



**ISLE OF WIGHT**  
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

# MESSAGES

## FROM OUR COUNTY OFFICIALS



**RUDOLPH JEFFERSON**  
2018 CHAIRMAN, ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

As a life-long resident of Isle of Wight County, I have witnessed and experienced tremendous economic growth and evolution over the decades. I am personally proud of how our citizens and government have managed this growth with progressive policies aimed toward sensibly concentrating development and infrastructure along major commercial corridors. Continued preservation of our essential rural character, held dear by so many citizens, coupled with a welcoming atmosphere for commercial and industrial growth have been the result - increasingly difficult to match in our bustling regional economy. The quality of our workforce is of utmost importance, as well. As you read this document, I invite you to note how we are raising our workforce's level of skills to ensure companies find the people they need within the county in which they want to live and work – Isle of Wight County!



**RONALD H. PACK**  
CHAIRMAN, ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

It has been my pleasure to serve on the Board of the Economic Development Authority (EDA) for over 30 years. The EDA is composed of seven members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Historically, the EDA has been a support organization for the County's Department of Economic Development. Our goals are similar in that we want to promote economic growth as well as employment opportunities for County residents. In the past, the EDA issued industrial revenue bonds to industries locating or expanding in Isle of Wight. Today, the EDA owns more than 1,000 acres of land available for industrial and mixed-use development. The continued growth of The Port of Virginia continues to play a key role in the County's success in attracting industrial prospects.



**CHRIS MORELLO**  
DIRECTOR, ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Each year, we strive to design and publish an annual report that documents Isle of Wight's unique and evolving economic role within our world-famous coastal region, and which showcases stories and statistics illustrating the County's special position within the dynamic business landscape of the Commonwealth. Excellent and easy access to the Port of Virginia, agricultural output value that ranks amongst the top three counties in Virginia, major international firms employing citizens in food processing and product distribution, plus the incredible recreational and historical assets offered by Isle of Wight – these are just a few of the many characteristics ensuring the County's population and economic output remain firmly on a growth curve. We welcome you to visit with us, learn about us – and of course, consider how you, too, can grow local roots and extend your global reach!

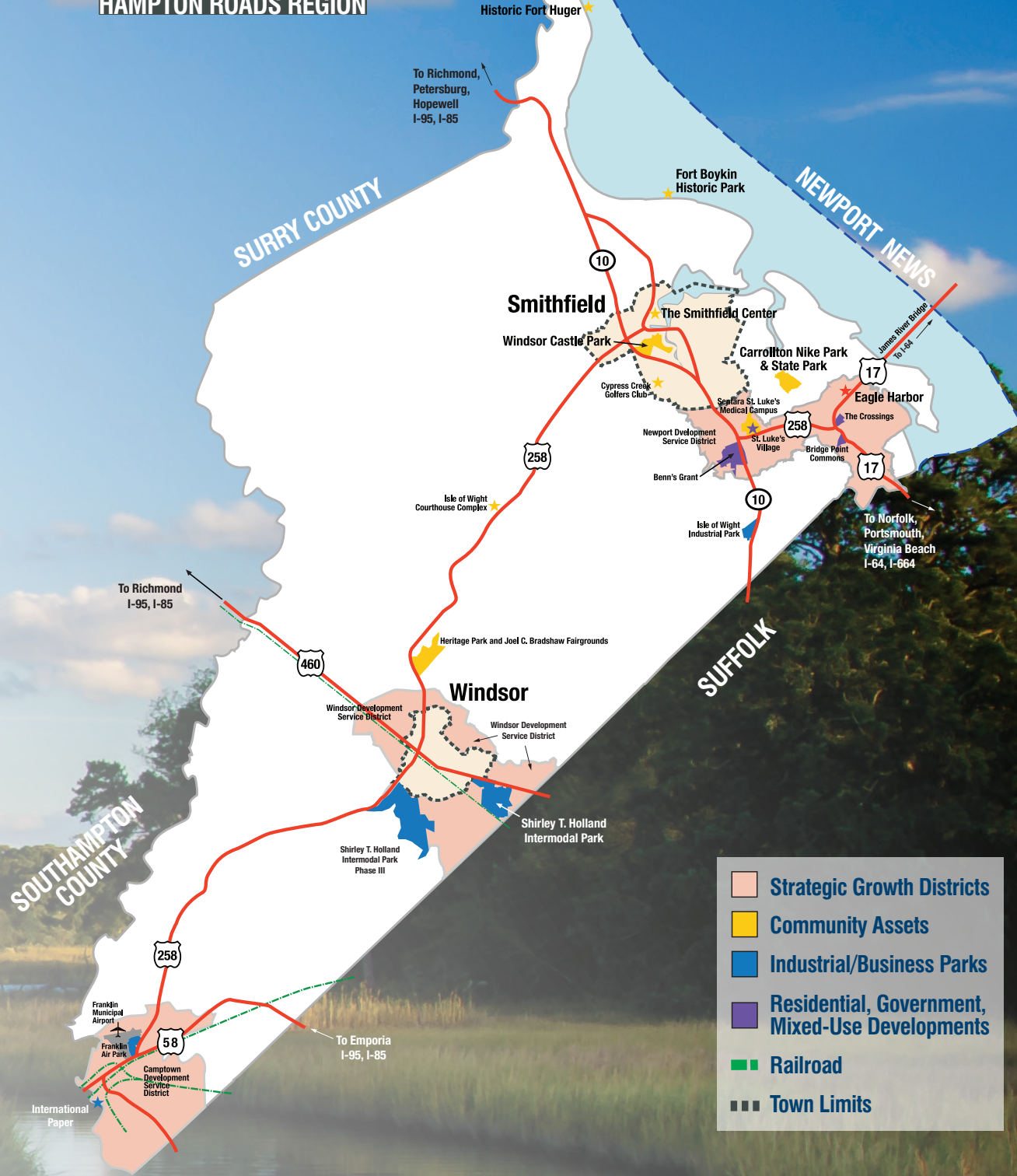
### DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mission: To help attract, retain and expand new business investment in Isle of Wight County and to provide quality employment opportunities for County citizens.

