



20

discover. connect. achieve.

13

Virginia's Gateway Region
Annual Report



Table of Contents

Greetings 2	Our Mission 4	Discover 6	Connect 12
Achieve 16	Regional Dashboard 20	Global Marketing 26	

Message from the Chairman



J. Peter Clements

With the publishing of our 2013 annual report, we reflect on how the regional economic development team, partners, and communities have worked in unison to assist businesses. We actively support a growth strategy that our regional leaders and partners previously committed to in “2011- Driving Regional Growth– Embracing a Global Future.” We believe partnerships are our most valuable resource and your partnership is invaluable to the team and the organization as a whole. We are relationship-oriented and focused on working with companies to find solutions to solve their issues. We are committed to making a difference at the regional level to convey greater impact for our communities, partners, and citizens.

This year, VGR assisted 53 diverse companies evaluating the region for a business location, and participated in several domestic and international attraction initiatives around the world. I am pleased to say that by working together, the region saw an addition of 1,676 new jobs, bringing capital investment of more than \$384 million in a challenging economy.

I personally appreciate your corporate as well as

individual commitment to the mission of creating jobs and building a robust economy for tomorrow. You, our partners, are the key to a prosperous future for the region. Together, we can compete globally for emerging technology jobs, advanced manufacturing, and other growth opportunities that will open the door for wealth, education, and advancement for the region and all of its citizens.

Moving ahead into the new year, we are committed to taking our effort to an all-time high and sincerely look forward to working with each of you to make great things happen. It is the total effort of all of the team members of Virginia's Gateway Region that will continue to make our region successful in attracting the right kind of investment to make the future brighter for all of us. For those of you who are on the team once again, a heartfelt thank you. For those of you who are considering joining us, we trust this report detailing our successes will help you make a commitment to invest in your community to make the Gateway Region a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Sincerely,

J. Peter Clements
Board Chairman

“The organization focused on ‘big picture’ objectives to meet the metrics set forth by our partners. We continue to be regionally focused and globally competitive.”

-Renee Chapline



Message from the President & CEO



Renee Chapline

Discover. As we look ahead, VGR will both pursue familiar routes and pioneer untraveled paths. We will maintain and augment our core work in business development, while enhancing relationships with global allies that create partnership opportunities to broaden the outreach of the organization. We will uphold and redefine our expert research competencies, building on our market intelligence program and advising state leaders on economic development programs. We will forge plans with community leaders to design regional initiatives that support workforce development to sustain existing industry growth and attraction of new companies. We will push our edge in marketing and communications, diving deeper into the technological side of our online platforms while also exploring the viability and appetite for robust branding for the region and state. VGR leaders, communities, and partners are in the business of leading and taking risks when others can't or won't, and we gladly do this if the end result is the betterment of the communities we serve.

Connect. The organization focused on ‘big picture’ objectives to meet the metrics set forth by our partners. We continue to be regionally focused and globally competitive. In 2013, the VGR team launched a new, innovative website that differentiates us

from peer groups across the U.S. We secured half of our private-sector revenue in three and five-year commitments, further extending resources to critical, strategic initiatives. These are just a few of the many successes that we attribute to your leadership and support. These are the benchmarks of progress that energize our momentum.

Achieve. It is equally challenging for VGR to remain relevant in our industry and among location decision makers as it is to stay germane in the market and among you, our investors. We have developed successful partnerships with UBFRANCE, SelectUSA, and continue to foster relationships with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and other partners that provide the best referral base for our organization to deliver business consulting services that we continuously strive to improve. We have been successful in aligning our program of work with the engagement of our communities and private-sector partners, and as we evolve to stay ahead of the game, so too must our ability to remain accessible and credible. We are keenly aware of not only striking this balance, but also maintaining and strengthening it, and you have our commitment that we will always work on your behalf, for the economic benefit of the region. You are the key to our success.

Thank you for your continued leadership and support,

C. Renee Chapline

Renee Chapline
President & CEO

Our Mission

Virginia's Gateway Region exists to enhance economic development opportunities for the cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, and Petersburg, and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex. VGR is a private, nonprofit organization that is publicly and privately funded to facilitate new business opportunities, work with existing businesses, advance resources that will enhance the economic viability of the region, and foster regional cooperation among the public and private entities that are involved in economic development activities.

