

2017  
ANNUAL REPORT

# THE CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Economic Development in  
Lynchburg, Virginia







# THIS IS LYNCHBURG

## Welcome Home

In the past year, Lynchburg was featured as an incredible place to live, work and play.

**#2** of Kiplinger's "Best Places to Retire"

**#2** in the national Digital Cities Ranking

**#8** in Gallup-Heathways "Highest Well-Being Cities"

**#37** in Money Geek "Small Cities to Make a Living"

**#85** in Forbes "Cost of Doing Business"

**#87** in Forbes "Best Small Places for Businesses and Careers"

**#140** in Milken "Best Performing Small Cities"



# THIS IS LEADERSHIP

The Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism (LOEDT) and the Economic Development Authority continued to implement progressive initiatives and incentives to promote Lynchburg's business community, centered around eight key areas:



**Business Attraction**



**Business Retention & Expansion**



**Entrepreneurship**



**Infrastructure**



**Talent Development**



**Economic Empowerment**



**Lodging & Dining**



**Visitor Experience**

## Lynchburg Economic Development Authority

The Lynchburg Economic Development Authority is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and serves as the incentive arm of the City of Lynchburg. Lynchburg's EDA actively pursues investment and development opportunities and works to elevate the economic development profile of the City.



**H. Michael Lucado**

Chair



**Louise E. Mitchell**

Vice Chair



**Mark Strosnider**

Secretary-Treasurer



**John M. Stone**

Assistant Secretary-  
Treasurer



**William T. Lovern**



**Gerard E. Swienton**



**Georgeann Snead**



## Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism

The Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism is the City of Lynchburg's economic development and tourism agency. With decades of combined experience, the staff leads business retention and attraction, entrepreneurship and tourism development, and marketing initiatives for the City.



**Marjette G. Upshur**  
Director



**Anna Bentson**  
Assistant Director



**Lisa Meriwether**  
Tourism Sales Manager



**Krista M. Boothby**  
Marketing and Public  
Relations Coordinator



**Jason M. Witt**  
Economic Development  
and Tourism Coordinator



**Melissa L. Dismond**  
Administrative Assistant



**Vivian Layne**  
Travel Counselor

## Lynchburg Visitors Center Travel Counselors

**Laura Coflin**

**Barbara McLaughlin**

**Judi Harvey**

**Sandy Inscoe**

**Janet Cofer**

**Morgan Carwile**

**Jessica Loyd**

**Sherika Callen**



# THIS IS OUR ECONOMY



**\$149,200**

## Median House Value

The median household income in Lynchburg City, Virginia, is **\$39,589** and the median house value is **\$149,200**. (Source: U.S. Census)

## Cost of living



The cost of living in Lynchburg is **10.9%** lower than the national average. (Source: JobsEQ)



**6.1%**

## Annual Population Growth Rate

In **2016**, the population in Lynchburg City, Virginia, was **80,212**. Between 2005 and 2015, the region's population grew at an annual average rate of **1.2%**. Lynchburg's population has grown **6.1%** since the 2010 Census. (Source: JobsEQ)

**\$41,791**

## Average Annual Worker's Wage

The average worker in Lynchburg City, Virginia, earned annual wages of **\$41,791** in 2016. Average annual wages per worker increased **2.0%** in the region during the preceding four quarters. (Source: JobsEQ)



## Healthcare Support

### Fastest Growing Occupation

Over the next **10 years**, the fastest growing occupation group in Lynchburg City, Virginia, is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a **+1.5%** year-over-year rate of growth. (Source: JobsEQ)



## Top Degrees

### Liberal Arts, Psychology, Business and Criminal Justice

Lynchburg's five colleges and universities issued **20,591 two- and four-year degrees** in 2015. Top degrees were Liberal Arts, Psychology, Business and Criminal Justice.