Department staff assists the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Economic Development Committee, administers the Enterprise Zone Program and provides funding to the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance (HREDA) and the Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center (HRSBDC). The department also assists the local farming and agricultural community.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Economic Development Authority, formerly the Industrial Development Authority, was created in 1968 to promote industrial growth in the County. As a support organization for the County's Department of Economic Development, it may authorize the issuance of tax-exempt industrial bonds to industries locating or expanding their operations in Isle of Wight.



- Strategic Growth Districts
- Community Assets
- Industrial/Business Parks
- Residential, Government, Mixed-Use Developments
- Railroad
- Town Limits

Photo by Mike O'Shell Photography

### STAFF

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Tom Elder**, Director, (June 2015 – June 2018)
- Chris Morello**, Acting Director/Director, (June 2018 – Present)
- Kristi Sutphin**, Economic Development Coordinator
- Gloria Spratley**, Administrative Assistant

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

- Ronald H. Pack**, Chairman
- Carroll Keen Jr.**, Vice-Chairman
- Len Alphin**
- Diana Beale**
- James Ford**
- Tim Hillegass**
- Richard J. "Dick" Holland Jr.**

#### 2018 ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- Rudolph Jefferson**, Chairman (*Hardy District*)
- William M. McCarty**, Vice-Chairman (*Newport District*)
- Don Rosie** (*Carrsville District*)
- Richard L. "Dick" Grice** (*Smithfield District*)
- Joel C. Acree** (*Windsor District*)

#### COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

- Randy R. Keaton**, County Administrator
- Donald T. "Don" Robertson**, Assistant County Administrator

#### COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

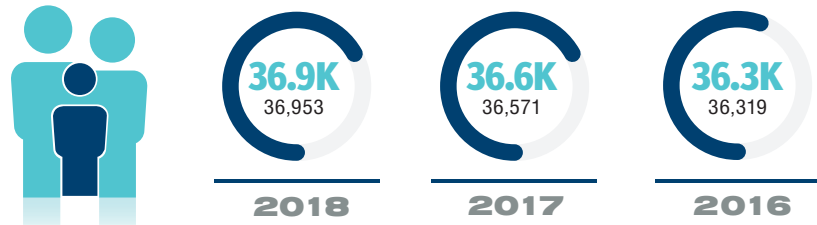
- Sunflowers**, Mike O'Shell Photography
- Port of Virginia Photo**, Courtesy of Port of Virginia

#### CONTACT US

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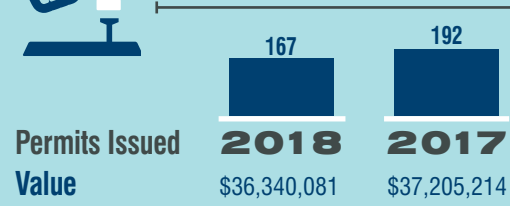
# ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE TRENDS

## Population Estimates



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Residential & Commercial Building Permits



Source: Isle of Wight County Inspections Department

## Income



\$33,172



AVERAGE PER CAPITA

## Home Value and Sale Prices



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Rein MLS, Residential Databank



## Major Private Sector Employers (100+ Employees)

- Smithfield Fresh Meats Corp.
- Keurig Dr Pepper
- International Paper
- Food Lion
- Smithfield Support Services Corp.
- C.R. England
- Cost Plus World Market
- Smithfield Foods (corporate HQ)
- Packers Sanitation Services
- ST Tissue
- Riverside Health System
- Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 3rd Quarter 2018

## New Business Licenses

	2018	2017
Isle of Wight County	215	196
Town of Smithfield	73	51
Town of Windsor	31	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>261</b>

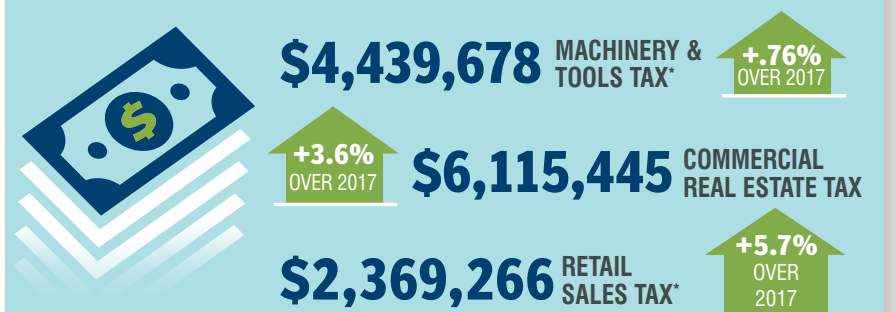
Sources: Isle of Wight County, Town of Smithfield, Town of Windsor

