

Dorchester County Economic Development

Susan Banks, Director



Economic Development

- Retention
- Attraction
- Marketing
- Business Incubation



Economic Development- Chartered County Dept- Free Services

Entrepreneur & Small Business Support, business planning, marketing, and mentoring, workshops, clustering and ecosystem growth, enhanced public and private collaboration

Infrastructure & Community Development- Industrial Park Development, Broadband Access, electricity- Infrastructure supports economic growth

Workforce Development – training and upskilling through programs, facilitate connections between employers and seekers, partner with schools and workforce boards

Tourism, eco-tourism, agritourism and sports tourism, we work closely with our Tourism department to bring in visitors so they eat and spend their money here.

Retention

Why It Matters

- Local businesses often generate **most job growth** in a community.
- Early engagement helps **prevent closures or relocations**.
- Businesses are more likely to thrive when they feel **heard, supported, and connected**.

Visit, build relationships,
support where needed

Resources for Startup and Existing Businesses

Funding

Incentives – State and Federal

Workforce Development

Grants

Connect to SBDC, MCE, SBA, Revolving Loans, Dorchester County Public Schools, Colleges and Universities

GOSBA, Commerce, DHCD, MDOT, EDA

MIPS- Maryland Industrial Partnership

TEDCO

BEAMs Business Class

Tax Credits

Business Plans

Data- we have access to data – some public and some private

Attraction



EXAMPLE: AMAZON HEADQUARTERS 2017

Jobs: 50,000

Location: Metropolitan area with population of 1 M

Access to Mass Transit

8 Million Square feet of Office Area

45 Minutes from an International Airport

Can we handle?

BENEFITS

Site Selection

Low cost land and rent

Permitting, Zoning, county and municipal

Redundant Fiber, airport, good quality of life

Workforce Overview

Dorchester County



Delmarva Index
A Regional Resource



INCOME



\$46,750

Median Household Income*



\$32,894

Per Capita Income*



2.0%

One Year Weekly Wages Gain/Loss†



\$966

Annual Average Weekly Pay†



\$50,251

Average Annual Pay†

BUSINESS



1,321

Total Businesses**



16,421

Total Employees**



3,013,055,223

Total Annual Sales **

COMMUTERS



14%

Spend 7+ hours commuting to and from work per week*



80.4%

Drove Alone to Work‡



13,578

Workers Commute to Work Base‡

KEY FACTS

32,401

Population*

44.7

Median Age*



13,789

Households*

\$38,575

Median Disposable Income*

HIGHEST EDUCATION ACHIEVED



21%

Bachelor's/Grad/Prof Degree*



26%

Some College*



42%

High School Diploma Only*



11%

No High School Diploma*

EMPLOYMENT



60%

White Collar*



24%

Blue Collar*



16%

Services*

2.7%

Projected Unemployment Rate*

59.5%

Labor Force Participation Rate‡

-2.8%

One-Year Employment Gain/Loss†

*ESRI 2024/2029 Esri Updated Forecasted Demographics

**ESRI 2024 US Business Locations & Summary data

†BLS 2023 Annual Average

‡Census Bureau, ACS 2022, Table S2301(LPR), S0801(Commute)

For more details about the data visit [Delmarva Index](#)

Note: Income, Business, and Commuter variables are based on the labor force population. Key Facts, Employment variables are based on total population and Education based on individuals 25+.

Delmarva Index:
Data, dashboards,
infographics and
reports that is free for
the public to use.

Ag census, manufacturing
dashboards, Business
sentiment, workforce
infographics, commuting
data

