



Richmond Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



2018 ANNUAL UPDATE



July, 2018

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission





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Staff of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and the Capital Region Collaborative hosted an annual review for members of the CEDS Strategy Committee on May 11, 2018 attended by 17 of our partners representing the localities economic development offices, Virginia Commonwealth University, regional economic developers, real estate, workforce development and non-profit partners. Review of progress, continued challenges, and strategies to focus on three central areas emerged from the discussion—physical assets (sites, buildings, infrastructure), human assets (workforce, training and other supports), and making connectivity among the elements a priority. The CEDS Annual Update for FY18 reflects progress over the past five years and lays the groundwork for sustained improvements over the next five years to be comprehensively addressed in FY19.





Introduction

The purpose of this 2018 Annual Report on the Richmond Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (RR-CEDS) is not only to begin to update key indicators toward addressing performance measures to show progress, but to report on activities and input from CEDS regional partners since the CEDS document was updated in July 2017. The base year RR-CEDS reflected a 2-year work effort of a 34-member CEDS strategy team that culminated with approval by the U.S. Economic Development Administration Regional Office in May 2014 and was officially accepted by the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) board on July 8, 2014. The RR-CEDS represents a comprehensive approach to economic development within a five-goal framework:

- Goal 1:* Create Best-in-Class Pre-K to 12 Public Education System
- Goal 2:* Expand Productive Workforce Participation
- Goal 3:* Focus Capital Investments on Priority Economic Development Opportunities
- Goal 4:* Grow and Retain Jobs That Advance the Region
- Goal 5:* Expand Regional Choice in Housing and Transportation Access to Employment

These goals relate directly to the six goal areas of the EDA: Collaboration, Public/Private Partnership, Strategic Priorities, Globally Competitive, Sustainable, and Relieving Economic Distress. Key to RR-CEDS Partnership is the Capital Region Collaborative (CRC). The CRC was formed in 2009 by the RRPDC and the Chamber RVA with an Organizing Council made up of private and public sector representatives across the Richmond Region. Starting in 2016, the CRC started tracking key performance measures which were updated most recently in first quarter of 2018. A web site reporting the findings from the Community Indicators was also launched in conjunction with the 2017 annual update <https://www.capitalregioncollaborative.com>. Not only do the indicators “assist community leaders, elected officials, and funders in making informed, strategic decision to drive change”, but they provide important input for the Annual RR-CEDS update. The comparative matrix below illustrates specific priority areas and how they relate to the five essential goals of the CEDS.





OVERLAP/CROSS-WALK CRC PRIORITY AREAS	CEDS PRIORITY AREAS				
	k12	workforce	directed capital invest	growth in demand jobs	choice housing/transit
education	X				
workforce prep	X	X			
job creation			X	X	
social stability	X	X			X
healthy community	X			X	X
coordinated transportation					X
james river			X		
quality place-arts, culture	X	X		X	X
CEDS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (in bold)					
Highlighted items - CRC indicators and/or action team in common	pre-school enrollment	% LF part in distressed neigh	funds leveraged by public \$	# new & retained jobs	Housing-Afford index change
	3rd grade reading	WIB pgm participation	dev to underutilized areas	# new in target clusters	housing cost burden decline
	7th grade career coaches	program integration	tax revenue priority areas	# business start-ups	new housing:med fam income
	CTE advancement	employer satisfaction		venture capital increase	public transit expansion
	HS grad rates & drop-out rates				
Only CRC Indicators:	8th Grade Math SOL Scores	per capita/hh income		annual wages	commuters
	% 24-65 with BA degree	underemployment		unemployment rates	commuter delay
		STEM-H jobs		employment growth	commercial air tavel
		opportunity youth		# major companies	transit coverage
		fitness index			
Action Teams or anecdotal evidence	chronic absenteeism				homelessness
	trauma informed care	heart disease		employment in culture	regional poverty rate
		diabetes		air quality	household income
		employed in health care		crime rate	SNAP recipients
		uninsured		cost of living	AMTRAK ridership
		asthma		% volunteers	James River visits & econ impact

Statistical evidence of the strengths and opportunities along with weaknesses and challenges led to the creation of the RR-CEDS organizing goal framework. Strategies, actions and models both within the region and from other communities make up a tool-box of elements that can be drawn from to direct positive collective action. Further focus within five (5) geographic areas of greatest influence shown on the map below is also intended to direct resources where the biggest regional impacts would be realized relative to the performance indicators.





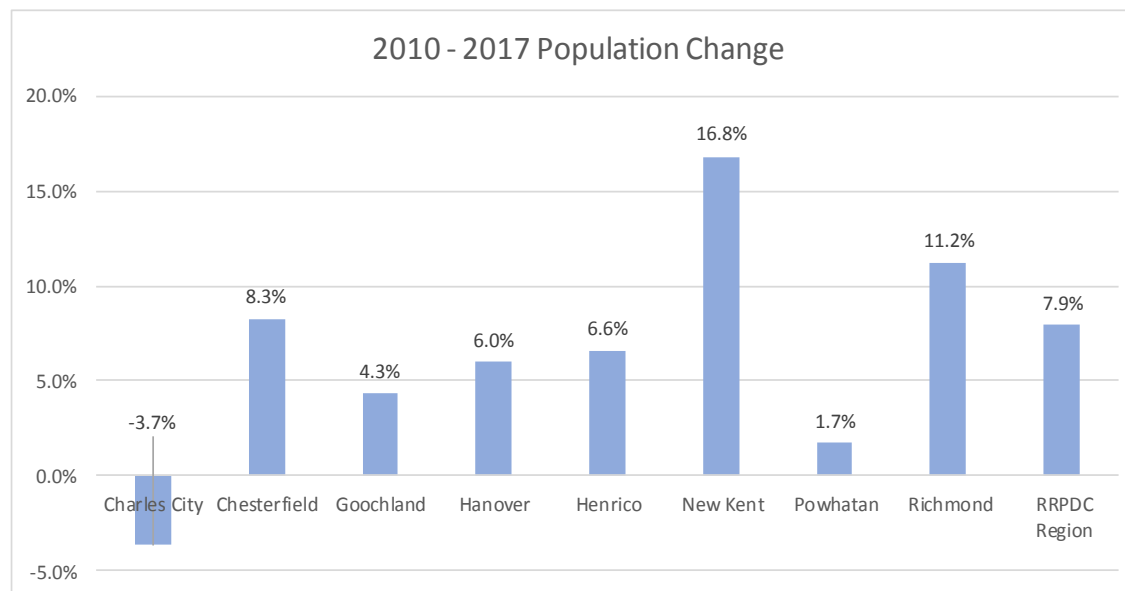


2016-2018 Economic Overview & Update on Key Findings

This annual update captures new data where possible to report on performance in moving key indicators; however, many of the measures are “lagging” indicators which will take several years to register progress. For example, the total jobs created in the region and the types of jobs over time may shift industry clusters and the location of these clusters which will impact how effective strategies in targeted areas such as the Richmond Marine Terminal (RMT) are or are not addressing unemployment, lower household incomes and specific job training needs to ready the workforce for the demand jobs. Therefore, this Annual Report summarizes a broad data review which is recognized to be the initial stage of gathering and reporting on data over a longer timeframe:

Population Growth

The 2017 regional population continues to increase at much the same annual rate experienced from 1980-2010, increasing to 1,084,424 or 7.9 % since the 2010 decennial census (ACS July 1 annual estimates, 2010-2017). Only Charles City County has slightly declined in population both in absolute and percentage terms. Chesterfield County has shown the greatest increase in absolute terms (26,257) with the City of Richmond a close second with a 22,917 population increase in the last seven (7) years. New Kent County has shown the strongest percentage rate of change. Provisional population projections of UVA’s Weldon Cooper Center show a healthy population growth for the region with 1.4 million projected for the 2045 (27.2%) population in the Region.

