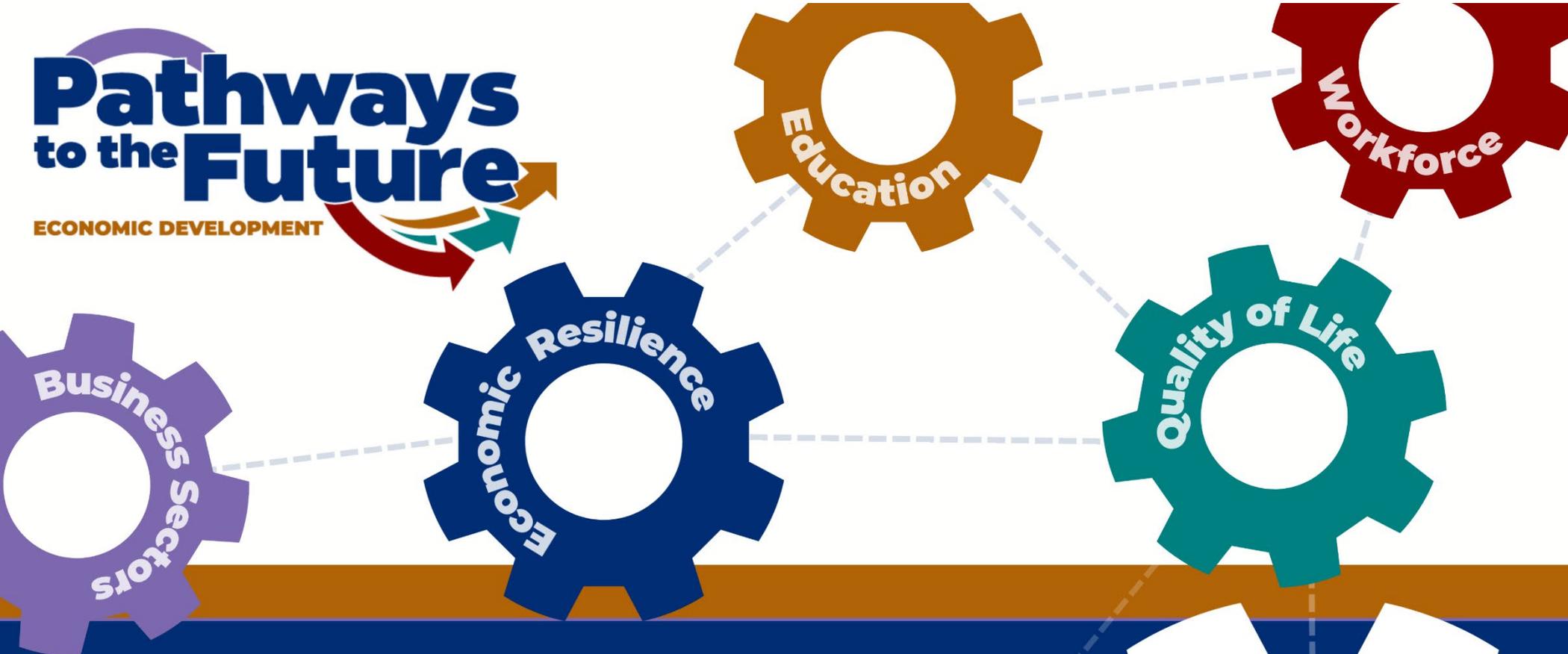


Pathways to the Future

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2025



PlanRVA
Where the region comes together to look ahead.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ii
Introduction..... 1
Background Information and Trends 3
Community Engagement..... 15
Strengths and Opportunities for Growth or Improvement..... 17
Strategic Direction/Action Plan..... 19
Evaluation Framework..... 38
Conclusion..... 41

Appendix A: Background Information

Appendix B: Greater Richmond Partnership Target Industry Cluster Analysis

Appendix C: Community Engagement Summary

Appendix D: Plans and Reference Documents

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Adopted by the PlanRVA Commission on November 13, 2025

Acknowledgements

This process was made possible by funding from the US Economic Development Administration, the Counties of Charles City County, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover,

Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, the Town of Ashland, and the City of Richmond. Grow Capital Jobs Foundation also contributed funding.



March 14, 2025 PlanRVA Pi/Pie Day with the public and partners, staff presentation on the Regional Strategic Plan and introduction to the 2025 CEDS.

Introduction

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) encourages regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), which “contribute to effective economic development in America’s communities and regions through a place-based, regionally driven economic development planning process.” The CEDS document benefits the region by providing a common baseline understanding of circumstances and an action plan to help move the region forward. In addition, the CEDS can benefit the region by helping to justify funding of projects and programs and by serving as a foundation to build additional capacity in the region. This 2025 Richmond Regional CEDS recognizes a decade of change since the previous regional CEDS was adopted in 2014.

The following representative CEDS Steering Committee has guided this update through development of each plan component. The Committee’s work has been informed by input from stakeholders and the community through two rounds of public engagement.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) “contribute to effective economic development in America’s communities and regions through a place-based, regionally driven economic development planning process.”

Steering Committee

Nora Amos	Town of Ashland	Katie McConnell	City of Richmond
Cynthia Boone	Charles City County	Chuck Peterson	Greater Richmond Partnership
Garrett Hart	Chesterfield County	Maggie Garinther	Virginia Economic Development Partnership
Dalila Medrano	Chesterfield County	Jodi Roberts	Thrive Birth to Five
Sara Worley	Goochland County	Brian Davis	Virginia Career Works Capital Region
Armon Smith	Hanover County	Woody Rogers	Partnership for Housing Affordability
Andrew Larsen	Henrico County	Elizabeth Creamer	Community College Workforce Alliance
Roxanne Salerno	Powhatan County	Omar Faison	Virginia State University
Lindsay Hurt	New Kent County	Michele Weatherly	ChamberRVA

Thanks also to all those who served as alternates or additional special advisors (see Appendix C).

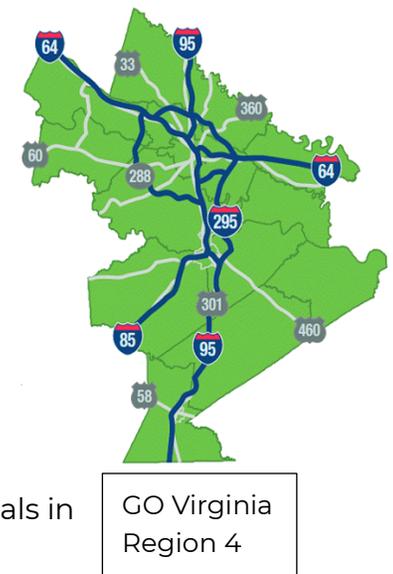
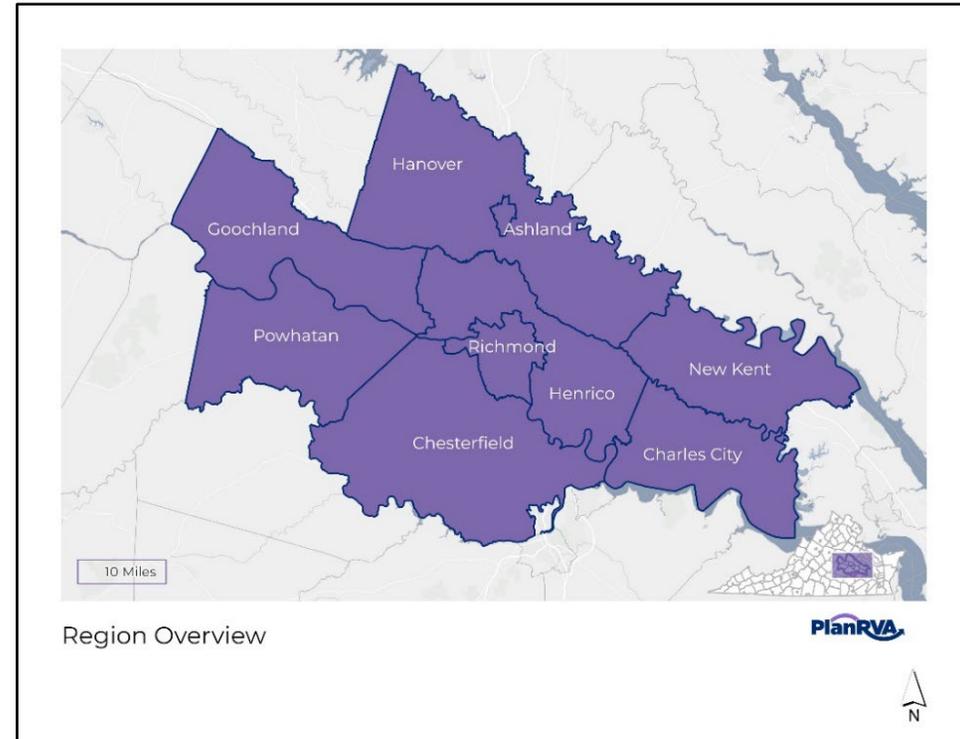
The Richmond Regional CEDS covers nine localities in central Virginia, spanning rural, suburban and urban geographies. The region's localities include the Town of Ashland, the City of Richmond, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan.

The Richmond Regional CEDS fits within multiple planning contexts. The CEDS is a regional planning document that works in tandem with plans at the local, regional, and state levels. These include locality economic development strategic plans, the GOVirginia Growth and Diversification Plan for Region 4 (the area covered by the PlanRVA and Crater Planning District Commissions), and Virginia Economic Development Partnership's Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

In addition, the CEDS draws upon and seeks to work in concert with planning efforts across a wide spectrum of issues relevant to the region's economic success. Examples include Greater Richmond Partnership's Target Industry Cluster Analysis, the Partnership for Housing Affordability's Regional Housing Framework, Virginia Career Works of the Capital Region Strategic Plan, and Richmond Region Tourism's Tourism Master Plan. A list of plans, studies and initiatives consulted as part of this CEDS update is included in Appendix D.

Through the lens of PlanRVA's regional planning work, the Richmond Regional CEDS is part of a set of core regional topical plans which make up the 2025-2030 Regional Strategic Plan: *Pathways to the Future*. The Regional Strategic Plan includes the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Richmond-Crater Multi-Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Comprehensive Air Quality Plan, and the Natural Resources Plan. The Richmond Regional CEDS also guides PlanRVA's work within the regional *RVA Rising* effort to ensure upward economic mobility for all and the formulation of appropriate metrics that can show progress toward meeting the goals of this plan and the other core plans.

The Richmond Regional CEDS process has been a data-driven opportunity to identify strengths and opportunities, and to consider aspirations for the future. This CEDS provides a framework for the Richmond region and our localities to work collaboratively together to address economic development Goals in the Strategic Direction/Action Plan.



Background Information and Trends

The Richmond region holds a strategic position as both the capital of the Commonwealth of Virginia and a hub in the center of the East Coast. Its location provides easy access to more than half of the U.S. population within a day's drive, making it an ideal area for commerce, logistics, and business expansion. The region is well connected by major interstate highways such as I-95, I-64, and I-85, as well as rail and air transportation, offering seamless connections to key markets and ports. As a state capital, the region benefits from a strong governmental presence, a diverse economy, and a highly educated workforce. Combined with steady population and business growth, the region continues to attract companies, talent, and investment, positioning it as a thriving economic and cultural center on the East Coast. The Commonwealth has been consistently recognized by CNBC as one of the top states for business.

This 2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) gives us a renewed opportunity to reflect on how the region has changed and set a refreshed regional strategy for growing and thriving economically. The following pages spotlight some of the regional data and findings that have helped to inform the other CEDS plan components. Please reference Appendix A for additional Background Information and Appendix B for the full Greater Richmond Partnership Target Industry Cluster Analysis.

