

# GO Virginia Region 3 Annual Report

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## I: Introduction

Region 3 is situated in rural south, central Virginia. It is the largest in land area and smallest in population of all nine GO Virginia (GOVA) regions and incorporates thirteen counties and two cities. Region 3 is ripe with opportunities: established centers of advanced manufacturing and technology, emerging innovation assets that support an entrepreneurial base, educational institutions building a skilled workforce, a significant natural resource base, and civic leadership that creates the necessary social capital to adapt to changing market conditions. Region 3 is the only region to routinely expend all its per capita allocations on a yearly basis. The success of its projects is outlined in the FY23 Annual Report.

<b>Region 3 Localities</b>	Counties of: Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte,
	Cumberland, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg,
	Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward
	Cities of: Danville and Martinsville
<b>Support Organization</b>	Southside Planning District Commission
<b>Targeted Sectors</b>	Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials
	Agriculture & Food Processing
	Business Services
	Controlled Environment Agriculture
	Energy, Natural Resources, & Finished Products
	Health Care Services
	Information Technology & Communications Services

## II: Growth & Diversification Plan

The development of Region 3's initial Growth and Diversification (G&D) Plan was an extensive process to ensure the creation of a relevant, strong foundation to build future projects and initiatives upon. Nearly 100 strategically selected stakeholders were involved in engagement session discussions. Five virtual group sessions covering the topics of entrepreneurship, business retention and scale-up, sites, and talent were also held. Additionally, one-on-one and group interviews were conducted, including chambers of commerce, educational institutions, community foundations, youth leaders, grant recipients, economic developers, local government managers, state agencies, innovation catalysts, and business leaders.

The required biennial G&D Plan update was completed in September 2023. A workgroup, comprised of several Region 3 Council members, Region 3 staff, and a Longwood University data and demographics specialist, was tasked by the Region 3 Council with modifying the G&D Plan to reflect changed conditions and developments in the Region since the last update. Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) was identified as a new targeted sector. In recent years, the CEA industry has been a rapidly emerging focus for economic development in Virginia. Building upon existing sector assets, Region 3 seeks to lead the Commonwealth with CEA initiatives, becoming a hub for CEA growth and opportunity.

The Region 3 economy in 2023 has not materially changed from the metrics presented in the 2021 G&D Plan. Longwood University's Office of Community and Economic Development was engaged to update its 2021 report entitled "Performance of the Region 3 Economy." As part of the update, Longwood completed an Economic and Skills Gap Analysis. The analysis provided valuable insight and direction for Region 3. It included employment and wage growth data, economic development announcements, a situational analysis, and identified workforce gaps among targeted industrial sectors. Additionally, recommendations were made for broadening current targeted sectors. The report and associated data are included as an exhibit in the 2023 G&D Plan update.

A table outlining Region 3's targeted industrial sectors, identified in the 2023 G&D Plan update, along with the related active projects and their primary goal follows:

TARGETED INDUSTRY	PROJECT <small>*denotes statewide project</small>	PRIMARY GOAL
<b>Advanced Manufacturing &amp; Advanced Materials</b>	GO TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
	Gupton Initiative	Talent Evolution
	P&HCC Welding Instructor	Talent Evolution
	CRC Redo	Site Development
	VGA Refresh	Site Development
	SVCC Mechatronics Instructor	Talent Evolution
	Southern Virginia Regional Alliance: Business Ready Sites	Site Development
	Virginia Growth Alliance: Site Development	Site Development
<b>Agriculture &amp; Food Processing</b>	Controlled Environment Agriculture Strategy & Roadmap	Talent Evolution
	GO TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
	Southern Virginia Regional Alliance: Business Ready Sites	Site Development
	Virginia Growth Alliance: Site Development	Site Development
<b>Business Services</b>	Controlled Environment Agriculture Strategy & Roadmap	Talent Evolution
	ExperienceWorks	Talent Evolution
	SEED Innovation Hub	Talent Evolution
	GO TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
	Southern Virginia Regional Alliance: Business Ready Sites	Site Development
	Virginia Growth Alliance: Site Development	Site Development
<b>Controlled Environment Agriculture</b>	Controlled Environment Agriculture Strategy & Roadmap	Talent Evolution
<b>Energy, Natural Resources, &amp; Finished Products</b>	GOT TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
	Southern Virginia Regional Alliance: Business Ready Sites	Site Development
	Virginia Growth Alliance: Site Development	Site Development

