



BEDFORD BUSINESS FIRST

News from Bedford County Office of Economic Development

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2023 Year in Review

As we approach the end of the year, we express our sincere gratitude to the valued partners within our community who have diligently contributed to making Bedford County an exceptional place to live, work, and play.

A special thanks to the Bedford County Economic Development Authority for matching the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) Business Ready Sites Program grant. The grant was awarded last summer and the project was completed in October for the second phase of the New London Business & Technology Center. This grant marks a significant milestone, propelling the site from a tier 2 to a tier 3 classification. The comprehensive scope of work encompassed a Preliminary Geotechnical Exploration report, a boundary survey, a Phase 1 environmental assessment, Cultural Resources Review, Threatened and Endangered Species Review, and the development of a new Master Plan. Furthermore, a Waters of the US Delineation and Determination study was successfully concluded earlier in the year.

Undoubtedly, initiatives of this nature play a pivotal role in our ongoing efforts to establish pad-ready sites within our industrial parks.

Should you or someone you know be considering the prospect of locating their business in Bedford County, please reach out to me. I'm happy to talk about plans and how to be of assistance.

Thank you all for your continued support and collaboration.



From my team to yours, we hope you all have a wonderful holiday season and can take some time to enjoy your family and friends.

Warm regards,

Pam Bailey

Economic Development Director
Bedford County

Parkland Direct to invest \$10 Million in expansion efforts

In October, the Bedford County Office of Economic Development, in partnership with the Economic Development Authority (EDA), announced that Parkland Direct, a high-volume lithographic print and custom envelope manufacturer, will invest \$10 million to expand its operations in Bedford County.

The company will add 50,000 square feet to its facility to increase production capacity with the addition of two new converter and press machines. The expansion will create 41 new jobs.

Read the full story [here.](#)



ProMach acquires Sentry Equipment & Erectors Inc.

In November, Sentry Equipment & Erectors Inc. announced it has been purchased by ProMach, a worldwide leader in processing and packaging solutions.

Sentry was founded in 1980 in Forest and is a respected supplier of high-quality conveyors, packaging equipment, container handling solutions, and related services.

"We're pleased to welcome the Sentry team to ProMach," said ProMach President and CEO, Mark Anderson. "The addition of Sentry further strengthens our position as one of the industry's leading suppliers of systems integration solutions, but this acquisition also allows us to add key products to ProMach's overall packaging equipment portfolio."

Read the full story [here.](#)



**Career & Technical Education video shows importance of CTE
for workforce development**

Bedford County Public Schools along with Bedford County Office of Economic Development and the Economic Development Authority partnered on a Career & Technical Education (CTE) video project showing the importance of CTE programs in our schools.

Watch it [here](#) on our YouTube channel.

Bedford ONE Program offers career exploration opportunities to 200 high school students in 2023

The Bedford ONE (Offering New Experiences Program) is in its tenth year and is a five-way partnership between the Office of Economic Development, the Economic Development Authority Board, Central Virginia Community College, Bedford County Public Schools, and our local business partners.

The purpose of the program is to bring career awareness to students as they begin to navigate the next steps post-graduation. Students (typically seniors), from all three area high schools, are invited to attend industry tours that showcase work-related opportunities in our region. This effort aligns with workforce development and helps to maintain our workforce pipeline. Should your business be interested in hosting a tour for our next generation of workers, please contact Holley Scheffel, Business Programs Coordinator to discuss.

Below you will find a list of businesses and industries that provided tours to Bedford County students during the 2022-2023 school year. Tours begin in September once school begins and end in March to avoid conflicts with school-based testing. We are grateful to all of the partners that make this program successful.

January - Bedford County Fire & Rescue, 911 Communications Center, and Bedford County Sheriff's Office
Emergency Services

February - Virginia Technical Institute
Career Fair for Seniors

March - Mariners Landing
Hospitality and Tourism Industry

September - Terry's Subaru & Wicked Diesel
Automotive Industry

October - Southern Air and Innerspec
HVAC and Non-destructive Testing

November - Chapel Creek Farms & Little Otter Flower Farm
Agritourism



Paving Project Complete at Elba Butcher Shoppe

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) tackled a large-scale project this past fall when they approved to repave the parking lot attached to a commercial property that they own. The parking lot at

Elba Butcher Shoppe, located at 212 E. Washington Street in Bedford, got an extreme makeover. The grocery store is a critical asset here locally and provides the community with fresh meats and produce in a walkable area. The improved parking lot enhances both pedestrian and vehicle safety for people utilizing the parking lot. A Bedford bench has also been added to the Otter Bus stop, and trees and shrubs will be added in 2024.



Director Pam Bailey Completes OUEDI coursework, earns Economic Development distinction

Congratulations to Pam Bailey, Bedford County Director of Economic Development, who graduated from the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute!

Pam finished her third round of classes and officially completed the program in November.



Holley Scheffel, Business Programs Coordinator, wins Citizen of the Year Award

Our very own Holley Scheffel was the recipient of the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year Award. Chamber President and CEO, Kayla Waller (pictured right) praised Holley for her contributions and efforts to enhance the lives of those living in Bedford County. Way to go, Holley!



Your small business matters!

If you need some first-rate coaching on how to get started or grow, check out the training offered at the **Small Business Development Center - Lynchburg Region**.

[Visit their website to see the classes offered.](#)

Visit the SBDC website to learn more about their program offerings including:

- [Small Town & Merchant Program \(STAMP\)](#)
- [International Business Development Program](#)
- [Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program \(ICAP\)](#)
- [Craft Beverage Assistance Program \(CNA\)](#)

- [Veterans Assistance](#)

Growth Trends for Bedford County

The unemployment rate for Bedford County, Virginia was 2.9% as of October 2023. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 3.6%. One year earlier, in October 2022, the unemployment rate in Bedford County, Virginia was 2.9%.

The largest sector in Bedford County, Virginia is Retail Trade, employing 2,642 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Health Care and Social Assistance (2,609 workers) and Manufacturing (2,136).

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in Bedford County, Virginia is projected to contract 0.3% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 0.3% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 0.1% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 0.2% per year.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total value of goods and services produced by a region. In 2022, nominal GDP in Bedford County, Virginia expanded 7.6%. This follows growth of 7.2% in 2021. As of 2022, total GDP in Bedford County, Virginia was \$2,308,579,000.

Source: JosEQ®

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Expanding? We have Business Ready Sites for you.



Our premier **New London Business and Technology Center** park in Forest features pad-ready and cleared lots for sale ranging from 7.5 to 50+ acres to accommodate 10,000 - 500,000 sq. ft. buildings. [Download the flier here.](#)

The **Bedford Center for Business** has land ready for development, including a 9.5 acre graded site, and it lies within the Town's Enterprise Zone and Virginia's Opportunity Zone. [Download the flier here.](#)



In **Montvale Center for Commerce**, two lots are available with nearly 20 combined acres ready for grading and will accommodate a building up to 200,000 sf. ft.

Conveniently located on 460W and close to I-81. [Download the flier here.](#)

Call the Office of Economic Development to learn how we can help your business grow in Bedford County. **540-587-5670** BedfordEconomicDevelopment.com

Did you know we have other commercial listings available on our website?
[Check them out here.](#)

Like what you see?

We post regularly to keep you up to date on projects taking place in the community, continuing education opportunities, and more!



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