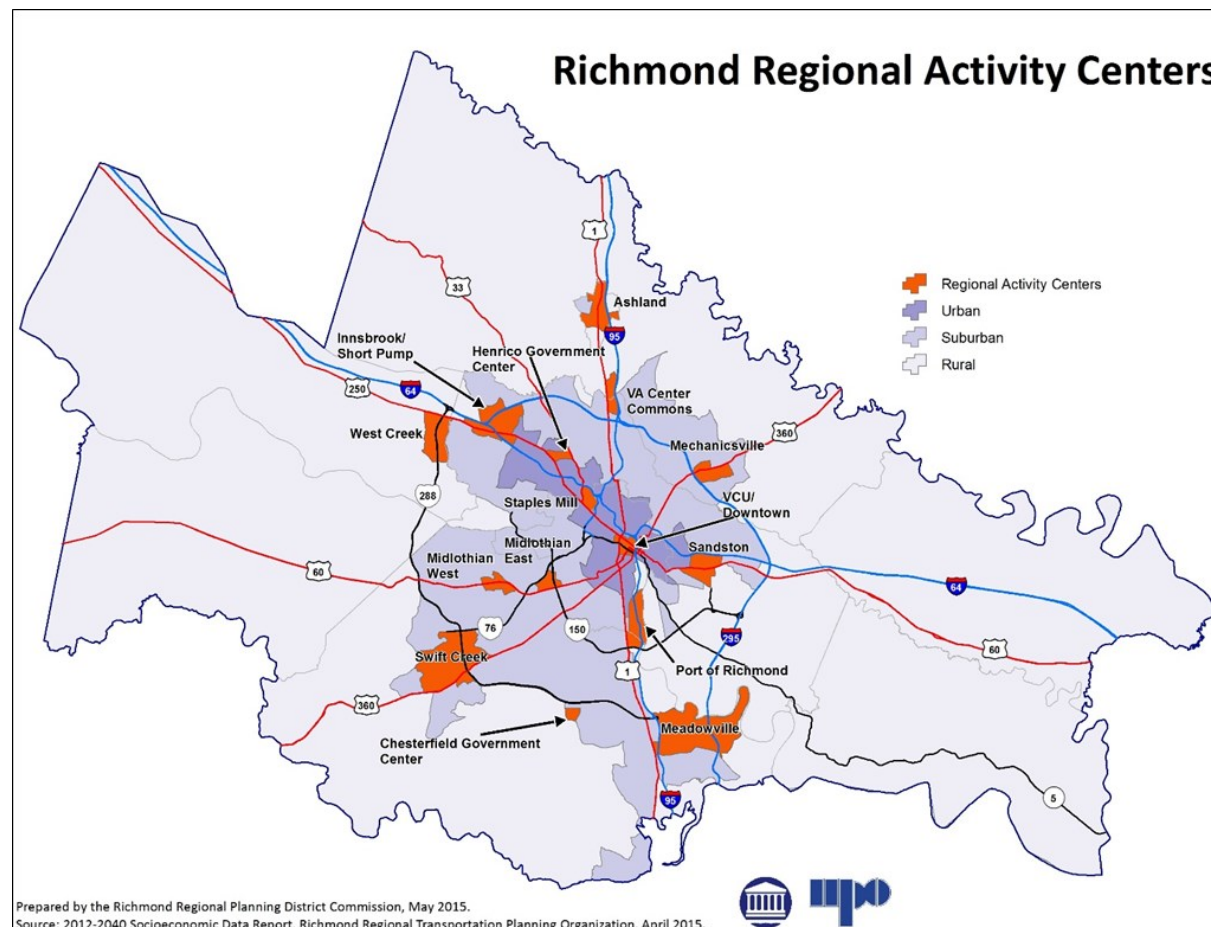


Source: U.S. Census Annual Population Estimates, July 1, 2010-2016



Population Distribution

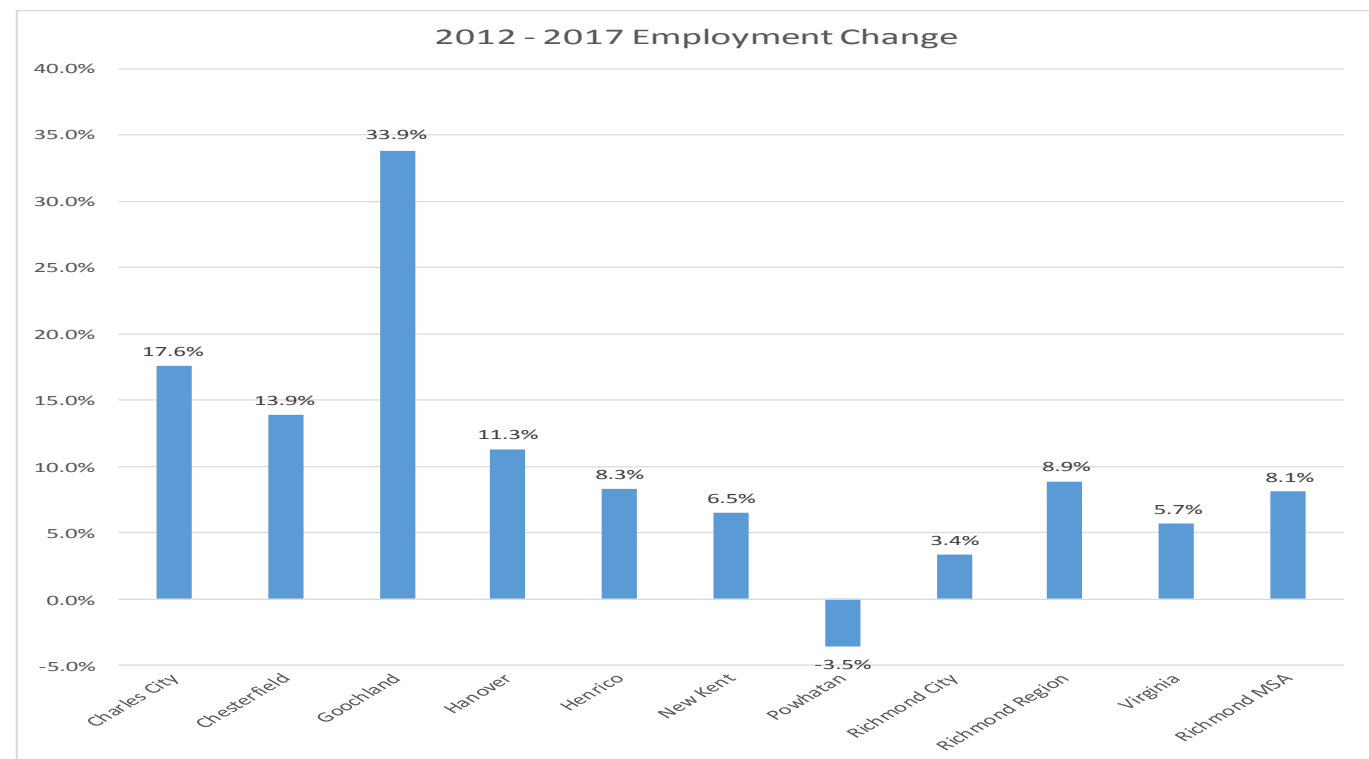
Population distribution across the region is the focus of a separate Socioeconomic Analysis prepared by the RRPDC every four years for the primary purpose of regional transportation planning. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2012-2040 update revealed underlying trends to forecast population for the region anticipating general patterns of growth, or concentrations of population and employment. The socioeconomic analysis is currently being updated for the 2045 Plan. Along with the refreshed target industry analysis by the Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP) and a general inventory of existing land use at a regional level, the socioeconomic analysis provides valuable guidance for strategic decision making on priority projects, feasibility of impact, and infrastructure investments. Likewise, a longer view of trends showing changes in specific demographics such as age and racial composition at a regional and sub-regional level will be used to fine-tune implementation objectives.





Employment Growth

Since 2012 (1stQtr) to 2017 (4th Qtr), the Richmond Region has added a total of 48,852 jobs, slightly less than during the 2011-2016 reporting period. These employment changes have not resulted in a noticeable shift in the industry clusters or relative strength; such shifts would only be expected over a longer timeframe. Most notably for the Region, the City of Richmond showed a modest gain from the previous period with an increase in 5,333 jobs, or 3.4%. In absolute terms, Henrico and Chesterfield continue to have the greatest increases in employment, and Goochland experienced the greatest percentage increases. Powhatan and Charles City counties experienced slower employment growth from 2012-2017 than in the previous period.



Source: JobsEQ® Data 2917Q4



Commuting Patterns

Regional commuting patterns depict updated census data from the most recent period (2009-2013). The general distribution of where employed residents of the region work has essentially remained the same over the past five years. Nearly one-fourth (22%) of all commutes are to work locations outside of the Richmond region. Henrico (27%), Richmond (24%) and Chesterfield (18%) continue to be the largest centers for employment, and these localities are almost equally balanced between those who live & work in the same locality vs. those who live & work in a different locality. Those commuting into the City for work represent 2.5-times the number who commute from the City to work elsewhere in the region.

City of Richmond Daily Commuting Flows

Note: Map shows workers, age 16+ traveling from their jurisdiction of residence to their jurisdiction of employment

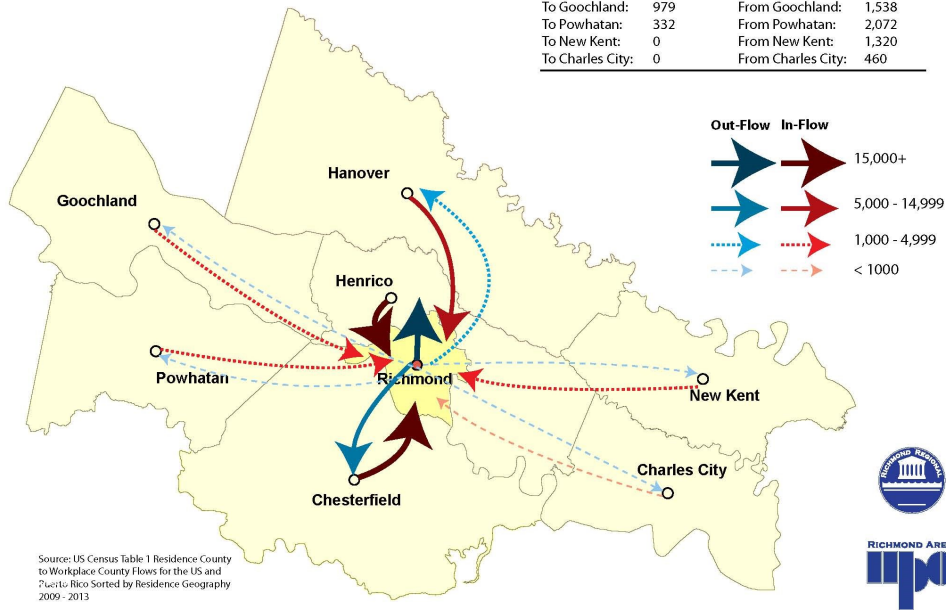
Internal Commuting
Richmond: 54,524

From Richmond

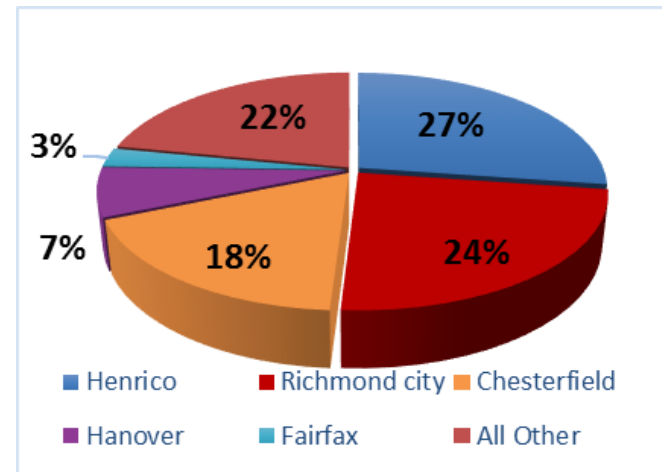
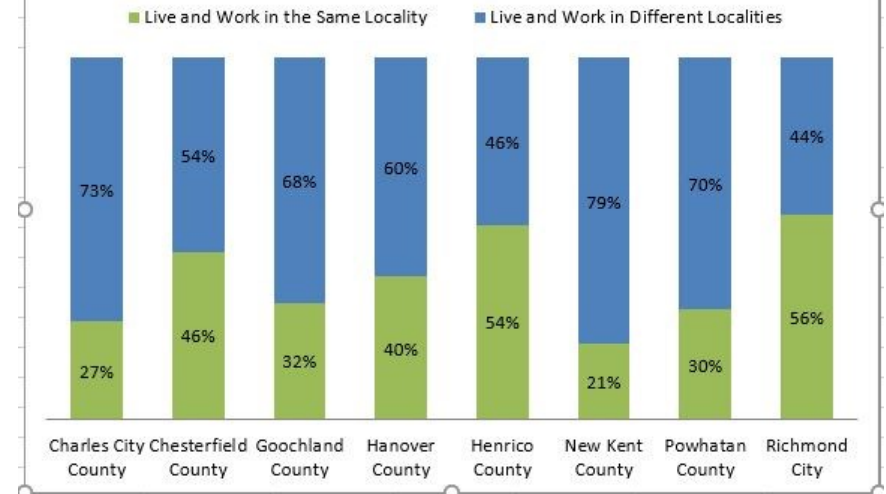
To Henrico: 21,954
To Chesterfield: 10,078
To Hanover: 3,028
To Goochland: 979
To Powhatan: 332
To New Kent: 0
To Charles City: 0

To Richmond

From Henrico: 40,415
From Chesterfield: 37,460
From Hanover: 9,216
From Goochland: 1,538
From Powhatan: 2,072
From New Kent: 1,320
From Charles City: 460



Richmond Region Commuting Flows





Industry Snapshot in RRPDC Region, 2017 Q4

Industry Clusters, Growth & Demand

Ranked according to the absolute number of total new employment expected within 2-digit NAICS code defined industries, Health Care, Retail, and Accommodations/Food Service industries are expected to be those with the highest demand for employment over the next year.

