

# Fluvanna County, Virginia Economic Development Commission

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## Economic Development Framework and Strategic Plan

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# Fluvanna Economic Development Framework

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***About this document:*** Serves as the working templates for developing the Fluvanna Economic Development (ED) Framework. The ED Framework was adopted during the Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting of August 11, 2009 as a method and common operating language for organizing our planning around a top-down, outcome-based process.

The framework is a logical hierarchy that includes the EDC vision, Goals, and Strategies. Each Strategy includes a set of tactics with actions and expected results.

Note: Version control is maintained on the last page.

## ***Definitions of selected terms:***

- **Vision** – Articulates the overarching philosophy and value set of the EDC.
- **Goal** – A core area of focus supporting the vision. The Goal embodies a desired end-state of economic development. It's an end to be achieved through continuous Strategy. Nomenclature – a single numerical digit (e.g. "2")
- **Strategy** – A strategic program that is undertaken to support a Goal. Strategies represent the general activity that serves as the means to achieving the stated Goal. Strategies can theoretically support more than one Goal, but they will be always associated with one main Goal. Nomenclature – (e.g. "2.3") read as "Goal 2, Strategy 3"
- **Tactic** – A short-term project. A set of actions that has a specific goal to move the mark for a stated Strategy. Tactics have a specific start and end date; they are initiated and then retired. Tactics also have other tracked aspects including the following: owner, implementer, action plan, baseline situation to be improved, target result, timeline, logical predecessor (or dependencies), and budget. Tactics are expected to have varying degrees of success in supporting Strategies. Nomenclature – (e.g. "2.3.5") read as "Goal 2, Strategy 3, Tactic 5"

## EDC Working Committees

The following Goals are assigned to two-person committees, which are assigned the task of taking ownership of the Goals to refine the underlying Strategies, Tactics, and Tactical Action Plans.

Goal	Committee Members
1 – Desirable Businesses and Conveniences	Stephen Scott and Catherine Palmer
2 – Strong and Sustainable Jobs and Talent	John Alexander and Rob Lewis
3 – Environmental Efficiency and Attractiveness	Chris Fairchild and Keith Smith
4 – Diversify the Tax Base	Joe Chesser and George Fitz-Hugh
5 – High-quality, Competitive Business Infrastructure	Robert Adams, Sr. , Catherine Palmer and Everett Hannah
6 – Economic Development Excellence	Stephen Scott

## The Framework (Vision, Goals, Strategies and Tactics)

**Vision:** Sustainable Prosperity – a strong and prosperous Fluvanna where citizens have a high standard of living that endures by its own right, while preserving the unique character, cleanliness, beauty, natural resources, history and heritage.

**1 –Desirable Businesses and Conveniences** (for the consumer and local businesses) – Modern conveniences are readily available for citizens and local businesses. One key to a sustained economic future will be Fluvanna’s ability to attract new, desirable economic investment. Competition for new investment is fierce. To compete effectively, the County and its economic development partners must continue to understand the needs of businesses and provide the programs, facilities and resources necessary to address these needs. This Goal seeks to develop the technical capacity, programs and facilities necessary to attract new business investment and employment to Fluvanna, particularly the kinds of businesses that are consistent with the vision.

**1.1 Prioritize desirable goods and services.** Identify community priorities for business recruitment and the expenditure of local economic development resources.

- 1.1.1** Identify and target economically attractive industries consistent with our local assets and vision. Business could be anything that is within the guidelines of the EDC and Comp Plan. Economically sound, supplying a good diversification of business and jobs serving all facets of the working public. Retain existing business, and keep open the capability of being able to accept or reject any applying business not fitting into our vision and goals.
- 1.1.2** Through a series of public meetings designed to obtain direct Fluvanna citizen input on desirable goods and services, we learned that the vast majority of Fluvanna citizens want growth, jobs, and lower taxes.

**1.2 Attract desirable business sectors.** Using the information gathered under Strategy 1.1, identify the business sectors that best fit Fluvanna’s needs and economic profile.