## Average Weekly Wage By Industry

	Isle of Wight	Virginia
Finance & Insurance	\$984	\$1,693
Management of Companies & Enterprises	\$2,470	\$2,008
Manufacturing	\$904	\$1,123
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	\$1,253	\$1,919
Transportation & Warehousing	\$857	\$1,018
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>\$794</b>	<b>\$1,082</b>

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, 3Q 2018

## Tax Revenue Highlights Fiscal Year 2018



Source: Isle of Wight County Commissioner of Revenue

## Largest Employment by Industry

Private Sector	Employees	%
Manufacturing (Incl. food processing & packaging; processing of paper, wood & agricultural products)	3,310	30.7%
Retail Trade	860	8.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	860	8.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	670	6.2%
Transportation & Warehousing	520	4.8%
Construction	470	4.4%
Administrative, Support, Waste Management & Remediation	450	4.2%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	420	3.9%
Wholesale Trade	410	3.8%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	370	3.5%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	250	2.3%
Finance & Insurance	210	1.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	210	1.9%
<b>Public Sector</b>		
Government (Federal, State, Local)	1,420	13.1%

- Employment in transportation and warehousing is 38% more concentrated in Isle of Wight than within the nation.
- Employment in manufacturing is 3.5 times more concentrated in Isle of Wight County than the nation.

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, Q1 2019 dataset, industries with employment > 200, percentage of county employees across all industries

\$67,767



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013-2017

## Isle of Wight's 5 Fastest Growing Industries

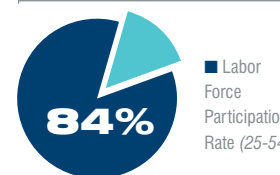
Industry	Historic Growth (2014-2018)	Projected Growth (2018-2022)
Management of Companies & Enterprises	22.2%	15.7%
Construction	16.9%	6.9%
Accommodation & Food Services	10.5%	5.4%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	7.2%	15.3%
Transportation & Warehousing	2.6%	19.2%

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, Q1 2019 dataset

## Workforce

Prime-Age Workforce (25-54): 13,750

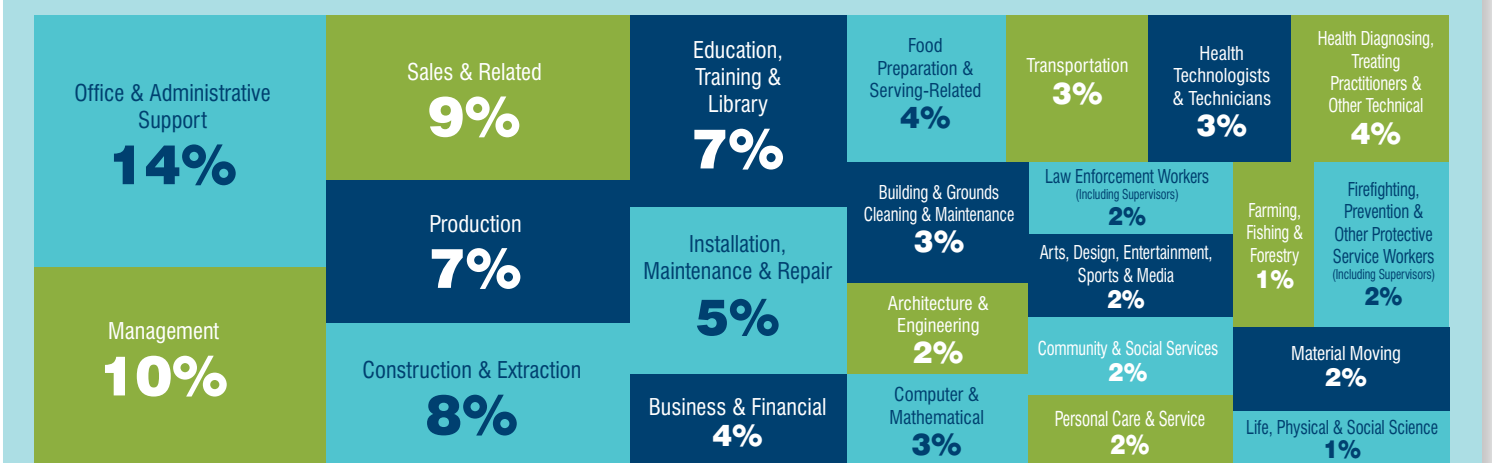
Civilian Labor Force: 19,220



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2013-2017 5-year estimates, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2018 annual average

## Employment by Occupations

PRIMARY JOBS HELD BY RESIDENTS 16 YEARS AND OLDER IN ISLE OF WIGHT



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

# ISLE OF WIGHT: COURTING PROSPECTS IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS



## Strategic Partners

- Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)
- The Port of Virginia
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD)
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance (HREDA)
- Hampton Roads Workforce Council
- Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center (HRSBDC)
- Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)
- Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce

### Isle of Wight Is Poised and Positioned to Compete

Rick Weddle, then President and CEO of HREDA, addressed Hampton Roads' future growth at Isle of Wight's State of the County Breakfast in June. He echoed then Economic Development Director Tom Elder's words that the County is "extremely well positioned to attract new business growth in the industrial and retail sectors." HREDA markets the region to attract jobs and companies.

