



Powering Local Economies

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Virginia Main Street (VMS) in Action



Jody Keenan

VA Small Business Development



Courtney Mainley

Virginia Main Street



The Leaders in Job Creation and
Measurable Economic Results

Powering Local Economies: Virginia SBDC in Action



The Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network is a *partnership* between the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University, and premier institutions throughout Virginia.



Virginia SBDC Locations



Virginia SBDC
Established
Business
Clients



Virginia SBDC Assistance



ADVISE

1:1 Confidential

Subject Matter
Experts

Free



EDUCATE

Training Events

Virtual
Resources

Conferences



RESEARCH

Industry Reports

Connections

Community
Partnerships

Growing Futures



SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

Commercialization
Assistance
International Trade
Artificial Intelligence
Cybersecurity
Craft Beverage

ADVISING AND TRAINING

- Business Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Access to Capital
- Marketing Strategy
- Digital Marketing
- Government Contracting



Tourism Businesses



INDUSTRIES

Craft Beverage
Specialty Retail
Specialty Foods
Restaurants
Agri-Tourism
Transportation

- VTC Grant Applications
- Financial Analysis
- Access to Capital
- Marketing Strategy
- Digital Marketing
- eCommerce
- AI
- Hiring and Training
- Government Contracting



Alignment with VTC Goals

- ✓ **Boost Off-Season Travel**

Marketing strategies

- ✓ **Destination Development**

Advising for boutique lodging, restaurants, attractions

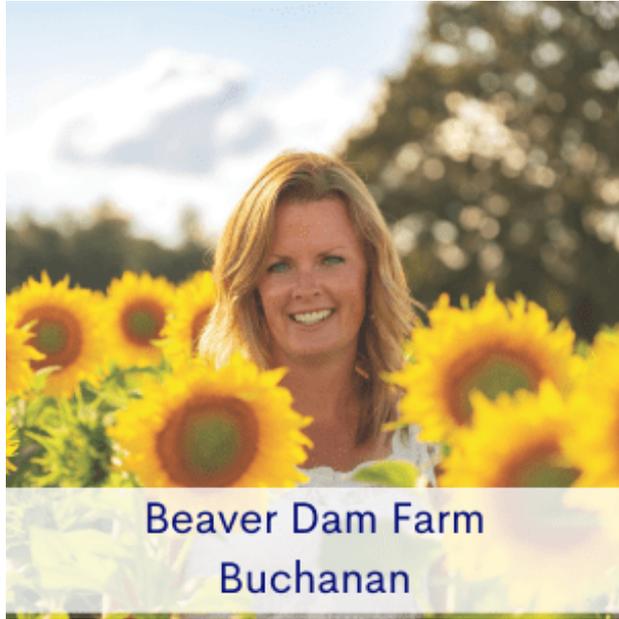
- ✓ **VA250 Commemoration**

Support for historic sites and cultural tourism

businesses



Client Stories

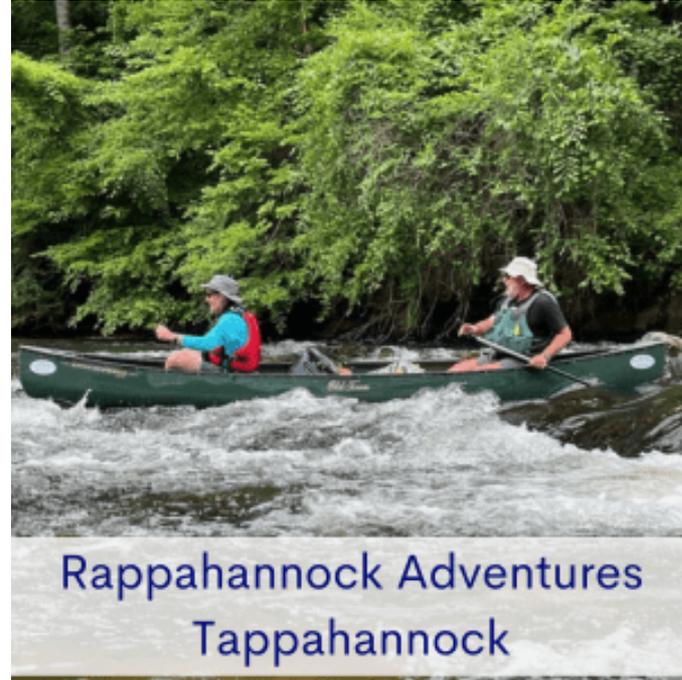


- Beaver Dam Farm Sunflower Festival
- \$20,000 VTC Grant
- Coaching in a Virginia business competition
- Marketing advice – digital media, advertising, PR



Client Stories

- History-themed tours of Rappahannock River
- Civil War Paddle Tours
- Business start-up basics
- SWaM certification



Client Stories



- Business planning & fundamentals
- Financial Projections
- Social media marketing
- Sales strategies



Client Stories

- Business acquisition
- Loan Packaging
- SWaM Certification to sell to Virginia
- Business ownership basics



What's Next

- ✓ Register for 1:1 advising
