 million into the economy through exported sales and accounts for 2.1% of all industry sales.

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, 2022.1, Hampton Roads Alliance, 2022.

Please note year-over-year comparisons take into account most recent data revisions.

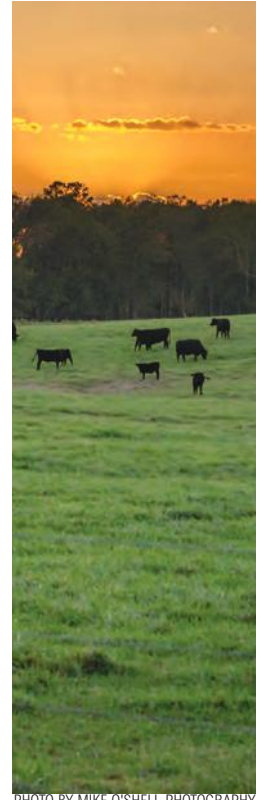


PHOTO BY MIKE O'SHELL PHOTOGRAPHY

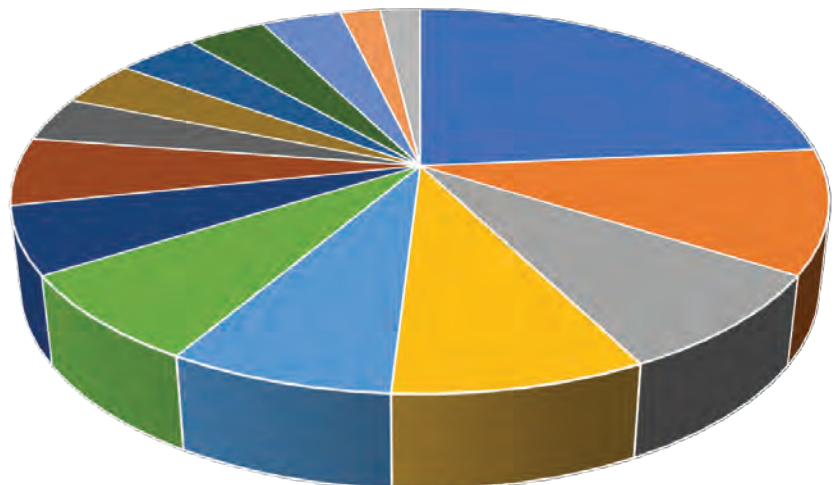
2021 New Prospect Activity

In addition to working with existing business projects throughout the year, Economic Development increased its marketing efforts and media presence to help attract an increased level of interest and inquiries from prospects in 2021. Economic Development was actively engaged with VEDP, the Alliance, site selection consultants, commercial real estate brokers and developers, and various companies directly on new prospective businesses interested in the county.

55 TOTAL NEW PROSPECT INQUIRIES

Prospect Activity by Industry Type

- 25% ■ Transportation & Warehousing
- 11% ■ Unknown/Disclosed
- 9% ■ Retail Trade
- 9% ■ Utilities
- 8% ■ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
- 8% ■ Other Services
- 6% ■ Construction
- 6% ■ Manufacturing
- 4% ■ Accommodation & Food Service
- 4% ■ Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
- 4% ■ Education Support Services
- 4% ■ Finance & Insurance
- 4% ■ Professional, Scientific, Technical
- 2% ■ Public Administration & Government
- 2% ■ Wholesale Trade



ISLE OF WIGHT'S INTERMODAL PARK POSITIONED FOR INCREASED PORT BUSINESS



Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park: Easily Accessible and Ready for Business!

Strategically located for port-related businesses, the county-owned Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park provides affordable acreage close to The Port of Virginia.

PARK HIGHLIGHTS

- Permit-ready site in Phase II under development
- Transportation planning underway in all phases
- Industrial zoning
- Easily accessible to interstates 95, 85, 64, 264 and 664
- Water, sewer, electricity, natural gas and fiber-optic services available
- Proven fast-track site plan review and permitting process
- Access to a regional workforce of more than 800,000 people
- Incentives include: VA Enterprise Zone, Foreign Trade Zone #20 and Port Grants
- Park tenants: Keurig Dr Pepper, Safo Products Co. and World Market – Virginia Distribution Center

LOCATION ADVANTAGES

- 26 miles to The Port of Virginia
- Easy access to local interstates (30 minutes to I-64 and I-664; 46 miles to I-95 and I-85). Site also adjacent to U.S. Route 460 and within 10 minutes of U.S. Route 58
- 15 miles to Franklin Regional Airport; 39 miles to Norfolk International Airport; 40 miles to the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport
- Direct rail access possible to adjacent Norfolk Southern Rail Heartland Corridor
- Nearly flat topography reduces on-site development costs
- One of the lowest real estate tax rates in Hampton Roads

New Video Promotes Permit-Ready Industrial Site

In September 2021, the county's Economic Development Department launched a new video promoting the 44-acre near permit-ready site in Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park. Staff worked with WB Marketing to produce the video, which highlights the site's location, access and incentives.