### Pillars Of The Economy:

#### Manufacturing, Management, Wholesale and Agriculture

**Manufacturing** is the leading industry sector in employment in Isle of Wight and produces nearly \$1.7 billion in sales, with Smithfield Foods responsible for about 57 percent of the county's industry sales in 2018. Manufacturing accounts for nearly 65 percent of exported sales, infusing almost \$1.48 billion into the economy.

**Management of companies and enterprises** is one of the largest industry sectors in Isle of Wight, apart from government services. It accounts for 5.3 percent of all industry sales and is the second largest sector in exported sales at 7.2 percent.

**Wholesale trade** accounted for 3.5 percent of all 2018 industry sales.

**Agriculture** is a significant part of County life and culture, with around 85 percent of the County's land zoned as Rural Agricultural Conservation. Isle of Wight produced \$61.8 million in sales within the *agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector* — an increase of 7.8 percent over last year. It accounts for 2.1 percent of all industry sales.

*Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, 2019.1*

### Planning Grant Funds Study For Community Services

The Economic Development Department led a cross-departmental county team that hired Willdan Financial to perform a market and feasibility study to determine community-oriented programs and uses for the former James River Christian Academy campus. The funds came from a Community Development Block Grant Planning Grant obtained in 2017.

By the end of 2018, Willdan had almost completed the study, which was designed to gauge both supply and demand for a wide spectrum of community services potentially housed in renovated buildings on-site. If the County and the landowner partnership goes forward, the study's results will help determine the best options to pursue.



Economic Development participated in a marketing mission to Atlanta with regional partners.

### 2018 Marketing Missions, Trade Shows, Conferences and Events

Economic Development staff participated in a variety of targeted outreach events

#### Marketing & Site Selection Consultant Missions

- San Francisco/Los Angeles Mission with HREDA
- Atlanta Mission with HREDA

#### Outreach Events and Trade Shows

- Site Selection Consultants Dinner with HREDA
- VEDP FAM Tour with European Consultant
- Newmark Knight Frank Reception with HREDA
- Atlanta Networking Reception with HREDA and Port of Virginia
- Sites and Buildings Tour with HREDA and VEDP
- Port of Virginia Coffee Day Reception

#### State Conferences/Professional Development

- Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) Conferences
- Virginia Agribusiness Council Annual Conference
- Virginia Agritourism Conference

### 2018 New Prospect Activity

In addition to working with existing business projects, Economic Development was actively engaged throughout the year with VEDP, HREDA, site selection consultants, commercial real estate brokers and developers, and various companies on new prospects interested in the County.



Economic Development staff and regional partners toured Facebook headquarters during a marketing mission to San Francisco.

**+ 38** TOTAL NEW PROSPECT INQUIRIES

- 23 industrial prospect inquiries
- 9 completed Requests for Information (RFIs)
- 6 industrial site visits

### Prospect Activity by Industry Type



32% Manufacturing  
18% Transportation & Warehousing  
11% Retail Trade  
11% Utilities  
8% Arts, Entertainment & Recreation  
8% Healthcare/Social Assistance  
5% Other  
3% Real Estate, Rental & Leasing  
3% Administrative/Support, etc.  
3% Professional, Scientific, Technical

Chart (above) shows prospect activity by industry type. Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number and do not total 100.

**TOTAL REACH: 53 CONSULTANTS**

# INTERMODAL PARK AND PORT OF VIRGINIA EXPAND ISLE OF WIGHT'S GLOBAL REACH



## Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park: Competitively Priced, Purposefully Located

Strategically located for port-related businesses, the County-owned Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park provides affordable sites close to The Port of Virginia.

### Park Highlights

- More than 1,000 acres competitively priced
  - 82-acre permit-ready site in Phase II
  - 41-acre permit-ready site in Phase II (under development)
  - Master planning underway in Phase III
  - Transportation planning underway in all phases
- Industrial zoning
- Easily accessible to interstates 95, 85, 64, 264 and 664
- Water, sewer, electricity, natural gas and fiber-optic services available
- Proven fast-track site plan review and permitting process

- Access to a regional workforce of more than 830,000 people
- Incentives include: VA Enterprise Zone, Foreign Trade Zone #20 and Port Grants
- Park tenants: Keurig Dr Pepper, Safco Products Co. and Cost Plus World Market, a subsidiary of Bed Bath & Beyond

### Location Advantages

- 24 miles to The Port of Virginia
- Easy access to local interstates (30 minutes to I-64 and I-664; 46 miles to I-95 and I-85). Site also adjacent to U.S. Route 460 and within 10 minutes of U.S. Route 58.
- 39 miles to Norfolk International Airport; 40 miles to the Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport; 15 miles to Franklin Municipal Airport
- Direct rail access possible to adjacent Norfolk Southern Rail Heartland Corridor
- Nearly flat topography reduces on-site development costs
- One of the lowest real estate tax rates in Hampton Roads

## 82-Acre Permit-Ready Site Open in Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park

Design and engineering work are complete and plans approved for stormwater, water and sewer, grading and entrance road master plans, creating an 82-acre, permit-ready site with-in Phase II of the Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park.



