

This is Lynchburg

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 Opportunity
Lynchburg

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OFFICE OF
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
& TOURISM

CITY OF LYNCHBURG



To be the best small city in America, the City of Lynchburg requires a deliberate strategy for competing for new investment and talent. In 2018, the Office of Economic Development & Tourism has engaged residents, business executives, community leaders and elected officials to create a five-year comprehensive plan to build tomorrow's Lynchburg and ensure that all residents have the opportunity to thrive.

Our Values

- Honor Legacy and Encourage Innovation
- Focus on Family-Wage Jobs
- Maximize Quality of Place
- Repurpose and Reuse
- Maximize Urban Potential in a Rural Community
- Support Continuous Upskilling
- Embrace Engagement

“The City of Lynchburg has a bright future. As we roll up our sleeves, we recognize that none of this work is possible without the consistent and engaged collaboration of our private, public, educational and nonprofit partners. It is our belief that each community member offers a critical strength that helps advance our collective goals. We are unified in our vision of Lynchburg’s prosperous economic future.”

- Marjette Upshur, Director

This is Lynchburg.

2017 population is

80,380

Grown 6.4% since 2010

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

Unemployment rate

3.6%

Source: July 2018, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Of individuals **25** to **64** in the City of Lynchburg, VA, **34.5%** have a bachelor’s degree or higher which compares with **31.8%** in the nation.

Source: JobsEQ

More than **21,000** degrees conferred last year by Lynchburg higher education institutions

Source: JobsEQ

Median age is

28.6

years old

Source: EMSI

Lynchburg’s foreign-born population increased

25.7%

from 2012-2016

Source: EMSI

Millennial population (20-34 years) is

45%

larger than the U.S. average

Source: EMSI

21,000

people commute to work in the City every day

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

\$148.5 million

in commercial construction permits issued
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

Source: City of Lynchburg

Median household income

\$41,000

Source: EMSI

Median house value

\$167,000

The cost of living is

13.2%

lower in City of Lynchburg, VA
than the U.S. average.

Source: JobsEQ

Average annual wages
per worker increased

1.5%

in the region in the past year.

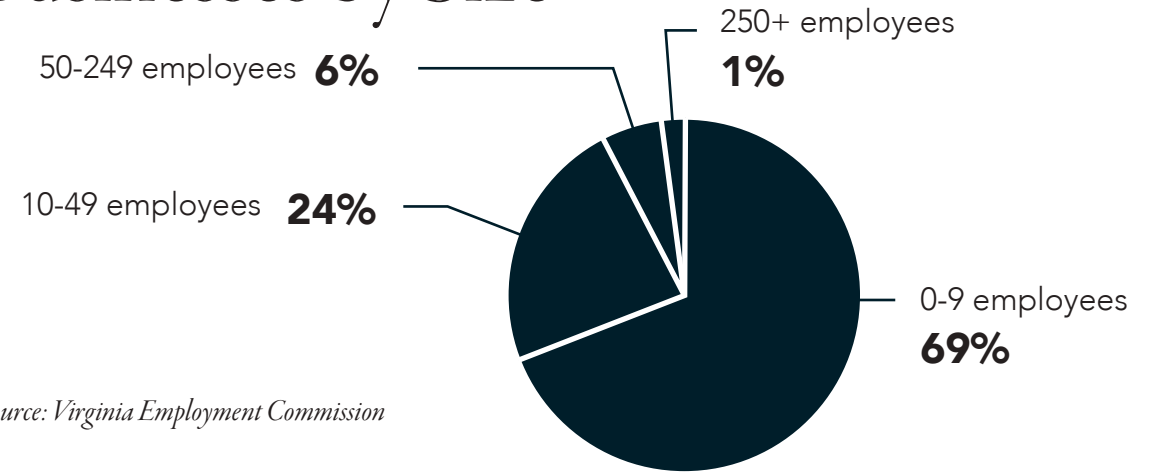
Source: JobsEQ

Largest employment sectors

Health Care and Social Assistance | Retail Trade | Manufacturing | Management
Finance and Insurance | Professional Services