<b>Health Care Services</b>	Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Sciences (FY24)	Talent Evolution
	GOT TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
<b>Information Technology &amp; Communications Services</b>	Mid-Atlantic Broadband Middle Mile Fiber Expansion*	Site Development Talent Evolution
	GO TEC 2025*	Talent Evolution
	RISE Build to Scale (FY24)	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
	Southern Virginia Regional Alliance: Business Ready Sites	Site Development
	Virginia Growth Alliance: Site Development	Site Development

### III: Summary of Projects

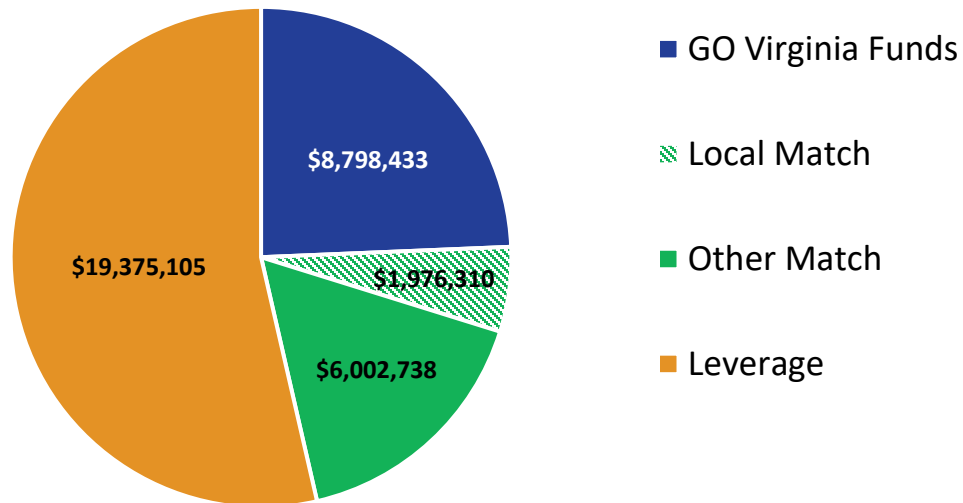
<b>FY23 Project</b> <small>*denotes statewide project</small>	<b>GO Virginia Funds</b>	<b>Total Match</b>	<b>Local Match</b>	<b>Additional Leverage</b>	<b>G&amp;D Investment Strategy: Targeted Industry</b>
GO TEC 2025*	\$3,474,821	\$2,426,079	\$1,783,040	\$431,030	Workforce Development: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials, Information Technologies & Communication Services, Energy, Natural Resources, & Finished Products, Business Services, Health Care Services
CRC REDO	\$65,000	\$32,500	\$17,500	\$0	Site Development, Start Up Ecosystem: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials, Information Technologies & Communication Services, Business Services,
P&HCC GO TEC Instructor	\$118,545	\$129,261.00	\$0	\$23,761	Workforce Development: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials
SVCC GO TEC Instructor	\$139,732	\$223,208	\$90,770	\$0	Workforce Development: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials
VGA Site Development	\$335,050	\$168,000	\$85,000	\$498,078	Site Development: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials, Energy, Natural Resources, & Finished Products, Information Technologies & Communication Services
MBC Middle Mile Construction*	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$0	\$18,422,236	Broadband Infrastructure: Advanced Manufacturing & Advanced Materials, Information Technologies & Communication Services