Courtesy of Port of Virginia

## The Port of Virginia – Mid-Atlantic Global Gateway Another Record Volume Year for the Port

In 2018, The Port of Virginia handled more than 2.85 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs). This set a new annual record for container cargo volume and was 0.5 percent more than 2017's total. A significant driver of economic investment and job creation in 2018 in Virginia, the Port was instrumental in creating 3,100 new jobs and developing 1.9 million square feet of space, a \$984 million investment. The Virginia International Gateway (VIG) expansion continued with the delivery of new cargo conveyance equipment, shuttle trucks and gantry cranes.

### Isle of Wight Port Customers

- Isle of Wight County is currently home to several significant Port users that are also some of the County's largest employers and tax payers.
- Keurig Dr Pepper
  - Cost Plus World Market
  - Smithfield Foods
  - International Paper
  - ST Tissue
  - Montague Farms
  - The Scouler Co.
  - Commonwealth Gin
  - Safco Products Co.

### Communities Support Supply Chain

Isle of Wight, Franklin/Southampton and Suffolk received a 2018 Community Economic Development Award (CEDA) from the Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) for their collaborative spirit and comprehensive approach to economic revitalization. To meet the growing needs of the supply chain industry, these communities, along with The Port of Virginia, collaborated with Paul D. Camp Community College (PDCCC) to support establishing a 5,000-square-foot PDCCC Regional Warehouse and Distribution Training Facility.

In turn, PDCCC leased an unused warehouse and created several training and certification programs to meet the region's manufacturing, warehouse and distribution needs.

## Virginia Ranks No. 3 on East Coast Among Agricultural Goods Exporters

**\$2.97 BILLION** **\$290 MILLION+ OVER 2017**  
 2018 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY EXPORTS VALUE

### Top Virginia Agriculture/Forestry Exports in 2018

Soybeans	\$701.8 Million
Wood Products (lumber, logs, wood pellets)	\$361.9 Million
Leaf Tobacco	\$284.4 Million
Soybean Meal	\$277.7 Million
Pork	\$232.3 Million
Micellaneous processed food & beverages	\$203.4 Million
Poultry	\$151.8 Million
Soybean Oil	\$148.4 Million

Source: Global Trade Atlas

### Agriculture & Forestry Impact in Virginia

**442,200 JOBS** **\$91 BILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACT**

### Agriculture & Forestry in Isle of Wight

**\$2.72 BILLION IN ECONOMIC IMPACT (3RD IN VIRGINIA)** **5,100 JOBS (11TH IN VIRGINIA)**

Source: The Economic Impact of Virginia's Agriculture and Forest Industries, May 2017, University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

# ISLE OF WIGHT ROOTS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

## IN THE HEADLINES



### Largest Soft-Drink Deal Ever

In July, Keurig Green Mountain Inc., a leader in specialty coffee and brewing systems, acquired Dr Pepper Snapple Group Inc. in reportedly the largest soft-drink deal ever. Keurig Dr Pepper is the seventh-largest company in the U.S. food and beverage sector and the third-largest beverage company in North America, with annual revenues of about \$11 billion.

### Businesses & Entrepreneurial Communities Boost Small Town, Local Experience

#### Quality Aire Moves to Former Rink

In December, Quality Aire Co., an HVAC contractor, celebrated the grand opening of its new location in the former Isle of Wight/Franklin Skating Rink. Owner Kevin Roughton renovated the property and qualified for a five-year, partial real estate tax exemption.

#### Old Dominion Hay Expands

Old Dominion Hay purchased a long-vacant building in Isle of Wight Industrial Park in Smithfield in 2018 to accommodate an expansion and relocation. For 18 years, the company has provided feed to domestic and farmstead animals, along with farm and ranch services. The covered facility still under renovation will enable weather-protected transfers of hay and feed to trucks.

The company plans to expand shipments domestically and overseas via The Port of Virginia. It was awarded a \$10,000 small business development incentive grant to assist with site development costs. The Saddle Barn is co-located within the retail area.

### NEW & EXPANDED BUSINESSES SMITHFIELD

■ **Fleur de Fou**, a home-based Isle of Wight florist, opened a Main Street location in January.

■ **Oasis on Main**, a massage stu-

dio, opened in February.

■ **Kids Come 1st**, a day-care center on South Church Street, opened in February.

■ **Maico Audiological Services**, a hearing center, celebrated its office relocation in September.

■ **Neuropractic**, owned and operated by chiropractor Dr. Rachel Abbott DC, opened in September on Main Street.

■ **SummerWind Vineyard** opened a tasting room in conjunction with Virginia Wine Month in October.

■ **VaughanTech PC Services**, a company that sells and services computers, relocated to South Church Street in November.

■ **Kroger** established its first location in Smithfield in December in the former Farm Fresh. It employs 95 full- and part-time workers, including 32 who had worked for Farm Fresh.

■ **Joe Sictor State Farm** celebrated the opening of its Main Street office in November.

## WINDSOR

■ **Old Point National Bank** acquired Citizens National Bank and converted the branch in May. Headquartered in Hampton, Old Point also has a branch in Carrollton.