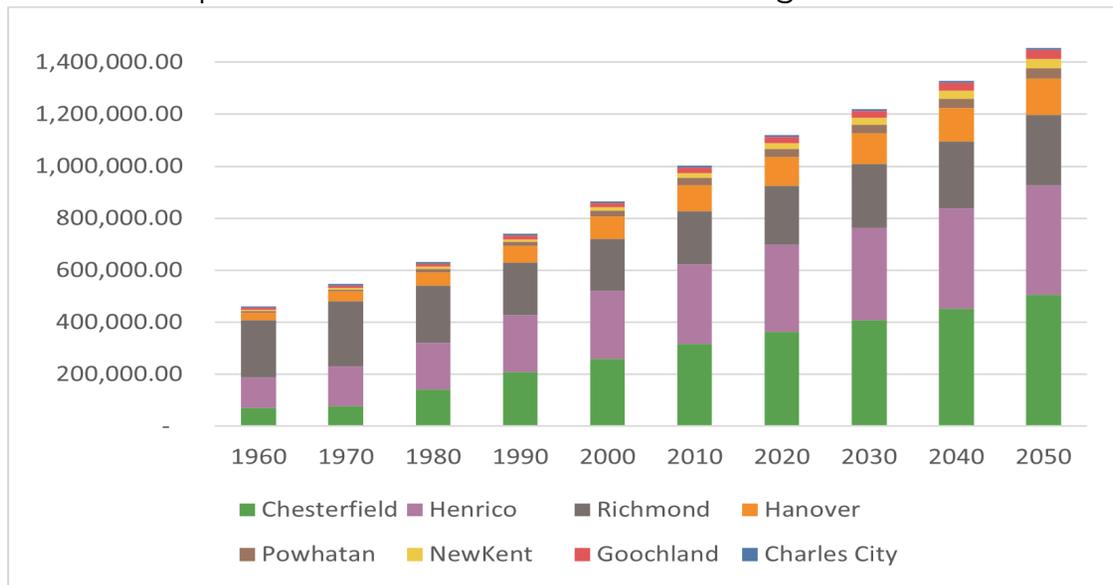
The following pages also provide information about some areas of the region that are currently, or are planned to have, concentrations of employment or mixed-use development that are important for the region's economic growth.

The information on these pages and in the Appendices provides only a snapshot in time, and only a small fraction of the data and information about each topic covered. Ongoing or planned studies noted in the Action Plan section, as well as planned data-tracking coordination efforts noted in the Performance Measures section, will bring additional details on many topics in the coming years.

Between 2010 and 2020, the population in the region has grown by about 12%, to 1,120,304 people (Exhibit 1). The regional population is projected to increase to about 1,455,000 people by 2050.

The number of households in the region increased from 450,376 in 2017 to 470,470 in 2022.

Exhibit 1: Population Trends in the Richmond Region



Source: 1960-2020 U.S. Census Decennial Census, 2030-2050 Weldon Cooper Center Projections

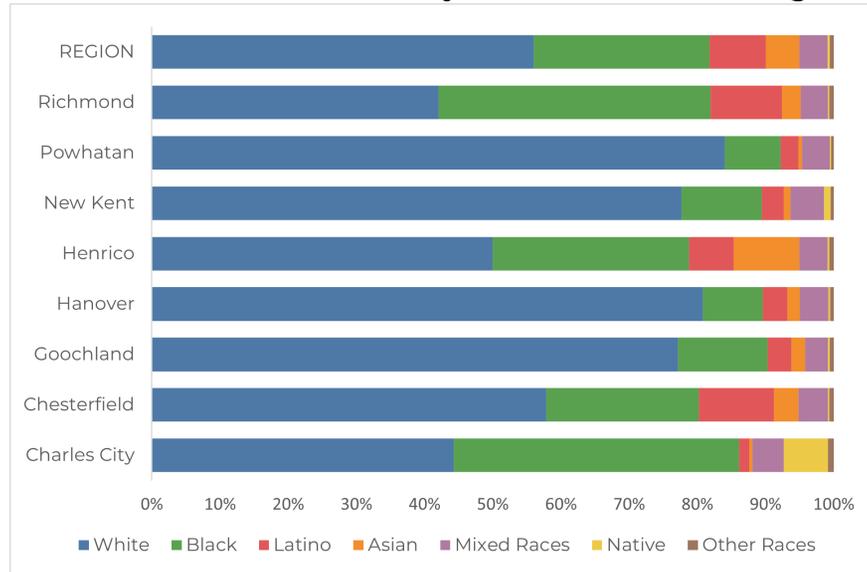
Exhibit 2. Labor Force Participation Rate Estimate and Unemployment Rate

	2011			2023		
	Civilian Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Charles City	3,738	61.9%	6.4%	3,710	63.5%	3.2%
Chesterfield	168,483	69.8%	5.2%	200,078	68.2%	2.9%
Goochland	9,745	55.0%	4.4%	12,203	55.5%	2.9%
Hanover	53,849	69.3%	4.7%	62,020	68.5%	2.5%
Henrico	168,270	70.6%	4.9%	191,583	71.2%	2.9%
New Kent	9,884	68.0%	4.6%	13,672	68.3%	2.6%
Powhatan	12,780	56.0%	4.5%	15,148	57.7%	2.7%
Richmond	108,753	64.8%	7.7%	124,807	65.2%	3.5%
Region	535,502	64.4%	5.5%	623,221	67.9%	3.0%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2011 & 2023 and U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2011 & 2023.

The civilian labor force stood at 623,221 in 2023, an increase of about 16% since the last CEDS plan (2011 data). The regional unemployment rate in 2023 was about 3 percent, down from the 5.5% cited in the last plan. (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 3. Race and Ethnicity in the Richmond Region by Locality



People of color (including Asian, Black, Latino, Mixed Race, Native, and Other Races) make up 44% of the total population of the region. After White, the second largest race category across all localities is Black. Compared to the region as a whole, higher proportions of Latinos live in Richmond, Henrico and Chesterfield; higher proportions of Asians are found in Henrico (Exhibit 3).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 2020

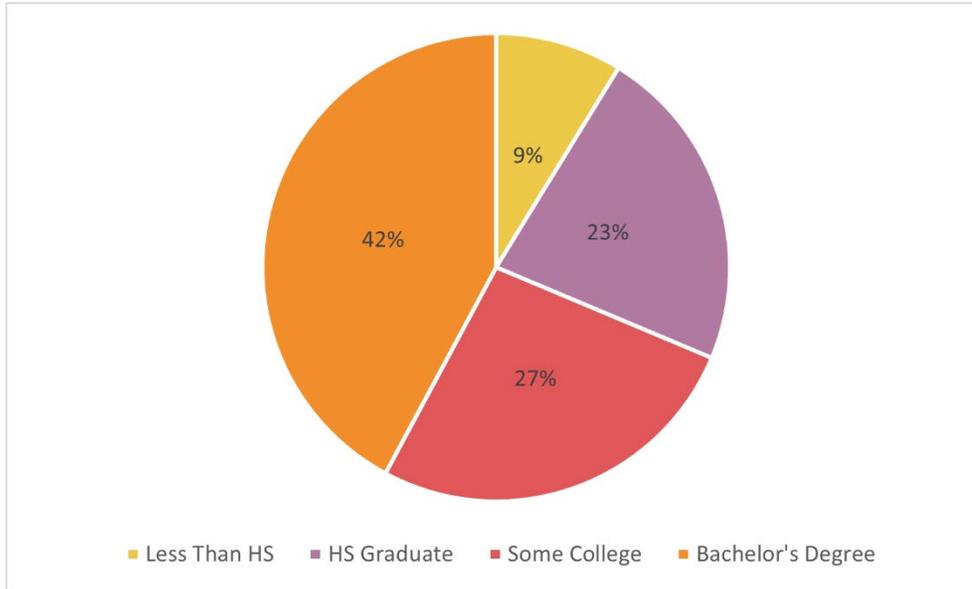
Between 2000 and 2020, the average median age across the region’s localities has increased by about 5 years. Charles City County had the largest increase in median age, an increase of about 12.7 years during that time period to a median age of 52.6. By comparison, the City of Richmond and Town of Ashland both have relatively young populations with median ages of 32.4 and 34.2, respectively (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4. Median Age

	1990	2000	2010	2020
Ashland	33.5	32.5	33.5	34.2
Charles City	35.2	39.9	46.6	52.6
Chesterfield	32	35.7	37.6	39.1
Goochland	35.9	40.5	45.2	49.5
Hanover	34.5	37.4	41	43.2
Henrico	33.9	36	37.5	39.1
New Kent	34.7	38.4	42.4	44.6
Powhatan	33.8	36.8	41.6	44.9
Richmond	33.3	33.9	32	32.4
Region ^a	34.1	36.8	39.7	42.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990-2020, www.nhgis.org. ^aThis is an average median age for the region, rather than a true median

Exhibit 5. Regional Educational Attainment



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table C15002, 2022

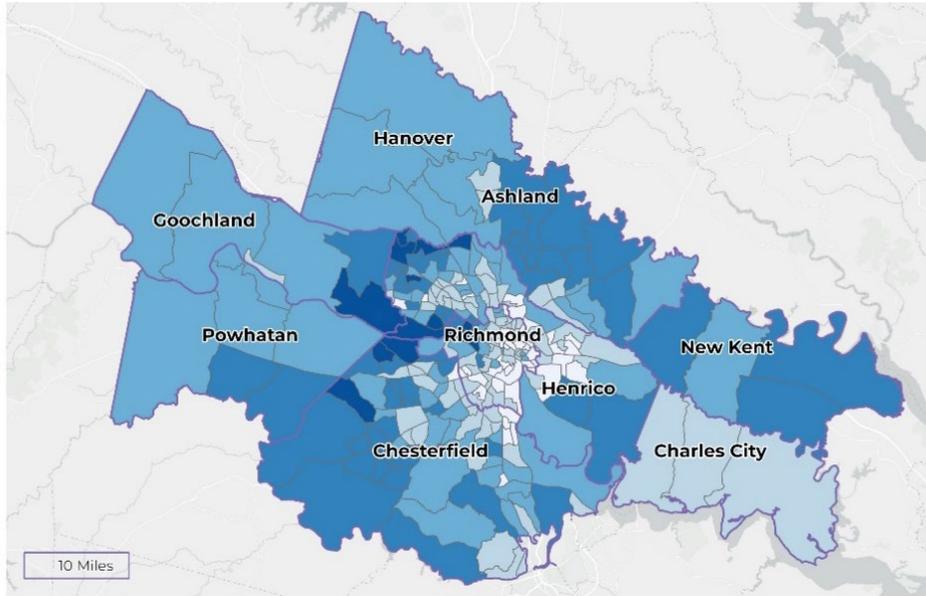
The region has a high level of educational attainment. Ninety-one percent of the region's population are high school graduates and forty-two percent also hold a bachelor's degree (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 6. Children Meeting Overall Readiness Benchmark as Measured by Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program

	2022	2023
Charles City	64.7%	68.5%
Chesterfield	61.0%	60.0%
Goochland	69.9%	73.8%
Hanover	74.0%	69.0%
Henrico	58.0%	60.0%
New Kent	54.9%	59.9%
Powhatan	72.1%	No Data
Richmond	46.0%	50.0%
Region	59.5%	59.7%*
Virginia	59.6%	60.0%

Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program data indicates that in recent years, just below 60% of the region's children met readiness benchmarks for kindergarten, a similar percentage to Virginia overall (Exhibit 6).

Source:
https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/rebecca.tippett8570/viz/rr_ecce_supply_demand_v2/Overview. * Does not include Powhatan.



