As we approach the halfway point in our five-year strategic plan, we take this time to reflect on the progress made and our plans to meet the challenges ahead.

Our Strategic Plan focuses on four main areas: infrastructure and business retention, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and marketing and business attraction. We are pleased to share that we have made great progress in each of these areas.

Of particular note:

• We worked to expand broadband services in the Frank Adams Industrial Park as well as established Federalsburg’s Enterprise Zone.

• We worked closely with Caroline County Public Schools to implement a program that prepares students for local jobs.

• We launched a small business concierge service.

• We’ve helped existing businesses expand, and we’ve welcomed several new businesses to Caroline County.

Since the plan’s inception in 2015, Caroline County Economic Development has changed its name and its brand, along with restructuring and creating a new advisory board. However, our core mission and goals remain the same: to serve the businesses of Caroline County, expand and train a local workforce, and maintain a strong quality of life for our fellow citizens.

We look forward to the continuing this important work throughout the second half of our Strategic Plan implementation.

ONWARD AND UPWARD!

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### ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This section addresses key structural aspects of the county’s economy, including:
- Transportation infrastructure
- Broadband infrastructure
- Local regulatory policy
- Local tax policy
- Incentives and resources for business expansion

### CAROLINE COUNTY’S 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Caroline County launched its 5-year strategic plan for economic development in October 2014. In order to make the most of the county’s limited resources, the plan emphasized strategies to help medium-to-large businesses grow and succeed in Caroline County. These larger businesses have the most significant impact on the county’s tax base and employment opportunities.

### STRATEGIC AREA 1
**Infrastructure, Policy & Business Retention**

This section addresses key structural aspects of the county’s economy, including:
- Transportation infrastructure
- Broadband infrastructure
- Local regulatory policy
- Local tax policy
- Incentives and resources for business expansion

### STRATEGIC AREA 2
**Workforce Development**

Perhaps the most important and most challenging section of the plan, Workforce Development addresses the training and educational resources needed to support existing businesses and industries targeted for attraction. Hiring and retaining the right people is consistently noted as the greatest challenge for most Caroline County businesses.

### STRATEGIC AREA 3
**Entrepreneurship**

This section addresses the business climate for startup companies within the county. Although primarily focused on startups with significant growth and employment potential, this section also addresses the needs of micro enterprises (those with less than nine employees).

### STRATEGIC AREA 4
**Marketing & Business Attraction**

This section addresses Caroline County’s brand as it is perceived by its own residents and businesses, as well as those outside the county. It also identifies industries targeted for business attraction efforts.

### RANKING PRIORITIES

Each objective in the plan is assigned a priority level. When allocating limited resources to execute a strategic plan, it is important to consider the feasibility of each objective and its potential impact on the community. The priority levels assigned to objectives in this plan are classified as follows:

**PRIORITY 1**
Addresses critical, urgent problems or opportunities.

**PRIORITY 2**
Addresses significant existing or anticipated needs or opportunities.

**PRIORITY 3**
Addresses existing or anticipated needs or opportunities.

**PRIORITY 4**
Will enhance the strategy if time and budget allow.
### STRATEGIC AREA 1: INFRASTRUCTURE, POLICY & BUSINESS RETENTION

#### SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish an Enterprise Zone that encompasses the Federalsburg and Frank M. Adams Industrial Parks.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>COMPLETED: The Federalsburg EZ was established in June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine if the Denton Industrial Park can qualify for an Enterprise Zone designation by exception; if so, apply for the designation.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CLOSED: Denton does not qualify for an EZ; legislation does not allow for exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a county property tax incentive for major expansion projects that take place outside of designated Enterprise Zone(s).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ACTIVE PROJECT: To be completed by December 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate potential incentives for downtown development and make recommendations to the municipalities of Caroline County.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>COMPLETED: Presented suggestions to town councils; Denton A&amp;E District expanded in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review covenants for all industrial/business parks in Caroline County and propose updates that will make them more appealing to businesses.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ACTIVE PROJECT: To be completed by December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a public rail siding in the Federalsburg area.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CLOSED: Survey of local businesses determined there is insufficient demand at this time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch an Economic Gardening program to help growing companies.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>ON HOLD: Lower priority objective that will be tackled if time &amp; resources allow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HIGHLIGHTS in Infrastructure, Policy and Business Retention