However, the location quotient (LQ)—which represents how each of these industry employment shares compare to national averages providing a measure of competitive advantage—shows that these top three are not currently the strongest relative to other metropolitan areas in the U.S.

The Richmond region is actually more dominant in the management of companies and enterprises (2.4 LQ), Finance & Insurance (1.65 LQ), Public Administration (1.15 LQ), and other related services (1.17 LQ).

NAICS	Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	Total New Demand
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	82,993	\$52,536	0.97	9,351
44	Retail Trade	60,246	\$29,384	0.94	8,249
72	Accommodation and Food Services	47,120	\$18,017	0.88	8,005
56	Adm Support/Waste Mgmt	44,570	\$36,731	1.15	5,667
61	Educational Services	51,756	\$44,656	1.05	5,193
23	Construction	38,077	\$54,485	1.14	4,227
54	Prof, Scientific & Tech	42,070	\$83,496	1.07	4,090
52	Finance and Insurance	39,268	\$96,511	1.65	4,079
81	Other Services (exc Pub Adm)	31,012	\$31,571	1.17	3,690
92	Public Administration	32,671	\$60,882	1.15	3,031
31	Manufacturing	26,749	\$63,520	0.54	2,552
48	Transportation and Warehousing	22,000	\$46,374	0.88	2,494
42	Wholesale Trade	22,846	\$69,071	0.98	2,488
55	Mgmt Companies	21,089	\$123,662	2.40	2,037
71	Arts, Enter. & Rec	12,930	\$21,132	1.09	1,939
53	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	9,582	\$56,339	0.94	1,028
51	Information	7,904	\$60,695	0.67	764
22	Utilities	2,278	\$87,383	0.72	208
11	Agri/ Forestry	1,635	\$26,339	0.19	186
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas	313	\$63,139	0.13	30
99	Unclassified	1,168	\$46,596	0.92	142
	Total - All Industries	598,275	\$52,692	1.00	70,377

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Data as of 2017Q4

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Sorted by Total New Demand in next one year period and relative location quotient

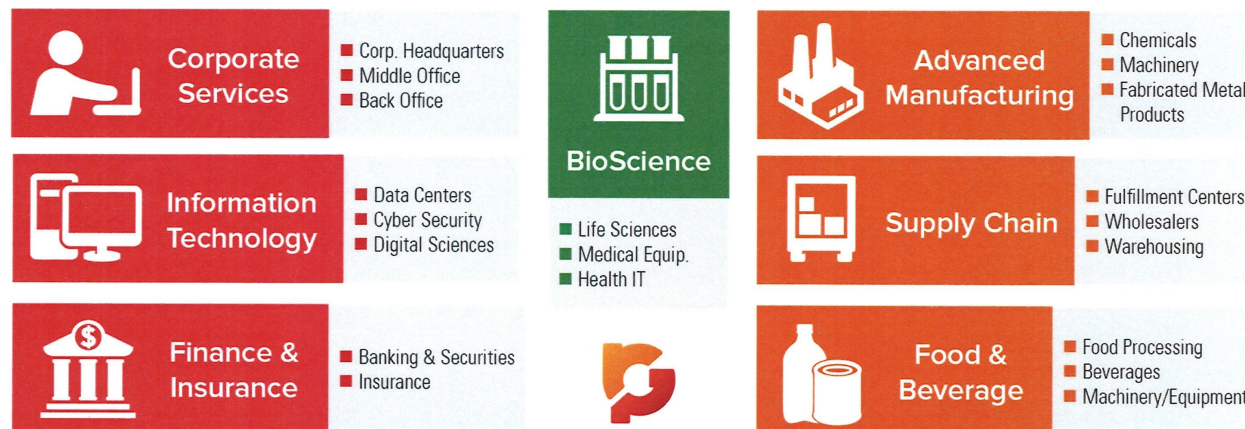


Greater Richmond Partnership, Inc. (GRP) Targeted Clusters

The 2011 *Target Cluster Analysis* prepared for GRP was a useful tool in the 2014 base year CEDS. This analysis provided the foundation for depicting which emerging clusters are best poised for growth based on data collected at the Richmond MSA level (see Exhibits 59 and 60, 2014 CEDS).

The analysis was updated in 2017 by GRP to reflect the current trends and opportunities. Many of the same larger industry clusters continue to be targeted although some of the clusters are more refined for the present business climate. For example, rather than targeting a major portion of the Health and Life Science sector, GRP is focused on the area of bioscience and specifically life sciences, certain areas of innovative care, and health information and management. In the Corporate Services cluster, the promotion of the Richmond region for headquarters, middle office, and back office (support functions of larger headquarters relocated to a lower-cost market) is a priority for their attraction efforts—Brink's, CarMax Genworth Financial, McKesson Medical-Surgical, Sun Trust Mortgage, and CoStar are a few recent examples. Approximately 53% of all employment in the region is engaged in the work of one of these target industry clusters according to JobsEQ, Chmura Analytics., 2017Q4 data.

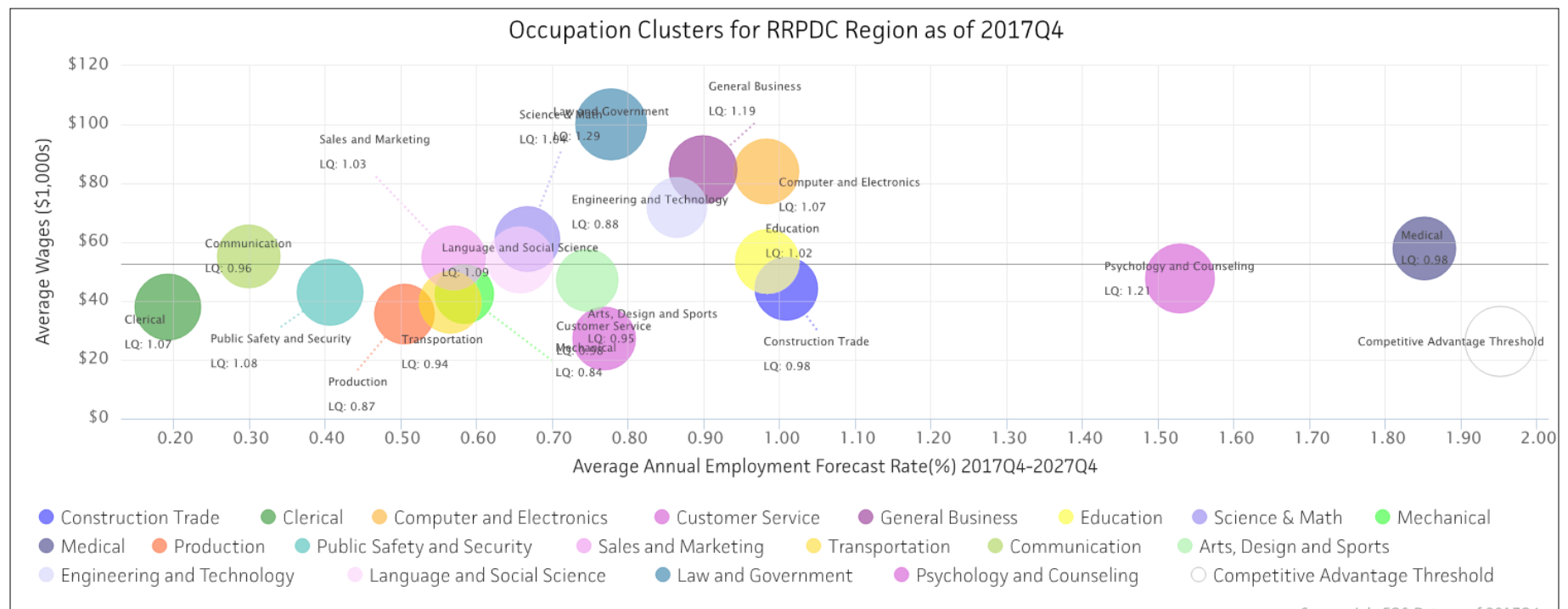
Targeted Clusters



Source: Greater Richmond Partnership, Inc. FY2018 Target Industry Clusters



Another way to look at market strengths in a region is to identify clusters of similar occupations within business and industry. The graphic below illustrates occupational clusters with regard to their relative strength now and predicted over the next 10 years. Average annual wages within the Richmond region are shown on the vertical axis. A Location Quotient (LQ) of greater than 1.0 indicates a strong cluster. The occupational clusters with the highest relative concentration are those in Law & Government (1.29 LQ), Psychology & Counseling (1.21 LQ), General Business (1.19 LQ), Public Safety & Security (1.08 LQ), and Computer & Electronics (1.07 LQ). These occupational skill clusters all contribute and correlate to the relatively high performance of industry sectors such as Management of Companies (2.40 LQ), Financial Services (1.65 LQ), Public Administration (1.15 LQ), and Administrative Support (1.15 LQ). The relative strength of the clusters has not changed appreciably since the 2014 base year RR-CEDS.