Project	Sub-Grantee	Participating Localities	Project Description	Relevant Project Metrics
GO TEC 2025	IALR	GOVA Regions 1, 3, 4, & 5; 26 public school divisions	GO TEC Virginia 2025 includes the development of three GO TEC Training Labs (one each in Regions 1, 4, and 5) to serve as a focal point for regional economic developers. These labs will work with existing and prospective businesses to highlight the GO TEC talent pathways and offer hands-on technology integration to create a pipeline of skilled workers. GOVA funds, matched by investments from the participating K12 divisions and private contributions, supports in-region GO TEC/IALR employees who will staff the Training Labs and coordinate aligned program activities. GO TEC staff will support the expanded number of K12 Divisions' Career Connections labs as well. GO TEC 2025 will offer defined academic and skill preparation pathways, starting in middle school through postsecondary, in strategic traded sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GO TEC Enterprise Plan</li> <li>● 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Program Evaluation</li> <li>● 3 Training Labs</li> <li>● 3,400 new jobs (3yrs)</li> <li>● 15 net new teachers trained (3 yrs); 25 net new (5 yrs)</li> </ul>
CRC REDO	Commonwealth Regional Council	Amelia Co., Buckingham Co., Charlotte Co., Cumberland Co., Lunenburg Co., Nottoway Co., Prince Edward Co.	CRC member localities have elected to discontinue membership in the Virginia Growth Alliance (VGA) and to charter a new REDO to reflect its current members' vision and goals. In partnership with CRC, CRC member localities and Longwood University, are pursuing the development of a business plan that will include the following areas: Sector and Labor Demand, identify Existing Inventory of Industrial/Commercial Sites and Buildings, and Current Staffing/Program/Budget Capacities of each locality's economic development operations. Additionally, the project will address: Business Attraction, Business Retention/Expansion, Business Formation/Small Business Support, Site Development, Technical Support, Governance Structure, and Budget and Financial Sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business Plan</li> </ul>
P&HCC GO TEC Instructor	IALR	Henry Co. and Martinsville City Schools	In alignment with the GO TEC 2025 project, P&HCC will offer dual enrollment welding classes for students in Henry County Public Schools and Martinsville City Public Schools. P&HCC will expand current training opportunities in welding to include high school dual enrollment opportunities to grow the pipeline of trained welders. P&HCC plans to enroll and train a total of 27 students in two years. Students participating in the new dual enrollment welding opportunity will have the opportunity to earn a Career Studies Certificate (CSC) in Welding if they complete two full years of dual enrollment credits and the opportunity to earn up to three (3) certifications through the American Welding Society (AWS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 48 credentials awarded</li> <li>● 27 students trained</li> </ul>

SVCC GO TEC Instructor	IALR	Buckingham Co., Cumberland Co., Prince Edward Co., Public Schools	SVCC will increase dual enrollment options in the Mechatronics field for students in Buckingham, Cumberland, and Prince Edward schools. The instructor that will be supported by this grant will teach mechatronics classes to students in each high school. Students will take 14 to 15 credit hours of dual enrollment coursework each semester. The coursework provided to students because of this project will allow participants to earn national industry recognized certifications such as NCCER, MOS, and career studies certificates in Industrial Electricity and HVAC Level I by the time they graduate high school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 135 credentials awarded (2 yrs); 165 credentials awarded (3 yrs)</li> <li>• 30 students trained (2yrs); 45 students trained (3 yrs)</li> <li>• 18 jobs created (2 yrs); 36 jobs created (3 yrs)</li> </ul>
VGA Site Development	Virginia's Growth Alliance	Brunswick Co., Lunenburg Co., Charlotte Co., Greensville Co.	The VGA Site Development Project will work to elevate four sites on the VEDP Virginia Business Ready Sites scale. Among those sites is one site that will be elevated to Tier 5 via due diligence (I-85 Industrial Park), two sites that will be elevated to Tier 4 via due diligence (Heartland Industrial Park and Lunenburg Commerce Center), and one site that will maintain its soon to expire Tier 4 status via updated due diligence (FASTA Site). GOVA funds will be used for architectural and engineering services, as well as for marketing materials and website updates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 site to Tier 5</li> <li>• 2 sites to Tier 4</li> <li>• 1 site remain Tier 4</li> </ul>
MBC Middle Mile Construction	Mid- Atlantic Broadband	Dinwiddie Co., Greensville Co., Lueneburg Co., Mecklenburg Co., Prince Edward Co., Prince George Co., Sussex Co., City of Petersburg	This project supports the construction of 69 miles of new open-access, middle-mile fiber optic broadband infrastructure in Regions 3 and 4. It will provide critical broadband connectivity and diversity for economic development purposes. It will provide open access middle mile fiber infrastructure to a total of 31 industrial and business park sites in nine localities (3 sites in Region 3 and 28 sites in Region 4), totaling 5,514 acres of available land for economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 69 miles of MM fiber</li> <li>• 5,514 industrial acres improved</li> <li>• 450 jobs (3 yrs); 640 jobs (5 yrs)</li> </ul>



## FY23 Region 3 Project Funding



### IV: Regional Collaboration & Partner Support

Region 3's strength lies in its ability to facilitate successful collaboration. In FY23, Region 3 put forward two Statewide Competitive projects bringing together a total of 31 different localities in addition to another four regional projects with twelve individual project partners. Also, in FY23 Region 3 held four Full Council meetings, four Executive Committee meetings, and numerous sub-committee and workgroup sessions.

The culmination of Region 3's collaborative efforts was the annual All Hands Meeting. The 2023 All Hands Meeting convened on May 4, 2023 at the Prizery in South Boston. There were nearly 100 attendees from key stakeholder groups including business, state elected officials, K-12 and higher education, local and regional government, economic and community development, entrepreneurs, healthcare, agribusiness, and non-profits. The program included an entrepreneur panel discussion featuring LetterPress Communications, Big Fade Entertainment, and Hometown Hustle along with ample networking opportunities and real time, interactive digital surveys via the Mentimeter. This year's keynote address was delivered by Micah White, an inspirational speaker and comedian turned entrepreneur advisor and community leader.

