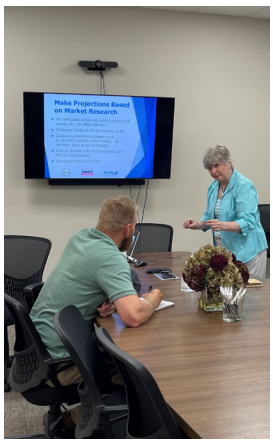


ORANGE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
2021 ANNUAL REPORT

THINK ORANGE VA
ORANGE COUNTY VA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mission

To develop a well-balanced economic development program through recruitment and existing business efforts which create increased tax revenue and high-quality job opportunities for Orange residents while preserving the natural and cultural make-up of Orange County.

Vision

To create a business environment that fosters entrepreneurial growth and attracts quality investment, with high-value jobs in a community with an affordable cost of living and a great quality of life.

Economic Development Authority Members & Staff

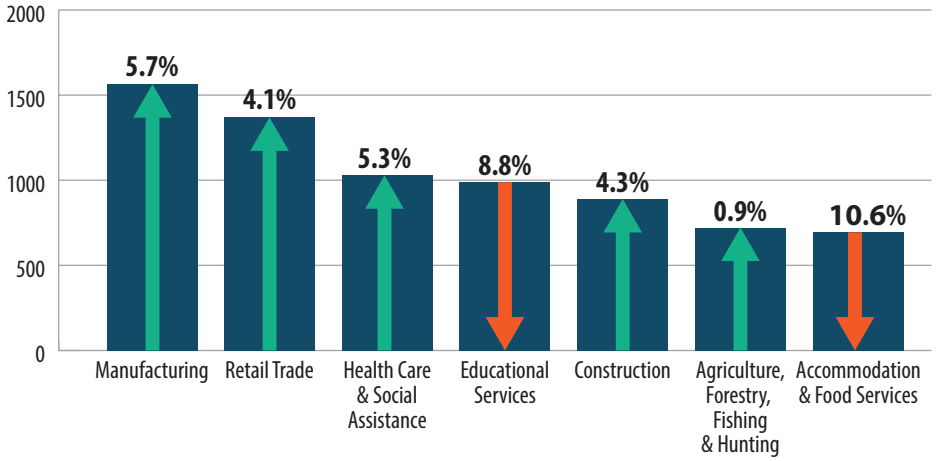
Robert "Bob" McConnell, *District #1*
Jack Rickett, *District #2*
Bill Hager, *Vice-Chair, District #3*
Julie Zeijlmaker, *District #4*
Doug Rogers, *Chair, District #5*
Sharon Hujik, *Town of Gordonsville*
Arthur Bryant, *Town of Orange*
Lee Frame, *BOS Representative*
Keith Marshall, *BOS Representative*

Rose Deal, *Secretary, Director of the Office of Economic Development*
Susan Turner, *Economic Development & Tourism Assistant*
Theodore "Ted" L. Voorhees, *County Administrator*
Thomas Lacheney, *County Attorney*
Dawn M. Herndon, *Treasurer, Fiscal Agent*

Largest Employment Industry Sectors in Orange

(figures reflect most current data comparison of Q2 2021 to Q2 2020 from JobsEQ)

Orange County's business-friendly environment creates continued success stories. Top employment sectors include:



New and Expanding Business Assistance

Aquaphalt
Career Nursing Academy
Champion Ice House
Cooper's Cookin and Catering
Fit Like Slick
Graze Steakhouse
Innovation Orange
LACED Revival
MadTack
Maier Mercantile
Missy Moodies
Paint it Orange
Palmetto Posh
Patch Brewery
Piedmont Processing
Pinnacle Physical Therapy
R U Freaking Hungry Food Truck
Spelled Ink
Spoon & Spindle
Toadstool
Trinity Senior Living
Worthington Architectural Millwork/ Pender Holdings

A Note from the Director

Taking an integrated approach to economic development, Orange County plotted decisive pathways forward in its 2021-25 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan established four key focus areas, with strategies and metrics measuring progress along the way. These focus areas informed economic development activities throughout the year, balancing the character of our community with opportunities for growth.

The Strategic Plan focus areas were our compass points during a fiscal year demanding resilience. From new business launches and expansions to grants, partnerships and workforce initiatives, Orange County rose to the occasion. The optimism and determination pulsing through our communities informs the path ahead. The future of Orange County is bright because it's shaped by you.