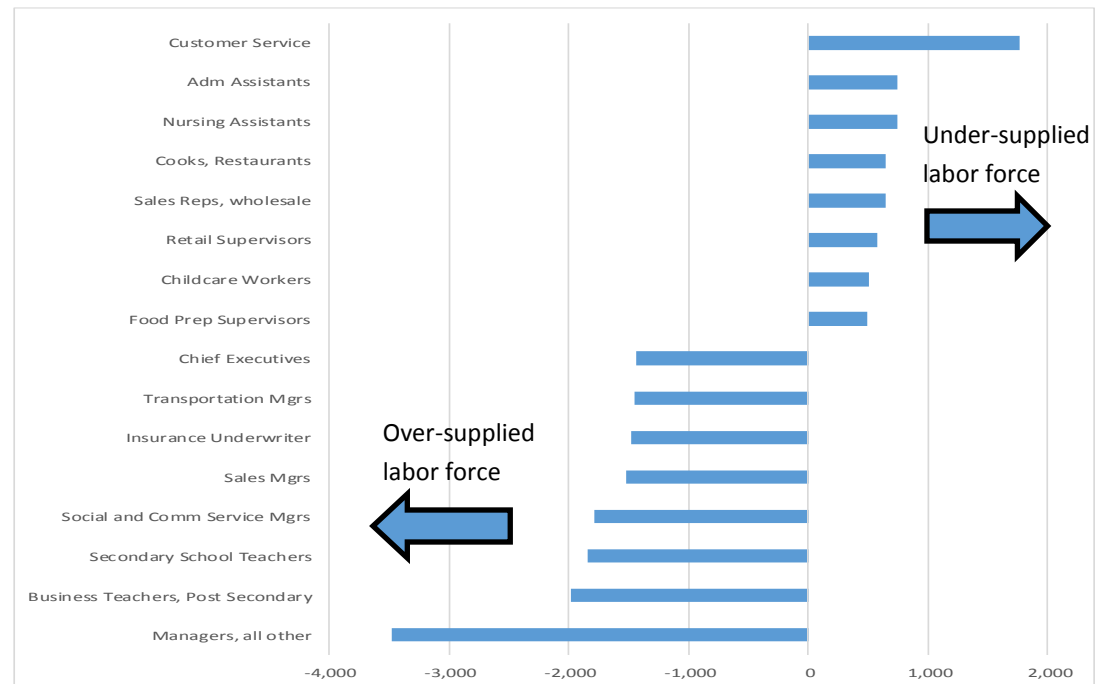
Skills Gap & Creating Career Paths

Identifying occupations that are in demand and matching them with the skills and/or training (certificates, education, apprenticeships) required to meet the demand are essential to strategizing about ways to address the higher relative unemployment challenges in the most distressed areas of the region. The time and expense of training or education can be significant barriers that keep those residents who are living in isolated poverty from achieving success. Identifying entry level positions that can lead to gainful employment and a career path to higher achievement, income and satisfaction has been a focus of this year's CEDS update. Several questions can be asked:

- What are the most in demand occupations which do not require a significant amount of time and resources to gain entry?
- Are the occupational demands of the region being addressed through our post high school career readiness programs, namely certificate, associate degrees and apprentice programs?

Those with customer service skills, entry level health care, sales, retail, and working with children are under-supplied in the labor force and less likely to require significant education and specialized training, offering a good entry point into the labor market.

Occupational* Demand/Award Difference for Richmond Region 2017Q4

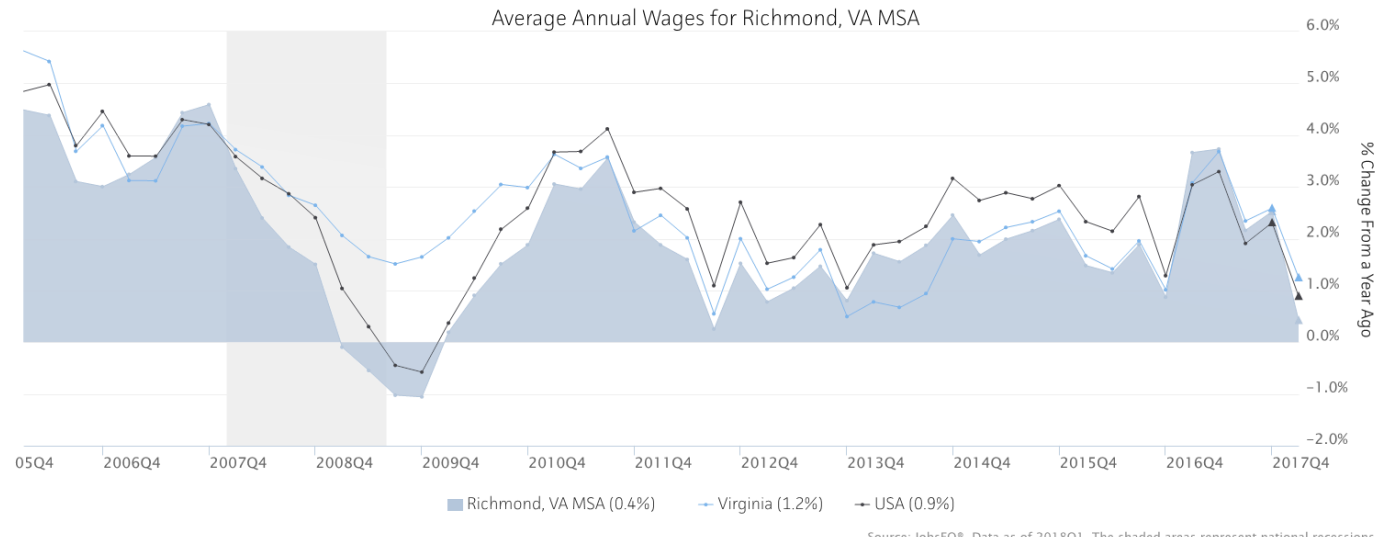


*Occupations that require training and/or education beyond high school
Source: Chmura JobsEQ, 2017Q4.



Wage Trends

Reflective of the types of industries that are growing in the Richmond MSA, wages continue to lag somewhat behind the Commonwealth and the U.S.; the gap has narrowed since 2014. The average annual wage in the Richmond is \$51,140 as of 2017Q1, but increased by 2.3% in the region during the last four quarters.



Jurisdiction	Unemployed	Jobs Openings	Jobs Openings per Unemployed
Charles City	185	31	0.17
Chesterfield	5,926	3,715	0.63
Goochland	326	175	0.54
Hanover	1,706	2,191	1.28
Henrico	6,039	6,008	0.99
New Kent	349	155	0.44
Powhatan	414	186	0.45
Richmond	4,653	21,804	4.69
RRPDC Region	19,598	34,265	1.75

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Labor Market Information, Dec 2017
Number of unemployed is not seasonally adjusted

Jobs vs. Unemployed

The number of openings posted through the Virginia Workforce Connection compared to those who are receiving unemployment as of December 2017 shows a significantly lower number of unemployed (about 12,000) compared the CEDS in 2014, but posted openings are also relatively lower (approximately 8,000) resulting in 1.75 openings (full and part time) that are available for every unemployed person. The location for the businesses with openings is somewhat misleading in that many of the central office addresses for the postings are in the City of Richmond.

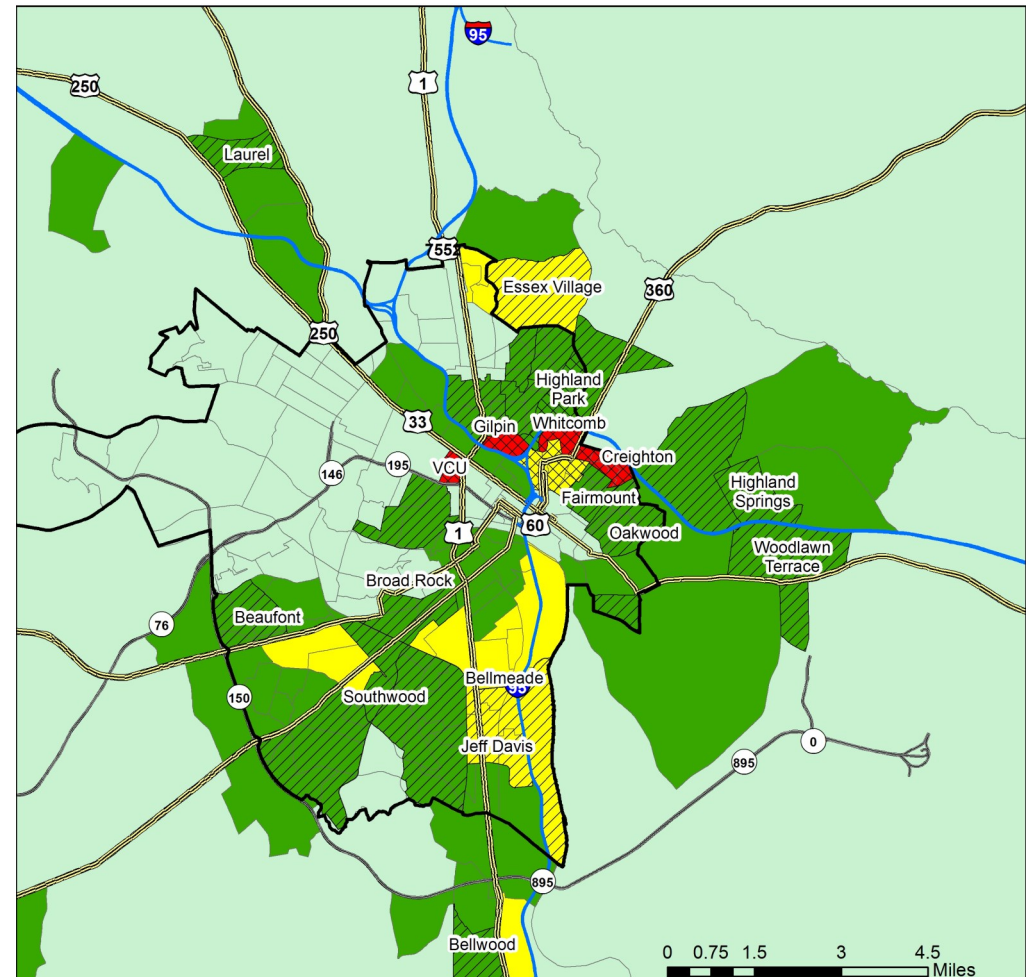


Distressed Neighborhoods, Unemployment & Labor Force Participation

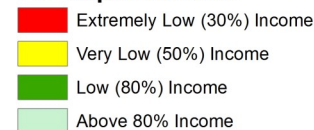
The region's most distressed neighborhoods are depicted in relation to the average per capita income (\$29,829) in the U.S. as the basis for this analysis. Those with incomes at 80% or less of the U.S. per capita are defined by the EDA as being low income, very low income at 50%, and extremely low income at 30% as depicted on the opposite map. The same general pattern of lower income areas in 2012 from the base year CEDS ranges holds true using the 2012-2016 5-year ACS estimates; however an expansion beyond the City limits into the eastern portion of the region is notable.