The GO Virginia Region 3 Council relies on a wide range of partners during the year. FY23 partners include:

- Region 3 Counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward
- Project Partner Counties of Carroll, Grayson, Wythe, Buchanan, Greensville, Surry
- Region 3 Cities of Danville and Martinsville
- Project Partner Cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Hampton, Newport News, Portsmouth, Norfolk
- Southside Planning District Commission
- Commonwealth Regional Council
- West Piedmont Planning District Commission
- Southern Virginia's Growth Alliance
- Virginia's Growth Alliance
- Institute for Advanced Learning & Research
- Longwood University
- Hampden Sydney College
- Southside Virginia Community College
- Patrick & Henry Community College
- Southern Virginia Higher Education Center
- SOVA Innovation Hub Corporation
- Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities, Inc.
- Commonwealth Alliance for Rural Colleges
- Virginia's Gateway Region
- Hampton Roads Alliance
- Hampton Roads Workforce Council
- UVA's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

## V: Outcomes & Impact

Region 3 had thirteen active projects over the course of FY23, of which three closed during that period. Of the active projects, four were implementation projects with relevant data to report. The others were either planning projects or in their initial stages with no reportable data. Projects with relevant outcomes are detailed below.

Project	Outcome
SVRA Site Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1,561 acres certified as shovel-ready</li> <li>- 4 industrial parks raised to Tier 4</li> <li>- 16 individual sites raised to Tier 4</li> <li>- 1 industrial park raised to Tier 5</li> <li>- 8 individual sites raised to Tier 5</li> </ul>
ExperienceWorks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9,143 participants in Career Choice events</li> <li>- 141 students attended work-ready bootcamps</li> <li>- 159 students attended sector-focused camps</li> <li>- 42 participants in teacher externship program</li> <li>- 113 businesses served</li> <li>- 203 internships created</li> <li>- 149 internship placements</li> </ul>
Controlled Environment Ag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEA Strategy &amp; Roadmap completed</li> <li>- Situational Awareness Workgroup (economic and workforce development professionals) convened</li> <li>- Strategy implementation initiated by IALR, VA Tech, and Region 3 Council</li> </ul>
VGA Refresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility study completed</li> <li>- Reorganization underway</li> </ul>
MBC Middle Mile Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NTIA \$16.3M grant award received</li> </ul>
Gupton Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic Workgroup created</li> <li>- 6 colleges participating</li> <li>- Implementation Strategy &amp; Roadmap created</li> <li>- First students will enroll Fall of 2024</li> </ul>
CRC Redo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic Research &amp; Product Assessment completed</li> <li>- Organization development by partner localities underway</li> </ul>
Bridge to Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1,324 jobs retained</li> <li>- 190 jobs created</li> <li>- 93 businesses served</li> <li>- 12 businesses expanded</li> <li>- 1,431 event attendees</li> <li>- 82 outreach events</li> <li>- 40 project partners</li> <li>- \$4,465,185 in increase revenue</li> </ul>
Entrepreneur & Innovation Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20 businesses created</li> <li>- 24 jobs created/filled</li> <li>- 70 early-stage startups supported</li> <li>- 593 adult participants</li> <li>- 458 student participants</li> </ul>

## VI: Communication and Outreach

The Region 3 Council has a robust communications program through its engagement with Letterpress Communications. This professional firm provides strategic consulting services to develop and implement communication strategies under a variety of marketing channels including social media, public relations, graphic design, event communications, photography, videography, advertising, and website design and maintenance. They also manage Region 3's social media platforms which includes developing content, maintaining posts, and tracking engagement on Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Additionally, LetterPress maintains and updates targeted media lists (local, regional, state, and national), develops and distributes press release content, pitches stories to national media, and monitors economic news via traditional and digital channels in Region 3.

## VII: Project Pipeline

RISE Build-to-Scale (FY24)- The RISE Build-to-Scale Initiative is the next phase of the SOVA RISE Collaboration, which began with Region 3's Entrepreneurship & Innovation Strategy in 2019. This proposal will scale up and expand the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Region 3. Over the next two years, it will launch the RISE Community Navigator Program, expand the RISE Entrepreneurship Training Pipeline, and extend outreach and storytelling efforts.

