

Commonwealth Regional Council

June 2025 Items of Interest

CEDS Stakeholder Meeting Gathers Regional Input

On June 24th, CRC hosted a regional stakeholder meeting as part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning process. Representatives from local governments, economic development organizations, workforce development agencies, educational institutions, and community groups came together to share insights on regional assets, challenges, and priorities. The discussion helped inform CRC's understanding of economic needs across the region and will guide the development of strategic goals and initiatives in the CEDS. We thank all participants for their valuable contributions.



Upcoming Funding Opportunities:

- Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation
 - Opens July 10, 2025
- VTC VA250 Marketing Leverage Program
 - September 16 – October 23
- VTC Special Events & Festivals Program
 - July 22 – September 11

Grants Awarded:

- The MILL Collective (TRRC Planning Grant) – Feasibility study for Farmville mill site
- Regional TRRC Grants – VHREDA Branding, BOOMS (Building opportunities on Main Street)
- Charlotte Co. Sheriff's Office – Byrne JAG (Body Cams – partial award)
- Charlotte County Meals on Wheels – Awarded \$8,000 to help provide hot and frozen meals

Grant Writing Assistance:

- Victoria & Keysville – HMGP applications for backup generators
- Mary E. Branch School – DHR BIPOC Preservation Grant submitted
- Prince Edward Co. – TAP Sidewalk Projects (Zion Hill Rd Ph. I & II)
- SEID Applications:
 - Prince Edward – HIT Park Access Road
 - Cumberland – Small Area Plan
 - Amelia – River Access Planning
 - Blackstone – Raw Water Line

The CRC provides free grant writing services for member localities and local 501C3 non-profits.

Opioid Abatement Initiatives Expand Across Region

CRC is supporting two new opioid recovery initiatives funded by the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA):

- Piedmont Health District received \$150,000 to hire a Peer Recovery Specialist and a part-time coordinator to expand outreach, naloxone distribution, school-based education, and mobile clinics in Prince Edward and Nottoway counties.
- Piedmont Regional Jail was awarded \$50,000 to implement a peer-led recovery program modeled after the McShin Foundation. The program includes a 14-week recovery curriculum, re-entry preparation, and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).

Both programs aim to reduce overdoses, support recovery, and strengthen community-based prevention and treatment resources.

Environmental Initiatives & DEQ Partnerships Underway

CRC is advancing several regional environmental projects in coordination with state and local partners:

- Rain Barrel Workshops are being planned in collaboration with local Soil & Water Conservation Districts and Virginia Cooperative Extension offices to promote water conservation through hands-on community events.
- Tree Giveaway Events are in the works through a developing partnership with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) to increase canopy coverage and promote native species planting.
- CRC is organizing a "Get Funded: Environmental Grants" Workshop, where localities will connect with representatives from state agencies to learn about available environmental funding opportunities.
- CRC has also signed on to support DEQ's development of the Chowan River I Water Supply Plan, a collaborative effort to ensure long-term water availability and sustainability for participating communities.

Public Input Shaping Local Comprehensive Plans

CRC continues to support local planning through active Comprehensive Plan updates in multiple communities:

- Town of Drakes Branch recently hosted its first round of community meetings and is preparing to launch a public input survey to gather additional feedback on the town's future development goals.
- Amelia County is conducting three upcoming community meetings over the next month and is working through detailed plan sections in coordination with the Planning Committee during monthly work sessions.

These efforts ensure local voices are at the center of long-term planning and land use decisions across the region.