

GUIDE **development opportunities**

Virginia Main Street Partnership

Virginia Main Street, a program of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), announced in the fall of 2019 that the City of Williamsburg was accepted into the successful downtown revitalization program as a DHCD Commercial District Affiliate. Virginia Main Street uses the National Main Street model for downtown revitalization, which was created to build economic vitality using a community's unique heritage and attributes as the foundation. In addition, the program helps communities develop their own strategies to increase visitation and encourage business development and pride in their downtown area.

The Virginia Main Street program will provide a blueprint for the City's development of a downtown association that represents all of Downtown Williamsburg, including Merchant Square, but also entrance corridors and the many restaurants and retailers down Prince George Street.



Williamsburg will have access to training, downtown revitalization grants, resources and materials, and consultations regarding key issues. The City will also benefit from being part of a larger network of downtowns dedicated to revitalization. This work is expected to enhance visitation, increase local business revenues, and create a more rich and culturally engaging resident experience.

The Virginia Main Street program, administered by DHCD, began in 1985. Since that time, more than 6,000 businesses have been created along with almost 20,000 jobs and more than \$1.2 billion in public and private investment.

Regional Adaptive Reuse Project

The City of Williamsburg acts as the fiscal agent for a \$600,000 brownfields assessment grant awarded by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and administered by the Greater Williamsburg Partnership (GWP).

The EPA defines a brownfield as a property that may possess environmental contaminants that could make it difficult to expand or redevelop. The GWP, James City County, York County, and the City of Williamsburg will work with owners of both public and private property to conduct these assessments. One area of study and interest for revitalization potential is The Edge, a proposed food-and-beverage district that the Greater Williamsburg localities have also allocated funds to establish.

Draper Aden Associates, a Virginia-based engineering firm, will manage the program implementation with an expected completion date of 2022.