SoVa Partnership for Health Science Careers TPI (FY24)- This project will address the competitive disadvantage faced by Southern Virginia when recruiting and retaining traded sector business investments because of their low healthcare outcomes, diminishing access to healthcare providers, and the availability of healthcare workers. The Region 3 TPI Plan will highlight the gaps and areas for improvement with strategies to address these gaps and a timeline for implementation, develop the roles and responsibilities of project partners, and prepare a labor market analysis to understand the workforce needs including skill gaps. Additionally, it will prepare a comprehensive evaluation of all educational and training programs available in health science occupations across the region.

Amelia County Region Commerce Center Planning- The Amelia County Economic Development Authority, in partnership with the Heartland Industrial Facilities Authority, has expressed interest in a site planning grant for \$100k from the Region 3 Council for eligible due A&E work to complete the due diligence requirements for a Tier 3 classification by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. This application will be submitted in December 2023.

SOVA Innovation Labs- The SOVA Innovation Hub has been developing plans to expand the SOVA Innovation Campus in South Boston for the past year. This expansion would involve the acquisition and adaptive reuse of an adjacent structure and developing the neighboring greenspace. The SOVA Innovation Hub has already acquired the adjacent property and building with plans to construct a digital makers space, community gathering space, and co-working offices. Currently, this project has received EDA and Tobacco Commission funding. Region 3 is considering supporting the project in a similar manner to the Per Capita grant awarded to the SEED Innovation Hub in Farmville by funding technology related equipment for the co-working and digital maker's space. The timing and amount of the Region 3 Per Capita grant is to be determined.

Brunswick County Public Schools: GO TEC Lab Development- Brunswick County Public Schools administration has indicated an interest in developing a GO TEC Lab at James S. Solomon Russell Middle School. Dr. Julie Brown has advised that a Per Capita application in the range of \$100-150k is under development and could be submitted for consideration by the Region 3 Council at its meeting on January 17, 2024.

Region 3 Leadership Development Project- Preliminary discussions have been held with principals at the University of Virginia’s Sorenson Institute for Leadership and the Virginia Institute for Government (Cooper Center units) about developing a community leadership program in Region 3. This program would complement and align with the SOVA Rise Collaboratives training for entrepreneurs. These discussions, and those with other Region 3 stakeholders, have shown heightened interest in pursuing an Enhanced Capacity Building feasibility study to better frame the program, outcomes, and partner organizations. The timing and amount of the Region 3 grant is to be determined.

## VIII: Council Members

Council Member	Title- Organization	Email
Timothy Clark- Region 3 Chair	President- Blair Construction, Inc.	tclark@blair-construction.com
Lauren Willis- Region 3 Vice Chair	BSA Officer- Bank of Charlotte County	ltawillis10@gmail.com
Rhonda Hodges- Executive Committee	Vice President- Workforce, Economic & Community Dev. Patrick Henry Community College	rhodges@patrickhenry.edu
Randolph Lail- Executive Committee	Chair of the Board- Benchmark Bank and Mid-Atlantic Broadband	randy.lail@earthlink.net
Clark Casteel- Executive Committee	President & CEO- Dan River Foundation	ccasteel@drfonline.org
Sheldon Barr	CEO- VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital	sheldon.barr@vcuhealth.org
Robert Bates	Branch Manager- Halifax Office Benchmark Bank	robert.bates@bcbonline.com
Melody Foster	Executive Director- Commonwealth Regional Council	mfoster@virginiasheartland.org
Kristin Gee	General Counsel- Kyanite Mining Corp.	kristingee@kyanite.com
Amy Griffin, PhD	Superintendent (Retired)- Cumberland County Public Schools	dramygriffin@gmail.com

Keith Harkins, PhD	Vice President – Academic & Workforce Programs Southside Community College	keith.harkins@southside.edu
Charles Majors	Retired Chair of the Board- American National Bank	charley.majors@gmail.com
James McClain	President & CEO- SW Virginia Energy Industries	james@swvagas.com
John Parkinson	CEO- Drake Extrusion, Inc.	jparkinson@drakeextrusion.com
Alfreda Reynolds	Director of Economic Development- Brunswick County	areynolds@brunswickco.com
Jeremy Satterfield	Manager- TechSpark Community Engagement Microsoft Corporation	jeremy.satterfield@microsoft.com
Sherry Swinson	Director- Hull Springs Farm Longwood University	swinsonsd@longwood.edu
Dale Wagner	County Administrator- Henry County	dwagoner@henrycountyva.gov

## IX: Support Organization

<b>Region 3 Support Organization</b>
Southside Planning District Commission
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UVA- Weldon Cooper Center
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