Overlaying labor force participation data helps provide further understanding of the challenges faced by residents of the lower income areas. The average rate of participation in the labor force of population older than age 16 in the Richmond region is approximately 65%. Population living in the areas with the greatest levels of distress do experience relatively higher unemployment rates and a considerably lower level of participation in the labor force as shown by the two cross-hatch patterns depicting 50-65% or below average participation rates and less than 50% participation in the civilian labor force. Much of this can be attributed to lower than average educational and skill level attainment.

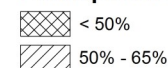
Labor Force Participation in RRPDC's Most Distressed Neighborhoods



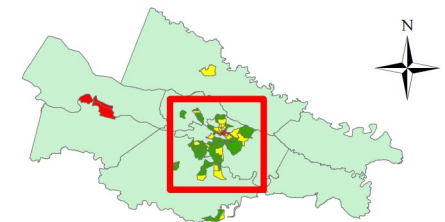
Per Capita Income



Labor Force Participation Rate



Data Source: 2012-2016 5-year ACS Estimates.
Table B23025 Employment Status by census tracts.





CEDS Strategy Regional Partners

Much of the active work toward action and implementation of the RR-CEDS is guided by the ongoing efforts of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and key partners of the CEDS in the areas of education, workforce, higher education, non-profits, and business and industry. Central to the RR-CEDS are strategic plans of the local economic development offices. Regional collaborative work efforts are principally accomplished through the RRPDC, the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO), the Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP), and jointly between public and private sectors through the Capital Region Collaborative. Updated highlights are summarized below:

Commonwealth of Virginia-BluePrint Virginia 2025

Key recommendations from this annual update by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and partners to guide the Commonwealth toward a more vibrant, prosperous state through a “plan of action [that] strengthens and secures its position as a leader in the global economy and is the best state in the nation for business” include:

Workforce and Education-The business community is especially interested in the availability of a well-trained, qualified workforce because it affects their bottom line; businesses also need appropriate housing in the communities where they operate to attract and retain talent. The *BluePrint* calls for continued investments in the **2016 New Virginia Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program** which currently provides funding for eligible noncredit workforce training that lead to a certification in a high-demand field. In 2017, 20 different credential programs are identified for enrollees at John Tyler and Reynolds Community Colleges including those in the fields of business/customer service, health care, education, logistics/transportation, and welding/manufacturing.

Business Climate-Agribusiness and tourism are both called out separately as industries targeted for focused attention in the *BluePrint*. Particularly relevant to the rural area of the region, acreage committed to farms and sales of product both increased dramatically from 2002 to 2012. 75% of the farms produced grain and soybeans, raised beef cattle, or produced a mix of crops or animals. Agritourism is a growing part of the Virginia economy that leverages natural resources as well.

Regional Connectivity. Essential to the Commonwealth through the *BluePrint* is the acknowledgement that all regions need State support and active stewardship with **connectivity through broadband and public utilities**. The eastern portion of the Richmond region is served by individual wells and septic systems where groundwater for permitting and renewed well permits is severely limited environmentally. **Energy**-The *BluePrint* supports infrastructure development to increase access to affordable, reliable natural gas for manufacturing, power generation and home heating.





Commonwealth of Virginia-BluePrint Virginia 2025 (continued)

Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship-The *BluePrint* calls for increased investment in expanding broadband coverage to unserved areas through additional public-private partnerships that explore new technologies and strategies. It also recognized the need for greater exposure for K-12 career planning in information technology important across all industries.

Manufacturing-The *BluePrint* references the need to support development of manufacturing supply chains through targeted investments in industry clusters. It calls for supporting efforts to build a strategic portfolio of project-ready sites by connecting them to important infrastructure such as broadband, energy, water, rail and highways, encouraging ways for multiple localities and regions to pool resources to meet match requirements for available grant programs.

Virginia Initiative for Growth & Opportunity (GO Virginia)

A joint initiative by the business community and the Commonwealth, GO Virginia received \$28 million in the last two-year budget of the Commonwealth to establish a grant funding program with new allocations in FY19 focused on regional collaboration to undertake projects in areas such as workforce development, business incubators and accelerators, joint site development and scale-up programs for small and large businesses. The legislation specifies that early efforts should be placed on addressing skills gaps identified in the workforce. Funds awarded through GO Virginia are intended to leverage private and other public dollar investments and could be an excellent complement to EDA Public Works eligible projects.

The *Economic Growth and Diversification Plan for Region 4* (Richmond and Crater region to the south combined) prepared through the GO Virginia program and approved in August 2017 provides guidance for the larger region (Richmond MSA). The *Plan* provides an overview of the major industry clusters relative to employment, wages and opportunities and the identified skill gaps between available and forecasted jobs and the current supply in the workforce.

- Overall **labor force participation** in Region 4 is high, and employment growth is supported by a diverse mix of industries. However, a portion of the region has a larger share of the population with only a high-school degree, and high rates of poverty in both urban and rural areas. The growth in sole proprietors and share of new jobs created by young firms—drivers of innovation and productivity growth—have been increasing in the region in the past five years, although still lagging state and national averages.
- **Significant intra-regional differences in population changes exist.** City of Richmond and immediately surrounding jurisdictions has increased, but **population decline** in each of the five localities with the smallest populations, including Charles City County, and the decline is projected to continue through at least 2030. Labor force participation is lower than the regional average in these same portions of the Region 4, reflected by lower relative per capita income.





Virginia Initiative for Growth & Opportunity (GO Virginia) Region 4 continued

- The overall regional economy has rebounded relatively well from the recession, but **wages have been slow to recover** (especially in the Crater district), growing below average rates in the state and nation.
- The creative services, financial services, defense and security, and bioscience/ life sciences clusters pay above-average wages and performed well locally compared to growth in those industries nationally over the last 10 years. The logistics, warehousing and distribution cluster and arts and entertainment cluster grew competitively within the region over this period, but have below-average wages. **Clusters with the largest contributions to GDP in Region 4 include professional services, energy, financial services, manufacturing, and defense and security.**
- Eight of the identified clusters are forecasted to grow at least as quickly as the regional average, led by **bioscience/life sciences, creative services, and information technology and communications**. Manufacturing categories- advanced materials, glass and ceramics, chemicals, and food and beverage- are significant historical drivers but are forecasted to grow below the regional average annual rate (0.7%) or decline.
- Online job postings data suggest current needs for **occupations requiring less than a college degree**: retail salespersons; first-line supervisors of retail sales workers; and sales representatives. Jobs with many online postings and requiring higher levels of training include registered nurses; computer user specialists; and software developers.
- Over the next ten years, the most rapid growth forecasts are for occupations that require a postgraduate degree, or a two-year degree or certificate. This is consistent with previous studies that have shown a need for advanced new economy skills and identified a **large “middle skills” gap** in jobs that require more than high school and less than a four-year degree.
- The report details **32 occupations that typically require an associate’s degree or less** that have a potential annual training gap and 35 occupations that require a bachelor’s degree that have an annual shortfall. Approximately 2/3 of these occupations are substantially related to strong regional clusters. These estimated gaps could potentially inhibit growth within clusters in Region 4.
- Region 4 stakeholders in surveys and focus groups identify **workforce development** and talent attraction/retention as the key driver of growth in higher paying jobs. This perspective is evident across the entire geographic region and transcends the intraregional differences that are evident on other issues.





Virginia Initiative for Growth & Opportunity (GO Virginia) Region 4 continued

- There is an impressive range of creative effort and investment underway to address workforce development issues throughout the region and in the Commonwealth. Stakeholders believe that the most successful efforts will involve **partnerships in which business involvement** is proactive and sustained. They also believe that substantial cultural and institutional changes are necessary for a long-term solution to the middle skills gap.
- Stakeholders identify **information technology as the “cluster of clusters.”** Not only is information technology an important cluster, but it is driving higher paying jobs in other clusters and is the essential foundation for the region’s entrepreneurial creativity and innovation ecosystem.
- **Logistics** is an important industry cluster due to the region’s natural locational advantages. Potential collaborations on port issues with Hampton Roads on developing an inland port around the Richmond Marine Terminal are perceived to be genuine opportunities. If the cluster is to support higher paying jobs, however, it will be important to link logistics to other clusters such as manufacturing and/or to enhance the research based applications of advanced logistics to contemporary business processes.
- **Advanced manufacturing** is critically important to drive higher paying jobs by stakeholders involved in the industry and by leaders throughout in the rural parts of Region 4. The state and the region have already made significant investments in revitalizing advanced manufacturing. Addressing workforce development concerns and infrastructure issues that inhibit site development are necessary prerequisites.
- The Richmond area has established the basics of a successful **“innovation ecosystem”** with increased access to capital, effective linkages with VCU researchers, and the creation of a vibrant entrepreneurial network. Stakeholders suggest that linking traditional strengths such as financial services and medical research with new economy companies and developing more effective ways of branding Richmond as an innovation center will enable the region to capitalize on its emerging potential.
- The Plan recommends that the Council consider how **workforce development resources and investments can be leveraged** to ensure that initiatives address important skill gaps and demonstrate how business can be a more effective partner in achieving measurable outcomes. It also recommends long-term changes that enable young people to make informed choices about careers and the pathways to achieving their goals.
- The Plan recommends that the Council consider more effective ways to attract and retain graduates from the **I-64 educational corridor** extending from Staunton to Virginia Beach and that includes more than half of the public university college students, the state’s major historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), significant private universities, and most medical students.
- **Advanced manufacturing** initiatives can make significant progress in addressing the challenges of workforce preparation and infrastructure for site development. And average wages in the region’s logistics cluster could be enhanced by linking initiatives to clusters such as manufacturing that pay higher wages.



- The Plan recommends that the Council consider supporting an initiative for increasing the supply of modernized shell buildings. The Council should also consider how the **Collaborative Jobs Act** can provide an incentive for multiple localities to participate in joint site development.

Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)

VEDP completed its FY19-FY23 Strategic Plan for Economic Development centered on five transformational goals that are particularly instructive for this FY18 CEDS update:

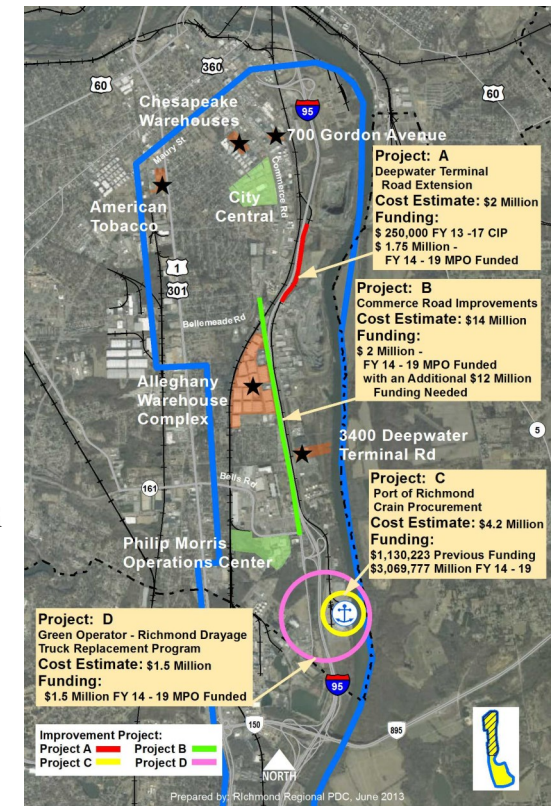
1. **Robust state growth:** Over the next several years, VEDP will work with its partners to achieve a growth rate (measured by employment and median earned income of workers) among that of the top 5-10 states in the U.S. **Every region wins:** Ensure that every region participates in the growth of the Commonwealth (i.e. all with positive growth in employment and median earned income of workers)
2. **Best state for business:** Restore Virginia to its previous leadership position near the top of the national business climate rankings (i.e. average position among the top 3-5 states) [The Commonwealth of Virginia is currently t#5 on the Forbes Best States for Business listing which measures: business costs, labor supply, regulatory environment, economic climate, growth prospects, and quality of life.]
3. **Top state economic development organizations:** Reestablish VEDP as one of America's premier state economic development organizations in order to accomplish the top three goals.
4. **Super collaborator:** Exhibit collaboration and coordination as hallmarks of VEDP, i.e. place a central focus on the "P" in VEDP.

VEDP Program Initiatives: The *Virginia Business Ready Sites Program* was established in 2015 by VEDP to increase the competitiveness of the localities, and thereby Virginia, by adopting minimum criteria for ready-sites and assisting in the development of those sites across the Commonwealth. Through this program a site classification system which rates sites from Tier 1 (willing seller/without property control) through Tier 5 (all permits secured/site ready for land disturbance permit) has been devised to indicate the readiness of each site to be developed. A second round of funding in July 2017 awarded another \$1.2 million in grant funding to identify and improve marketable properties of greater than 100 contiguous acres for development. In the Richmond Region, only two candidate sites, *White Oak Technology Park* in Henrico County (718 AC) and the *Holland Axelle site* (275 AC) in Hanover County are classified as a Tier 4 which means the sites are zoned for commercial and industrial use, infrastructure is in place or will be deliverable within one year, and all permit issues have been identified or quantified. The Commonwealth and the Richmond region have a very limited number of large (~100 AC) sites which are classified as development-ready.

Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO)

Commerce Corridor-Transportation Connectivity, Accessibility and Economic Opportunity study is a collaborative planning effort of state, regional and local interests led by the RRTPO with financial and consultant support provided by the Virginia Secretary of Transportation's Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI). The Commerce Corridor study area is centered on the Richmond Marine Terminal (RMT) and the I-95 corridor from the James River crossing in the City of Richmond to Route 10 in Chesterfield County. The study represents a comprehensive analysis of existing and future transportation needs and prioritization of infrastructure investment required to drive commerce in the study area. Given the Port of Virginia's 40-year lease with the City of Richmond to manage and operate the RMT, significant economic development and job creation is possible both inside and outside the port gates. More than 60+ potential short, medium and long term project solutions have been identified including a project summary, features, funding information and project development details which would be required to realize true economic re/development investments in the area. The Implementation Draft was released June 2017 providing a strong foundational element for bundling future projects with a variety of funding sources.

In the past year, \$12.5 million in private dollars have been invested in acquisition of two former brownfield sites, and plans are underway to redevelop the sites into 2.2 million square feet of logistics oriented space. It is estimated that up to 3,000 jobs can be created at these spec facilities built on the assurance of a cost-effective way to transport raw materials and finished product by barge through the Virginia Marine Terminal (VMT) located within 1-2 miles of both sites and offering 3-day a week service to the Port of Virginia in Hampton Roads 100 river miles to the east. Both of the sites (Alleghany Warehouse and Philip Morris Operations Center) were identified as key sites in the 2014 Richmond region's CEDS within the Port Opportunity Zone.





Capital Region Collaborative (CRC)

The CRC continues to serve as one of the primary vehicles for a developing strategy and responding through collective action among the business community, the region's localities and the non-profits/foundations, and has made good progress this past year to drive action:

- **CRC Action Groups** focus directed effort through the CRC Organizing Council so that more deliberate action plans, tasks and steps can be taken or directed by a small core group, and progress can be measured in improving the quality of life and economic prosperity of the Region. The Workforce Action Group made up of educational partners such as Bridging Richmond, Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), the Capital Region Workforce Partnership, the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, and business and industry participants is focused on reaching and building strategies to engage Opportunity Youth those 18-24 who are unemployed or not enrolled in school or training programs. (more than 17,000 youth in the region).
- **Community Conversations and Events** with partner organizations leading to an informed public and better social connections, including co-sponsor with the Valentine Museum Controversial History series on topics such as Voting Rights & Redistricting (social stability), Monuments & Tourism (Quality Place), Immigration (Job Creation), the Interstate highway System (coordinated transportation), and the Festival of the River with a number of cultural and environmental stewards of the James River.
- **RVA Community Indicators/2018 RVA Snapshot & Valentine History Makers** Awards were presented in a large public forum with 200+ in attendance on March 13, 2018 which provides an annual update of community indicators that measure progress on economic and social goals related to the regions' priorities. This third year compares how the Richmond Region matches up to six other peer regions within each of the eight (8) priority areas organized into two major influences: economic prosperity and quality of life. The indicator measurement are intended to assist "community leaders, elected officials, and funders to make informed, strategic decisions to drive change." Additional foundation funding was awarded to develop and launch an interactive website www.capitalregioncollaborative.com to track the indicators.





Capital Region Workforce Partnership and its three regional workforce centers are part of the Virginia Career Works system, a statewide network that makes employment and training services available to job seekers and employers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Services are targeted for those living in the Richmond region. The centers are located in downtown Richmond, eastern Henrico and northern Chesterfield, and include partners such as the Virginia Employment Commission, Adult Education, the Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Senior Connections and others to leverage resources and make workforce service delivery more efficient and seamless for both employers and those seeking training and work. In the most recent program year, over 40,000 job seekers visited its centers for career services, and nearly 2,000 people were enrolled in intensive training services. Over 200 business locations have been served.

City of Richmond Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) was established in 2015 to strategically address and ameliorate the high degree of poverty in the City of Richmond. The Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI) is a strong and active arm of the OCWB and received a \$1.9 million grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services available to cities with high poverty rates. Several in-demand job training programs such as those in health care and logistics or supply chain management industries are the focus of the CWI with the fund enhancement. Recognizing the many barriers those in poverty face to work toward self-sufficiency beyond employment, CWA launched a program called BLISS (Building Lives of Independence and Self-Sufficiency). BLISS provides wrap-around holistic support services to targeted participants from one of the city's public housing communities who are heads of households.

Established by the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park (VBRP), **Activation Capital** is a “non-profit organization with the sole purpose of bringing great passions to life and fostering a vibrant creative culture in RVA.” Activation Capital is an active network of entrepreneurs, product developers, researchers, financiers, university, non-profits and corporate leaders who bring together the resources needed for start-ups, or idea launchers, product patents or scientific research. Activation Capital has tracked metrics of progress in the innovation ecosystem over the past two years offering suggestions as to gaps in resources, mentoring opportunities or capital investment that will best keep the technical and innovative employment sector vibrant and growing.

On the plus side: Investments by **NRV** (formerly New Richmond Ventures) and through **VCU accelerator** program have increased in supported companies or organizations, academic research expenditures up by \$9.9 million, and higher educational attainment increased overall in the Region. Challenges which remain or have become more acute include: funds raised by VBRP, Richmond-based companies or Lighthouse Labs Accelerator declined despite gains in other areas, knowledge assets or patents issued slightly declined and the number of career readiness certificates declined despite an increased level of completion in other areas such as high school graduation and 2-year and 4-year degrees. NRV is addressing the investment challenge with an investment fund geared to middle-stage entrepreneurial efforts. This metric measurement and the activities associated with the Activation Capital are an important indicator of the health of the innovation ecosystem of the Richmond Region combined with job growth and specifically targeted job training programs for the unemployed, under-employed or opportunity youth. Business incubators such as Lighthouse Labs and The Annex provide office space, mentorships and funding to new start-ups, UnBound RVA focuses on budding entrepreneurs from low-income communities for one-year internships.





Bridging Richmond

Bridging Richmond (BR) is a cradle to career partnership anchored by Virginia Commonwealth University and supported by many community partners, including the CRC. The collective goal of the partners is to ensure every person in the Richmond region has a chance to thrive in school, work and life. Regional institutions from the education, business, nonprofit, government and philanthropic sectors work together to measure what matters, identifying best practices, putting into action what works, and investing in positive educational outcomes. A decade of involvement, coinciding with the formation of the CRC, has built a strong foundation through a number of Collaborative Action Networks (CAN) around the following key issues which affect an individual's ability to learn:

Attendance and Literacy-Local data indicates 10% of students miss at least 18 days of school each year, making them chronically absent and interrupting their ability to learn academic and social skills. Through a shared services model convened by United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg and Smart Beginnings (school readiness convener) programs to increase the number of pre-school seats, make kindergarten registration imperative, and institute a Campaign for Grade-level Reading increasing 3rd grade reading proficiency are designed to get children off to a good start, love learning, and make education a priority with families.