2013 Board of Directors

Chesterfield County

Steve A. Elswick
James V. Daniels

Colonial Heights

C. Scott Davis
Charles Townes, II

Hopewell

George S. Elder
Christina Luman-Bailey

Petersburg

Horace Webb
Winston T. Sanders

Dinwiddie County

Milton Hargrave, Jr.
Daniel D. Lee

Prince George County

J. Peter Clements
William Robertson, Jr.

Surry County

Ernest L. Blount
John O. Newby

Sussex County

J. Rex Davis
Raymond L. Warren

At Large

Victor K. Branch
Lynn F. Jacob
J. Tolleison Morris, VI
Robert C. Walker
Dr. Robert Turner, Jr.
D. Ray Trevillian

Officers

J. Peter Clements - Chairman
Victor Branch - V. Chairman
Lynn F. Jacob - Secretary
C. Scott Davis - Treasurer

Operational Team



Renee Chapline

President & CEO



Lauren Hogge

Executive Assistant



Tim Graves

Research Manager



Rachel Balsley

Marketing &
Communications
Associate



Emily Salmon

Business Development
Manager [Part-Time]

Partners... thanks to you!



Banks & Credit Unions

BB&T
Bank of America
Bank of McKenney
Fort Lee Federal Credit Union
M&T Bank
Peoples Advantage Federal Credit Union
The Bank of Southside VA
Virginia Commonwealth Bank
Virginia Credit Union
Wells Fargo

Finance & Insurance

Dixon Hughes Goodman, LLP
Jacobs Financial Group
Ligon Jones Insurance Companies
Mitchell, Wiggins, & Company, LLP
William H. Talley & Son, Inc.

Chambers of Commerce

Colonial Heights
Chesterfield County
Dinwiddie County
Hopewell/Prince George
Petersburg
Surry County
Sussex County

Communities

City of Colonial Heights
City of Hopewell
City of Petersburg
Chesterfield County
Dinwiddie County
Prince George County
Surry County
Sussex County

Manufacturing & Distribution

Boar's Head Provisions
Gerdau Ameristeel
Goya Foods
Hill Phoenix
Service Center Metals
United Parcel Service

Automotive

Leete Tire & Auto Center, Inc.
Strosnider Chevrolet

Architecture & Engineering, Construction & Technical Services

Atlantic Constructors, Inc.
Baskervill
Bowman Consulting
Draper Aden Associates
ECS-Mid Atlantic, LLC
Froehling & Robertson, Inc.
Harlan Construction Company, Inc.
Hourigan Construction
KBS, Inc.
Rudy L. Hawkins Electrical Contractor, Inc.
The Hollingsworth Companies
Townes, PC
Vanesse Hangen Brustlin

Real Estate Development, Sales, & Leasing

Apartment Connection
Colliers International
Dominion Commercial
Ford Agency
High Street Lofts, LLC
Hometown Realty Services
Ingram & Associates
Parr & Abernathy Realty, Inc.
Porter Realty
Roslyn Farm Associates, LLC
Roslyn Farm Corporation
Specter Properties
Weinstein Properties

Foundations

The Cameron Foundation

Education & Training

John Tyler Community College
Richard Bland College
Virginia State University

Legal

The Nolte Law Firm, PC
Williams Mullen

Professional Services

Advantastaff
Boitnott Visual Communications
Boulevard Flowers
Country Club of Petersburg
J.T. Morris & Son, Inc.
Networking Technologies & Support
Owen Printing Company
The Progress-Index
Wilkinson Advertising Promotions
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Health Care

Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center
Crater Vision Center
HCA Richmond Division (John Randolph Medical Center)
Southside Regional Medical Center

Utilities

Columbia Gas of Virginia
Dominion Resources Services
Mid-Atlantic Broadband
Old Dominion Electric Cooperative
Prince George Electric Cooperative
Southside Electric Cooperative

Individuals

M. Dale Bradshaw
Renee Chapline
C. Scott Davis
George S. Elder
Kimberly & Robert C. Garey
Milton Hargrave, Jr.
Lynn F. Jacob
William A. Robertson, Jr.
Winston T. Sanders
Larry C. Tucker
Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Walker
Cleveland A. Wright
Earnest H. "Bud" Yerly, Jr.
Wes Baskerville
J. Peter Clements
Fraternal Order of Eagles, Aerie #882



To successfully fulfill the commitment made to partners and meet the metrics set forth in 2011 by regional leadership, Virginia's Gateway Region goes beyond the borders of its three cities and five counties. Its outreach is global and partnership with stakeholders is strategic, involving a tactical marketing plan that positions the region as a unique opportunity for business. The business location message is the theme promoted by VGR and its partners. This region is differentiated by game-changing primary assets and a central location in the U.S., with access to a talented, innovative workforce unparalleled anywhere. Relationships established by VGR's team, corporate partners, regional leaders, and stakeholders create a global marketing force to be reckoned with.