Source: JobsEQ

Businesses by Size



Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Tourism Industry

1,700 Total Employment

\$37.5 million local payroll

\$185.8 million in visitor expenditures - up **2.5%**

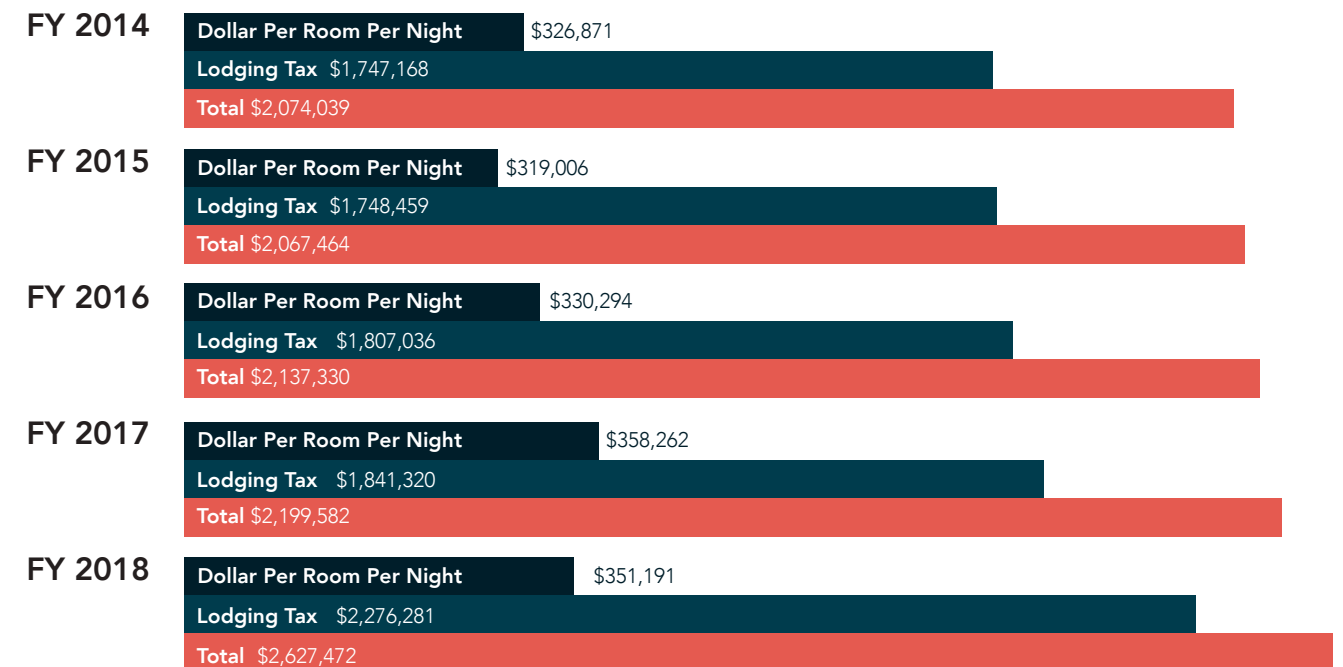
Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation

\$2 billion

in annual retail sales

Source: US Census

Lodging Tax Revenue





Goal

Number 1
Expand and support Lynchburg's existing company foundation

Repurposing for growth

In 2018, the City of Lynchburg received \$300,000 in assessment grants from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue to assist businesses and property owners to identify, assess and begin redevelopment of brownfields. Funding dedicated to the assessment of sites potentially impacted by hazardous substances and petroleum will be used to conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments, cleanup and redevelopment planning and community engagement activities. Lynchburg first received a federal brownfields grant in 2015.

2,742
businesses currently licensed in the City of Lynchburg

48%
have been in business 10 years or more

Building on the nuclear foundation.