Median Household Income by Census Tract

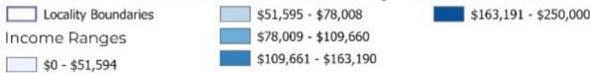


Exhibit 8. Distressed Census Tracts

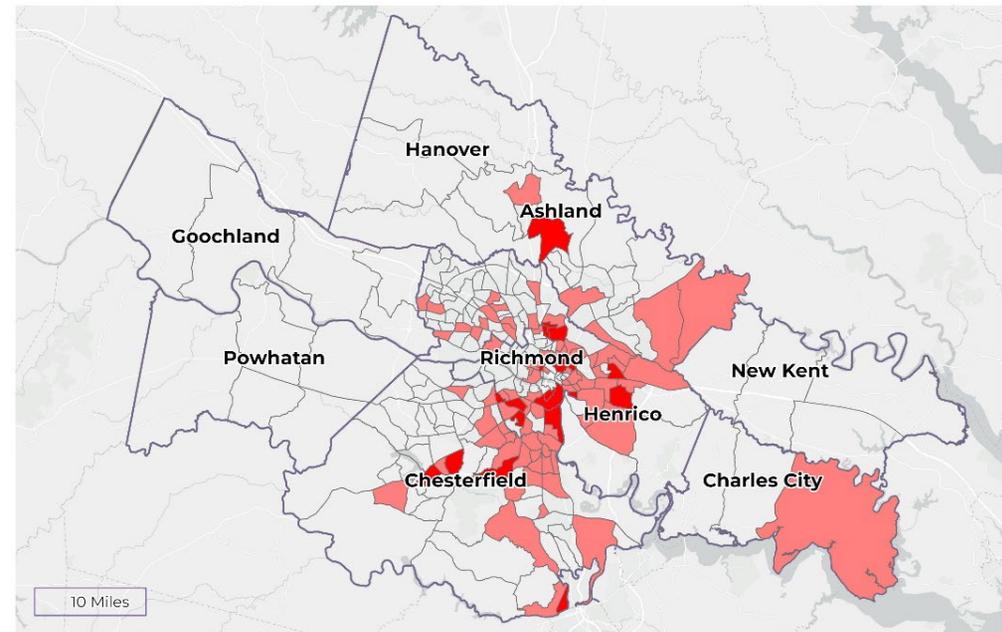
Neither the region nor individual localities meet the EDA criteria to classify as distressed, defined as areas where unemployment is greater than 1% of the national average and/or the per capita income is 80% or less than the national average. Some portions of localities (census tracts) where both factors are met include areas of Richmond, Chesterfield and Hanover.

Map Data Source: <https://nerde.anl.gov/opportunity/distress/tract>.

Exhibit 7. Median Household Income, 2022

The distribution of wealth across the region as depicted by the median household income by census tract generally shows census tracts in the outlying counties to be higher than in the urbanized area, with the exception of higher earning households in western Richmond.

Map Data Source: Source: ACSST 5Y2022S2503



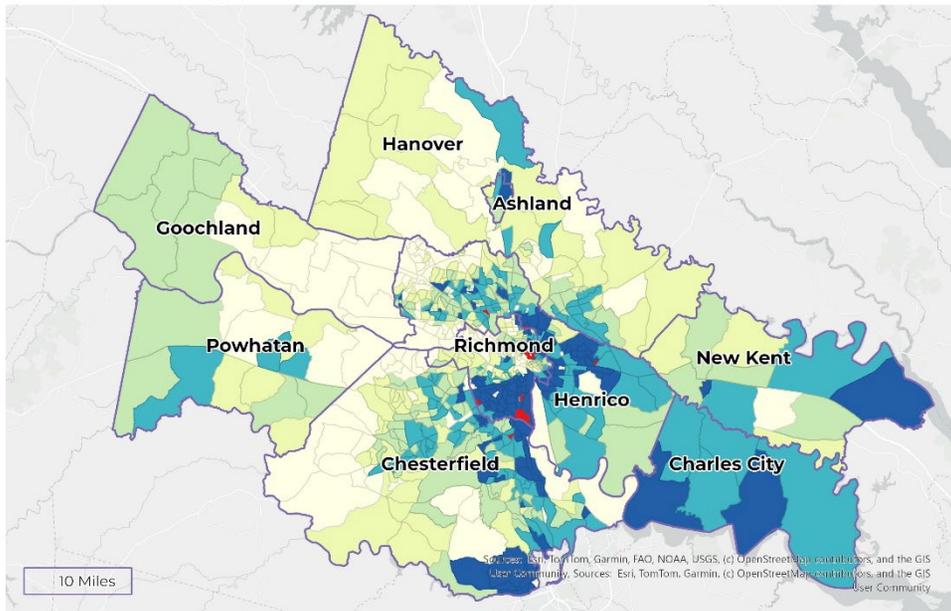
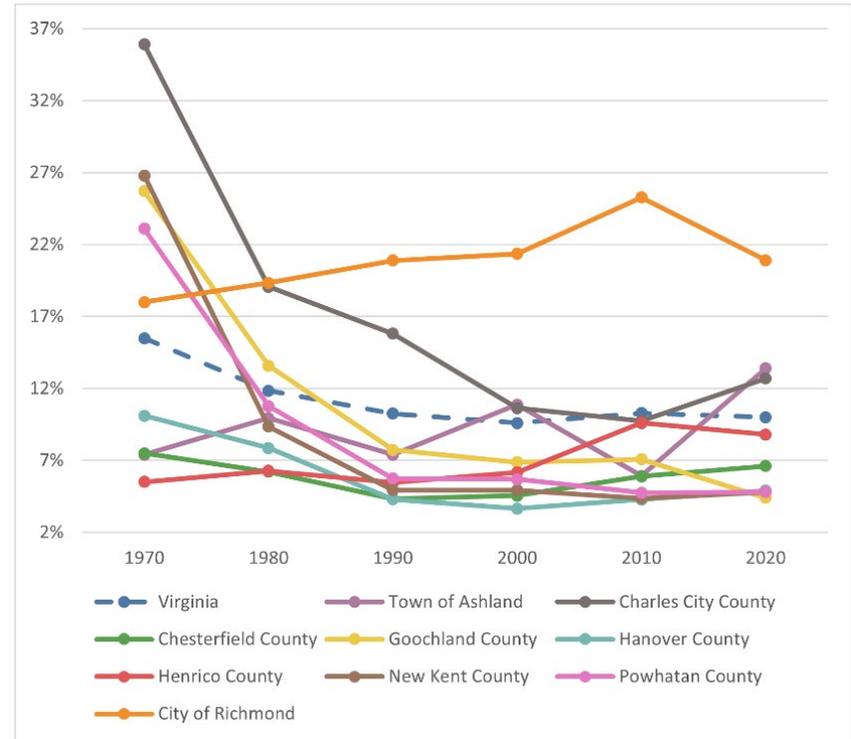
Distressed Census Tracts



Exhibit 9. Percentage of Persons in Poverty

The percentage of residents experiencing or living under the federal poverty level shows a similar depiction of need using a different standard of wealth. Overall, rates of people in poverty have decreased in the region since the 1970's, a trend that was disrupted in some localities by the pandemic, as reflected in the 2020 data.

Data Source: Decennial Census (1970-2000), ACS 5 Year (2010-2020)



Housing Affordability in the Richmond Region (2022)

- Locality Boundaries
- Affordable at 150% of AMI
- Affordable at 120% of AMI
- Affordable at 100% of AMI
- Affordable at 80% of AMI
- Affordable at 50% of AMI
- Affordable at more than 150% of AMI



Exhibit 10. Housing Affordability

The map on the left illustrates areas (census tracts) with affordable housing based on various levels of Area Median Income (AMI). Lighter colors represent areas with higher housing costs, while darker, more saturated colors indicate areas with greater housing affordability. The lack of housing stock available for purchase by those households at levels of 80% of AMI shows how limited the choice of homeownership is for those of low-and-moderate incomes.

Map Data Source: Median home sales price calculated from home sales data from CVR-MLS. Median Household Income from Census ACS 2022, 5-year estimates. 4-person family AMI for Richmond MSA from HUD.

Total Workers for PlanRVA Footprint by Industry

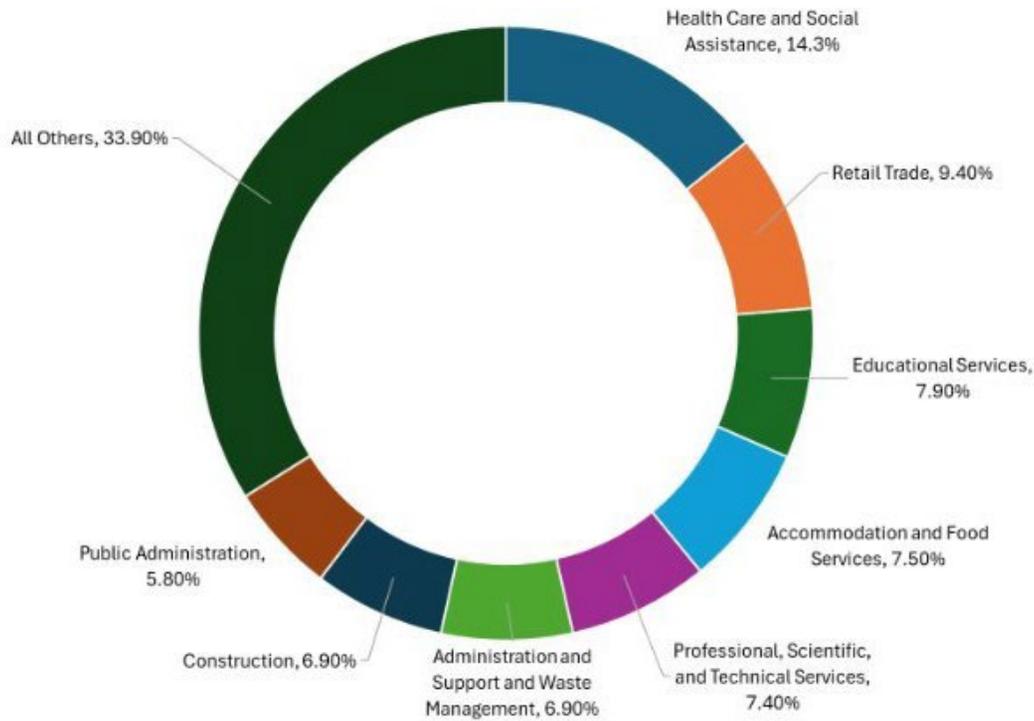


Exhibit 11. Top Industries, by Employment Percentage

Top industries by employment in the region include Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade. There are sizable proportions of employment across a wide range of sectors.

Data Source: JobsEQ, courtesy of Greater Richmond Partnership. Data derived from the BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Exhibit 12. New Start-up Firms

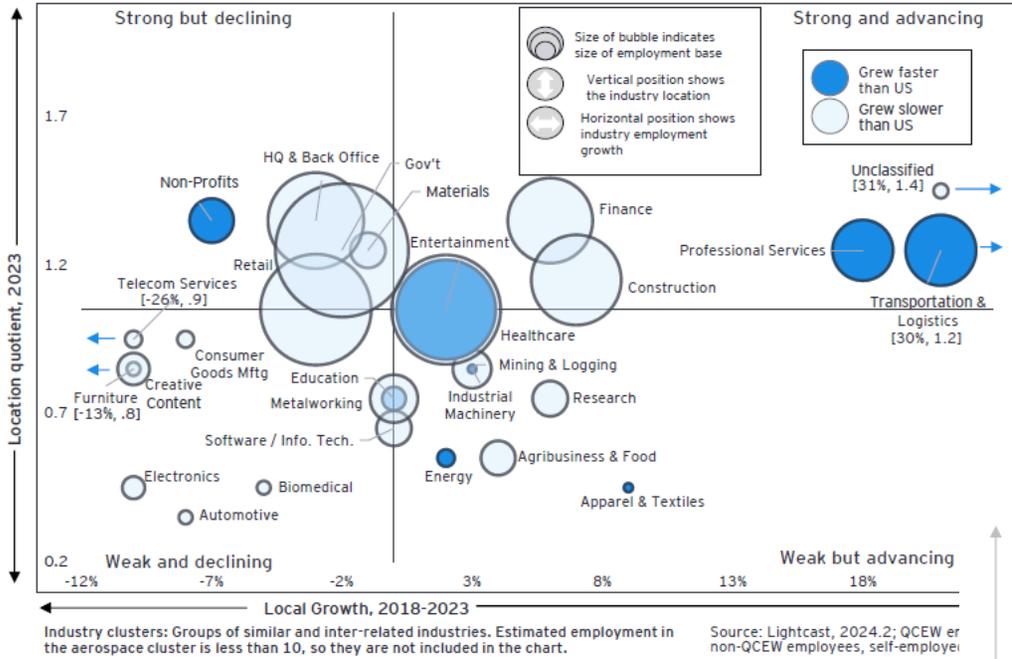
	Number of New Start-Up Firms
2022	1,679
2023	1,757
2024	1,930

Exhibit 12. New Start-Up Firms

The number of new start-up firms in the region has trended upward in recent years.