Of individuals 25 to 64 in Lynchburg City, Virginia, **34.2%** have a bachelor's degree or higher, which compares with **31.3%** in the nation. (Source: JobsEQ)



**\$2 billion**

## In Annual Retail Sales

(Source: U.S. Census)



## Employment

In **2016**, unemployment in Lynchburg averaged **4.5%**, with a seasonal spike during the summer months of **4.9%**. Beyond the trend of a seasonal improvement in end-of-year unemployment, the **12-month low** of **4.2%** in **November 2016** signals an improving employment picture.

(Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)

While all employment in Lynchburg City, Virginia, is projected to grow **0.2%** over the next **10 years**, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow **1.0% per year**, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow **0.4% per year**, and occupations requiring a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow **0.7% per year**.

(Source: JobsEQ)

## Employers by Size of Establishment: Lynchburg City



(Source: Virginia Employment Commission)

## Job Sectors

Sectors in the City of Lynchburg with the highest average wages per worker are Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (**\$82,862**); Wholesale Trade (**\$67,239**); and Utilities (**\$62,346**). Regional sectors with the best job growth over the last 5 years are Healthcare and Social Assistance (**+949 jobs**), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (**+429**), and Accommodation and Food Services (**+418**).

The largest sector in Lynchburg City, Virginia, is Healthcare and Social Assistance, which employs **10,875 workers**. The next-largest sectors in the region are Retail Trade (**7,129 workers**) and Manufacturing (**6,389 workers**). (Source: JobsEQ)





# THIS IS OUR IMPACT

Economic development objectives focused on the growth of local business and industry continue to be a primary driver of the Office of Economic Development and Tourism. Through our programs this year:

**322** total jobs created

**\$80 M** new capital investment

**\$3 M** capital available in loans and grants

**2,896** businesses currently licensed

(Source: Office of Economic Development and Tourism)

Lynchburg companies are selling to customers all over the globe – exporting ideas, sharing innovative practices and providing some of the best advanced manufacturing and machining products in the world.

August  
2016

## Pacific Life Insurance Company

**\$4 M investment | 300 Jobs**

*Acquisition of term life business platform from Genworth Financial and open east coast business center*

January  
2017

## Convergys Corporation

**\$4.2 M investment | 600 Jobs**

*Headquartered in Cincinnati, OH, Convergys is the largest customer service provider in the United States and the second largest provider globally*



In fiscal year 2017, **commercial building permits totaled nearly \$155 million** in real property investment.

Of the 2,900 businesses licensed in the City of Lynchburg, **47% have been in business 10 years or more.**

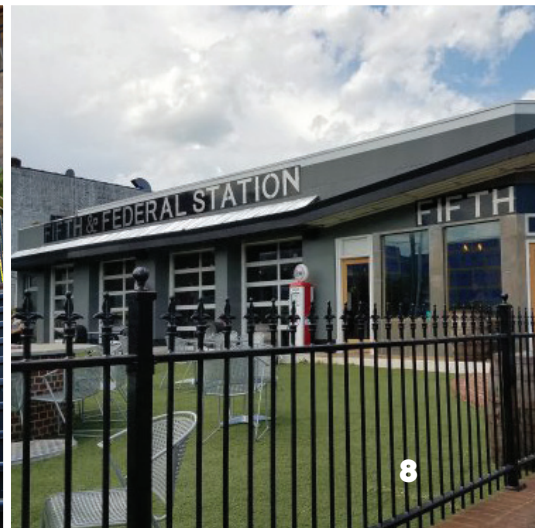
**Downtown revitalization** continues with 28 new businesses and more than 279 jobs created in fiscal year 2017. In the past ten years, more than 900 residential lofts have been developed spurring investments in retail, restaurant and service businesses.

**The City of Lynchburg Real Estate Rehabilitation Program** encourages renovation of older structure and helps to revitalize commercial neighborhoods. To date, 775 properties in the City have participated in the program, resulting in nearly \$152 M in improvements to the City's tax base.

The Economic Development Authority and the City of Lynchburg Adopted **Development Principles** to serve as the initial point of contact for all commercial development in the City.

