

## Fairfax County Launches “Made in Fairfax” Initiative



To expand and strengthen economic activity in Fairfax County’s commercial areas, the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) has launched the Small Scale Production Initiative to explore the potential for community-friendly small scale production enterprises as a revitalization strategy. This initiative builds on the county’s work to address vacancies in office and commercial buildings and to further our goals to create unique places where people want to be.

Small-scale production (SSP) or manufacturing is an umbrella term that refers to a unique growing sector of small businesses that produce tangible goods. SSPs can include textiles, hardware, woodworking, metalworking, prototyping, consumer product design, breweries and local food production. These businesses typically serve both consumers, (as a retail operation), as well as production in the same facility. Technological and economic changes – along with consumer market preferences for locally-made and “artisanal”/craft products – have enabled small producers to competitively operate in traditionally non-industrial areas, such as retail and commercial centers. SSPs are often cleaner, quieter, and more compact and can therefore be “good neighbors” in mixed-use areas.



Over the next several months, OCR staff and the SSPI Advisory Team (on which Community Business Partnership is proud to serve) will work with Recast City – a leader in the SSP movement nationally – to identify the scale and potential for SSP within Fairfax County, by:

- \* Researching existing and potential SSPs within the county;
- \* Engaging real estate and development partners with interest in this sector; and
- \* Analyzing the obstacles and opportunities for development of SSPs in specific areas.

To kick-off this initiative, Fairfax County hosted a “Made in Fairfax” forum on Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fairfax County Government Center. The forum, led by Ilana Preuss of Recast City, was attended by over 75 creative entrepreneurs, property owners, government officials and interested residents; and focused on the potential and challenges of this new blend of economic and community development.

At the same time, Fairfax County staff will be identifying changes in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance to facilitate SSP development where appropriate.



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