The video is available on the Economic Development website and on its YouTube Channel. A media blitz targeting real estate developers and brokers resulted in increased inquiries about the site.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PORT OF VIRGINIA

Franklin Regional Airport Receives ARPA Funding



In 2021, the Franklin Regional Airport received a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to repair 4,000 feet of various taxiway surfaces, 28,000 square yards of the existing apron surface and 2,900 feet of the existing north taxiway surface to extend the pavement's useful life.

Franklin Regional was one of six airports in Virginia to receive federal funding for infrastructure improvements through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

Isle of Wight Firm Selected for Export Trade Program



American K-9 Interdiction LLC (AK9I), a service-disabled veteran-owned small business in Isle of Wight County, was one of 10 companies selected to participate in the Virginia Leaders in Export Trade Program (VALET) in 2021. The two-year program, led by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, assists companies in the Commonwealth that are committed to international exporting as a growth strategy.

The VALET program provides participating companies with export planning services and assistance from a team of experienced international service providers, including attorneys, web designers, bankers, translators, accountants and freight forwarders, to help meet the companies' international business goals.

AK9I was founded in 2001 and produces and trains superior working dogs for government, law enforcement and private entities. The company specializes in training canines and handlers for policing/patrol assignments, narcotics detection, explosives detection on and off leash, tracking/trailing and specialty disciplines.

The Port of Virginia – Mid-Atlantic Global Gateway

Port Posts Record-Setting Volumes



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PORT OF VIRGINIA

In 2021, The Port of Virginia processed more than 3.5 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs), a 25.2 percent increase over 2020, making it the most productive year on record. The month of December was also the most productive month in history with 325,000 TEUs.

In addition to handling cargo, the Port also began new infrastructure investment projects that will increase efficiency and capture more cargo. Projects include dredging the channel depth to 55 feet, which will expand capacity at the Norfolk International Terminal Central Rail Yard, and purchasing two new super-post Panamax ship-to-shore cranes.

The Port also signed a lease dedicating a large portion of Portsmouth Marine Terminal to staging and pre-assembling components critical to the success of the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project off the coast of Virginia Beach.

The Port continues to be a significant driver of economic investment and job creation in the Commonwealth. According to its fiscal 2021 economic impact report, the Port generated 436,667 part-time and full-time jobs and more than \$100.1 billion in ancillary economic impact.

\$4.1 BILLION

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY EXPORTS VALUE FOR 2021

VIRGINIA RANKS NO. 3
ON EAST COAST AMONG
AGRICULTURAL GOODS EXPORTERS

+28%
OVER 2020



Top Virginia Agriculture/Forestry Exports in 2021

Soybeans	\$1.1 billion
Pork & Pork Offal	\$862.6 million
Wood Products	\$280.9 million
Soybean Meal	\$235.0 million
Miscellaneous Food & Beverage	\$228.7 million
Poultry	\$199.7 million
Tobacco	\$180.7 million
Beer	\$173.7 million
Soybean Oil	\$173.3 million
Peanuts	\$56.1 million

Source: Global Trade Information Services Inc.

ISLE OF WIGHT HELPS BUSINESSES PUT DOWN ROOTS



RENDERING ONLY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE, COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE HEALTH SYSTEM

Riverside Health System to Establish New Hospital

In June 2021, Riverside Health System announced plans to apply for a Certificate of Public Need to establish a new, 50-bed, general acute-care hospital in the county. The facility would also include four operating rooms, an emergency department, a labor and delivery department with six obstetrics beds and Level 1 neonatal nursery, and other diagnostic, procedural and physician services.