- 1.2.1** Develop a comprehensive marketing plan to promote Fluvanna’s assets to targeted industries (per 1.1.1) and businesses. Focus on Fluvanna County’s central location and – when appropriate – infrastructure ready for business.
- 1.2.2** Identify grant opportunities and other fiscal and tax incentives that can be used to facilitate new business opportunities in the County. Work with the Economic Development Authority to identify and/or develop incentive programs.
- 1.2.3** Investigate the use of bonds or other funding resources available as a potential tool for attracting a developer or other business.
- 1.2.4** Identify business sectors that would likely benefit from Fluvanna’s geographic location.

- 1.2.5 Continue to support the expansion of the County's tourism base through regional strategies with Louisa and Orange Counties, as well as with the Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention and Visitors' Bureau and other strategic partners. Ensure visibility and access to the tourism market through the Piedmont Crossroads Visitors' Center or other similar facility.
- 1.2.6 Continue to support the expansion of the County's tourism base by working with private and public interests to develop attractions and events.
- 1.2.7 Create a private/public strategic ED Subcommittee charged with continuing over time to identify industries suitable for the county.

**1.3 Retain and support existing businesses.** In order to grow Fluvanna's economic base, it is essential to identify existing businesses and work to meet their needs to maximize retention of businesses in the County.

- 1.3.1 Identify businesses and develop a central database of existing, known Fluvanna businesses.
- 1.3.2 Using the structure available under the Business First Program (in partnership with TJPED), conduct personal and/or telephonic interviews of existing business owners and record resulting inputs for reports and analysis. Supplement those efforts with online surveys distributed through the Chamber of Commerce and local media.
- 1.3.3 Develop, strengthen and publicize resources available to existing businesses.
- 1.3.4 Work with the Fluvanna County Chamber, Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development, Small Business Development Corporation, and others to maximize resources and adopt best practices in support of local businesses.
- 1.3.5 Produce resources and/or events to inform local businesses on ways to improve their business vitality. (e.g., how to get bonded and insured to qualify for larger service contracts).

**2 - Strong and Sustainable Jobs and Talent** (for the employee and potential employers) – Ample, high-paying jobs in stable industries are available for a well-prepared Fluvanna workforce. Fluvanna will provide and maintain a local labor force that has the skills and work ethic needed by local employers. Evolving economies create new labor force needs and new job skill opportunities. Education and workforce development programs are critical components of successful economic development programs. By supporting education, retraining and lifelong learning opportunities, Fluvanna County and its public and private sector partners will ensure that the labor force needs of existing and future businesses can be met.

### **2.1 Grow quantity of stable in-county jobs**

**2.1.1** Track in-county job statistics, including volume, growth trends, stability factors, per-capita income, industry concentration, etc.

**2.1.2** Develop a strategic plan for growing quantity of stable in-county jobs.

## **2.2 Strengthen per-capita income**

**2.2.1** Promote local growth of sectors with higher-than-average wages.

**2.2.2** Partner with education and workforce development Strategies to retain and grow marketable intellectual capital, innovation, and productivity.

**2.3 Enable strong workforce.** Ensure a well educated, trained and diverse workforce to support incoming businesses by working together with our schools and colleges.

**2.3.1** Emphasize and promote the benefits of GED attainment and vocational-technical skills training. Engage with the local school system to reinforce the importance of vocational-technical skills offerings in the schools.

**2.3.2** Seek to provide accessible and convenient vocational-technical training center sites. Examples include business or communications skills development programs offered by PVCC at the Fluvanna County Library.

**2.3.3** Seek adequate and timely funding for workforce development and training needs.

**2.3.4** Partner with the school system and education proponents in the County.

**2.3.5** Explore regional partnerships with the Piedmont Workforce Network, Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development, Piedmont Virginia Community College, and the University of Virginia.

**3 - Environmentally Efficient and Attractive** (for current and future generations) – Economic activity leaves minimal negative impact on the environment, and may ideally enhance the environment.