Career Readiness-Working with the CRC Action Team a number of new initiatives including Mission Tomorrow for all 8th graders in the region's schools to be exposed to a wide variety of careers have been launched and are entering multi-year commitments.

Innovative k12 Education-BR provides data services and professional development in support of important programs such as:

- **Next UP** is a coordinated middle school out-of-school program at two middle schools in Richmond that works closely with Higher Achievement
- **Code RVA** is a Chesterfield-led consortium of 10 school districts which opened a magnet high school in Fall 2016 specializing in computer science

Talent Hub-BR serves as the backbone organization for one of 17 Talent Hubs in the nation using a 3-year grant from Lumina Foundation in partnership with Kresge Foundation working on a number of initiatives, including:

- **Graduate RVA** with the community colleges on a "Reverse Transfer" program working closely with VCU to identify and provide student support for those enrolled at VCU who already have enough college credits to meet associate degree requirements from John Tyler Community College. In this first year effort 164 earned associate degrees in December 2017 and 194 in the Spring of 2018, providing these students with a recognized credential to put to work while completing their 4-year degree.
- **Developmental Math module** for high school students in their junior and senior years which makes them more ready for college rather than remedial classes in the first year of community college.





Local Government Partners

The **Town of Ashland** works closely with the Hanover County Office of Economic Development to build relationships, provide incentives, and market available product for commercial and industrial development within the Town. The Town is served by a 7-member Economic Development Authority which administers a loan, grant and bond program to support economic growth and vitality. Much of the Town's commitment is focused on the downtown Ashland Main Street area, but has also included positioning of several larger properties with greater access to I-95 and Route 1. The 286-acre Holland/Axelle parcel just north of the Route 54/Route 1 intersection is one such property now zoned for industrial use and added to the Route 1-I/95/295 focal area. This site has been accepted into the VEDP *Virginia Business Ready Sites Program* with a Tier 4 readiness status.

Charles City County remains a largely rural community based on a modest rural economy which is not growing. Charles City County's economic development challenge in the near-term is to determine how best to position the County to derive benefit from several large, natural gas energy plants in the Route 106 corridor on the western side of the County. Construction employment will be significant and both projects will have a tremendously positive impact on the local tax base. The County's *2015 Economic Development Strategy* provides a solid understanding of the local economy in the context of the region recognizing very specific strengths/asset, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Building on the opportunities, the County should focus on:

- Diversifying tourism opportunities and assets
- Leveraging the Virginia Capital Trail (VCT), and 52-mile multi-use trail traversing 27 miles of the County along Route 5
- Developing more retail in targeted areas
- Expanding small manufacturing
- Building a residential base in selected locations

The strategy identifies Route 106 as the key industrial corridor and the Charles City Courthouse as the commercial/residential hub. The County staff is working with the Planning Commission to develop a *Route 106 Corridor Master Plan* for adoption this Fall as the first component of a County Comprehensive Plan.



Chesterfield County. Much activity in the Port Activity Area (south) has come about since the 2014 RR-CEDS which identified the 500+ acre James River Industrial Center (JRIC) as one of the largest developable properties in the Commonwealth. A proposal by Tranlin Inc. (now Vastly) a Chinese manufacturer of specialty paper products to develop the entirety of the JRIC has stalled since last year's report, but two warehouse-distribution projects of nearly 1.0 million square feet have taken its place creating a logistics hub off the Willis Road interchange south of the VMT. These will be a complement to the large distribution projects currently under construction in the Commerce Corridor area opposite the VMT in the City of Richmond.

Goochland County is challenged by growth opportunities which will require substantial infrastructure upgrades especially within the West Creek Business Park Focal Area (p. 73 of RR-CEDS) and Route 288/Route 250 from the Henrico County line into Centerville. The area north of Route 250 was one focus of the *2035 County Comprehensive Plan* update depicting a vision for an interconnecting highway network to serve the approximately 485 acres of prime economic development property. Destination retail and supporting commercial development in this area is driving much of the demand for infrastructure. This area is part of the Tuckahoe Creek Service District (TCSD) with more than adequate capacity to serve the acreage contained within the district—8,500 total acres of which 3,500 acres are in West Creek. The 2015 County Utility Master Plan calls for evaluation of the timing, funding and priority for extending both trunk and distribution systems within high growth development areas to connect to developer-funded local systems and laterals. The County just recently completed a Capital Impact Model which is being used to assign 20-year costs to development proposals, providing a reasonably acceptable method to attribute development proffers to residential and commercial development.

Corresponding development pressures for residential development in areas extending south and west of West Creek place competing demands for infrastructure and public services. The need for more affordable housing alternatives for the growing workforce is becoming evident; the median house value in Goochland is \$318,400 or more than 40% higher than the rest of the Richmond Region and rental units represent only 13%—compared to 34% regionally—of the total housing stock.



Hanover County has a *2015-2020 Economic Development Strategic Plan* and recently worked with the Planning Department to update the *2017-2037 County Comprehensive Plan* including revisions to the economic development strategy. Identified as a key regional focal area in the RR-CEDS (pp. 64-65), the Route 1/I-95/295 corridor is considered a promising economic spine with mixed opportunities for infill and growth especially from the Virginia Center Commons area in Henrico through Hanover County and the Town of Ashland. Utility availability including water, sewer, road access, and broadband expansion are considered the greatest needs to adequately serve these infill sites. The County does not retain control of any major properties, but works closely with developers of tracts well suited for industrial development in Northlake Business Park and surroundings. Another big need identified by the County are parcels/buildings that are capable of housing expanding businesses who want to remain in Hanover County. The County Air Park is a good example of “incubator” space for light industrial/office-service uses but without additional space for the second stage of growth for many of the tenants. Diversity in living (19% of occupied housing in Hanover is rental vs. 34% in the region), types of jobs (retail trade predominates), and a greater variety of quality employment opportunities which pay higher wages are primary goals for Hanover County. Hanover participates actively with Greater Richmond Partnership to attract and retain/expand business, and provide opportunities for workforce skills training.

Henrico County continues to be the employment center for the Richmond Region, and the demographics essentially mirror that of the region with similar population growth, rates of poverty, and median housing values. The County has available the largest developable--1,316 net acres master planned with 12 contiguous parcels ranging from 12 to 224 acres--in the Region at the White Oak Technology Park. White Oak is classified at a Tier 4 level, meaning Phase 1 environmental assessments and costs of development have been completed to provide a guaranteed developed cost per acre price. White Oak is primarily slated for advanced manufacturing, technology and data centers. Additional parcels within the Laburnum corridor in the vicinity White Oak with easy access to the Richmond International Airport offer infill and pad-ready industrial development potential much of which is not yet developed and actively marketed.

To the west, Innsbrook Corporate Center is being re-envisioned for more corporate office build-out, retail and mixed-use, making use of the Urban-Mixed Use (UMU) flexible zoning tool. The Innsbrook NEXT Master Plan sets the framework for new infill development with an urban street grid, adding structured parking and open space to foster a 24-hour lifestyle. With a Class A office vacancy rate down to 3-4% and developable land prices in the Route 250 corridor approaching \$1.0 million an acre, infill and redevelopment of mixed-use product within the 1300 acre Innsbrook Corporate Center is becoming a practical reality.





New Kent County has experienced a 2.4% average annual population growth rate from 2005 to 2015, second only to Loudoun County in northern Virginia. In contrast, total employment in the County declined by 2.2% over the last year. Compared to the other jurisdictions in the Richmond Region, employment growth and contraction since the 2008-09 recession has been sharper. Like Charles City County, much of the challenge for non-residential economic growth is related to utilities and highway access. Interstate 64 bisects the County offering four major centers of economic opportunity at each interchange. The largest opportunity site of 1600 contiguous acres, New Kent Center, is located immediate south of I-64 at Route 106. The site has been in the final running for several large distribution centers, but significant investment to extend utilities and road into the site are required. Taking the next step to finalize engineering and full development costs would provide an invaluable large, development-ready site to the Richmond Region. Fulfillment of workforce needs from within the residential population is also challenged by the need for public school facilities, especially at the elementary level, to keep pace with the relatively rapid rate of population growth. Cooperative programs such as *Bridging Communities Regional Career & Technical Center* (BCRTC) with adjacent localities, including Charles City County, in high school, provide innovative workforce training in the trades including diesel technology, HVAC, nursing, pre-engineering, culinary arts, criminal justice, and web and game design. Also located in New Kent County, Rappahannock Community College offers dual enrollment in EMS, web and game design, general engineering technology, and HVAC. Construction and Extraction occupations currently have the largest location quotient, and health care the greatest future demand for workforce.

Powhatan County has many of the same characteristics as the other smaller jurisdictions in the Richmond Region, serving primarily as a single-family residential community with smaller industrial/commercial employment base. Wages and cost of living in Powhatan is lower than the regional averages, and the labor force participation rate is lower. Median house value is higher, and housing type choices are primarily owner-occupied with only 13% in rental occupied housing. Employment over the last year has increased significantly by 3.1% compared to only 0.5% for the region, and the unemployment rate is lower at 3.4%. The County is at an important crossroads, rebuilding their economic development partnership internally with a focus on three important components: 1) business retention, 2) brand development, and 3) instituting learning opportunities for the business community to enhance their own abilities to thrive. The Route 60, Anderson Highway, corridor serves as the major spine for non-residential growth with several activity nodes which could best support industrial if provided upgraded water and sewer utilities and broadband service. One existing industrial park, Oakbridge, located in the easternmost sector of Route 60 has potential for 100+acres of infill and expansion if upgraded sewer service is provided.



City of Richmond

Expanding broader workforce access to this fast-growing area is one of the challenges which will be a continued focus as the *The Pulse*, the first bus-rapid transit of the Region extending from the eastern area of Henrico at Rocketts Landing to Willow Lawn on Broad Street (Route 250) to the west, became operational in June 2018. The *Pulse Corridor Plan* was adopted by the City of Richmond in July 2017 with the goal of expanding the BRT spine's reach and focus on a deliberate strategy to ensure the GRTC *Pulse* is used as an effective transformative tool. This plan's approach is to foster transit-oriented development (TOD), a development pattern that encourages most trips to be made by foot, bike, and transit. The defined study area is home to one-fourth of the population and two-thirds of the jobs in the City; more than one-half of the population is 18-34 years old; and two-thirds of the households have one or fewer cars. The opportunity to foster a successful, well-used transit system that offers potential to create a system that offers public transit choice to the largest concentration of the residential population and employment in the Region.