■ **Anna's Ristorante Italiano & Pizzeria Too** reopened in September under new management in a new location in the Windsor Plaza shopping center.

## CARROLLTON

■ **1st Advantage Realty** opened an office inside the new Carrollton Business Center in January. Broker/agent Jimmy Auvil Jr. and his team also manage leasing for the business center.

■ **Hobbs Mechanical**, a full-service provider of HVAC, electrical and refrigeration services, celebrated its one-year anniversary in Carrollton in June.

■ **Napoli è Ristorante Italiano**, a family-owned and operated restaurant, opened in The Shoppes at Eagle Harbor in March.

## GAME ON!

### Businesses wield logistics

Teams of employees from Keurig Green Mountain and Cost Plus World Market showed off their logistics skills in June while competing in the fifth annual Hampton Roads LogistXGames in Suffolk. The event raises money to provide scholarships for workforce development training offered at Paul D. Camp Community College and Tidewater Community College. The competition raised \$33,000, and Team Keurig placed second, repeating its 2017 performance.



### Jeb Bonnett (aka "Jeb the Butcher") Named Entrepreneur of the Year

Jeb Bonnett, owner/operator of Jeb's Market, a local meat market, was named 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year by the Isle of Wight County Department of Economic Development.

Bonnett, his daughter, Lisa, and wife, Chae — known as "The Butcher, the Baker and the Korean Food Maker" — came to Carrollton to become part of Southeastern Virginia's renowned meat heritage. They opened the meat market in 2001 and attained a USDA Grant of Inspection in 2017 to produce products for wholesale.

The Bonnett team cures and smokes meats, sausages and other food products. Many of these have achieved the Virginia's Finest® designation, including the cherry smoked ham, country ham, cottage bacon, smoked sausages, beef jerky, beef and pork bulgogi, and two out of seven barbecue sauces.



### QDaddy's Pitmaster BBQ Named Chamber Business of the Year

QDaddy's Pitmaster BBQ, a family-owned, second-generation pit-master barbecue restaurant in Smithfield, was named Isle of Wight County Business of the Year by the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce.

An altruistic community supporter, the restaurant has extended its philanthropic efforts to many educational, nonprofit and civic groups including the Isle of Wight Community Foundation, County schools' sports teams, local scout troops and school bands.

QDaddy's opened in January 2017 and has been selling out of its slow-cooked ribs, brisket and barbecue ever since. The quick-serve restaurant's homemade menu items have quickly become a hometown favorite and continue to attract visitors from all over the region.

According to owner Jesse Witten, hospitality is the backbone of this business. He believes if you love people while you feed them, they will love you back...forever.

### Workforce Development Initiatives

County Aims to  
Become Certified

Isle of Wight  
County Economic De-



velopment officially launched its ACT Work Ready Communities initiative in December with a breakfast for local business leaders and workforce partners. Among those presenting were Congressman Bobby Scott (3rd Congressional District), Virginia Senator Louise Lucas (18th District), Delegate Emily Brewer, Virginia House of Delegates (64th District), and Governor Ralph Northam's chief workforce development advisers.

The nationally recognized ACT Work Ready Communities Program certification helps localities quantify and track job-ready skill sets of the current, transitioning and emergent workforce. Certification will help the County link, align and match its workforce development efforts for economic growth and competitiveness.



In conjunction with the official launch of this initiative, Economic Development rolled out a new logo for its workforce development programs — Isle of Wight Works. This brand includes [www.isle4jobs.com](http://www.isle4jobs.com), which points directly to workforce development programs, data and job search tools.

The local Workforce Development Working Group, established in 2015, will continue supporting the County's efforts toward work-ready certification. By the end of 2018, the County had achieved 23 percent of its goal toward full certification.



## BUSINESS OUTREACH PROGRAM

WE STAY CONNECTED!

The Economic Development staff builds relationships by meeting with new and established businesses throughout the year and provides information on available programs and services tailored to the specific needs of each business.

■ **Business Outreach and Advocacy:** Staff reaches out to businesses via face-to-face meetings, new business welcome packets, phone calls, emails, events, newsletters, its website and social media. Staff helps businesses navigate the development/permitting process by coordinating monthly pre-application meetings to allow applicants to get timely feedback on projects from Planning and Zoning, Inspections, Utilities, Stormwater and Economic Development representatives.

■ **Marketing:** Economic Development features local businesses in its monthly newsletter, provides an Online Business List on the Economic Development website, prepares press releases for the media on openings and expansions, and shares social media posts. Staff can also provide one-on-one analysis of marketing opportunities and make business-to-business connections.

■ **Business Resources:** Staff maintains close ties with professionals who provide counseling and support services. Economic Development continues to help financially support the Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads, which provides business planning, marketing and financial planning services to startups and existing businesses.

■ **Expansion and Relocation Assistance:** Staff maintains a database of available commercial properties and assists new and expanding businesses in finding locations that meet their requirements.

■ **Networking and Education:** Staff promotes regional small business workshops and also hosts events with state and regional partners.