Riverside Health System currently provides primary care in Carrollton. It also provides diagnostic services and a healthy living community in Smithfield that features assisted living, memory care, long-term care and a skilled rehabilitation center. Riverside Smithfield Hospital will provide residents with more high-quality medical service options and enhance the quality of life already enjoyed in Isle of Wight. It will also employ hundreds of professional and support staff.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PAPA'S GARDEN

Monette Property Lands New Tenants

The Monette Parkway Office Campus in Smithfield welcomed a new tenant in 2021, and a second business received county approvals to build out laboratory and office space.

Papa's Garden, a commercial greenhouse, grows and harvests microgreens and small produce for restaurants in Williamsburg and Virginia Beach. It also sells its products online. The company leases an existing 8,490-square-foot building at 39 Monette Parkway for its 7,500-square-foot indoor growing facility and office space. It employs three people.

In November 2021, Pagan River Labs received approval to operate a laboratory to test vitamins, protein bars and shakes, pre-workout pills and drinks, and edible items from small farms. The new business will occupy 5,000 square feet at 1 Monette Parkway beginning in 2022. It will create four full-time jobs.



New Business Center Promotes Coworking and Collaboration

In April 2021, Economic Development participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house celebration sponsored by the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce for Hamtown Hub, a new membership-based, coworking business center.

The Hub is designed to accommodate professionals who need workspace for meetings, training sessions and study groups, or just a safe place to conduct business. The Hub is located within the Chamber of Commerce building at 100 N. Main St., Smithfield.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COCKEYED ROOSTER CAFE

Smithfield Businesses Win Retail Awards

The **Cockeyed Rooster Café**, a family-owned and -operated restaurant serving breakfast, brunch and lunch, was named Restaurant Retailer of the Year by the Peninsula Division of Retail Alliance. Owner/operator Chris Christou has been in the restaurant business for more than 40 years. The Cockeyed Rooster, which opened in July 2015, is his sixth successful restaurant.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHRISTMAS STORE

For the second year in a row, **The Christmas Store of Smithfield** was named Gift Shop/Artisan Market Retailer of the Year by the Peninsula Division of Retail Alliance. Jim and Elaine Abicht founded The Christmas Store in 1994 as a hobby stemming from their many years of collecting antique Christmas items. In addition to Christmas ornaments, decorations, gifts and collectibles, the store carries items for every major holiday.



Isle Chat Connects Businesses with Economic Development

As part of its Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program, Economic Development created

“Isle Chat” to connect with local businesses via a free 30-minute video or phone chat. The program was developed due to COVID-19 limiting typical face-to-face BRE meetings. It allows staff to learn more about local businesses so they can provide assistance and resources to help businesses reach goals and overcome challenges.

Business Retention and Expansion Program: We stay connected!

The Economic Development staff builds relationships by meeting with new and established businesses throughout the year. It provides information on available programs and services tailored to each business' specific needs. Due to COVID-19, most interaction with businesses in 2021 was done virtually or by phone or email.

BUSINESS OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY ■ Staff reaches out to businesses via face-to-face meetings, new business welcome packets, phone calls, emails, events, newsletters, its website and social media. One of the chief objectives is to help businesses navigate the development/permitting process by coordinating monthly pre-application meetings. This allows applicants to get timely feedback on projects from Planning and Zoning, Inspections, Utilities, Stormwater and Economic Development representatives.

MARKETING ■ Economic Development features local businesses in its monthly newsletter spotlight, “Isle Biz Rocks.” It also provides an Online Business List on the Economic Development website, prepares press releases for the media on openings and expansions, and shares social media posts. Staff can also provide one-on-one analysis of marketing opportunities and make business-to-business connections.

BUSINESS RESOURCES ■ Staff maintains close ties with professionals who provide counseling and support services. Economic Development also continues to financially help support the Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads. The center provides business planning, marketing and financial planning services to startups and existing businesses.

EXPANSION AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE ■ Staff maintains a database of available commercial properties. It also assists new and expanding businesses in finding locations that meet their requirements.

NETWORKING AND EDUCATION ■ Staff promotes regional small business workshops. It also hosts events with state and regional partners.

Businesses Celebrate with Ribbon Cuttings



The Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce hosted ribbon cuttings for 10 businesses in 2021 to celebrate new or expanding businesses and anniversaries. Some events had been delayed by COVID-19. All were promoted, supported and attended by the county's Economic Development Department.