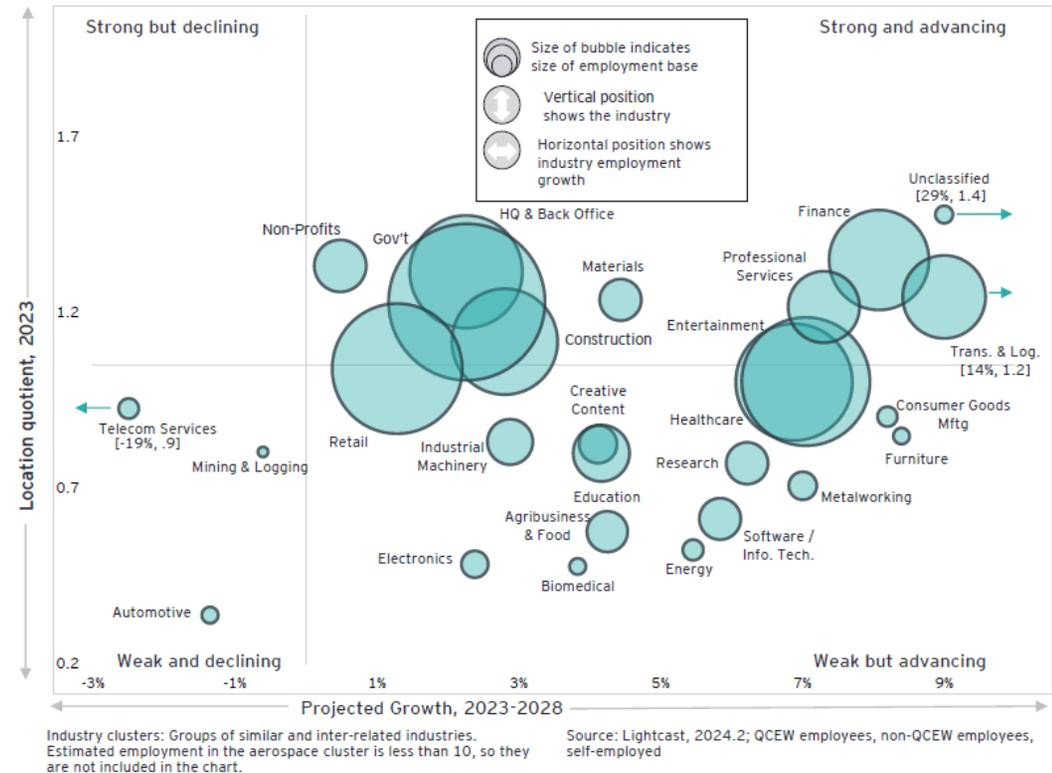
Data Source: Virginia Works, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Note: The following criteria was used to define new startup firms: 1.) Setup and liability date both occurred during 1st Quarter (January, February, March) 2025 2.) Establishment had no predecessor UI Account Number 3.) Private Ownership 4.) Average employment is less than 250 5.) For multi-unit establishments, the parent company must also meet the above criteria.

Exhibit 13. Recent cluster employment growth: 2018-2023



Greater Richmond Partnership's 2025 Target Industry Cluster Analysis (see Appendix B for full text)

Exhibit 14. Projected cluster employment growth: 2023-2028



Building on a diverse economic base, the Richmond region has tremendous potential for continued growth in the key target industry sectors of 1) Advanced Manufacturing, 2) Corporate Services, 3) Information Technology and 4) Life Sciences along with the emerging niche industries and economic driver industries identified by the GRP Target Industry Cluster Analysis.

Economic Development Geographies

Each of the nine localities in the Richmond Region has planned for economic growth areas through Comprehensive Plans and other land use and economic development planning documents. The areas identified in locality plans are all important to regional economic growth. This plan maps some areas as regional economic development “focal areas” based on the process detailed below. In addition to these areas, this plan maps additional important areas for economic growth and courthouse (County seat) areas.

To build a picture of employment and mixed-use concentrations within the region, Existing and Emerging Activity Centers were identified using land use information and socioeconomic data. Land use information consisted of locality-sourced existing land use data and future land use map information from Comprehensive Plans. The existing land use categories and planned future land use categories (Comprehensive Plan designations) used by each locality were each grouped into a set of general categories for regional consistency. The existing and projected socioeconomic data – population and employment numbers - used in the analysis were consistent with the base year (2017) and future year (2050) projections used in the region’s Long Range Transportation Plan. The methodology to determine the Activity Centers calculates densities of jobs (for employment centers) and densities and proportions of jobs and population (for mixed use centers). It also considers the size (number of acres) at these densities, specifying a minimum amount of contiguous area. The thresholds for density and amount of contiguous area varied for different portions of the region - within the urban core, suburban area, and rural area.

- The existing land use information and Existing Activity Centers are shown below on *Exhibit 15*. Exhibit 13 also includes sites listed in the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) Site Locator Tool.
- The future land use information from local Comprehensive Plans and the Emerging Activity Centers are shown below on *Exhibit 16*.

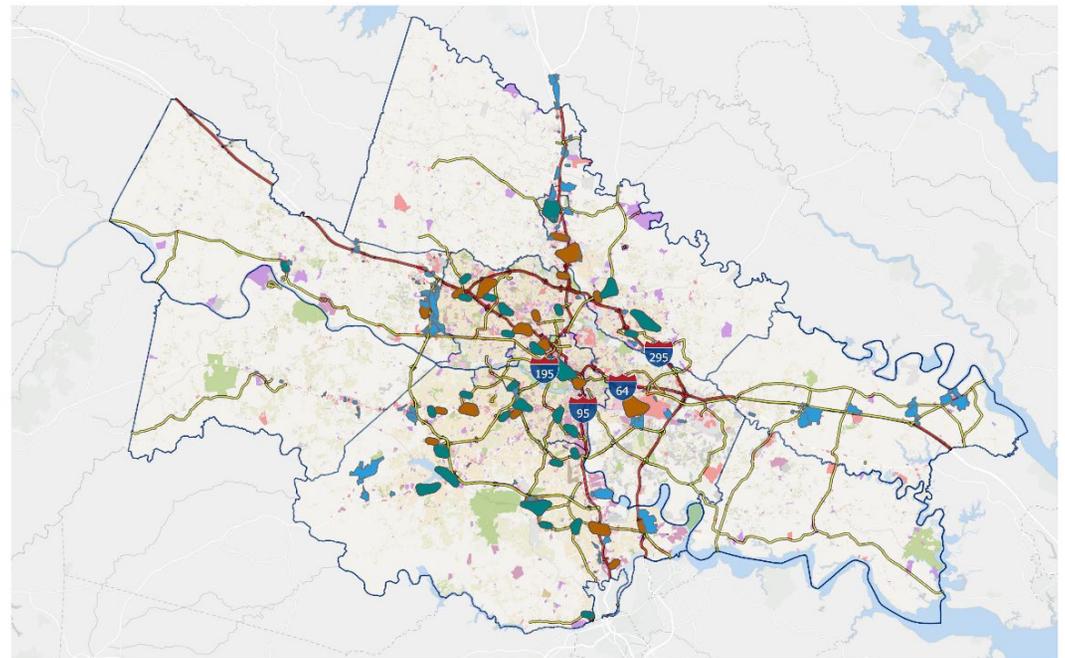
This land use and Activity Center analysis, together with locality input, were used to update the regional Focal Areas depicted by the 2014 CEDS. The updated Focal Areas are shown in *Exhibit 17*, and a high-level characterization of each Focal Area is provided on page 13. In addition, Exhibit 17 shows additional important economic development areas noted as current or likely nearer-term growth areas by locality staff (yellow dots – see page 13 for location list), and the courthouse areas within Charles City, New Kent, Hanover, Goochland and Powhatan counties (stars).

All areas (Focal Areas, additional important economic development areas, courthouse areas) depicted in Exhibit 17 represent opportunity areas for continued planning, investment, and where applicable and feasible, regionally coordinated efforts (e.g., regional transportation planning). The areas shown on these exhibits may change over time as land use plans, socioeconomic data, and VEDP Site Locator tool data are updated.

The Focal Area numbers in Exhibit 17 match the descriptions on page 13; they are not a ranking of priority.

Exhibit 15: Existing Land Use and Activity Centers

- This map shows existing land uses generalized for the region, and employment (brown) and mixed-use (teal) Existing Activity Centers. The map also depicts the location of properties captured in the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) Site Locator Tool as of fall 2024.