**3.1 Preserve the health and beauty of our natural resources.** Ensure adequate focus on preservation of ecological assets such as the James, Rivanna and Hardware Rivers, as well as groundwater resources.

**3.2 Develop and implement plans that protect and preserve the rural and historic character of the county through targeted location of business development areas.** By anticipating business needs and carefully planning how those needs will be met, Fluvanna's natural beauty and historically significant sites will be preserved. This will serve to preserve these assets for future generations and will enable and enhance tourism in the county.

**3.3 Manage growth by planning efficient transportation.** The ability to efficiently move people and products is a key aspect of economic sustainability. A community's transportation system, including its

highway, rail and air components, presents a highly visible indicator of a community's commitment to economic sustainability and growth. Fluvanna County will continue to develop the community consensus necessary to ensure a safe and effective transportation system that is designed to accommodate future community and business needs.

**3.3.1** Identify needed transportation improvements and establish priorities for those improvements.

**3.3.2** Develop and maintain a safe and effective transportation system that is designed to accommodate future community and business needs.

**3.4 Manage growth by strategically locating businesses in designated growth areas.** This will help ensure that our environmental resources are protected and preserved. It will also achieve an optimal balance of quality of life for Fluvanna's citizens, with a stable and diverse revenue base and needed jobs and services for the county.

**3.4.1** Use the tools provided in the Comprehensive Plan – the six Community Planning Areas (CPAs) and the Zion Crossroads Urban Development Area (UDA) – to attract and locate desirable businesses in the appropriate areas of the county.

**3.4.2** Use the County's Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance for optimal mixed-use development in the CPAs, proactively engaging developers and potential businesses in the earliest stages of the planning process.

**4 - Diversify the Tax Base** (for tax payer) – Ensure that the County has a strong fiscal framework, and that services rendered for citizens and businesses are well-supported by non-residential revenue sources.

**4.1 Track statistics on commercial and residential revenue.**

**4.1.1** Leverage database from Tactic 1.3.1 and other sources to maintain statistics on business tax contribution and growth trends.

**4.2 Pursue external funding sources such as grants to supplement revenues otherwise required from the County tax base.**

**4.2.1** Take an inventory of actual and potential sources of supplemental funding.

**4.2.2** Prioritize and pursue funding from identified sources (from 4.2.1) for supporting specific Tactics with resource requirements.

**4.3 Work with local partners such as the Fluvanna County Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center and Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development to identify and meet needs of local businesses (education, planning, business advocacy, etc.).**

- 4.3.1** Use the tools provided by Business First to maintain current information on each business.
- 4.3.2** Produce resources and/or events to inform local businesses on ways to improve their business vitality. (e.g., how to get bonded and insured to qualify for larger service contracts).
- 4.4** Develop standards for business legislation and review ordinances to ensure that they are commercially friendly.
- 4.5** Explore tax incentives to attract potential commercial entities.
- 4.6** Benchmark our tax ratios against other Virginia counties. Consider implementing a business registration process with appropriate licensing fees.
- 4.7** Develop and promote policy of desirable tax source and ratio targets. Progressively work toward the generally-accepted economic development goals of (a) 30% of revenues from business and 70% from residential and/or (b) a 1:1 ratio of jobs to the available labor force.

**5. High-quality, Competitive Business Infrastructure** – A community’s infrastructure is a crucial component of a sustainable economy and economic growth. Fluvanna County and its municipal and private sector partners must continue to focus efforts on developing the organizational relationships and physical facilities necessary to ensure that the County residents and businesses have facilities that meet current needs and have the capacity for future planned growth.