VGR Tours the Port of Virginia

In November, regional leaders and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership toured the Port of Virginia. The Port of Virginia is the only port on the East Coast that can handle the world's largest container ships today. This will provide plenty of opportunities in the years to come with the Panama Canal expansion, allowing the largest container ships to pass through. This will increase port traffic in the Port of Virginia, creating a multiplier impact at the Port of Richmond and a much-needed boon for Virginia's economy. This, combined with the potential Route 460 expansion, will put a bull's-eye on the Gateway Region for business development opportunities. "[The port investments] will keep us on the forefront and in the driver's seat for moving product on the East Coast to the Midwest. Legislation is being presented to offer tax incentives to any business located in the state that ships product out of the Port of Virginia," said Nicholas Walker of Roslyn Farm Corporation. When it comes to business development, access is everything and the Gateway Region is positioned well with access by sea, rail, road, and air!

“[The port investments] will keep us on the forefront and in the driver’s seat for moving product on the East Coast to the Midwest. Legislation is being presented to offer tax incentives to any business located in the state that ships product out of the Port of Virginia.”

- Nicholas Walker, Roslyn Farm Corporation



VGR Hosts Global Logistics Forum

In May, VGR hosted the 2013 Global Logistics Forum in partnership with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and UPS. The forum was designed to provide participants with unique ideas and opportunities to slash costs from their bottom lines. In the first half of the forum, held at Virginia State University, an overview of global logistics and how it impacts businesses in Virginia was explained by logistics experts Warren Hammer of the VEDP; Barry Johnson of the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Logistics Systems; Eric McDonald of the U.S. Commercial Services of the U.S. Department of Commerce; and Kevin Hughes of UPS. The second half of the forum consisted of interactive working sessions led by subject matter experts in retail, professional and consumer services, industrial manufacturing, and small business. The case studies showed participants how they could impact their business's bottom line, from the board room to the shipping dock and every process in between.



"We look forward to continuing our efforts and partnership with VGR to provide our customers with the tools, solutions, and expertise to accomplish their business objectives."

- Kevin Hughes, UPS

SelectUSA 2013 Investment Summit

VGR recently joined a delegation of nine Virginia organizations at the inaugural SelectUSA Investment Summit in Washington, D.C. The goal was to promote the state as the prime spot for international trade and investment. Hosted by the Department of Commerce, the summit connected top-level corporate executives and investors from the U.S., and around the globe, with the nation's economic development organizations.

The two-day conference welcomed more than 1,000 attendees from nearly 60 international markets, 47 U.S. states, three U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. Featured speakers included U.S. President Barack Obama; U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker; U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry; Bill Simon, president and CEO of Walmart U.S.; and Parker Harris, cofounder of Salesforce.com.

Direct investment in the U.S.— from foreign and domestic firms — is a critical factor in economic growth and job creation. In 2012 alone, the U.S. attracted more than \$160 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI), making it the world's top destination for FDI. In 2011, foreign-owned companies in the U.S. were responsible for employing 5.6 million U.S. workers.

As the region's workforce development initiatives support advanced manufacturing and emerging technology skill sets, organizations such as SelectUSA provide forums for companies around the world to explore the possibilities of U.S. expansion or relocation. VGR will be there to engage and connect with these leaders to offer solutions for their capacity needs.



Above: U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker



* Photos courtesy of CommerceGov Flickr photostream

Above: U.S. President Barack Obama
Below: U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry



Fun Foods Spur Regional Opportunities

VGR put boots on “Bay Area” ground to promote the region at Fancy Foods West in San Francisco, seeking out specialty foods companies with expansion plans on the front burner, and shared a “taste-test” of the region’s location advantages. This marketing trip provided the opportunity to learn about new products and growing trends in the industry, from organic and gluten-free to grocery delivery. The best of the best in the food industry were presented with information on a strategic location on the East Coast within Virginia's Gateway Region. A team of professionals from the Virginia Department of Agriculture partnered with VGR to bring resources to clients, presenting a dynamic business case for locating facilities in Virginia.



Entrepreneur 'Nurse Nicole' Educates Young Girls

Nicole Brown, a registered nurse with a Master of Science in Nursing, launched her business two years ago when her daughter asked, "Mom, what do you do at work?" While working as a nurse, Brown gained an understanding of just how valuable education and creating positive role models is for young girls. Through books, DVDs, and dolls, that's exactly what she is setting out to do.

After attending educational programs and receiving mentoring from the **Gateway Center for Enterprise**, Brown has jump-started her business and made many strides in making "Nurse Nicole" a household name. She has two books about the adventures of Nurse Nicole, titled "N is for Nurse" and "Wash Your Hands," that have sold throughout Central Virginia. Her books are also available on Amazon in print and Kindle versions, on Barnes & Noble online, and on her own website.