# ENJOY THE GOOD LIFE IN ISLE OF WIGHT



Photo by Trina Haj

## Isle of Wight Ranks Among Healthier Communities in Virginia

In 2018, Isle of Wight County ranked 35th out of 133 localities in Virginia when it came to overall health outcomes, just shy of the top 25 percent, according to an annual nationwide survey by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The County ranked higher than neighboring localities, and its overall ranking has remained stable over the last 10 years. The study analyzes many factors affecting health including behaviors, such as smoking, drinking and exercise, quality of life, social and economic factors, such as income and education, and the physical environment.

**95.5%** ON-TIME GRADUATION RATE TOPS STATE AVERAGE

**84%** 2018 GRADUATES EARNED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS

**100%** ACCREDITED & OVERALL SOL SCORES

**SURPASS STATE AVERAGE IN 4 OUT OF 5 CATEGORIES**



Courtesy of Isle of Wight Schools

## Agriculture Comes to Life at Farm

In December, school and County officials, along with several goats and piglets, celebrated the official opening of the Agricultural Land Lab's barn and classroom. A full-time farm manager and agriculture teacher collaborate to provide authentic, real-world learning in the areas of agricultural business management and mechanization, along with plant, animal and soil sciences.

Since opening in September 2017, the students have transformed the land lab from six acres of uncut grass to four fenced pastures, a vegetable garden, and housing for chickens, rabbits and goats. Students receive real-world experiences through the land lab, such as participa-

tion in "farm to table" marketing from the sale of farm products to the public and to the school division's culinary arts program. Elementary students are introduced to science standards during field trips to the land lab. The working farm has made agriculture come to life for students throughout the division.

## Windsor Town Center Opens its Doors

Officials from the Town of Windsor and Isle of Wight County celebrated the grand opening of the Windsor Town Center in November. The 14,000-square-foot former Windsor Middle School gymnasium, located at 23361 Courthouse Highway behind Georgie D. Tyler Middle School, has been transformed into a community center housing a gym, meeting room, kitchen and art room. In addition to investment by the Town of Windsor and Isle of Wight County, residents, nonprofits and local businesses donated time, materials and money toward the renovation. Isle of Wight County Parks and Recreation will staff and provide programming at the facility.

# TOURISM AND COMMUNITY EVENTS



Photo by John N. Payne

## The Salty Southern Route Virginia's Path to Pork and Peanuts

Southeastern Virginia has long been known for its peanuts, salt-cured hams and pork. The Salty Southern Route takes you on a journey through this picturesque area to experience the traditions firsthand. From the Town of Smithfield, namesake of the world's largest pork producer Smithfield Foods, and the City of Suffolk, home to the world-famous Planters Peanuts, to the farms, peanut processors and charming country stores of Surry, Sussex, Franklin and Southampton County, you'll experience the culture and people behind the area's delicious foods.



## Smithfield/Isle of Wight Popular Location for Movies and TV

Location scouts have discovered Smithfield and Isle of Wight County. In 2018, multiple TV and movie projects filmed in the area:

**Affairs of State**, a full-length motion picture filmed partially in Smithfield and Isle of Wight, premiered in June 2018 and played in major markets. It's now available for download.

Season 3 of the Discovery Channel's

**Killing Fields** kicked off in January. The season featured how Isle of Wight County and its Sheriff's Office worked on the 2004 murder case of Carrie Singer, a crime that remains unsolved.

Two episodes of HGTV's ever-popular **House Hunters** were filmed in Smithfield and aired nationwide.

**Mary For Mayor**, a full-length feature film by Home Theater Productions, will premier in 2019. Corbin Bernsen, known for his roles in TV shows "L.A. Law" and "Psych," directed, produced and starred in the film.

**State Plates**, a TV show hosted by former "American Idol" contestant Taylor Hicks, was filmed at Darden's Country Store and Downtown Smithfield.

CBN shot TV and **music video** productions in Smithfield.

## Trio of Annual Festivals Generate Local Economic Impact

Since 2012, 42,800 people have attended Smithfield VA Events festivals including:

- Smithfield BOB Fest – January
- Smithfield Wine & Brew Fest – April
- Smithfield Bacon, Bourbon, Beach Music Fest - October

2017 TOURISM IMPACT

**\$41.9 MILLION** FROM LOCAL TOURISM EXPENDITURES

**+5.0%** FROM 2016

**407** TOURISM-SUPPORTED JOBS

**+2.0%** FROM 2016

**\$953,438** LOCAL TAXES GENERATED

**+3.2%** FROM 2016

Source: Virginia Tourism Corp.

## 2018 VISITOR COUNTS

**80,000** PEOPLE VISITED SMITHFIELD FARMERS MARKET

**12,620** PEOPLE VISITED SMITHFIELD & ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY VISITOR CENTER

Source: Smithfield & Isle of Wight Tourism

**2,227** HOTEL NIGHTS SOLD

**\$1M MILLION+** LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR A TOTAL OF \$5.5 MILLION+ SINCE 2012

**\$911,000** DONATED BACK TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Source: Smithfield VA Events

# ISLE OF WIGHT

## COUNTY AWARDS

Isle of Wight County earned the following two awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA):

### Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

*(for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018)*

### Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

*(for fiscal year ended June 30, 2017)*

### Isle of Wight County earned the 2018 VACo Achievement Award

*(Best Small County Achievement)*

for using a Geographic Information System to improve the efficiency of erosion and sedimentation control inspections

Isle of Wight County Schools received the 2018 Workforce Innovation Award from the Hampton Roads Workforce Council for the redesign of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) program

Isle of Wight County Schools, based on test scores, ranked 4th in South Hampton Roads school districts

— *SchoolDigger.com*

Carrsville Elementary School earned the 2018 Board of Education Distinguished Achievement Award



## MOURNING THE LOSS OF OUR LEADER



The 2018 Economic Development Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Tom Elder, Director of Economic Development, who passed away unexpectedly June 10, 2018.