ACTIVITY

The Pulse travels through the densest part of the city and is readily accessible by a multitude of development types. Figure 2.7 shows general activity trends in the demographic study area with the highest population densities between Boulevard and 3rd Street and the highest employment densities in Downtown Richmond and the VCU campuses. Dots are not precise, but are located on either residential or employment-generating parcels.

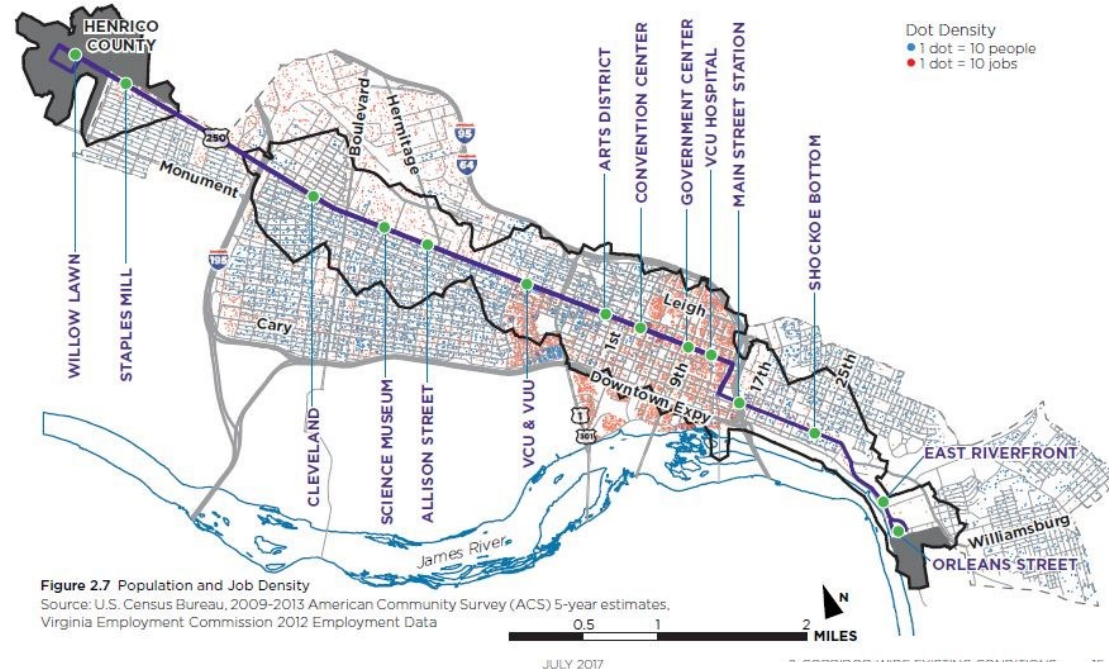


Figure 2.7 Population and Job Density

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, Virginia Employment Commission 2012 Employment Data



PLAN FRAMEWORK

Development along the Pulse Corridor will follow six guiding principles of TOD, as described below and shown in Figure 3.2. These principles are generally accepted as best practices in supporting TOD.

CORRIDOR PRINCIPLES

- **Mixed-Use** Housing, employment, entertainment, and daily needs are near each station area. Mixed use can be vertical or horizontal within a neighborhood context.
- **Viable Transportation Options** Walking and biking to accomplish everyday tasks is an option for people living and working near station areas.
- **Dense, Compact Development** New buildings are taller and larger in the Pulse Corridor to add housing and jobs to create a more walkable and vibrant area.
- **Historic Preservation** Retaining existing historic buildings is a priority. Smaller historic buildings add to a diversity of style and use along the Corridor.
- **Transit Access** Individuals have easy access to the Pulse and to the local transit network, enabling less dependency on auto-travel.
- **Connectivity** A highly-connected street grid and transit network is the glue that leads to successful TOD.

6 PRINCIPLES

Guide Richmond's transit-oriented future.

5 GOALS

- Reach a highly walkable Corridor
- RECOMMENDATIONS & VISIONS Outline steps to reach the goals:
 - 35 Corridor-wide Recommendations
 - 71 Station Area Recommendations
 - 14 Station Area Vision Statements

Figure 3.1 Plan Framework

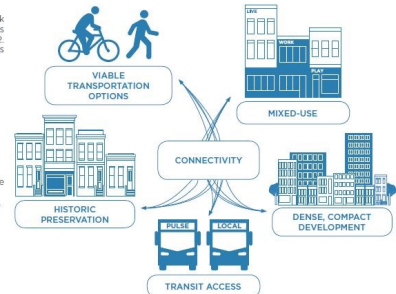


Figure 3.2 Pulse Corridor Principles



As the Region's center of culture and capital of the Commonwealth, the **City of Richmond** is once again growing from a population standpoint. Employment has only moderately increased over the last 4 quarters, slightly ahead of the regional growth. Average wage increases have also been modest still tracking behind the state and U.S. rate of growth. The City has the largest percentage of population (25.5%) of population living in poverty especially compared to the 11.9% regional average; median household income is about 50% of the region's, and house value is 15% below the regional median. Coupled with meeting the needs of a growing population the City is conscious of the need to ameliorate poverty, deconcentrate public housing, enhance training and expand the workforce pipeline to be better capable of meeting the demands of expanding business and industry. Physical opportunities for reinvestment in job producing economic development have been promising, particularly along the Broad Street corridor, arising from greater market interest in areas like Scott's Addition, a vibrant building program by Virginia Commonwealth University on both campuses and the promise offered by the Pulse Bus Rapid Transit that lays the groundwork for better connectivity between jobs and residential concentrations.

Conclusion

For the RR-CEDS to serve as a useful resource in guiding more strategic thinking and action, it is important re-focus on the *human element*—through workforce preparation, starting with steps to strengthen the family, putting concerted energy into pre-school and k12 education systems all the way through training in the trades and higher education.

The aspirational vision put forth by the RR-CEDS: “Strategic investment in human capital and physical infrastructure will lead to a more dynamic Richmond Region” is a broad sweep that should frequently be refined or redefined to truly describe deliberative regional collaboration. “Dynamic” implies *resiliency* which is the all-encompassing catchword of the day, but also depicts a sustaining, healthy dynamic as a thread that ties all plans, strategies and actions together. Demographic trends of population and employment growth are in the Richmond Region's favor, disparities in access to quality education, housing, and transit for many of the region's families not only prevent those families' positive progress, but strain the region. Public investments in infrastructure which are capable of incentivizing or underpinning private market forces while at the same time considering the needs the labor force require confident leadership and willingness to work toward common goals of inclusivity and resiliency.

A look at the Brookings Institute Metro Monitor Dashboard <https://www.brookings.edu/interactives/metro-monitor-2018-dashboard/> which provides an composite metric (growth, prosperity, and inclusion) for the 100 largest metropolitan areas provides one indicator of relative health among the 100 largest metro areas in the U.S. Over the last 10 years from 2006-2016, the Richmond Metro Area (MSA) is ranked 40th in overall growth with a positive increase in employment, slight increase in wages, but decline in jobs at young firms. However, when it comes to Inclusion which is the measure of median wage, relative poverty, and employment rate, the Richmond MSA is ranked a poor 82nd overall. This is a factor the region needs to focus on as inclusive growth will enable more people to invest in their skills and to purchase more goods and services. Thus, inclusive growth can increase human capital and raise aggregate demand, boosting prosperity and growth. Ensuring that all people can contribute to and benefit from growth and prosperity also helps sustain widespread support for the policies on which growth and property depend.”





A decline in median wage did not positively impact the inclusivity score. Those metro regions which achieved growth and prosperity while improving overall inclusion include a small number of metropolitan areas—Albany, NY, Austin, TX, Charleston, SC, Denver, CO-- we may draw from over the next year as we add to the Richmond Region's toolbox.

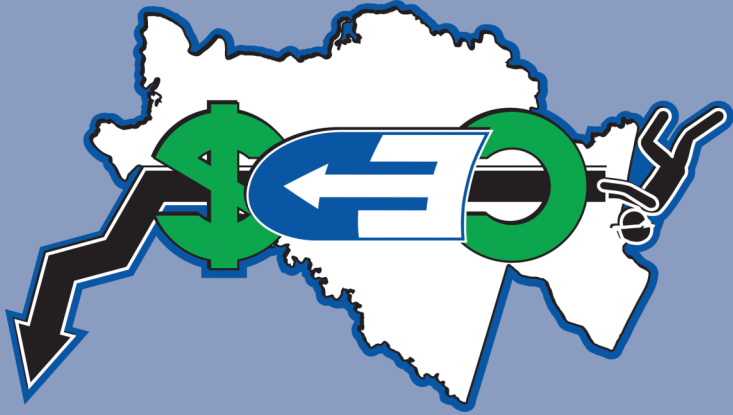
The strategy premise first expressed on p. 75 of the RR-CEDS which called for the renewal of new models of collaborating *at the metropolitan or regional level* is even truer today:

- Measure what matters
- Dare to be different
- See the world (for best practice models)
- Think long-term, act near-term
- Find leaders that reflect who you are now, not who you were 50 years ago

In summary, the need to regain a vibrant Virginia economy post-recession has been a concerted call to action by the Commonwealth in response to an economy which has been over-reliant on the Federal government. As pointed out by the RR-CEDS, the Richmond Region is not as dependent in comparison to other regions of the Commonwealth; an estimated 2 percent of the Richmond region's GRP compared to 18 percent in NOVA and 13.4 percent in Hampton Roads are derived from Federal contracting. New opportunities to integrate planning and action efforts through regional collaboration have emerged with a focus on resiliency in many related sectors, most importantly, emergency management, hazard mitigation, transportation planning, and economic development. The RRPDC worked closely with the Crater Planning District Commission on a comprehensive update of the combined region Hazard Mitigation Plan, and have joined together as Region 4 for GoVirginia initiatives. The Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance is an active partnership of 25 local jurisdictions and three military bases which establishes a forum of local emergency managers, public safety officials, federal, state, regional, private sectors, higher education and non-profit partners to collaborate, coordinate and enhance emergency management and preparedness in Central Virginia. Building on the success of larger regional partnerships such as this will enable better economic resiliency as well.



Richmond Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



July, 2017