- **Burkes Outlet** – A national retailer selling apparel, housewares, shoes and accessories at discount prices opened in the former Peebles store in Smithfield Shopping Plaza.
- **Coffee Cube** – A mobile coffee stand that also offers cream-based blended beverages, teas and plant-based energy drinks opened in Smithfield, operating there and around the county.
- **Countryside Real Estate Group** – An independently owned and operated real estate and property management company associated with Keller Williams Town Center opened on South Church Street.
- **Farmers Service ACE** – A local retailer of concrete supplies, building materials and farm equipment on West Main Street in Smithfield celebrated its merger with ACE Hardware.
- **Hampton Roads Classical** – An independent, full-time American classical academy currently offering kindergarten through sixth grade classes co-located with Hope Presbyterian Church in Smithfield.
- **Phoenix Physical Therapy** – A practice providing physical and occupational therapy, athletic training and massage therapy opened in Smithfield Plaza.
- **The Pink Picket Fence Boutique** – A retail shop offering clothing, home décor and gift items celebrated its one-year anniversary at the Carrollton Shoppes.
- **Red Point Taphouse** – A locally owned craft brewery and kitchen offering an eclectic menu with locally sourced ingredients paired with house brews, craft cocktails and wines in a casual vintage atmosphere opened on South Church Street in Smithfield.
- **Redd's Climate Controlled Self-Storage** – A climate-controlled storage facility with 24-hour access and onsite security opened on West Windsor Boulevard.
- **River's Edge Apparel** – A retail outfitters store for outdoorsmen and women opened on Main Street in Smithfield.

Additionally, the following businesses opened brick-and-mortar storefronts in 2021:

- **O'Reilly Auto Parts** opened a new store on Route 460 in Windsor.
- **54 Beans**, a contemporary coffee café with an atmosphere designed to encourage and inspire people, opened in the Eagle Harbor Shopping Center in Carrollton.
- **The Main Gourmet**, a retail food store carrying specialty items from sweet to savory, opened on Main Street in Smithfield.
- **Chili Hill Foods & Farm**, a small food market offering Asian groceries with a Thai-centric theme, fresh produce, Virginia-grown products and homemade prepared foods opened on Main Street in Smithfield.
- **Eclipse Pets**, a pet store selling reptiles, birds, hamsters and beta fish along with foods, treats and supplies for finned, furry, feathered and scaly pets, opened on South Church Street in Smithfield.

QUALITY OF LIFE – COUNTY PRESERVES THE OLD, BUILDS ANEW



PHOTO COURTESY OF IWCS

IWCS Breaks Ground on Elementary School

In October 2021, Isle of Wight County School officials broke ground on a new Hardy Elementary School, which will replace the current 60-year-old school. The new, two-story school will have a capacity of 887 students in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. A display case of Hardy's history will be prominently featured in the new building.

Designed by RRMM architects, the floorplan features a "main street" corridor that separates the more public spaces (i.e., administration, cafeteria and gymnasium) from the more private grade "houses."

The new school will feature a strong collaborative learning environment with shared extended learning areas at each grade level for larger group gatherings. Heartland Construction will build the \$36.8 million school scheduled for completion in spring 2023.

IWCS Career Academies Offer Authentic Experiences

Agriculture/Land Lab ■ Isle of Wight County Schools revived the Walter S. Newman Chapter of Future Farmers of America (FFA), a program which had been defunct the past 10-15 years. Students are once again participating in FFA competitions and learning about the agricultural industry and its contributions to society. Students also completed building a greenhouse at the Land Lab. There, they grow fresh produce for school cafeteria meals as part of a "Farm to Fork" program.

Building Trades ■ In spring 2021, Building Trades students partnered with the Windsor High School Horticulture Program to replace a deck and build a wheelchair ramp for a local, retired family.

Cosmetology ■ The IWCS Cosmetology Salon at Windsor High School is open to the community on Thursdays for hair and nail services.

Culinary Arts ■ Culinary Arts students prepared bagged lunches for bus drivers. They planned the menu, shopped for supplies, and prepared lunches which included homemade egg rolls, chicken and dumplings, and berry cobbler. Students also catered small events at Turner & 10, the student-run restaurant on the Smithfield High School campus.

Nurse Aide ■ Nursing students prepared for clinical rotations at Riverside Hospital. The program provides students with skills to deliver basic and advanced clinical care to medical-surgical patients, the chronically ill and the elderly.

Welding ■ IWCS is working with industry partners, including Liebherr, Sumitomo Drive Technologies, Carter Machinery and Acoustical Sheet

Metal to build out work-based learning programs and youth-registered apprenticeships.