- **Choptank Transport** expanded for the second time in five years, creating an additional 130 jobs in Preston.
- **Lorry Industries** expanded to a new facility in Denton, doubling in size and adding 20 new jobs.
- **The Federalsburg Enterprise Zone** helped attract three new businesses creating a combined total of 200 new jobs.
- **The Denton Artsway**, a state-designated A&E district managed by Caroline County Council of Arts, expanded to cover 90 acres of Denton.
## Strategic Area 2:

Workforce Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES</th>
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<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with neighboring counties' school systems and Chesapeake College to create an inventory of technical training resources available in the area; form partnerships to share resources and provide students with greater access to tech training.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ONGOING: Regional collaboration continues to improve; New technical programs launched in Caroline County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with Chesapeake College and Caroline County Board of Education to develop a Customer Service and Sales curriculum and career path.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ACTIVE PROJECT: Advisory group has begun meeting; Revamped programs to launch by 2019-2020 school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a full-time business liaison position within Caroline County Public Schools.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>COMPLETED: Caroline County Public Schools now an active partner for economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a comprehensive, county-wide leadership development initiative.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>ON HOLD: Lower priority objective that will be tackled if time &amp; resources allow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Highlights in Workforce Development

**AMP**

The Advanced Manufacturing Professionals (AMP) will begin enrolling Caroline County students in Spring 2018. This program provides students with the skills needed for a local manufacturing career.

**Chesapeake College**

Chesapeake College has focused new resources on credit and non-credit programs for skilled trades, meeting demands of local employers.

**Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)**

Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership held a bootcamp training session for 15 local job seekers, all of whom were hired by Crystal Steel.
### STRATEGIC AREA 3: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

#### HIGHLIGHTS in Entrepreneurship

- **Market Street Public House** is expanding to the building next door, doubling its footprint in downtown Denton.
- **Turnbridge Point**: Since opening their Denton B&B in 2015, Turnbridge Point has expanded to include a custom bakery, couture wedding cakes, catering, brunches and other special events.
- The food scene in Caroline County has continued to expand with the launch of new restaurants such as 2 Cousins in Federalsburg and 9 Central Diner in Ridgely.

#### SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a flexible, customizable incentive package for promising startup companies with significant growth potential.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>COMPLETED</strong>: Local &amp; state incentives can be combined for growing startups; County small business loan program also available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a strong partnership with the Delmarva Food Hub and lead agricultural attraction efforts for the region.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>ON HOLD</strong>: Contingent upon the final configuration and business model of the Food Hub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch a Small Business Concierge service to directly assist micro enterprises.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>COMPLETED</strong>: Added small business specialty to economic development staff; Created new online resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Area 4: Marketing and Business Attraction

**SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Launch a county-wide branding initiative that conveys the spirit of Caroline County and why it's a great place to live and work.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>COMPLETED: You Belong Here brand was launched in 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create comprehensive marketing plans and budgets to attract companies in three target industries: manufacturing, logistics &amp; fulfillment, and agriculture &amp; ag technologies.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ACTIVE PROJECT: New website incorporates SEO content &amp; industry ambassadors for targeted industries; marketing plans in development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a comprehensive marketing plan and incentive strategy for the Mid-Shore Technology Park in Ridgely.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ACTIVE PROJECT: Incentive package defined; marketing plans in development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a feasibility study for an indoor/outdoor multi-use sports facility in the Denton area.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>CLOSED: No suitable buildings currently available; Need offset by creation of North County Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HIGHLIGHTS in Marketing and Business Attraction**

- Based on feedback from more than 300 community members, the You Belong Here brand was launched in 2016 to help attract businesses, employees, and visitors to Caroline County.
- Crystal Steel expanded to Federalsburg in 2016, acquiring a 100,000 sq. ft. building in Federalsburg and an additional lot. They will be creating more than 125 jobs over the next two years.
- Eastern Shore Forest Products expanded their operations to Federalsburg in 2017, acquiring the former Kraft plant. They will be adding at least 40 new jobs in Federalsburg.
- Anco Glass relocated from Delaware to Federalsburg in 2017. Their move brings 20 new jobs to Caroline County.