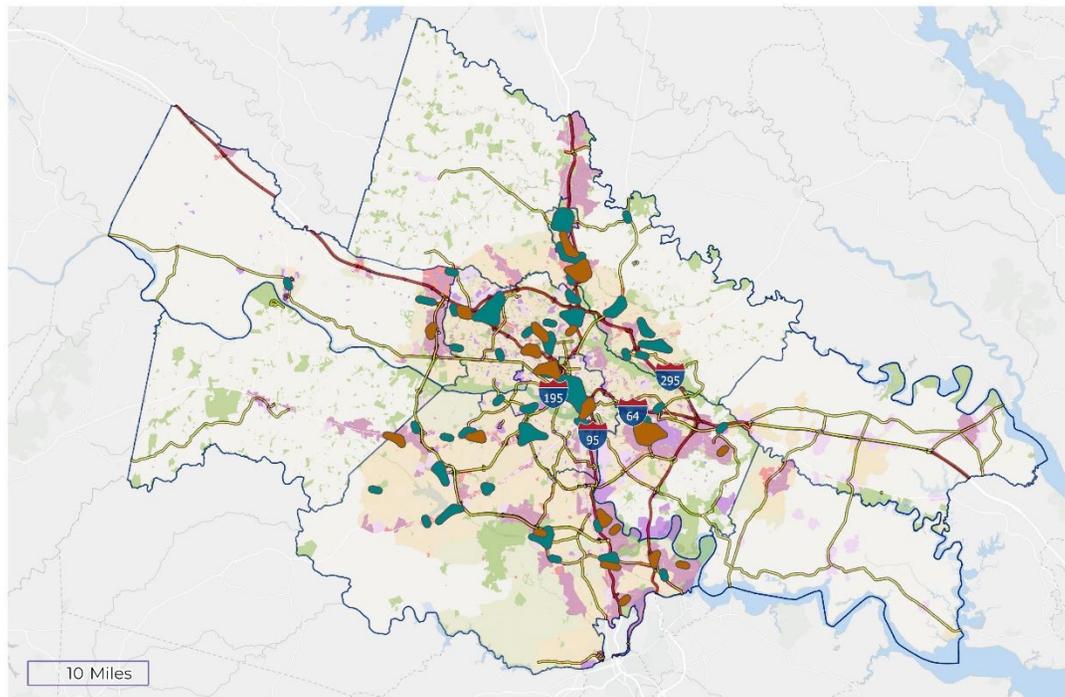


EXISTING ACTIVITY CENTERS



Exhibit 16: Future Land Use and Emerging Activity Centers

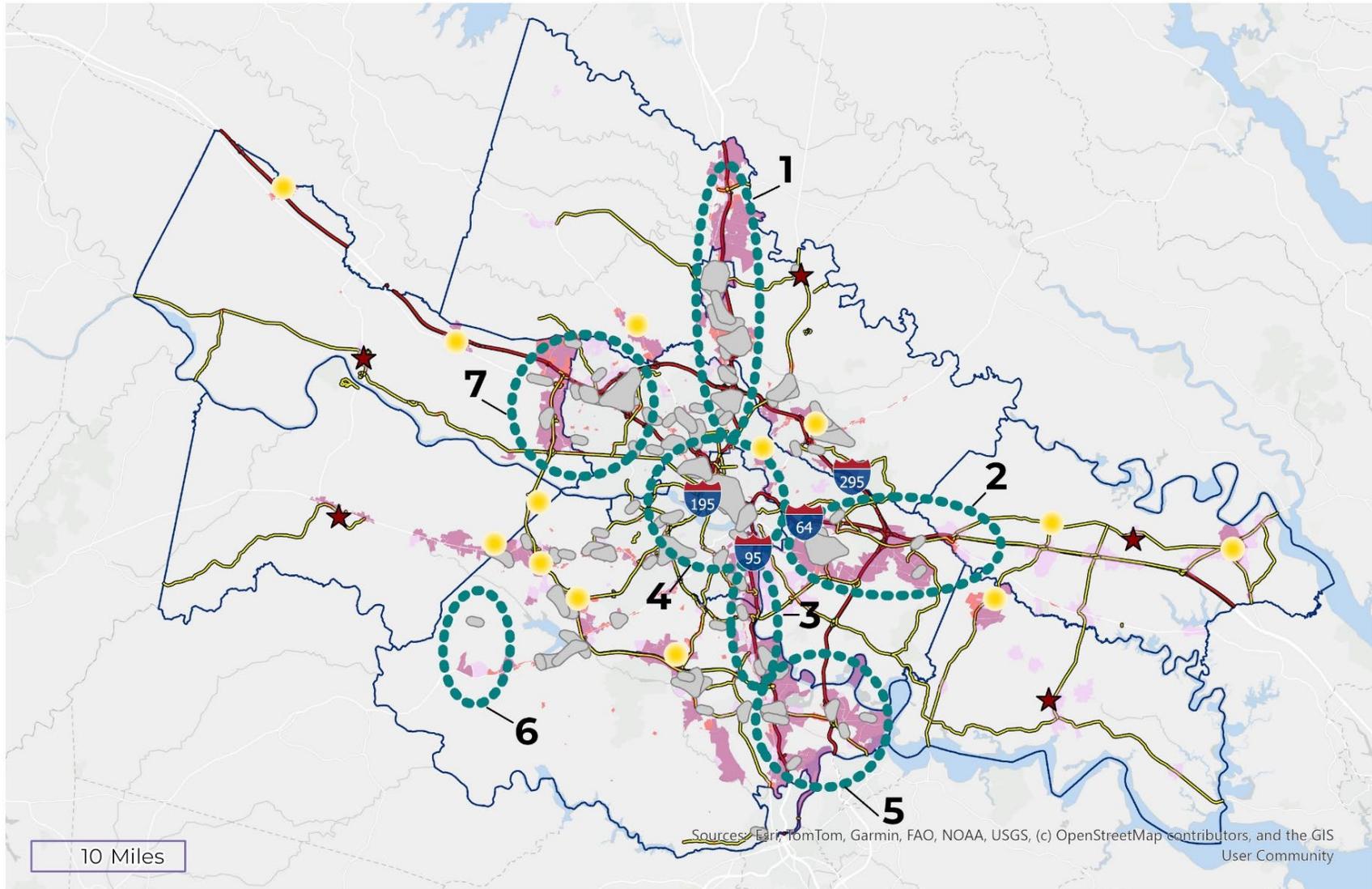
- This map shows planned land uses from locality Comprehensive Plans, generalized for the region. The map also shows the projected employment (brown) and mixed-use (teal) Emerging Activity Centers.



EMERGING ACTIVITY CENTERS



Exhibit 17. Economic Development Geographies



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  2025 Focal Areas | Future Land Use | Major Roadways |
|  Additional Important Economic Development Areas |  Commercial |  Interstates |
|  Rural County Seats |  Mixed Use |  State Routes |
|  Activity Centers |  Industrial | |



Focal Area Descriptions and Additional Important Economic Development Areas

Focal Area 1: Route 1/I-95 North Corridor

This Focal Area extends along I-95 north from Henrico through Hanover County and includes the Rt. 30 Gateway at King's Dominion, the Hickory Hill complex, the Ashland Rt. 54 interchange, the Town of Ashland Holland tract, and Best Products Reimagined in Henrico County.

Focal Area 2: Richmond Internal Airport/White Oak

This Focal Area in Eastern Henrico area includes the RIC Airport, Laburnum Avenue industrial parcels, the White Oak Technology Park extending to Bottoms Bridge to the east in New Kent County along I-64.

Focal Area 3: I-95 South/Port Activity

This Focal Area encompasses industrial and distribution center parcels south extending out of the city center along I-95 encompassing the Richmond Marine Terminal/Commerce Corridor area and Bells Road.

Focal Area 4: Central Richmond/Manchester

This Focal Area contains the urban heart of the region, including the region's downtown commercial corridor (along Broad Street and City Center redevelopment), as well as rapidly developing/redeveloping areas such as the Diamond District, Scotts Addition into Westwood redevelopment in Henrico, the Springline at District 60 development on Midlothian and associated Midlothian commercial corridor extending into Richmond, the Hull Street corridor south of the James River extending into Chesterfield, and southern areas of Henrico and extending into Richmond in the vicinity of Rocketts Landing.

Focal Area 5: Meadowville/Route 10

This Focal Area intersects with I-95 south to include the James River Industrial Center, Walthall and Ashton industrial parks, and Meadowville/Route 10 Super Highway extending south into Chesterfield County.

Focal Area 6: Upper Magnolia

This Focal Area is an emerging development center and contains significant land for new industrial and mixed-use development, including the approx. 1,000 acre Upper Magnolia Green site.

Focal Area 7: Innsbrook/North Gayton and West Creek/Ashland Road

This Focal Area encompasses land parcels in both Henrico and Goochland counties, including the existing Innsbrook area spanning North Gayton Road with continued development west along Broad Street, Route 288 and north of Broad along Ashland Road in Goochland. West Creek is planned for both significant employment uses as well as being a mixed-use center.

Additional Important Economic Development Areas

- Richmond Raceway Vicinity (Henrico)
- I-295/Creighton Road Interchange Vicinity (Hanover)
- I-64 Exit 211/Talleysville Vicinity (New Kent)
- Route 33 Corridor (New Kent)
- Roxbury Industrial Center and Vicinity (Charles City)
- Chesterfield County Airport Vicinity (Chesterfield)
- Watkins/288 Corridor (Chesterfield)
- Route 60 Corridor (Powhatan/Chesterfield)
- Route 288/Route 711 Vicinity (Powhatan)
- I-64/Exit 167/Oilville Vicinity (Goochland)
- I-64 Exit 152/Hadensville Vicinity (Goochland)
- Mountain Road Gateway (Hanover)

Survey 1: Strengths and Opportunities for Growth or Improvement Engagement

Survey 1 was designed to gather stakeholder and public feedback on the region’s strengths and opportunities for growth or improvement. The survey questions were developed in January and February of 2025 and were informed by initial strengths and opportunities for growth input provided by the Steering Committee at its first (January) meeting. To capture a variety of perspectives, two component surveys were created; the two surveys asked for feedback from an individual perspective and from an organizational or business perspective – respondents could choose to take one or both surveys.

Survey 1 was posted on the CEDS Project Engagement Page and was open from February 14, 2025-March 17, 2025. During this time period, PlanRVA hosted a Regional Symposium on March 14, 2025, at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The Regional Symposium included an afternoon session on the CEDS – this included a presentation and an opportunity to provide feedback. Participants were also encouraged to visit the CEDS Project Engagement Page and take the surveys. Comments received from Survey 1 and Symposium were shared back to the community and with the Steering Committee.

Survey 2: Goals and Actions Engagement

Survey 2 was designed to gather stakeholder and public feedback on the goal concepts and potential activities to undertake in the next five years. The survey questions were developed in May and June of 2025 and were informed by input on an initial set of goals and activities concepts provided by the Steering Committee at its third (May) meeting. Survey 2 was posted on the CEDS Project Engagement Page and was open from June 16, 2025 - July 18, 2025. Comments received from Survey 2 were shared back to the community and with the Steering Committee.

Comment Period. A draft of the Richmond Regional CEDS was posted on the Project Engagement Page for a period of 30 days prior to PlanRVA Commission consideration.



Strengths and Opportunities for Growth or Improvement

Based on data research, public surveys and stakeholder engagement, and the Steering Committee's understanding of the region, the following assessment provides strengths and opportunities for growth or improvement in the Richmond Region that help inform the Strategic Direction/Action Plan.



Strengths

- Location (Middle of East Coast)
- Quality of Life
- Relatively Lower Cost of Living
- Tourism Assets
- Natural Resources - Green Spaces, Water Resources, etc.
- Strong Trade and Export Potential
- Diverse Economic Base, Presence of International Companies
- Diverse Industries
- Business-Friendly Environment
- Entrepreneurial Culture
- Infrastructure – Transportation network, Communications Network, etc.
- Skilled and Educated Workforce
- Access to Capital
- Wide Variety of Higher Education Resources
- Growing Region – Population and Businesses
- Dedicated and Collaborative Organizations and Institutions
- Cultural and Recreational Resources (Music/Art/Restaurant Scene)
- Reckoning with the Region's Complex History in Thoughtful Ways
- High Uptake of Early Education, Nation-Leading Quality
- Multicultural Region with Resources to Support People and Businesses

Opportunities for Growth or Improvement

- Maintaining and Upgrading Aging Infrastructure
- Continued/Increased Investment in Transportation and Mobility Connections – Domestic Flights, Transit, etc.
- Quality, High-Speed Broadband Across the Region
- Energy Supply Growth and Predictability
- Sites/Land: Sites with Infrastructure
- Sites/Land: Publicly Owned/Controlled Sites
- Sites/Land: Small Lot or Flex Space Development Opportunities
- Rate of Growth in Household Income
- Housing Supply, Across the Spectrum of Unit Type, and Meeting Needs for All Ages
- Attainable Housing for Mid and Lower Median Income Population
- Differing Education Outcomes
- Differing Economic Mobility
- Raising the Region's Profile Nationally and Globally
- Capitalizing on RVA's Existing Workforce, Including Older Age Groups
- Attracting Additional Knowledge Workers
- Coordinated Workforce Development System
- Work Based Learning Programs and Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Additional Access to Venture and Other Capital
- Access to Goods and Services Across the Region
- Rate of Employment Growth
- Natural Hazards Resilience – Businesses Preparedness
- Unmet Demand for Affordable Childcare and Early Childhood Education



Strategic Direction/Action Plan

The Goals, Strategies and Actions below have been developed to help the region retain and build upon its areas of strength, and to consider and address areas that were identified as opportunities for growth or improvement.

Each Action includes a column listing Prospective Partners. This list of partners is not exhaustive, and we anticipate that partnerships will grow and evolve over time. Many Partners listed are already engaged in the projects or programs described in the Action. In other instances, we have listed organizations as examples of Potential Partners to recognize the role they currently play in the region, but their inclusion is not intended to imply specific obligation or commitments.

The CEDS strategic action plan is informed by the PlanRVA **Regional Strategic Vision**, adopted by the PlanRVA Board on June 12, 2025. This Vision guides strategic planning efforts across the agency and the region by identifying five key interconnected themes for which PlanRVA and our partners strive (next page).

Prospective Partners Acronyms	
CCAM	Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing
CCWA	Community College Workforce Alliance
CRWB	Capital Region Workforce Board (Virginia Career Works, Capital Region)
CVTA	Central Virginia Transportation Authority
DRPT	Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
EMACV	Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FOLAR	Friends of the Lower Appomattox River
GO Virginia	Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity
GRP	Greater Richmond Partnership
GRTC	Greater Richmond Transit Company
LISC	Local Initiatives Support Coalition
PHA	Partnership for Housing Affordability
RRT	Richmond Region Tourism
RRTPO	Richmond Region Transportation Planning Organization
RVA Rising	RVA Rising is a group of non-profit organizations, businesses, regional institutions, civic leaders and others focused on upward economic mobility.
SBDC	Small Business Development Center (Capital Region)
TB5	Thrive Birth to Five
VECF	Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
VEDP	Virginia Economic Development Partnership
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
Virginia Works	Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement
VPRA	Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Regional Strategic Vision

Strategic and Resilient Infrastructure. A region with infrastructure and systems designed and maintained to protect and enhance individual and community health and well-being.