- 5.1 Enhance water and sewerage infrastructure.** In order for Fluvanna County to be able to enter and grow in a sustainable job market, it must first have the needed infrastructure in place.
  - 5.1.1** Monitor the progress of the Citizen Water Committee (appointed by the Board of Supervisors on March 17, 2010) and its recommendations regarding the water supply for the County. Actively participate in Committee meetings and discussions to influence its action specifically as it affects water supplies in support of economic development.
  - 5.1.2** Ensure that potential developers or businesses proactively address current and future infrastructure needs (including water, sewer, and roads) in Master Plans submitted in conjunction with their development projects.
- 5.2 Enhance the County’s telecommunication infrastructure.** Broadband access is a critical infrastructure component in attracting virtually any business to the area. Being able to accommodate their business needs will be key to Fluvanna’s attractiveness as a potential location.
  - 5.2.1** Actively monitor progress of the ARRA Broadband Initiative undertaken by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, specifically the proposed wireless broadband service to be provided to the region by DigitalBridge Communications.

**5.3 Provide and/or support the development of an adequate number of “ready to go” sites within the County.** Once the infrastructure is in place, land should be purchased and advertised as “shovel ready” for development.

**5.4 Ensure that adequate utility services are available** to meet existing and projected needs of all County users.

**6 – Economic Development Excellence** - To develop and maintain an effective local economic development program that promotes the vision. A programmatic approach to economic development is crucial and can be an important key to successful economic development efforts. Fluvanna County recognizes that such a programmatic approach requires both staff and other resources to implement successful economic Strategies.

**6.1 Build and maintain sufficient operational capacity** for effective Economic Development - Provide the resources necessary to fund and operate an effective economic development program.

**6.1.1** Develop Return on Investment to demonstrate the advisability of establishing a permanent, full-time economic development office in the County, along with appropriate funding to invest in economic development Strategies.

**6.1.2** Advocate for sufficient staff capacity, identifying specific position(s) and responsibilities.

**6.1.3** Form relationships and explicit partnerships with other economic development entities for teaming on this strategy.

**6.1.4** As appropriate, adopt a more “regional” approach to attracting business with other counties such as Louisa and Orange.

**6.1.5** Train economic development staff, commissioners, and other active participants and equip for continuous professional and educational development.

**6.1.6** Cultivate a “Citizen Task Force” comprised of volunteers with an interest in economic development to provide additional capacity and resources.

**6.2 Centralize Economic Development Planning** - Coordinate County economic development activities within a single department charged with promoting the economic health of the community.

**6.2.1** Establish a central repository for economic development information:

- Land Availability
- Labor Force
- Physical Capital, Infrastructure
- Energy Sources & Costs
- Financing Options
- Management Assistance
- Quality of Life
- Other

**6.3 Continuously Improve Processes and Planning –**

**6.3.1** Review and update this strategic plan on an annual basis.

**6.3.2** Every five years, poll Fluvanna's citizen base on desirable goods and services, benchmarking progress against the original poll (Tactic 1.1.2).

**6.3.3** Every five years, review this strategic plan within the context of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure compliance.

## Version Control - Document Revision History

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Description of major changes</b>	<b>Date changes were approved by EDC</b>
1.0	First working draft	Created - August 11
1.1	Added two new Goals. Edited verbiage and scope of Goals and Strategies.	Working version. Reviewed on Aug 25, 2009.
1.2	Edited and added text from committee work. Added tactic pages for each Strategy.	August 25, 2009
1.3	Assigned Goals to new EDC Members, additional development work on Strategies and Tactics. Separated out Tactical Action Plans as a separate document.	October 13, 2009
2.0	Edited and updated to bring the Plan further into compliance with the FY11 budget and BOS priorities.	March 15, 2010
FINAL	Final, edited version for approval by the EDC and adoption by the Board of Supervisors	June 30, 2010

## Planned Document Actions

1. Additional working iterations to finalize Goals, draft Strategies, and add some supporting tactics.
2. Combine this document with background research in the EDC Organizational Plan Document to create the EDC Plan Draft.
3. Plan work sessions and other means to gather citizen input once the combined draft is created.
4. Working sessions to get BoS, staff, EDA, and Planning Commission input.
5. Additional working iterations incorporating multiple inputs.
6. Submit document to BoS for adoption.
7. Publish.