The City of Lynchburg is home to two of the largest nuclear companies in the United States - Framatome and BWXT. In April, Framatome, designer and supplier of nuclear equipment, services, and fuel, announced the relocation of its North American corporate headquarters from Charlotte, NC to the City of Lynchburg. The company has 1,300 employees in Lynchburg, 2,300 employees in North America, and 14,000 employees globally.

Expanding manufacturing.

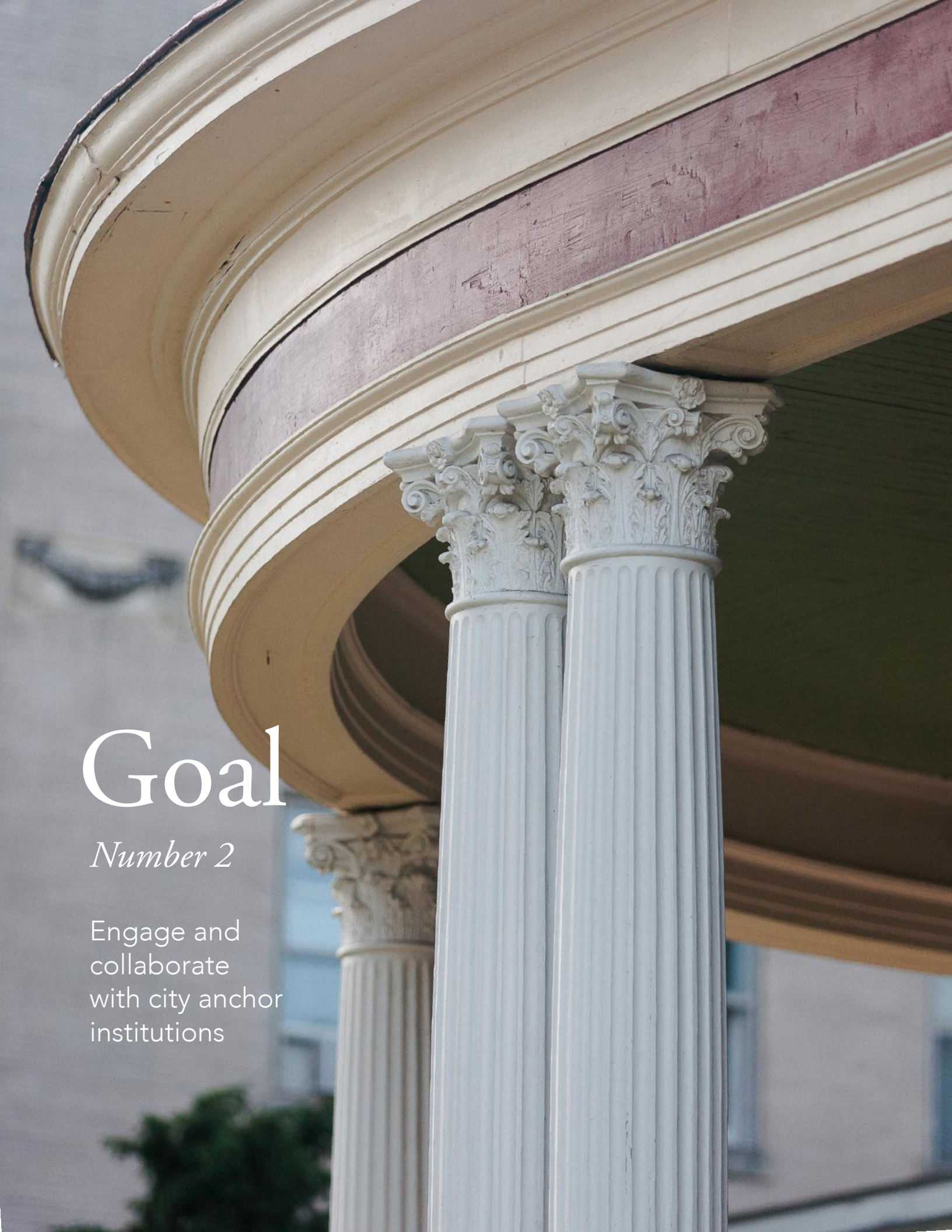
Tessy Plastics, a premier molder of custom injection molded plastic components, is investing \$9.2 million to expand its manufacturing operation to accommodate a new product line in the City of Lynchburg. Virginia successfully competed against New York for the project, which will create 34 new jobs.