A Healthy Environment. A region with thriving ecosystems - healthy watersheds, clean air, fruitful working lands, flourishing habitats, and communities that are located and planned in ways that recognize the connections between environmental health and human health and well-being.

Attainable Housing. A region with diverse housing stock that makes attainable housing options for everyone that are safe, comfortable, resource-efficient, and built in coordination with available or planned infrastructure and services.

A Strong Economy. A region with a diverse and resilient economic base, an educated and skilled workforce, employment that enables workers to meet their family needs, and communities with the physical, structural and social conditions to support and attract employers, workers and visitors.

Opportunity and Choice for Everyone. A region that engages and collaborates with all voices and creates pathways to success through access to jobs, housing, infrastructure and services, quality education, a healthy environment, and other elements that allow all individuals and families to thrive.



Goal 1: Improve and strengthen local school districts and the early childhood care and education (ECCE) system, to prepare all students with the knowledge and skills they need for a rewarding life and career.

The early childhood care and education and K-12 education systems are foundational for preparing our children to be individuals who can thrive in their working life and as members of our communities. These systems are also key elements that enable caregivers to participate in the workforce and can help to retain and attract individuals and families in the region. A skilled workforce and quality educational institutions are in turn important considerations for the business community; additional aspects of workforce development are covered in the Workforce Development Goal (#2) below.

Strategy 1.1 Support efforts to ensure children from birth to age five have access to affordable, quality childcare.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Track and share data with regional partners on kindergarten readiness, and on childcare program availability (overall provision in the region, geographic gaps, affordability issues, etc.).	Thrive Birth to Five (TB5), PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF)).
B. Compile data and information that could support employers considering providing daycare or partnering with daycare providers or considering benefits that provide subsidies or scholarships. Consider seeking funding for a pilot program.	TB5, Community Stakeholders, PlanRVA, Employers.
C. Work with localities to create resource guides; consider existing regulations and policies that impact childcare providers (zoning requirements, Comprehensive Plans, etc.).	Localities, PlanRVA, TB5, Community Stakeholders.
D. To reduce the ECCE workforce shortage, share information on the low wages issue and investigate solutions.	TB5, Community Stakeholders (e.g., VECF).
E. Support state or regional investigation of approaches used in other states that may be feasible, such as locality-option childcare center property tax credits, or the Michigan Tri-Share Program.	TB5, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., VECF).



Project of Note: In FY26, Thrive Birth to Five is working with Reinvestment Fund on an *Early Childhood Care and Education Gap Analysis*.

Strategy 1.2. Encourage school district investments in programs and curricula that prepare students for success, and community investment in wrap-around services to support students.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Support the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) as it serves as our region’s coordinating entity for the GO TEC program, a talent pathway initiative that introduces middle school teachers to strategic technology and engineering sectors.	Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM), GO Virginia, School Districts, Localities.
B. Support and encourage investment in after-school and summer programs.	School Districts, Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., YMCA, NextUP RVA).

Strategy 1.3. Encourage expansion of secondary school (middle/high school) Career and Technical Education (CTE) and dual degree program opportunities.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Compile and share regional CTE offerings. In coordination with other efforts listed in the Workforce Goal, consider whether additional analysis is needed to determine gaps and possible strategies for adding capacity.	ChamberRVA, CCWA, PlanRVA, School Districts, Localities, Community Stakeholders.
B. Investigate funding through GO Virginia or other sources for implementation.	PlanRVA, Localities, Industry employers

Strategy 1.4. Provide information and opportunities for middle and high school students to learn about regional career options and entrepreneurship.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Consider regional collaboration on internship programs for high school students (e.g. Partnership for the Future Program).	ChamberRVA, School Districts, Community Stakeholders, Non-Profits
B. Support Mission Tomorrow and other similar programs.	ChamberRVA, Community Stakeholders.
C. Share information and collaborate with high school career services staff and counselors.	ChamberRVA, CCWA, Community Stakeholders, Localities, School Districts.

Goal 2: Support the ability of residents to reach their full potential and thrive throughout their working life, and build a workforce with the skills and credentials most needed by employers in the region.

A workforce equipped with the job skills demanded by employers helps individuals and their families thrive and is essential for businesses and industry to be attracted and establish themselves. A key is to identify the demand jobs in the emerging growth sectors that will strengthen the regional economy. This requires careful, but active collaboration among workforce organizations, educators, business and industry through curriculum development, education and training.

Strategy 2.1. Fully harness the workforce ecosystem in partnership with business and industry to provide, create, and expand training programs.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Continue efforts to align and collaborate across the region's workforce ecosystem.	ChamberRVA, Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), Capital Region Workforce Board (CRWB), other Workforce Organizations and Higher Education Institutions (e.g., Virginia Works, RVA Rising), Localities, School Districts
B. Conduct an analysis of existing workforce programs to identify unmet workforce development needs in our region.	ChamberRVA.
C. Explore development of tools to make workforce development resources easier to access and use by workers, businesses, and others.	PlanRVA, ChamberRVA, CCWA, CRWB, other Workforce Organizations
D. Work collaboratively to advance recommendations of the Advanced Pharmaceutical and Information Technology Talent Pipeline Initiative (TPI) studies.	CCWA, ChamberRVA, other Workforce Organizations
E. Support workforce development efforts to prepare the workforce in key areas that support regional goals: target emerging industries and related supporting sectors; construction trades needed for housing construction; occupations needed for clean energy measures (Air Quality Plan); identified high demand/high wage jobs; educators.	ChamberRVA, CCWA, CRWB, other Workforce Organizations (e.g., RVA Rising), Localities

F. If unmet workforce development needs are identified, identify/seek GO Virginia or other funding to address the needs (examples might include TPI assessments in other sectors, program development, curricula development, or facilities and equipment).	Employers, PlanRVA, CCWA, CRWB, other Workforce Organizations, Localities.
G. Support efforts to further AI-readiness in education and workforce development programs.	GO Virginia, ChamberRVA, CCWA, other Workforce Organizations
H. Continue collaborations between organizations, education institutions and businesses (including small businesses) to educate and train students to meet specific workforce needs with a focus on creating on-the-job training and apprentice programs (e.g., industry-led regional sector partnerships, Virginia Works registered apprentice programs).	Employers, ChamberRVA, CCWA, Virginia Works, Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP), Capital Region Workforce Board (CRWB), other Workforce Organizations (e.g., RVA Rising).

Strategy 2.2. Strive to retain area graduates from dual enrollment high school diploma programs, community colleges degree programs, and certificate programs.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Provide information and opportunities for post-secondary students to learn about regional career options, apprenticeships, and internships (e.g., V-TOP program, Virginia Works registered apprenticeship programs, Capital Region Workforce Development Board On-the-Job Training program).	Employers, ChamberRVA, Capital Region Workforce Board (CRWB), Virginia Works, other Community Stakeholders and Workforce Organizations
B. Connect post-secondary students with knowledge about this region's quality of life.	ChamberRVA, other Community Stakeholders (e.g., Richmond Region Tourism (RRT), Venture Richmond, Higher Education Institutions).
C. Support programs to engage young workers and young professional organizations (e.g., HYPE, YRichmond, Leadership Unscripted, Leadership Lab).	ChamberRVA, Venture Richmond, other Community Stakeholders.



Project of Note: The Talent Pathways Initiative for Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing and for Information Technology completed in June of 2025 lays out a clear assessment and action steps for meeting the demands of both priority sectors.

Strategy 2.3. Consider efforts to attract skilled workers in key sectors.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Assess the need for out-of-market recruitment campaigns for certain sectors.	Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP)
B. Assess the relocation incentives used in other states/regions (trailing spouse initiatives , etc.).	VEDP, GRP

Strategy 2.4. Seek to increase workforce participation rates, remove barriers to accessing training and jobs across regional demographic groups, and encourage conditions that enable workers to meet their family needs.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Work to engage and support “second career” workers (retirees, military, federal workforce) and other adult learners.	ChamberRVA, Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), Capital Region Workforce Board (CRWB), other Workforce Organizations (e.g., RVA Rising), Localities.
B. Continue to assess barriers to training and workforce participation generally, as well as within specific sectors with workforce shortages, and continue efforts to reduce or remove identified barriers (e.g. costs for certifications, broadband gaps, information gaps, transportation).	ChamberRVA, CCWA, other Workforce Organizations (e.g., RVA Rising), Localities, other Community Stakeholders
C. Gather, benchmark and share data on wages, poverty, income, and cost of living.	PlanRVA



Project of Note: RVA Rising, a cross-sector coalition of regional organizations working to increase upward economic mobility in the region, is in the process of developing a set of metrics and a data dashboard designed to measure the region’s progress; Chamber RVA is leading the pillar for Rewarding Work.



Project of Note: The RVA Rewarding Work pillar is also serving as an organizing framework for workforce development coordination. As one aspect of this, a Workforce Development Environmental Scan is underway in FY25 to identify unmet workforce development needs.

Goal 3: Build and maintain high-quality and resilient networks of infrastructure throughout the region to meet the needs of communities, workers, and businesses.

For purposes of the CEDS, “infrastructure” is inclusive of physical networks of transportation, utilities (water and sewer, electricity, etc.), telecommunications networks, and stormwater management (both constructed and natural systems). When available and operating well, transportation systems and networks enable people to access jobs, goods and services. Transportation and other infrastructure systems also allow businesses and industries to operate, receive materials and move their goods, and access or receive customers.

Strategy 3.1. Continue to coordinate regionally on transportation project planning and funding, working to enhance freight movement and people’s ability to access jobs with a focus on the economic development areas mapped in this plan and underserved areas.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Support maintenance of, and projects to improve, the region's roadways, as outlined in local and regional plans, such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan and locality Comprehensive and Transportation Plans.	Localities, Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., VDOT, FHWA, RRTPO, CVTA), Community Stakeholders
B. Improve active transportation network connectivity, as outlined in local and regional plans, such as BikePedVA.	Localities, Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., VDOT, RRTPO, CVTA, FHWA), Community Stakeholders (e.g., FOLAR)
C. Encourage investment in railroads for freight and to support existing and expanded inter-regional passenger service, as outlined in rail studies.	Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., VPRA, DRPT, RRTPO, CVTA), Localities
D. Support improvements to Richmond International Airport facilities and services (including expanded inter-regional connections), as outlined in airport master plans and studies.	Localities, Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., Capital Region Airport Commission, RRTPO)
E. Support improvements to Richmond Marine Terminal facilities and services, as outlined in port master plans and studies.	Localities, Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., Virginia Port Authority, RRTPO)

F. Support expansion of fixed route transit services and demand responsive transit services, as outlined in transit service studies such as the Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan.	Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., GRTC and other providers, RRTPO, CVTA, DRPT); Localities; Community Stakeholders.
G. Support efforts to maintain low or no cost transit fares.	Localities; Community Stakeholders; Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., RRTPO, CVTA, GRTC and other providers)
H. Continue working to implement projects that enhance freight movement in the region.	Transportation Agencies and Authorities
I. Improve intermodal freight connectivity by creating better linkages and collaboration between different modes of transport (port, road, rail, and airport).	Transportation Agencies and Authorities
J. Consider conducting a regional Commodity Flow Study.	RRTPO, Community Stakeholders.
K. Support maintaining and improving passenger intermodal connectivity (road, rail, transit, airport) to serve residents and visitors, as outlined in transit and other studies.	Transportation Agencies and Authorities, Localities, Community Stakeholders



Project of Note: The region’s Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), developed by the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO), is an interrelated strategy for effective investment of public funds for multi-modal regional transportation infrastructure. This plan is updated every five years, and the current update is underway with adoption planned for 2026.



Item of Note: Established in 2020 by the Virginia General Assembly, the Central Virginia Transportation Authority (CVTA) allocates regional, local and transit funds to address critical transportation needs. As of April 2024, the CVTA distributed \$340.4 million back to the nine member jurisdictions; distributed \$102.1 million to Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC); and retained \$238.3 million for competitive applications serving priority regional transportation projects.