- ✓ Attend training
- ✓ Visit our website



VirginiaSBDC.org





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Jody Keenan

State Director

Virginia SBDC

jkeen@gmu.edu



Powering Local Economies with Main Streets

VA-1 2025

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Danville, VA



Why Main Street districts are important

Dollar for dollar, pound for pound, Main Street is one of the most effective economic development programs ever created. It works because Main Street communities recognize small steps, small businesses, small deals and small developments can add up to big impact. From Article: [New Life for Small Cities](#), *Richmond Times Dispatch*, May 16, 2022.

Ed McMahon

***ULI Senior Resident Fellow, Chairman
Emeritus Main Street America, Trustee
Orton Family Foundation***





Virginia Main Street is an accredited State Coordinating Program of **Main Street America**. As a Main Street Coordinating Program, Virginia Main Street helps to lead a grassroots network consisting of over 100 Virginia historic neighborhood and downtown commercial districts committed to developing and managing high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

The Main Street Approach

Build a diverse economic base | Catalyze smart new investment | Cultivate a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem

Create an inviting, inclusive atmosphere | Celebrate historic character | Foster accessible, people-centered public spaces



Build leadership and strong organizational capacity | Ensure broad community engagement | Forge partnerships across sectors

Market district's defining assets | Communicate unique features through storytelling | Support buy-local experience

ORGANIZATION

Bring all sectors of the community together to build consensus & common vision, assemble resources, and lead revitalization



Sense of Ownership

DESIGN

Improve physical elements while preserving & enhancing the community's authentic fabric



Sense of Place

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Strengthen & diversify the local economy by supporting existing base and encouraging strategic use of space and entrepreneurship development



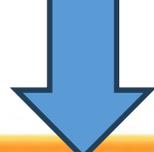
Sense of Vitality

PROMOTION

Position district as the center of activity, culture, commerce, and community life, market its assets, and promote its positive image