Early Childhood Education ■ In September 2020, Isle of Wight County Schools launched Little Sprouts, a full-day pre-K program at Windsor Elementary School. The teacher-supervised program pairs high school Early Childhood Education students (cadets) with preschoolers and allows them to interact in a safe, nurturing environment. A two-way mirror allows the cadets to observe and study the instructor and the 4-year-olds in the neighboring classroom.

Each program leads to certification and continues to generate community interest and partnerships with local businesses and industries. Prior to graduation, the Department of Labor and Industry helps IWCS create internships and work-based partnerships for students. Camp Community College helps to provide workforce development opportunities through a partnership with the division.

✓ 97.4% on-time graduation rate tops state average

✓ 671 industry certifications achieved

2020
2021 **SCHOOL STATS**



PHOTO COURTESY OF WOMAN'S CLUB OF WINDSOR

Windsor Mural Preserves History

The Woman's Club of Windsor recently dedicated a freshly painted mural on one of the town's oldest buildings. The club commissioned muralist Sam Welty to complete the project, which began in November. The new mural restored faded logos of businesses that once occupied the early 1900s building.

Windsor Library to Expand



PHOTO COURTESY OF WINDSOR LIBRARY

Isle of Wight County is working on a site plan and design for the proposed expansion of the Windsor branch of the Blackwater Regional Library. The two-story addition to the north side of the existing building would add 1,800 square feet to support library and community programs and meetings.

Smithfield Approves Neighborhood

In July 2021, Smithfield Town Council approved a proposal from Virginia Beach-based developer Napolitano Homes to build the 812-home Mallory Scott development. The development, to be located on more than 500 acres of former farmland along Battery Park and Nike Park roads, will be built in phases. It will include 107 townhomes, 198 duplexes, 507 single-family homes and shared amenities.

County Celebrates Opening of Completed Park Trail

In June 2021, the Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors, in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Transportation, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion and public opening of Segment 2 of the Park-to-Park Trail.



The Park-to-Park Trail, spanning a total of more than 3 miles along Battery Park Road (Segment 1) and Nike Park Road (Segment 2), will provide economic and recreational access to local businesses, restaurants and park facilities for non-motorized users in the Smithfield, Windsor and Newport election districts. When complete, the trail will connect Nike Park in Carrollton with Windsor Castle Park in Smithfield.

TOURISM AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Grants Help Boost Tourism

Smithfield and Isle of Wight Tourism received four grants from Virginia Tourism Corp. totaling **\$30,850** to support the following initiatives:

- ➔ Replacing an existing gazebo stage in front of the Smithfield Times building to create “Main Street Square,” a gathering and events space.
- ➔ “Shop Small, Shop Smithfield” promotions with the Genuine Merchants of Downtown Smithfield (GMODS).
- ➔ Facebook Live “ShopTalk” videos featuring downtown merchants.
- ➔ Continued promotion of the Salty Southern Route, a foodie tour featuring peanut, ham and pork products in Southeastern Virginia.
- ➔ Social media co-op reimbursement.



2020 DIRECT TOURISM IMPACT

\$34.24 million
Local tourism expenditures
(down -17.2% from 2019)

\$1.7 million
Local taxes generated
(up 69% from 2019)

452
Tourism-supported jobs
(up 5.1% from 2019)

Source: Virginia Tourism Corp. and Tourism Economics

2021 VISITOR COUNTS

34,025 Smithfield Farmers Market

11,033 Smithfield & Isle of Wight County Visitor Center

Source: Smithfield & Isle of Wight Tourism



PHOTO BY ELLY CONDIT

AWARDS

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY

Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

(for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021)
from Government Finance Officers Association

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

(for fiscal year ended June 30, 2020)
*from Government Finance Officers Association
for the 10th consecutive year*

TOWN OF SMITHFIELD

Certified Crime Prevention Community

*From Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
as one of only three towns in Virginia to achieve this status*

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY SCHOOLS

First Place Excellence in Workforce Readiness Award

from Virginia School Boards Association





HAMPTON ROADS REGION

SURRY COUNTY

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY

SUFFOLK



Local Roots, Global Reach
ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, VIRGINIA

- Strategic Growth Districts
- Community Assets
- Industrial/Business Parks
- Residential & Mixed-Use Developments
- Railroad
- Town Limits



Local Roots, Global Reach

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, VIRGINIA

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