Strategy 3.2. Support efforts to maintain and improve the region's energy supply and infrastructure.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. To further investigate recent changes to the regional energy picture such as new generation types (solar, nuclear fusion, etc.) and energy-intensive uses such as data centers, consider the development of a regional energy plan.	PlanRVA, Virginia Department of Energy, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Dominion Energy Innovation Center).
B. Support improvements that keep critical facilities and businesses powered during disruptive events.	PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders, Energy Providers (e.g., Dominion Energy)

Strategy 3.3. Support efforts to maintain and improve the region's utility capacity and infrastructure.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. In support of maintaining an adequate, safe and reliable water supply, consider the development of regional water supply plan(s).	PlanRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders.
B. Explore funding sources (state, federal, etc.) to improve water/sewer systems, or extend water/sewer services to areas that align with future growth plans.	PlanRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders.

Strategy 3.4. Support efforts to maintain and improve (coverage areas, speed, etc.) the region's broadband infrastructure.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Assess remaining broadband gaps and possible solutions and funding options, as well as opportunities derived from the region/mega-region's substantial digital infrastructure.	PlanRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders.



Goal 4: Support existing business and industry, and foster the development of start-ups, small-to-medium-sized businesses, and entrepreneurs to build a diverse and innovative economy.

A thriving economy depends on successful and growing businesses across the full spectrum of sizes and sectors. Effective economic growth recognizes the value of focused collaboration across target industries that are already strong or emerging. Greater Richmond Partnership’s 2025 *Target Industry Analysis* identifies Advanced Manufacturing, Corporate Services (such as finance and insurance), Information Technology, Life Sciences, Transportation and Logistics, Defense, and CleanTech (manufacture of components for renewable energy and other clean technologies) as such targets. Other regional or local economic studies have identified a range of additional important sectors, such as tourism. An estimated 76 percent of employers in the region have fewer than ten employees; these small businesses can also drive job creation, innovation, and economic growth and contribute to the diversity and competitiveness of the marketplace.

Strategy 4.1. Work to grow and attract identified target industries and build competitive clusters, and to periodically re-assess industry trends in the region.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Support efforts to attract or expand industries identified in the Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP) Target Industries Analysis, GO Virginia Region 4 Plan, or locality strategies, and to develop industry ecosystems, including consideration of the larger ecosystem necessary for success (such as construction and trades sectors).	Localities, VEDP, GRP, GO Virginia, ChamberRVA, Dominion Energy Innovation Center; Community Stakeholders (e.g., RVA757 Connects, Richmond Region Tourism)
B. Collaborate inter-regionally on target industry efforts (e.g., Advanced Pharma initiatives with the Crater Planning District region, and the I-64 Innovation Corridor with the Hampton Roads Planning District region, etc.).	Localities, GRP, GO Virginia, ChamberRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., RVA757 Connects, Richmond Region Tourism)
C. Support the work of the Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Tech Hub to build strategic partnerships in research and development.	Community Stakeholders (e.g., Private Sector, Alliance for Building Better Medicine, Higher Education Institutions)
D. Strive to update target industry or related studies at regular intervals to ensure new trends and data are considered.	GRP, PlanRVA, ChamberRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders
E. Continue and expand efforts to share regional business and businessperson success stories (website material, events, etc.).	GRP, ChamberRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., StartUp Virginia)

Strategy 4.2. Support site-readiness efforts in appropriate locations, including efforts to advance sites in the VEDP Tiers.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Explore additional approaches to property/infrastructure development that prioritize target and emerging industry use (e.g., public ownership, Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA) akin to Eastern Virginia RIFA).	Localities, VEDP, GO Virginia, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Virginia Resources Authority)
B. Consider bundling some site characterization, acquisition or infrastructure upgrade to promote site readiness.	Localities, PlanRVA, GO Virginia, VEDP
C. Pursue site readiness projects in existing centers, corridors and downtowns and business centers (revitalization, redevelopment, infill).	Localities, PlanRVA, Virginia Main Street program



Item of Note: Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP)'s 2025 Greater Richmond Target Industry Cluster Analysis is a key component of this CEDS. GRP serves as the Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) for Hanover, Henrico, Richmond, Chesterfield.



Project of Note: Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Alliance consisting of the Alliance for Building Better Medicine, Reynolds Community College and the Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA) are leading efforts to build a Workforce and Talent System for the region's growing Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing (APM) and Biotech clusters. The \$3.9 million dollar Good Jobs Challenge grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has accelerated this work. This investment will: 1) Create an APM-Biotechnology intermediary, 2) Launch community-based marketing and outreach to increase workforce participation in APM and Biotechnology, and 3) Scale the region's wrap-around support infrastructure and provide paid work-based learning opportunities to individuals who are enrolled in APM and biotechnology programs at Reynolds, Brightpoint, and CCWA.



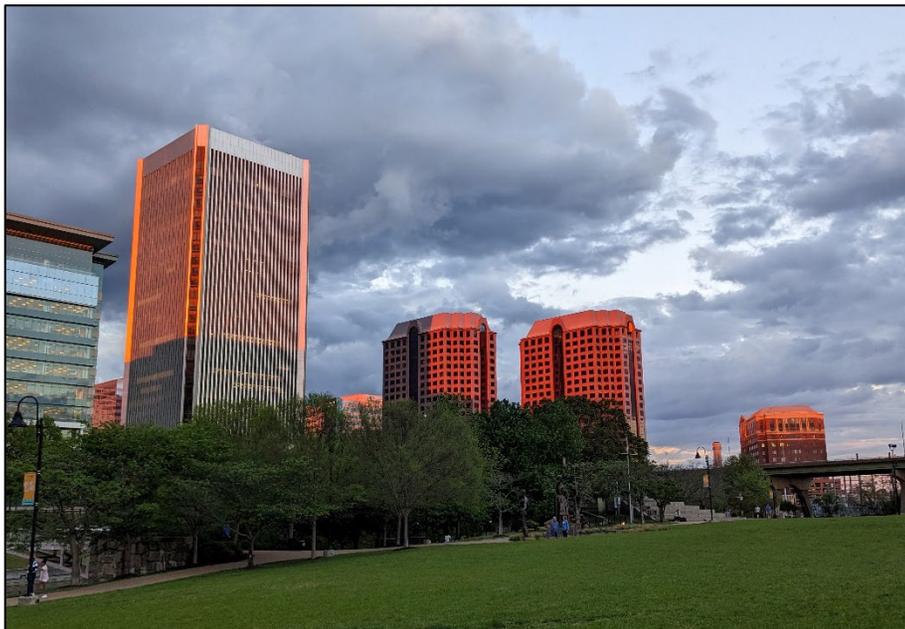
Project of Note: 2025 GO Virginia Growth and Diversification Plan draft identifies the significant advances for Region 4 in building a life science value chain across research, manufacturing and distribution in the Advanced Pharmaceutical sector.



Project of Note: GOVirginia Regions 2, 4 and 9 Project VITAL (Virginia Innovations and Technology Advancements in Life Sciences) led by Activation Capital in collaboration with Cville BioHub and Verge Alliance to establish new research cores, expand workforce development programs, and create a collaborative network connecting academic institutions with industry partners across the Commonwealth's biotechnology corridor.

Strategy 4.3. Support economic growth in other sectors important to the region, including tourism (agritourism, ecotourism, sports tourism, arts and culture, etc.) and agriculture/agribusiness.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Support efforts to implement recommendations outlined in locality economic development strategic plans.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
B. Support efforts to implement recommendations outlined in the Richmond Region Tourism Master Plan and other local, regional and state tourism strategies.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Venture Richmond, Richmond Region Tourism, local chambers of commerce)
C. Pursue additional opportunities to connect regional agricultural products with food/beverage producers, restaurants, and other end users in the region.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Richmond Region Tourism, Virginia State University (USDA), Shalom Farms; Virginia Tech Extension)
D. Encourage use of regional trails (Capital Trail, Fall Line Trail) and other tourism sites to leverage business opportunities.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Richmond Region Tourism, Friends of the Lower Appomattox River, Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, Sports Backers)



Strategy 4.4. Support start-ups, small-to-medium-sized businesses, and entrepreneurs with a focus on supporting communities and businesses in EDA defined distressed geographies and other underserved areas.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Provide support to entrepreneurs and small businesses (concept validation, incubation, accelerator, etc.), including approaches as outlined in the Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative plans or other regional or local strategies.	Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Startup Virginia, 1717 Collective, Small Business Opportunity Center, Capital Region SBDC, Dominion Energy Innovation Center)
B. Share information about existing resources , and continue to look for ways to streamline and provide more direct access to information.	Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Startup Virginia, 1717 Collective, Metropolitan Business League, BizWorks).
C. Support the work of research and higher education institutions to build innovation and entrepreneurship programs and capacity in the region.	Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Higher Education Institutions)
D. Study access to capital across sectors and demographics and consider options for addressing gaps.	Community Stakeholders (e.g., Locus, Bridging Virginia, Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC), 1717 Collective)
E. Support existing mentorship programs and encourage formation of additional opportunities.	Community Stakeholders (e.g., Startup Virginia, Higher Education Institutions, SCORE Richmond)
F. Support activities and events intended to spur collaboration and networking.	Community Stakeholders, Localities
G. Consider reviewing regulations (such as zoning regulations) and processes (such as application processes) to assess if they could be made more accessible.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders



Item of Note: StartUp Virginia which hosts StartUp Incubator, Idea Factory, Entrepreneur Certificate, Entrepreneurial Hub and Investor Hub will be expanding with a second physical incubator location in Henrico in 2026.

Goal 5: Collaborate on efforts to meet key community needs and maintain or improve the region's quality of life.

CEDS survey respondents identified 'Quality-of-life as a key factor for individuals and businesses in their decision to locate or remain in the Richmond region. Quality-of-life encompasses key elements needed for well-being and satisfaction, and correlates closely to all the other CEDS goal areas. The CEDS quality-of-life focus is on diverse housing stock, quality facilities, accessible goods and services, recreational and entertainment options, and clean and healthy natural environment. When housing is affordable and readily available, businesses can better attract and retain a stable workforce. A roof over one's head is essential for quality-of-life and is the basis for economic growth and prosperity.

Strategy 5.1. Support diverse housing options for all income levels.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Work to further the recommendations in Partnership for Housing Affordability's Regional Housing Framework, with particular focus on those that relate to regional collaboration.	Partnership for Housing Affordability (PHA), Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
B. Work with for-profit and non-profit developers of housing to increase the supply, and thereby affordability.	PHA, Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
C. Regional collaboration on housing studies and data (e.g., compilation and sharing of regional housing data).	PHA, Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
D. Information sharing among localities, such as housing tools/best practices that are being used in the region or elsewhere, and how EDAs in the region are involved in housing incentives and tools.	PlanRVA, Localities, PHA, Community Stakeholders
E. Collaboration or information sharing on grant opportunities (e.g., Workforce Housing Investment Program, Southern Crescent Regional Commission grants).	PlanRVA, Localities, PHA, Community Stakeholders
F. Compile and share information with officials and engage with communities about the benefits of additional housing as part of the region's workforce and economic development strategy.	PlanRVA, Localities, PHA, Community Stakeholders; Virginia Housing Alliance
G. Engage employers on housing issues and avenues to partner on solutions.	PlanRVA, Localities, PHA, Community Stakeholders

H. Support efforts to coordinate housing and economic development planning across the region (in rural, suburban, and urban areas), including housing considerations in revitalization of corridors and commercial centers with infrastructure capacity, and mixed-use nodes along transit-corridors.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
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Strategy 5.2. Support investment or reinvestment in downtowns and commercial corridors.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Explore establishing additional business district or corridor organizations that can jointly pursue marketing and coordinated management (e.g., Main Street programs).	Localities, PlanRVA, Virginia Main Street Program, Community Stakeholders (e.g., 1717 Collective)
B. Explore funding opportunities for the adaptive reuse of buildings that will support new businesses and/or allow mixed use redevelopment (where permitted).	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders
C. Pursue placemaking efforts to create attractive destinations for both residents and visitors.	Localities
D. Support planning and investments in active transportation facilities (overlaps with Infrastructure Goal) and other streetscape features.	Localities, Transportation Agencies and Authorities (e.g., VDOT, RRTPO), Community Stakeholders.