Brown is supported through the Women's Economic Empowerment Project Partnership, an Enactus program sponsored by Walmart that empowers women by providing entrepreneurial and workforce skills through the Enactus teams. This partnership is a unique opportunity to galvanize women to contribute to their



Nicole Brown

"Over 2/3 of all entrepreneurs expect to recruit new employees for their companies in 2014."

-Jim Turley, Ernst and Young CEO

families' financial success. Brown is in the beginning stages of fulfilling a purchase order with Walmart so she can begin selling her products on a national level and growing her business.

Dorothy Jaekle, a member of the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors and Virginia's Gateway Region Board of Directors, stated, "We are committed to supporting entrepreneurial development in the region and we are pleased that Nicole is growing her company in Chesterfield County."

Connect

Virginia's Gateway Region is continually evaluating new ways to adapt to a changing economy and provide meaningful outreach and feedback to partners, clients, and regional leaders. The organization finds innovative ways to create jobs, facilitate partnerships, and foster economic opportunity for its communities and partners. In 2013, VGR was behind multiple new endeavors including the launch of a Brokers' Breakfast series, discussions with regional stakeholders about the need to create a pathway for future leaders, and conducting leadership surveys evaluating interest levels of young leaders. VGR is especially grateful to the involved colleges and universities, Chambers of Commerce, community partners, and corporate partners for their support.

Russian Ambassadors Urge Trade & Acquisitions

Возможность, or as we say in English "opportunity," knocked this spring when VGR and Virginia State University hosted a delegation of Russian graduate business students,

a former Russian Ambassador and a follow up delegation of Russian business leaders seeking to facilitate trade and industry growth. Interest continues with some of the representatives regarding possible collaboration and assistance for market expansions.



Brokers' Breakfast

At Virginia's Gateway Region, we engage with the commercial real estate community routinely to support requests from clients around the world. This year, to enhance regional collaboration between partners, communities, and VGR, the first meeting of the series was held for conversation about opportunities for the region. This brought together brokers from around the region to present development trends in a rapidly changing real estate market. These meetings bring real estate professionals face-to-face with the region's economic development professionals, ensuring the full array of ideas and opportunities are captured.

Building Transformative Youth Leadership

Assess. Educate. Connect. Engage. Virginia's Gateway Region is doing just that when it comes to understanding the barriers that college students and young professionals face regarding leadership, philanthropic opportunities, and making a difference in the region. VGR's leadership recognizes a void in the region and the opportunity and need to engage young leaders, support their development, and assist them in connecting with opportunities for corporate and civic engagement. To address these issues and cultivate a program to identify, groom, and develop this cohort, VGR called out to the region's young professionals through social media outlets and other digital survey mechanisms in conjunction with focus groups to understand what opportunities would be most useful to the up-and-comers.

VGR utilized interns from Virginia State University and Virginia Commonwealth University to conduct a needs assessment, surveying college students and young professionals in the region, and produced a white paper identifying the steps necessary to institute a young leadership program locally. The findings and program framework will be presented in early 2014 to the communities, key business professionals- both academic and corporate partners- business associations, and nonprofit leaders. VGR received a Building Collaborative Communities grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to fund this explorative endeavor.



The Gateway Center for Enterprise

2013 offered several new opportunities to bring together resources to create an ecosystem of entrepreneurial growth for the region. Along with essential regional partners, the Gateway Center for Enterprise launched in July, making VGR ground zero for entrepreneurs looking for a business mentor willing to lend advice and commit time to individuals to avoid the pitfalls of a start-up. Thus far, the Gateway Center has gained a strong following and has impacted many local entrepreneurs seeking assistance.

The kick-off event was a great success, with standing-room-only attendance comprised of rising entrepreneurs, regional leaders, and area media. The program supports export growth by assisting with new and emerging market development to grow the local economy. "Just as it takes a village to raise a child, a community of seasoned business professionals can foster a successful small business," wrote The Progress-Index in a highlight about the successful opening. That is the idea behind the new program, to pool resources and grant access to next-level support in launching a new business or increasing revenue for an existing one.



**"This partnership allows us to offer entrepreneurial mentoring to people that want to be in control of their own financial destiny by acting upon creative ideas that can reap personal rewards for themselves and create jobs for the community."
- Renee Chapline, VGR President & CEO**



Achieve

Virginia's Gateway Region Economic Development Organization is supported by more than 100 corporate and community partners that share a common interest in the success of the region. It is a team committed to facilitating partnerships for regional prosperity for all citizens. VGR is a public-private partnership that leverages the strengths of the region's talent, small and large businesses, research and academic institutions, and international connections to ignite and spearhead economic growth, ensuring a sustainable future for the region. It is committed to paving the way for existing companies to thrive and cultivate an environment to attract the world's leading companies to the five-county, three-city region.