Tom began his employment with Isle of Wight County in June 2015 after serving for more than 25 years in economic development and commercial real estate. Some of his previous roles included serving as Executive Vice President of the Hampton

Roads Economic Development Alliance and as Assistant Director of Economic Development for the City of Chesapeake.

Tom loved playing tennis at Norfolk Yacht and Country Club, where he kept his boat, and fishing on the Eastern Shore. He was an avid fan of soccer and football. He also enjoyed lunches and good conversation in Historic Downtown Smithfield, especially at Wharf Hill Brewery in Smithfield.

He will be remembered for his quick wit and story-telling, charm and infectious personality, brilliant smile, blue eyes, and most of all, for his love of his friends and family.

Tom was a valued member of the Isle of Wight County team and well respected in the Hampton Roads region. His presence and his contributions are greatly missed by the Economic Development staff and the entire community.

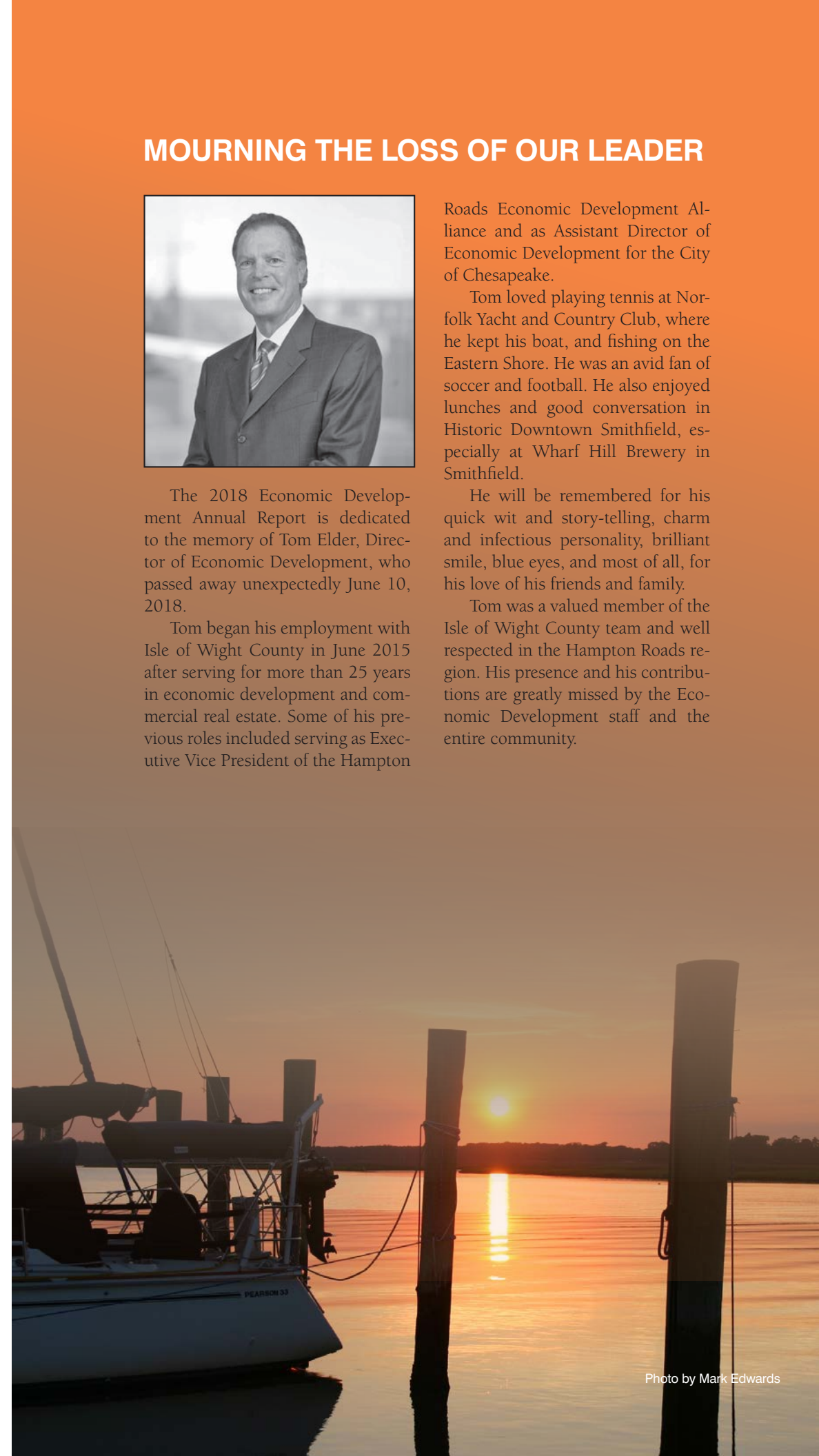


Photo by Mark Edwards





Local Roots, Global Reach

# ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
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