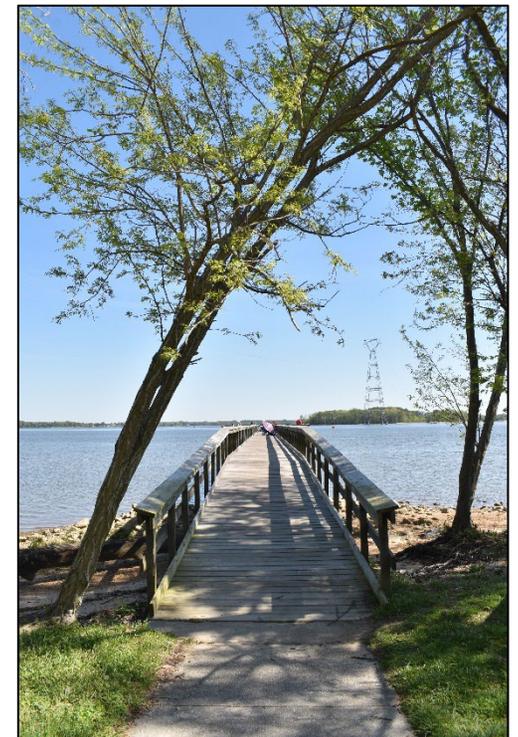
Item of Note: Partnership for Housing Affordability (PHA)’s mission is to “champion policies, developments, and programs for quality affordable housing in the Richmond region.” PHA Regional Housing Framework (for Chesterfield, Richmond, Henrico, Hanover and Ashland, <https://pharva.com/housing-framework/>) is a key regional housing document for the CEDS.



Project of Note: Led by PlanRVA, in partnership with the region’s localities and stakeholders, the 2025 Market Value Assessment (MVA) will provide regional-scale data on the housing market to inform regional and locality policies and practices to build stronger neighborhoods.

Strategy 5.3. Encourage activities and investment that support natural resource protection, recreation facilities and programs, and arts and cultural institutions and programs.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Support the development and implementation of plans to support the protection of key open space, water resources, habitats, historic lands, and other natural resources.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Soil and Water Conservation Districts, State Agencies)
B. Work collaboratively to protect and improve the water quality of waterways in the region.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Soil and Water Conservation Districts, State Agencies)
C. Support planning and investments in context-appropriate active transportation facilities, such as greenways, as outlined in local and regional plans including the regional Pathways to the Future: Natural Resources Plan.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g, Friends of the Lower Appomattox)
D. Invest in the region’s recreation programs, as well as arts and cultural institutions and programs as they help drive the region’s creative economy.	Localities, PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Community Foundation of greater Richmond)



Goal 6: In coordination with hazard mitigation efforts focused on individuals and the larger community, proactively prepare businesses and components of our regional supply chains for possible economic and environmental disruptions.

Economic resilience aims to better prepare regions to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any type of shock, disruption, or stress it may experience. The Richmond region is in an enviable position having a diverse economic base that is not overly dependent on a single industry or sector. Activities that prepare the region to sustain public services and business operations in face of economic downturns, restructuring, or natural disasters are essential.

Strategy 6.1. Educate businesses on potential risks within different parts of our region and collaborate on business preparedness efforts.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Coordinate implementation of Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) recommendations with CEDS strategies.	PlanRVA, Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia (EMACV)
B. Collaborate with the Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia (EMACV) and other groups on business preparedness workshops and distribution of other preparedness resources.	PlanRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders.

Strategy 6.2. Build local/neighborhood-level community capacity to efficiently connect businesses to resources when disruptions occur, and to facilitate business activities that support the community.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Assess the feasibility of Resource/Resilience Hubs within the region, and specifically consider components of the Hubs that could support businesses or workforce development. If appropriate, explore funding opportunities and approaches that have co-benefits for economic development.	PlanRVA, Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., EMACV, 1717 Collective)



Project of Note: On behalf of the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area, PlanRVA is using a FEMA grant to explore and plan for resilience hubs to support vulnerable populations, including the unhoused, before, during, and after emergency events and may become physical locations from which to provide shelter, food and medical care.

Strategy 6.3. To help manage demands on electrical infrastructure and save money on business operations, increase education and awareness of energy opportunities.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Share information on energy efficiency business improvements and electric appliances or machinery.	PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders.
B. Compile and share information with businesses on procedures and incentives for solar roof systems for commercial buildings.	PlanRVA, Community Stakeholders.

Strategy 6.4. Strengthen regional industry supply chains by supporting actions to recycle used materials and build circular supply chains.

Actions	Prospective Partners
A. Encourage and, where feasible, support investigation of circular supply chain opportunities, such as collecting critical minerals from retired digital devices for reuse (supports target IT sector).	PlanRVA, Private Sector, Localities, Community Stakeholders (e.g., Central Virginia Waste Management Authority, Higher Education Institutions, Circular Supply Chain Coalition)



Item of Note: The Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia (EMACV), a coalition of over twenty localities, tribes/sovereign nations, and stakeholder organizations that collaborate on best practices for emergency preparation, response, relief, recovery and mitigation. EMACV has prepared a “Ready Business” toolkit to help businesses develop preparedness programs and plans and collaborates with localities to conduct Disaster Recovery Workshops for Businesses.



Project of Note: Pathways to the Future: Air Quality Plan (anticipated completion Dec. 2025) is a roadmap for the Richmond MSA to become a net-zero, clean economy by 2050. Based on significant input from stakeholders and the public, the plan sets region-wide goals and identifies actionable measures for localities, agencies, industry, and communities to work together to reduce emissions, improve local air quality, and support clean energy workforce development.



Project of Note: In collaboration with Crater Planning District Commission, PlanRVA will begin updating the region’s Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) in 2026 to assess risks and prepare draft mitigation actions essential for local eligibility for disaster funds.

Evaluation Framework

Implementing the strategies and actions in the Action Plan over the next five to ten years will be the work of many partners in the region. Progress on these items will depend on many factors, such as available resources (people, funding, etc.) and locality or partner priorities. In addition to moving forward Action Plan items incorporated into its own work plan, PlanRVA will seek to facilitate progress on the items in the Action Plan by:

1. Where feasible, supporting and collaborating with those listed as prospective partners (and others that may be identified over time) in their work, especially in areas such as data analytics, convening, and communications).
2. Creating a digital CEDS presence that can be refreshed as locality documents or regional plans are updated, and new information relevant to economic development in the region becomes available.
3. Holding an annual meeting of the CEDS Steering Committee to review progress on the items in the Action Plan and facilitate Committee discussion of challenges or opportunities that have, or may, affect the Action Plan.
4. Providing selective data updates, particularly reflecting significant changes to the data included in this plan's Background Information/Appendix A and/or additional data pertinent to the Committee's discussion as listed in item #3. A full data update would occur every five years during the CEDS update.
5. Consulting on a regular basis with key partners involved in implementation, including those partners that are not already Steering Committee members.
6. Collecting and sharing economic performance measure data as listed below to monitor progress (in coordination with partners and RVA Rising).
7. Update the Steering Committee if there are conditions that affect the ability to complete the items above.

Performance Measures

These measures have been selected to capture some of the key economic characteristics of the region. These metrics were selected after considering measures used in the 2014 CEDS; Urban Institute Upward Mobility Dashboard data (which is organized into pillars that include Rewarding Work, High Quality Education, Opportunity-Rich and Inclusive Neighborhoods); and data that will be tracked in conjunction with other regional plans such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Data availability, consistency, and quality have also been a major point of consideration.

The regional RVA Rising effort centered on upward economic mobility across the region will also be tracking data and outcomes that will be relevant to the CEDS. RVA Rising's metrics will draw upon the Urban Institute's Upward Mobility Metrics as one source of information, while also developing a set of metrics specific to this region. This process will extend beyond the CEDS adoption timeline, but in the coming years this metric data will be considered as a complement to the items listed below.

Over time the Performance Measures listed below can be further considered and potentially revised or changed if warranted due to approaches developed during the RVA Rising effort, emerging regional issues, data availability, or other factors.

Goal 1: Improve and strengthen local school districts and the early childhood care and education (ECCE) system, to prepare all students with the knowledge and skills they need for a rewarding life and career.

Performance Measures

- Overall Readiness Benchmark as Measured by Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program.
- Childcare worker wage (Regional).



Goal 2: Support the ability of residents to reach their full potential and thrive throughout their working life, and build a workforce with the skills and credentials most needed by employers in the region.

Performance Measures

- Population with a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Regional percentage of students in Grades 6-12 earning a CTE credential.
- Certifications completed through the Fast Forward program.
- Regional labor force participation rate.



Goal 3: Build and maintain high-quality and resilient networks of infrastructure throughout the region to meet the needs of communities, workers, and businesses.

Performance Measures

- Objectives specified in the Pathways to the Future Transportation Plan (the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan).
 - *Example objective: By 2050, the average jobs and weighted destinations per capita accessible within 30 minutes by all modes (driving, transit, biking, walking) at AM Peak Hour (6:30AM -8:30 AM) will increase by 15%.*
- Share of Income Spent on Transportation (Regional). (This is a metric included in the Urban Institute Upward Mobility Data Dashboard, under the Opportunity Rich and Inclusive Neighborhoods pillar.)
- Amount of region with broadband coverage (download 100 mbps/upload 20 mbps).



Goal 4: Support existing business and industry, and foster the development of start-ups, small-to-medium-sized businesses, and entrepreneurs to build a diverse and innovative economy.

Performance Measures

- GDP Annual Percent Change (Region)
- Average Annual Wage (Region)
- Annual Percent Change in Employment (Region)
- Unemployment Rate (Region)
- Jobs Paying Living Wage (Region) (This is a metric included in the Urban Institute Upward Mobility Data Dashboard, under the Rewarding Work pillar.)
- New Startup Firms
- Supply deficits in sector employment



Goal 5: Collaborate on efforts to meet key community needs and maintain or improve the region's quality of life.

Performance Measures

- Percent housing cost burdened – owner, renter (Region)
- Affordability Index (Ratio of median household income to house sales price at the Census Tract level)
- As Also Listed Under Infrastructure: Objectives specified in the Pathways to the Future Transportation Plan (the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan).



Goal 6: In coordination with hazard mitigation efforts focused on individuals and the larger community, proactively prepare the businesses and components of our regional supply chains for possible economic and environmental disruptions.

Performance Measures

- Objectives specified in the Pathways to the Future Air Quality Report (Air Pollutant Emissions).



Conclusion

The 2025 CEDS process has used data and community input to assess regional strengths and opportunities for growth and improvement. Together, these have informed the Goals, Strategies and Actions in the Strategic Direction/Action Plan. Implementation and progress on the items in the Action Plan will be carried out by a range of partners in the region; the Implementation Framework describes the processes and performance measures will track progress over time.

While all items listed in the Strategic Direction/Action Plan have been identified as important to move forward, the following are Priority Projects for the coming year:

- Childcare Gap Analysis. Lead: Thrive Birth to Five. (Goal 1, Strategy 1.1/Action A)
- Childcare Resource Guides. Partners: Localities/PlanRVA, along with community stakeholders. (Goal 1, Strategy 1.1/Action C)
- Workforce Ecosystem Identification and Analysis. Lead: ChamberRVA (Goal 2, Strategy 2.1/Action B)
- Market Value Analysis (MVA) regional housing assessment. Partners: PlanRVA/New Kent/Localities, along with community stakeholders. (Goal 5, Strategy 5.1/Actions A and C)
- RVA Rising Evaluation Metrics

Priorities in subsequent years will be identified as related plans and studies are completed. Recommendations will be taken to the CEDS Steering Committee as part of the Annual Review.

The CEDS is not just a roadmap for strategic investment in infrastructure and business attraction efforts, but a people-centered plan that recognizes the value of maximizing workforce capacity to benefit individuals, families, and the public and private sectors. The Richmond Region has tremendous potential for continued growth, and the rich partnerships represented here will ensure that data gathering and analysis continues beyond this 2025 CEDS.