Regional Wins

Marten Transport

Chesterfield County

In February, Wisconsin-based Marten Transport announced expansion plans for its Chesterfield County terminal. The expansion will yield the creation of 127 jobs and \$11.7 million in capital investment.

Marten Transport, Ltd. is a premier supplier of time- and-temperature sensitive transportation services providing service nationwide as well as to Canada and Mexico. Marten Transport currently owns and operates 11 terminals; the Chester terminal's strategic location at the midpoint of the East Coast, provides customers unparalleled access to major markets.

Nelson Westerberg

Dinwiddie County

Another win for Dinwiddie County: Nelson Westerberg. The company provides moving, storage, and relocation services for corporations, families, the government, and military. Considering its specialization in moving, the company had no problem transitioning into an 82,000 square-foot facility in Dinwiddie County, adding 75 new jobs at its sixth facility in North America. This region is a strategic location, for logistics companies such as Nelson Westerberg.

Service Center Metals

Prince George County

Service Center Metals established its presence in Prince George County in 2003 and has expanded twice since. The company's CEO received the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award and was honored as a Virginia Chamber "Fantastic 50" winner, and most recently received a Resilience Award for manufacturers from the Initiative for Business in Society at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. Today, Service Center Metals employs 122 people with annual revenue of \$145 million. In 2013, the company celebrated 10 years with a groundbreaking event to highlight an 84,000 square-foot expansion that added a compact remelt plant. With this expansion, the company will be able to recycle scrap from its own processes, increasing production efficiencies, with end results faster than competitors. The new site will be operational spring 2014.

The Kroger Co.

Colonial Heights

The first Kroger to be built in the Tri-Cities is planned to replace the former courthouse on Temple Avenue. On the 9.5-acre lot, the 90,000 square-foot grocery store will have a nine-pump fuel center and drive-thru pharmacy. The \$20 million capital investment is anticipated to generate about 200 jobs and is scheduled to open in the summer of 2015.

Amsted Rail

Petersburg

Chicago-based Amsted Rail announced the expansion of its Petersburg operations in February. With more than 100 years in the industry, Amsted is a leading manufacturer and supplier of railroad freight car undercarriage, end-of-car systems, and components for the world's most significant railroad markets. The project will include \$37.5 million in capital investment and the creation of 104 jobs in the region.

Dick's Sporting Goods

Colonial Heights

Area sports enthusiasts can rejoice- Dick's Sporting Goods opened its doors in Colonial Height's Southpark Mall in July. The largest U.S. based full-line sporting goods retailer opened its 25th Virginia store and first in the region with a three day long extravaganza including Virginia Commonwealth University alum and Utah Jazz basketball player Eric Maynor. After opening in the former Dillard's location, Dick's Sporting Goods created approximately 70 jobs in the region.

2013 Results

Project Activity

New Projects: **53**
Visits: **20**
Properties Evaluated: **178**

Lead Generation

Research Requests: **1,464**
Outreach Initiatives: **364**
Corporate Meetings: **299**

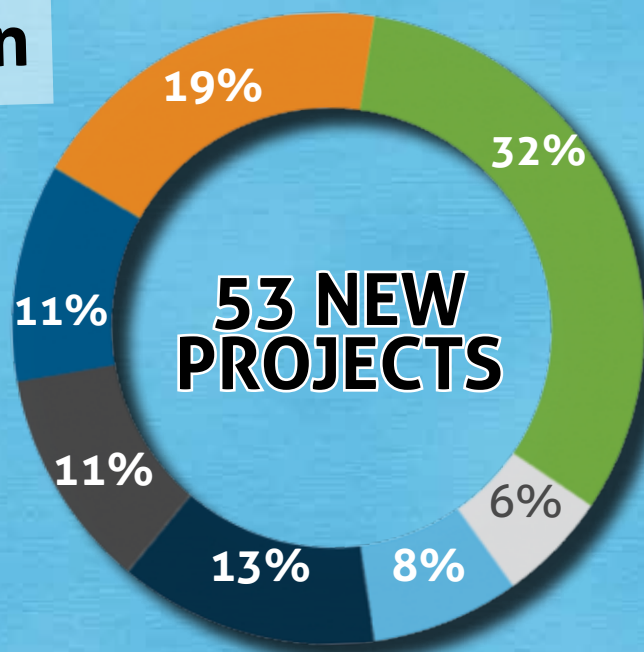
Announcements

Region: **15**
Payroll Impact: **\$55.3 million**

Business Development

Stakeholder Participation: **615**
Public Speaking Engagements: **26**
Corporate Appointments: **311**
Business Attraction Programs: **24**