The Authority served as the conduit for issue of more than \$300 million in **Industrial Revenue Bonds** to support the expansion of facilities at Centra and Westminster Canterbury.

(Source: Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism)





# THIS IS OPPORTUNITY



## Enterprise Zone

The City's two **Enterprise Zones** coupled with expanded small business financing continue to produce substantial results. In the past few years, the City has made several thousand additional acres of commercial property eligible for investment grants; in 2016, 189 new jobs were created in Lynchburg Enterprise Zones, with \$123,557 in state grants supporting Lynchburg businesses. Investments in commercial real estate were even more significant. Real Property Improvement Grants of \$873,414 leveraged private commercial property investments of more than \$15.5 million.

## The Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund

has approved \$1.7 million in small business loans, supporting seven small firms throughout the City.

## The Local Enterprise Zone Redevelopment Program

provides an investment overlay district corresponding to existing Enterprise Zone boundaries. Designed to support small business real property investments and expand real estate tax receipts for the city, the grant has been effective in incentivizing public-private partnerships and private investments. In fiscal year 2017, \$122,000 was invested to support local businesses through the Local Enterprise Zone Redevelopment Program, leveraging \$539,120 in capital investments across the City.





## Infrastructure and Transportation

Recognizing the implications of Lynchburg's industrial past, the Office of Economic Development and the Authority have actively pursued testing, remediation and redevelopment opportunities for commercial brownfield sites. Building upon recent successes on 5th Street, the Economic Development Authority was awarded \$400,000 in **Community-Wide Brownfields Assessment** grants from the EPA in June 2015. This funding is dedicated to the assessment of sites potentially impacted by hazardous substances and petroleum and will be used to prepare a site inventory and database, conduct Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, and conduct clean-up and redevelopment planning and community engagement activities in the Midtown neighborhood. The City has leveraged an additional \$81,000 in 2017 in state support from the Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic

Redevelopment Assistance Fund to support local brownfields project assessment.

Economic development efforts supported more than \$250,000 in public-private partnerships for **infrastructure improvements** benefiting multiple businesses, including new sidewalks at Ivy Creek Innovation Center, to improve accessibility and enhance public; parking improvements on 5th Street; and efforts to extend John Capron Drive to increase access to First Lynchburg Industrial Park development.

Economic development staff participates in the Lynchburg Regional Transportation Advocacy Group, as a partner on the Commonwealth's first **Regional Connectivity Study**, and as Initiative Council chairs for the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.



# THIS IS COMMUNITY



## CO.STARTERS Entrepreneurial Program

In 2016, the Office of Economic Development launched **CO.STARTERS**, a nationally recognized 9-week program that helps aspiring and seasoned entrepreneurs turn business ideas into action. In the first year, thirty businesses graduated from the program.

In June 2016, five Lynchburg start-ups that completed the first CO.STARTERS cohort received **Community Business Launch** grants totaling \$40,000 to start or expand their business operations and all businesses received service hours from local providers in accounting, legal, web development and marketing support.



The number of Lynchburg start-ups continues to grow, increasing **8%** from 2014 to 2016. (Source: Virginia Employment Commission)



## YOUR SOURCE FOR STARTUP ADVICE AND HELPFUL TOOLS IN LYNCHBURG, VA

In addition to CO.STARTERS, entrepreneurs can access **Launched in Lynchburg**, a web portal for local businesses and stakeholders centered on interactive learning and building business connections. Since launching the website in August 2016, there have been over 2,000 unique video plays and over 900 hours spent watching these videos.



Lynchburg was designated Virginia's first **TechHire** community in 2015, joining a national, multi-sector White House Initiative designed to prepare a pipeline of workers for 21st century jobs. TechHire provides a platform to expand models for training that prepares students for the workforce in months, not years, to increase the speed and agility with which America trains new, skilled professionals. The Lynchburg Office of Economic Development is working alongside employers to connect citizens with barriers to employment to higher wage and higher skill jobs in healthcare, information technology and advanced manufacturing. This partnership will equip our citizens with relevant skills and engage those who may lack the typical profile of degrees and career experience.



