

The Economic Development Authority made significant advancements in marketing Amherst County as a business location, developing sites for business expansions, supporting small business, and navigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

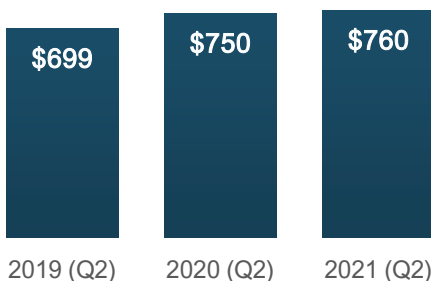
50 Businesses & 17 Nonprofits Assisted \$5,605,000 Grants Awarded & Administered



Economic Dashboard

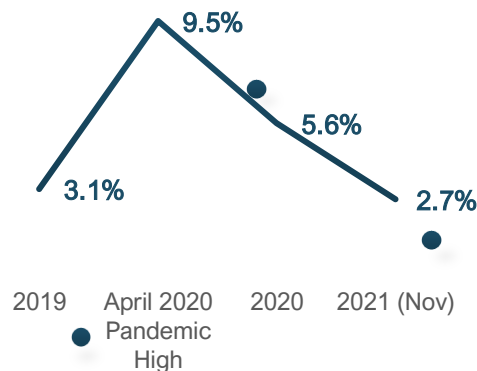
Average Weekly Wages

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



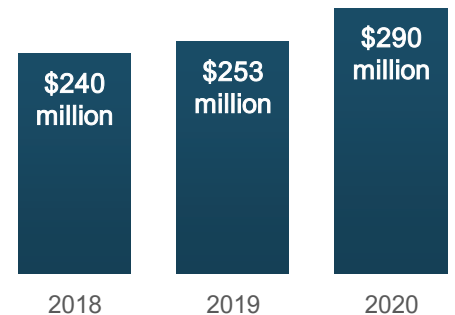
Unemployment Rate

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Taxable Sales

Source: Virginia Department of Taxation



Message from the Chairman



The Economic Development Authority was a pillar of stability during a time of unprecedented uncertainty. The EDA took on a critical role administering pandemic relief funds and grants that helped businesses weather the economic disruption. We provided key communications and guidance to our businesses about financial assistance and support programs. The strength of our organization was evident as it helped our business community navigate the pandemic.

Even though many resources were shifted to recovery, the EDA still succeeded in making progress in key areas of economic development. Companies expanded, new developments opened, sites were prepared, millions in grants were awarded, and the strategic plan was updated. In spite of it being some of the most uncertain economic times in decades, the EDA made significant progress in its mission to promote economic development policies and practices that help retain the

county's existing businesses and employment base, facilitate the growth of existing commercial and industrial enterprises, and attract new businesses and employment opportunities.

Looking forward, the EDA is ready to continue to carry out its mission with the same passion, determination, and diligence that it has over its 18-year history.

Chad Eby, Chairman

EDA Mission

The mission of the Economic Development Authority (EDA) of Amherst County is to promote economic development policies and practices that help retain the county's existing businesses and employment base; facilitate the growth of existing commercial and industrial enterprises; and attract new businesses and employment opportunities. Success in this mission will result in high-quality jobs and a stable and diverse tax base that increases the quality of life of Amherst County residents.

Responding to COVID-19

Many of the EDA's resources in 2019-2021 were devoted to helping businesses, the local government, and our community navigate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through grant administration.

Administered Over \$1.8 million in COVID-19 Relief Grants

- Amherst EDA COVID Grant for Small Businesses
- Awarded first Department of Housing and Community Development COVID Urgent Need Grant in Virginia for \$569,650
- Awarded \$550,000 Department of Housing and Community Development COVID Back in Business Grant
- Managed all Amherst County COVID Grants
 - a. Created and Managed Grant Review Committees to Evaluate Grant Applications
 - b. Created Grant Application Materials
 - c. Publicized Grants
 - d. Worked with Amherst County Finance Director on Financial Compliance

Attracting Business and Facilitating Expansions

The EDA assisted four companies with expansions and new project developments, along with providing more than **50 businesses** with one-on-one guidance and grant applications.

- S&S/Truball entered the Valet Program, a 2-Year International Business Acceleration Program
- ITG entered the Virginia Economic Gardening program, which provides qualifying second-stage companies with custom resources to identify and resolve distinct growth challenges that traditional business assistance and incentives do not address.
- Camp Trapezium, a farm brewery located in the former Amherst Milling Company, opened in June 2021 after four years of effort to save an important landmark.
- Virginia Foam expanded by building a 4,300 SF facility in Amelon Commerce Center
- The EDA responded to an increase in new business development inquiries in 2019 and early 2020 by creating individual marketing proposals for companies.