New Project Composition



G2 Results: Years 1-3

New Business



1,676

112% of goal

jobs created

Existing Business



892

127% of goal

\$384M

77% of goal

capital investment



277% of goal

\$415M



companies assisted

6 out of **15**

programs

148% of goal

148

Global Marketing

29

International
Companies
Assisted

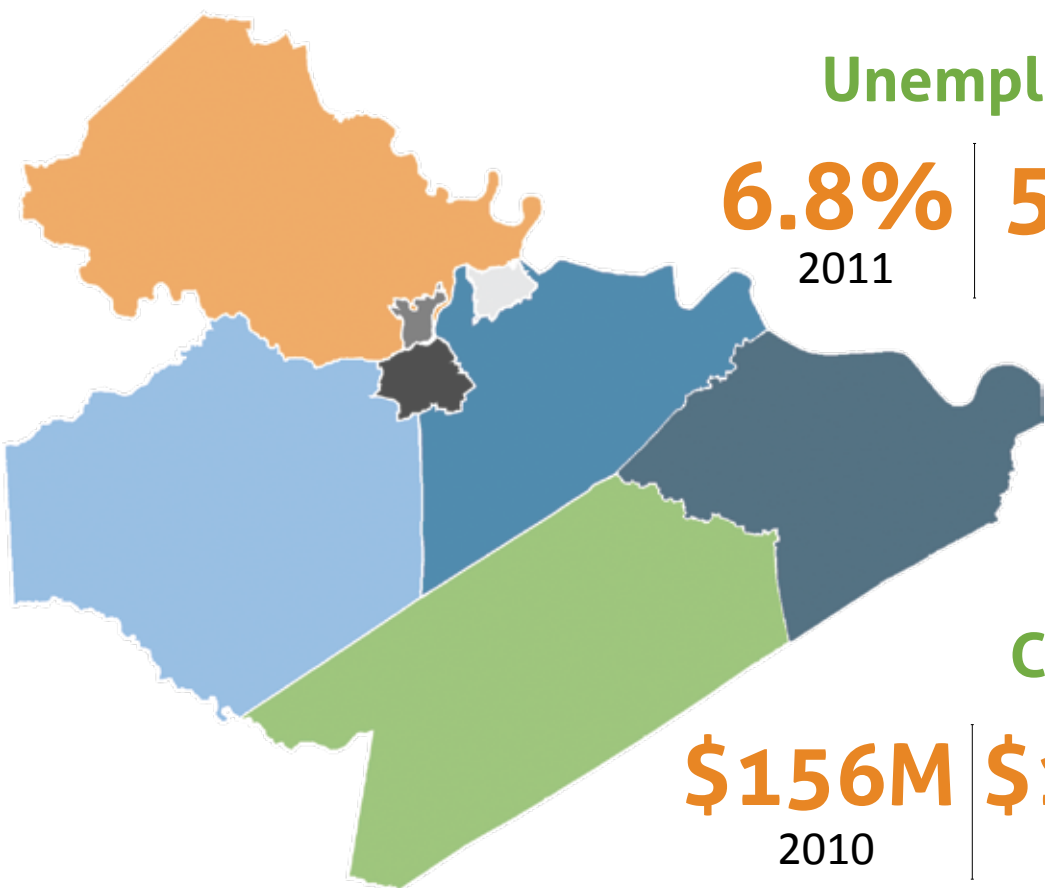
290% of goal

International
Marketing
Campaigns

32

160% of goal

Regional Dashboard



Unemployment Rates

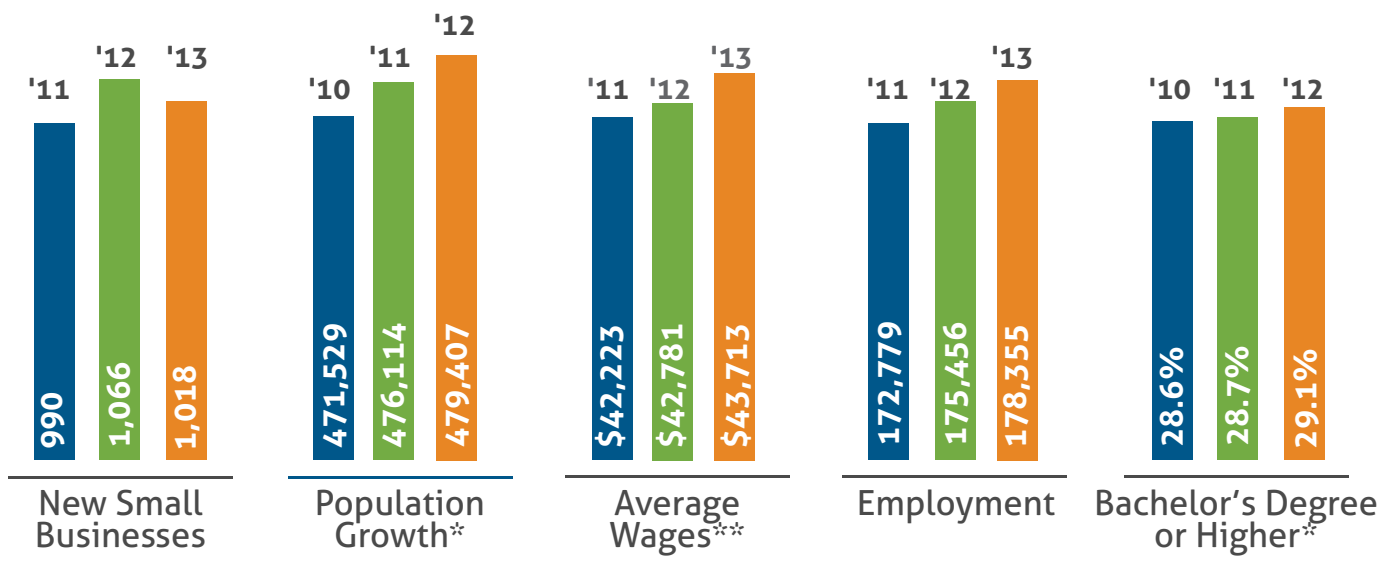
6.8% | **5.9%** | **5.8%**
2011 | 2012 | 2013

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Residential Building Permits Construction Value*

\$156M | **\$143M** | **\$211M**
2010 | 2011 | 2012

*2013 data unavailable
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



* 2013 data unavailable | **Data for 2nd quarter of each year
Sources: Census Bureau & Bureau of Labor Statistics

A Beacon with a New Life

Hopewell

Built in 1928 as a silent movie and Vaudeville show palace, the Beacon Theatre in downtown Hopewell was a first-class playhouse hosting the likes of Lash LaRue, a popular cowboy film persona who later taught Harrison Ford how to use a bullwhip in the Indiana Jones movies. By the 1950's the theatre was primarily a movie house, where many young sweethearts met for date night. However, by 1981 the theatre sat vacant.

The theatre's recent renovation has been a long time coming. The historic rehabilitation took place over several decades, first with a remodeling of the reception area and grand ballroom and then the restoration of the Art Deco architectural details. The final phase was completed in December, when the city put the finishing touches on the 650-seat auditorium. In January 2014, the Beacon's first performance in 33 years took place in front of a sold out crowd. Thanks to public and private efforts, the newly polished theatre is poised to become an entertainment asset not only to Hopewell, but to the entire region.