Sense of Activity



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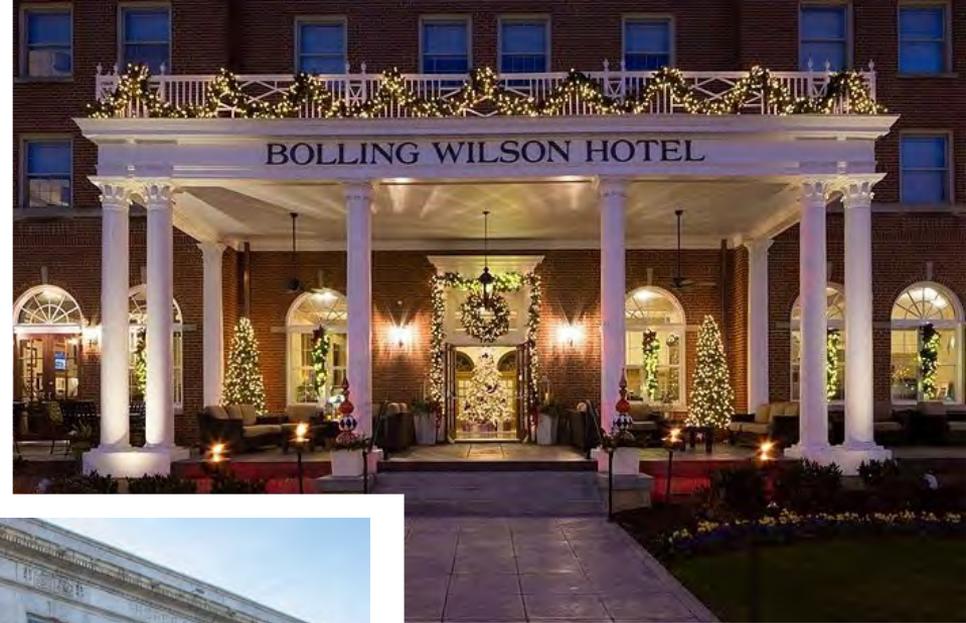
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Sense of Activity









Tips for Getting Started

1. **Put together a core committee of people.** Look at your downtown as if you are a first time visitor. What are its strengths? How do we build upon them for the best version?
2. **Then broaden the reach, talk with fellow stakeholders about the idea of forming a downtown organization.** Also, talk with the Town, Chamber, EDA, and other organizations. Gather input and support.

Then, if you decide to move ahead . . .

1. **Identify possible board members and supporters.** Create an interim board of directors (5-9 people). **Take them to other downtowns** to meet with peers, hear about what works.
2. **The choose a name, determine service area, draft bylaws & articles of incorporation, establish 501c3, insurance, work and funding plan...**



Main Streets and Partners

Communicate, coordinate and collaborate on:

- Entrepreneur and Small Business Development
 - Emphasis on *experiential* retail, restaurants, services with high foot traffic
- Real Estate Redevelopment
 - Reusing character-defining architectural assets
 - Small-scale developers/owners
 - Activating low-traffic and vacant spaces
 - Infill development
- Marketing
 - Image building campaigns and events



Main Streets and Parters

Communicate, coordinate and collaborate on:

- Business Relocation and Expansion
 - Independent retail and restaurants
 - Personal services
 - Small-scale manufacturing
 - Emphasis on Quality Retail Experiences
- Strategic Planning
- Talent Attraction/Placemaking
 - Attractive public realm, parks, and recreation
 - Downtown housing in the thick of it for young professionals
 - Hot desking with other remote workers in third spaces or coworking spaces



TIER SYSTEM

Exploring Main Street

- Noncompetitive Application
- Learn about best practices and connect to a network of peers
- Grant - \$15K CVG

Mobilizing Main Street

- Competitive Admission
- Learning laboratory with organizational development emphasis
- Required to apply for Advancing designation
- Grant - \$15K CVG

Advancing Virginia Main Street

- Community Designation
- Competitive Application Process
- Main Street America Community Accreditation
- Grants - \$25K DIG & FFG

Not sure if your town/city is an Exploring Main Street community, visit www.virginiamainstreet.com.



mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov

(804) 371-7171

dhcd.virginia.gov/vms (Program Website)

virginiastreet.com (Blog)

[Courtney Mailey](#), Virginia Main Street State Coordinator
and Program Manager

VMS Program Administrators:

- [Amy Guzulaitis](#) (Southwest)
- [Ellie Dudding-McFadden](#) (Central Virginia/Shenandoah)
- [Blaire Buergler](#) (Northern Virginia/Shenandoah)
- [Kyle Meyer](#) (Tidewater)
- [Zachary Whitlow](#) (Southern)



Q&A



Jody Keenan

VA Small Business Development

(703) 277-7727
jkeenan@gmu.edu



Courtney Mainley

Virginia Main Street

(804) 385-0191
courtney.mailey@dhcd.virginia.gov