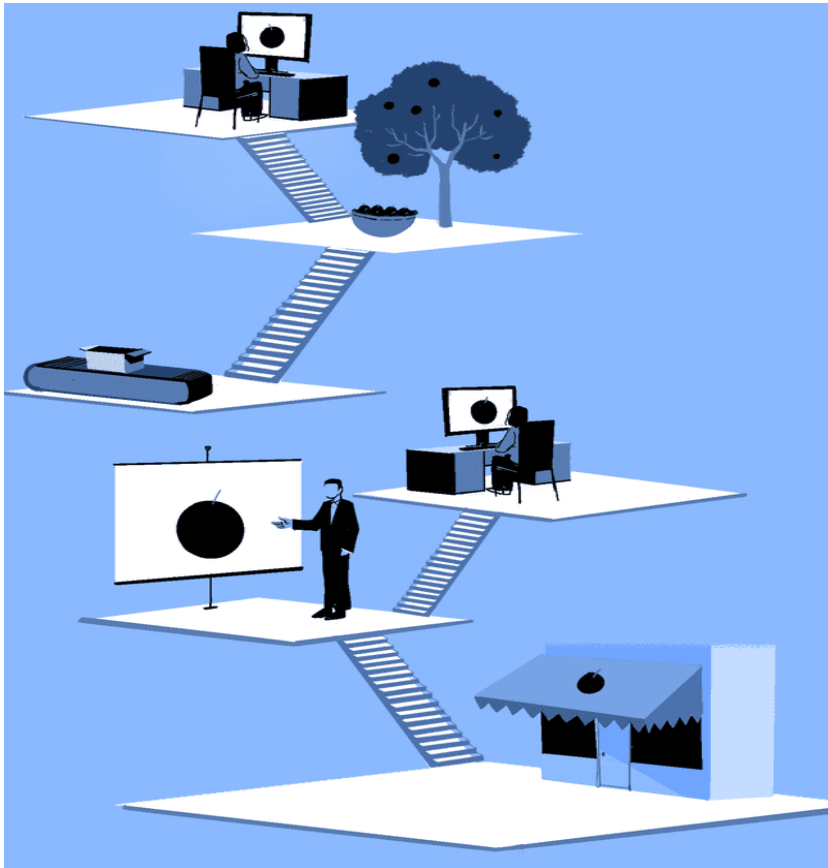
Why is this important?

Customer behavior, Target
market, Advertising, Talent
Planning, Community
Engagement- knowing
what a community needs,
competition.

Nicole Evans
Business Development
Manager

Supporting Local Business Growth: Marketing Promotion & Connections

Our Role in the Business Ecosystem



- We serve as a connector to resources, opportunities, and exposure.
 - Referrals to local, state, and federal funding sources
 - Access to training, workforce, and networking resources
- Promote local businesses to residents, visitors, and beyond
- One-on-one support with planning or expansion
- Introductions to other businesses and collaborative partners

Where We Promote

- Annual 'Water Moves Us' magazine mailed to residents
- [Monthly newsletter](#) with business spotlights and updates
- Social media and digital outreach campaigns
- Targeted print and digital ads
- Feature stories, photos, and videos shared on [our website](#)



"Businesses that are featured or promoted by other trusted local sources—like government agencies, economic development offices, or community organizations—experience a 20–25% average increase in customer engagement and inquiries within 3 months."

(Source: Main Street America, 2023 Small Business Impact Report)

Why We Promote

- Increased visibility leads to more customers and local pride.
- Helps attract workforce, partners, and outside investment.
- Drives community engagement and awareness of your services.
- Spotlighting businesses uplifts the local economy as a whole.

Our mission is to help businesses launch, grow, and thrive locally

- We're proud to support the veteran community in business
- Let's Talk- Ask us how we can help promote and grow your business
- Your success is Dorchester's success—let's build together
- Thank you for your service and your entrepreneurial spirit

Tina Thompson
Incubator Manager

Supporting Start-ups At the Eastern Shore Innovation Center

Start-up Support

- Startup Support

We offer a fully supportive environment to accelerate business growth and help entrepreneurs develop the next generation of technologies.

Startups can join the Innovation Center as a coworking space member or with dedicated space in our state-of-the-art facility where they can access a wide range of business resources and are partnered with an experienced business mentor, certified by SCORE, a Small Business Administration organization.

Eastern Shore Innovation Center



BENEFITS

- Low Rent
- Class A Space with dedicated offices available
- Fiber optic broadband infrastructure
- Large conference rooms (up to 52)
- Small conference room (6 people)
- Large monitor displays presentations, web conferencing, and webcasting
- Access to shared office equipment
- 24-7 access with video and badge security
- Free wifi
- Free parking
- Research laboratory
- Secure Storage
- Guest Lobby
- Free business advisory service

Q & A

Thank you!