Waukeshaw/Phelps School Road Project

After four years of intense and complicated redevelopment, the historic Phelps Road School opened as “The Westie,” offering 42 market rate pet-friendly apartments. The former school, was once a place of pride for the community, had fallen into a profound state of deterioration. The \$7 million rehabilitation project retained and restored this historical building, and it has become a unique focal point for the community.

This project was so complicated most developers wouldn't touch it, but with a strong partnership between the EDA, the County, and Waukeshaw Development, the project removed the blight from the neighborhood and brought life back to the abandoned school. It also kicked off the revitalization of the area and added vibrancy to a neighborhood in decline. Amherst County will benefit from the new tax revenue that will be generated by the project and the increase in economic activity from the tenants who will live in the 42 apartments.

Developing Sites and Buildings for Growth

A key strategy to retain growing businesses and attract new companies is to have developed sites and buildings. The EDA made significant progress toward having premier space ready for businesses.

- Awarded a \$3,000,000 U.S. Economic Development Administration grant to construct a 45,000 SF Multi-Tenant Building to attract new and expanding businesses
- Awarded a \$250,000 grant from GO Virginia Region 2 to grade lot #4, the largest in Amelon Commerce Center, to a pad-ready site
- Completed due diligence on the Dillard tract
- Awarded a \$160,000 GO Virginia grant to help pay for the \$500,000 redevelopment plan for the Central Virginia Training Center



The Westie Before



The Westie After

Building Future Community Capacity

The EDA supports a wide range of community capacity building initiatives that help advance economic development.

- Managed financial requests from the county, including: County Bond Modification, Fire Truck Financing, Animal Shelter Bond Financing, and Community Development Block Grant funding for homes in the Old Town Madison Heights
- Madison Heights Master Plan is underway
- Conducted the first joint workshop between the EDA and the Amherst County Sewer Authority to open a dialogue about future development in the county

Board Members

Chad Eby, Chairman, District 2
Dan Sweeney, Treasurer, District 5
Patrick Dreher, At-Large
Shelly Hunt, District 4

Calvin Kennon, Jr., District 3
Andrew Proctor, District 1
Michael Russell, At-Large
Ella Lewis, Youth Representative



Chad Eby



Shelly Hunt



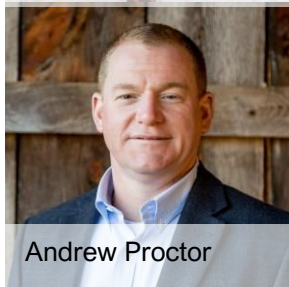
Dan Sweeney



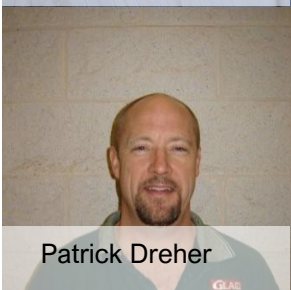
Calvin Kennon



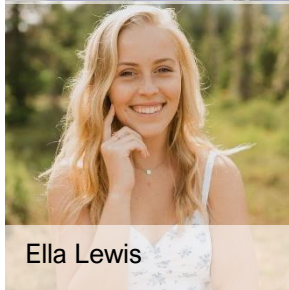
Michael Russell



Andrew Proctor



Patrick Dreher



Ella Lewis

Developing the Workforce for the Future

Retaining, developing, and attracting talented workers is the number one issue of all businesses today. The EDA continued to work with Amherst County Public Schools, Central Virginia Community College, and workforce development partners to advance business and education partnerships to forge new education and training programs.

Setting the Future Course for Economic Development

The EDA completed a major update to the EDA's Economic Development Strategic Plan that set the course for 2022-2025.



Space for Businesses to Grow



Business Startup, Retention & Expansion



Education & Workforce Development



Marketing & Communications



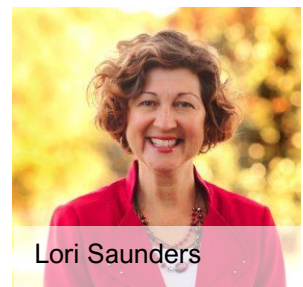
Allied Initiatives

Staff

Victoria Hanson, Executive Director
Lori Saunders, Assistant Director



Victoria Hanson



Lori Saunders