# THIS IS COMMUNITY



## Arts & Culture

The City of Lynchburg's **Arts & Cultural District Program**, managed by the Office of Economic Development, generates both economic and cultural activity. Support from the National Endowment for the Arts and Virginia Commission for the Arts, combined with locally generated amusement taxes, provide a local arts and cultural endowment of approximately \$35,000 annually. In fiscal year 2017, these funds leveraged private financing to support 21 arts and cultural initiatives and events and generate economic activity of more than **\$2 million**.

In 2016, Lynchburg participated as a study community in **Arts & Economic Prosperity 5**, the most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in the United States, conducted by Americans for the Arts. The study concluded that the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates more than **\$10.8 million** in annual economic activity in the City of Lynchburg—supporting 251 full-time equivalent jobs and generating \$962,000 in local and state government revenues.







## Create Lynchburg

The City of Lynchburg, in partnership with the Small Business Development Center at CVCC and the Academy Center of the Arts, hosted the first **Create Lynchburg** conference on January 27-28, 2017. The Create Lynchburg conference convened more than 75 arts entrepreneurs for a weekend of workshops, panel discussions and speakers.

## Lynchburg Innovation Week

The Economic Development Authority continued support for **Lynchburg Innovation** partnership activities, inspired by **Lynchburg Innovation Week** held in June 2016. These events are designed to highlight our business community and inspire citizens to take an active role in growing our City at the intersection of entrepreneurship, arts and culture, and technology. The City of Lynchburg awarded a 2017 **Community Economic Development Award** (CEDA) from the Virginia Economic Developers Association for Lynchburg Innovation Week.



# Partnerships and Acknowledgments

Economic development requires partnerships to build community. We are proud to partner to make direct investments in our citizens, students, workers, schools, community groups and cultural events. Our partnership programs support the many facets of comprehensive economic development.

**Special Thanks** to the following individuals and organizations that support economic development efforts in the City of Lynchburg.

- Lynchburg City Council
- City of Lynchburg Department of Community Development
- City of Lynchburg Department of Information Technology and GIS
- Commissioner of the Revenue
- City of Lynchburg Department of Parks & Recreation
- City of Lynchburg Department of Finance & Budget
- City of Lynchburg Department of Communications & Marketing
- Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
- Lynchburg City Schools
- Campbell County Economic Development
- Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation
- Downtown Lynchburg Association
- United Way of Central Virginia
- Small Business Development Center at CVCC
- The Lynchburg Business Development Centre
- The Region 2000 Workforce Investment Board
- Lynchburg Road Runners Club
- Center for Economic Education at Lynchburg College
- Work Healthy Lynchburg
- HumanKind
- Virginia Downtown Development Association
- Virginia Business Incubation Association
- Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities
- Partners in Education
- Greater Lynchburg Transit Company



- 
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
  - James River Council for the Arts and Humanities
  - Young Professionals of Central Virginia
  - Virginia Commission for the Arts
  - Virginia Tourism Corporation
  - Lynchburg Grows
  - SCORE
  - Region 2000 Local Government Council
  - Retail Merchants Association
  - Virginia Economic Development Partnership
  - Virginia Economic Developers Association
  - International Economic Development Council
  - Virginia Community Capital
  - Liberty University
  - Virginia Amateur Sports
  - Vector Space
  - Lynchburg College
  - Greater Lynchburg Community Trust
  - Randolph College
  - Moore + Giles
  - Virginia University of Lynchburg
  - Amazement Square
  - Academy Center of the Arts
  - Central Virginia Community College











# THIS IS **LYNCHBURG** WELCOME HOME



**Office of Economic Development and Tourism  
City of Lynchburg**

**900 Church Street Lynchburg, Virginia 24504**

**(434) 455-4490**

**[www.opportunitylynchburg.com](http://www.opportunitylynchburg.com)**