Sincerely,

Rose Deal
Director of the Office of Economic Development

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION:
Grow and diversify the Orange County economy through business attraction and retention efforts.

- Launched the digital Orange County Business Directory. The free platform helps businesses engage new and existing customers. Access the directory at: www.buyorangeva.com.
- Conducted a three-month digital marketing campaign promoting Thomas E. Lee Industrial Park, Tourism, and digital business directory.
- Established the Orange County Economic Development Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
- Finalized sale of Lot 15A in the Thomas E. Lee Industrial Park to Central Virginia Electric Cooperative (Firefly).
- Finalized sale of Lot A in the Thomas E. Lee Industrial Park to Worthington Architectural Millwork/Pender Holdings.
- Applied for and received a $20,050 grant from the Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund (VBAF). Funds were requested to support the Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments to be completed on a 21-acre parcel associated with the former Virginia Metal Industries building.
- Using American Rescue Plan Act funding allocated to Orange County, partnered with Community Investment Collaborative to launch the Orange County Revolving Loan Fund.

Major Employers

750+ EMPLOYEES
Orange County Public Schools

300+ EMPLOYEES
County of Orange
Aerojet Rocketdyne Inc
Dogwood Village

250+ EMPLOYEES
MPS
Green Applications
Walmart

200+ EMPLOYEES
Food Lion
American Woodmark
Zamma Corporation
Germanna Community College

150+ EMPLOYEES
Battlefield Farms

TOTAL AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT FOR ORANGE COUNTY EMPLOYERS
9,246

Business Touch Points 221

Bounce Back Orange Grants

$688,000 in grants to 99 businesses/organizations
(end of 2020-Q1 2021)

Business Equipment & Fixtures Revenue

$1,007,690.12
▲21.8% from 2020

Meal Tax Revenue

$963,613.48
▲16.0% from 2020

Machinery & Tools Tax Revenue

$1,088,926.11
▲21.6% from 2020

Commercial & Industrial Real Estate Revenue

$2,127,542.40
▲1.5% from 2020

Transient Occupancy Tax Revenue

$63,523.08
▲43% from 2020

2021 Orange County Unemployment Comparisons

Q1: 5.1% (6.6% U.S.)
Q2: 3.7% (5.7% U.S.)
Q3: 3.3% (5.2% U.S.)
Q4: 2.5% (3.9% U.S.)

- Helped Orange County Tourism launch a Marketing Leverage Grant Program.
- Promoted the Virginia Career Works-Piedmont Region Career Pathways Guide, supporting businesses with recruitment, retention and workforce development.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: *Connect Orange County employers to talent suppliers to ensure that the workforce pipeline meets current and future needs of the county.*

- Partnered with Orange Workforce Center to co-host a Spring and Fall job fair focused on Orange County employers.
- Facilitated partnership between Orange County High School and Germanna Community College, resulting in an Automotive Studies Certificate Program at the high school.
- Co-hosted Human Resource Manager Roundtable event with Orange Workforce Center to better understand hiring needs, and challenges Orange County businesses are facing.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: *Foster small business development and entrepreneurship to enhance the County's competitiveness, desirability and perception.*

- Using CARES Act funding allocated to Orange County, awarded Bounce Back Orange Small Business Grants as COVID-19 relief.
- Established a partnership between Downtown Strategies, Orange County Economic Development Authority, and LOVEOrangeVirginia (formerly Orange Downtown Alliance, Inc.) to assess the downtown Orange commercial district. Download the assessment: **https://www.thinkorangeva.com/why-orange/investment-opportunities**
- Planned Orange County Small Business Week. A digital campaign raised awareness and participation in shopping local, and highlighted the significant impacts our small businesses make to the community.
- Hosted the 2021 Quad County Business Summit and QuadTank Pitch Competition at the Pavilion at Lakeland Farm on October 20.
- Hosted the 1st Locally Made Market at the Montpelier Hunt Races.
- Hosted quarterly business development workshops and one-on-one business advising sessions with Central Virginia Small Business Development Center business advisor.
- Awarded discretionary grants, through the Economic Development Authority Incentive Policy to three new/expanding businesses.

QUALITY OF LIFE: Increase talent retention and attraction by promoting the quality of life offered by Orange County as a place to live, work, and play.

- Supported Orange County events and festivals through sponsorships, marketing, and volunteering.
- Realized a 68% increase in Visitor Center traffic, compared to visitations in 2020.
- Welcomed approximately 76,180 visitors to events and festivals.
- Created "Around Town" Scavenger Hunt.