



GO Virginia Monthly Update

Dear Connie,

The GO Virginia Initiative continues to make meaningful strides across the Commonwealth. Building from the Orientation Conference held on April 20th, there has been a lot of regional and statewide activity over the last month. As the initiative continues to move forward, we intend to provide more regular updates and information regarding the implementation of GO Virginia.

We need your support to continue the momentum. Please stay engaged with the GO Virginia initiative by following us on [Twitter](#) and liking us on [Facebook](#).

Recent GO Virginia Activity

- Each of the nine GO Virginia regions has officially organized, held its first meeting, and has started to develop its "Economic Growth and Diversification Plan" which will be submitted to the GO Board as early as September 2017
 - Most regional councils have solicited for consultants to help with drafting their plans and will be making a final decision on their consultant teams in the coming weeks
 - The GO Virginia Guidelines Workgroup met twice in May to continue their work to prepare evaluation criteria for the plans and projects supported by GO Virginia. The
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Workgroup's recommendations will be reviewed at the June 13th GO Board meeting

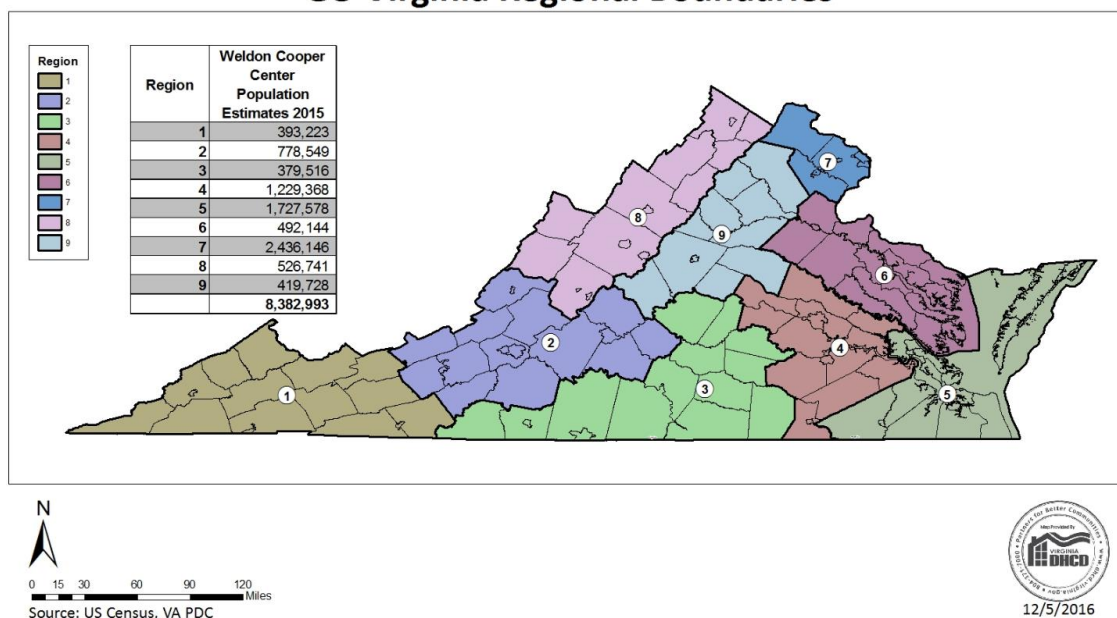
- In case you missed it, visit [our website](#) for copies of the materials provided at from the 2017 Orientation Conference
- To assist each region, George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis provided baseline economic data for each regional council to utilize in its planning process. You can also find that information on govirginia.org
- The Virginia Research Investment Committee (VRIC) continues to meet to help determine ways Virginia can strengthen its ability to commercialize research
- We've had over 100 new individuals join our coalition since April. We also were formally endorsed in April by the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce.

The GO Virginia Framework

During the 2016 General Assembly Session, Virginia's legislature passed [HB834](#) and [SB449](#). These identical bills provided the foundation for the GO Virginia framework and created the 24-member state GO board that is made up of elected officials, business leaders, and several ex-officio members of Governor McAuliffe's cabinet.

The GO board met a major milestone in December of 2016 with the establishment of the GO Virginia regions.

GO Virginia Regional Boundaries



Each of the nine regions have established a regional council made up of business leaders, educators, economic developers, and local government officials from across each region. These regional councils are fundamental to the GO Virginia Initiative because they will help develop priorities and will then evaluate projects coming from local governments in that region. As previously mentioned, the regional councils are currently in the process of developing their region-specific "economic growth and diversification plan."

The economic growth and diversification plans will identify each region's economic opportunities, needs, and challenges, while taking into account existing business strengths, leading industry clusters, workforce considerations, and new emerging opportunities that will lead to higher paying jobs in each region.

After the adoption of the regional plan, at least two local governments, in cooperation with private businesses, educators, and other stakeholders, will be able to submit applications to fund projects that address gaps, needs, or opportunities outlined in the plan. Robust public participation and input will be an integral part of this process.

Looking Ahead

- May-June: Regions submit preliminary budgets and work plans
- June 6th: GO Virginia Executive Committee Meeting
- June 13th: GO Virginia Board Meeting
 - Approval of regional budgets
 - Approval of workgroup guidelines
 - Discussion of performance metrics
- August-September: Regional Councils will submit their economic growth and diversification plans
- September 12th: GO Board will meet to approve economic growth and diversification plans and begin to award up to \$400,000 in grants to each region for the development of their plans. Regions can apply for another \$250,000 later in fiscal year 2018

GO Virginia In the News

Richmond Times-Dispatch: [Extended Richmond region gets ready to GO with new economic development strategy](#): In the next 90 days, a new regional council has to produce a plan to make the economy GO in the extended Richmond region. The 20-member council, which met in Henrico County for the first time on Wednesday, is the last of nine regional councils to convene to carry out the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Act, better known as GO Virginia, a new economic development model pushed by corporate leaders and partly funded by \$28 million from the state.

South Potomac Pilot: [COMREL Updates Includes Nice Bridge Timeline Update and Statewide Jobs Initiative](#): The Naval Support Activity South Potomac (NSASP) Community

Relations (COMREL) Council held its second quarter meeting May 17 at the High Tides on the Potomac restaurant, in Colonial Beach, Va., where updates to the civilian and military leadership from both sides of the river included an overview of the Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren 100th Anniversary, the most recent changes to the Harry W. Nice Bridge replacement project and an introduction to the “GO Virginia Initiative,” a bipartisan and business-led coalition working to create better business opportunities statewide.

Roanoke Times: [State leader pitches six-point plan to revive coalfields' economy](#): O’Quinn talked about the intersection of VEDP and GO Virginia, which is short for Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity in Each Region. While VEDP works to attract businesses to the state and add jobs, the regional council, made up of community leaders from Southwest Virginia, can determine the best economic development strategy for the specific area, he said.

Bristol Herald Courier: [No 'silver bullet': Business leaders discuss future at SWVA Economic Forum](#): “We’re painfully aware of what happens when communities lose jobs and lose population,” he said during a presentation at the forum. That pain is one reason Smith said he chose to join GO Virginia, a group dedicated to fostering private-sector growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education and government.

The Daily Progress: [In face of uncertainty, policy entrepreneurship will drive Virginia economy](#) If you ask state or local government policy-makers what keeps them up at night, they’ll consistently point out two troubling trends. First, planning and policy-making are getting harder.

Please visit govirginia.org for additional information and other regular updates on GO Virginia and www.dhcd.virginia.gov for additional administrative updates.

Email wwampler@mwcllc.com with any questions regarding this update.