Beacon Theatre



Hopewell

Golf Course Gets New Lease

Prince George County

After a tough year of bankruptcy and foreclosure, the Prince George Golf Course has found a few new owners and some salvation. The 113-acre course located about 12 miles south of Petersburg was purchased in November by George Emerson and several partners. In order to give new life to the course, Rick Bealert has taken over as general manager and head golf professional. According to Bealert, "This will have a very positive impact on



Prince George Gold Course Patrons

this area in the county. The renovated bunkers and clubhouse, along with extensive work on the greens, have been completed. The Prince George Golf Course is very user-friendly and we will actively seek to bring in more outside tournaments."

The course's makeover included adding a fleet of 50 golf carts, \$30,000 in renovation costs to the pro shop, as well as seeding, fertilizing, and additional work on the greens. The renovated, 18-hole course is open to the public and offers daily and annual memberships.

Chesterfield County



Berry Farm Boosts Agritourism

Chesterfield County

This year, the popular pick-your-own produce and family activities farm The Chesterfield Berry Farm opened a retail store, making it easier for customers to purchase a wide range of goods from fresh fruit, to jellies and jams, dressings, and seasonal decorations.

The USDA defines agritourism and recreational services as farm or winery tours, hay rides, hunting, or fishing. Agritourism showed strong growth in Virginia as income from agritourism and farm-related recreation increased to \$12.9 million in 2007 from \$2.7 million in 2002 — an average 37 percent growth per year, according to the USDA's farm census. By comparison, overall farm income in the state grew only 7 percent a year during that period.

The Chesterfield Berry Farm supports the growing industry of agritourism, engaging in planting, picking, packing, and production of fresh products for its retail store. The farm attracts numerous visitors from around the state for family activities like hayrides and pig races. The retail store is just another berry in the Chesterfield Berry Farm bucket, adding to a story of business growth at a great regional agritourism amenity.



Triple R Ranch Meats

Dinwiddie County

Do you know where your food comes from? With news of national food recalls and outbreaks of foodborne illness, that question is being asked more frequently these days. The Jones family, which has farmed 175 acres in Dewitt, Dinwiddie County since 1933, previously grew traditional row crops like corn, soybeans, and tobacco. However, they have switched to raising Black

Angus cattle due to the changing times and necessity — they couldn't find or afford to buy pasture raised/non-genetically modified organism (GMO-free) grain finished beef products over the Internet. Triple R Ranch operates a farm store that sells the premium beef products to the public and embraced the growing trend of agritourism by hosting its first annual cook-off in June.

Mega-Site Expansion Broadens County Opportunities

Sussex County

Sussex County continued its comprehensive, community-based economic development efforts this year by working with Virginia's Gateway Region, Crater Planning District Commission, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and other state and regional partners to complete its first economic development plan. As part of this effort, and to compliment its three publicly owned



Sussex County Officials

industrial sites, the County purchased a second tract at the Sussex County Mega-site, a 1,000 acre expanse, with direct access to rail and U.S. 460, as well as water, sewer, and electricity all on site.

According to County Administrator Thomas E. Harris, "The citizens of Sussex believe that this exceptional industrial site, which sits strategically between Richmond and Hampton Roads and within 500 miles of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Atlanta, is well worth the public investments due in part to its close proximity to I-95, I-295, I-64, US-460, and all points North, South, East or West." Sussex is zoned and designed to attract industries and businesses who want to have direct rail or truck access to the Port of Virginia, as well as complementary businesses to the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing, the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Logistics, or the Mid-Atlantic Advanced Manufacturing Center. The Sussex County Mega-site offers a most unique and strategically located commerce center in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and is officially open for business!



Sussex County

Marina Acquisition to Boost County Recreation

Surry County

In October, Surry County acquired new land that will lead to increased recreational use of the James River for both residents and tourists. The county bought Gray's Creek Marina, allowing it to develop the land to provide waterfront access for the first time in its history. The county received a \$100,000 grant from Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to purchase the marina, giving them a cumulative 23 miles of shoreline along to the James River. Potential uses for the marina site include a boat ramp and water access, hiking, fishing, camping and picnicking facilities, habitat observation, and more.



Appomattox River



Colonial Heights Courthouse



Petersburg Old Towne Train Station

Global Marketing Outreach



January

Fancy Foods West - California
California Marketing Mission

February

California Marketing Mission

April

Ohio Marketing Mission
Texas Marketing Mission
Washington Marketing Mission

March

Russia Marketing Event

May

Russia Marketing Event
Georgia Marketing Mission

June

Southeast Marketing Mission
Midwest Marketing Mission

August

New York & Massachusetts Marketing Missions

September

Maryland Marketing Mission
Michigan Marketing Mission
Natural Products Expo - Maryland

October

IMN Data Center Forum- California
IEDC Conference - Pennsylvania
Washington, D.C. & Maryland Marketing Missions
SelectUSA Investment Summit - Washington, D.C.

November

World Forum for Foreign Direct Investment - China
Finance & Investment Forum - China
7X24 Mission - Texas

Gateway Goes Viral

Social media strategy has become an even greater part of economic development outreach opportunities at VGR. Testimonials from companies who have invested in the community provide support to our business case and lend credibility to the region's strengths as a strategic business location. This year presented new opportunities to engage our partners digitally with relevant information. Improved two-way communication will enable VGR to build deeper relationships with customers, harnessing the power of networking to attract new companies and talented workers, support entrepreneurs, announce relevant information about the communities in real time, and invite key targeted groups to visit and learn more about the region.

The region's assets are changing rapidly, with new developments in education, new businesses, and shared research and development capacity initiatives; social media channels open the door for new timely information to be shared with our partners. VGR's digital media strategy engages audiences around the world to initiate interest to visit the region to learn more about investment opportunities.

Web Marketing

Increase in Website Traffic after 2013 Launch: **85%**

Countries Reached: **59**

Newsletter Outreach: **33,380**

Top Domestic Visitors: **DC, CA, NC, NY, & MD**

Top International Visitors: **India, Canada, UK, Germany, & China**

www.gatewayregion.com





Virginia's Gateway Region

256 E. Ellerslie Avenue, Suite D
Colonial Heights, VA 23834
rchapline@gatewayregion.com
804.732.8971
www.gatewayregion.com