Investing in redevelopment

The City's two **Enterprise Zones** support capital investment and job creation. In 2017, \$203,484 in Enterprise Zone grants supported new job creation by Lynchburg companies and and Real Property Improvement grants of \$828,063 leveraged private commercial investments of more than \$16.2 million.

The Real Estate Rehabilitation Program encourages renovation of older structures and helps to revitalize commercial neighborhoods. To date, 809 properties have participated in the program, resulting in \$178 million improvements to the City's tax base.

The Local Redevelopment Program is designed to support small to mid-sized commercial property investments. In fiscal year 2018, \$219,000 leveraged investment of more than \$2.9 million in capital investments by small businesses in the City's Enterprise Zones.



Goal

Number 2

Engage and collaborate with city anchor institutions

Community Anchors

As some of the largest employers in their communities, anchor institutions wield enormous influence on a city's economic development, from employing local residents to providing workforce pipelines for residents, to driving development in downtown.

In the City of Lynchburg, some of the most prominent anchors include academic institutions such as Liberty University, Central Virginia Community College, Randolph College and the University of Lynchburg; healthcare institutions, such as Centra Health; and a number of tourism assets. By engaging these organizations in economic development, the City can ensure that all residents reap the benefits of Lynchburg's financial growth.

In 2017, the Economic Development Authority of the City of Lynchburg served as the conduit for issue of nearly \$100 million in **Industrial Revenue Bonds** to support the expansion of facilities with Centra Health.

Infrastructure Improvement

In January 2018, Centra Health invested \$8 million to open a new community clinic on 5th Street to increase residents' access to healthcare. The facility is expected to serve about 3,000 patients annually and act as a second location for the Free Clinic of Central Virginia on Main Street, which serves the uninsured, underinsured and individuals with an income less than 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The City assisted the project with infrastructure improvements including buried power lines and new sidewalks.

Tourism Partnerships with Liberty University

Virginia Commonwealth Games at Liberty University

Known as Virginia's Olympics, this statewide event is the largest multi-sport three-day festival in Virginia. Approximately 11,500 athletes of all ages and ability levels compete in 60 sports.

In 2017, the Commonwealth Games had a **\$2.6** million economic impact in the City of Lynchburg.

In August 2019, Liberty University and the City of Lynchburg will host the **State Games of America**. The State Games of America is an Olympic-style event held every two years and features up to four days of competition among medal winners from other State Games events throughout the country. The City of Lynchburg can expect to welcome between 12-15,000 athletes from at least 32 states.

In March 2018, the **International Swim Coaches Association** chose Lynchburg as the location for the Junior National Championship Cup, an event that attracts more than a thousand swimmers and their families from across the country.

Tourism Sales

As a result of tourism sales efforts in Fiscal Year 2018, 98 sales leads and assists produced events and room nights in the City of Lynchburg resulting in an estimated economic impact of more than **\$15 million.**

Secured Leads

43

leads with approximately **19,834** room nights and estimated economic impact of **\$9.3 million**

Tentative Leads

36

leads with approximately **6,766** room nights and estimated economic impact of **\$3.8 million**

Assists

11

leads with approximately **3,754** room nights and estimated economic impact of **\$2.6 million**

Lynchburg secured the bid to host the 2019 **Virginia Association of Museums Annual Conference**, a statewide gathering of more than 150 museum professionals and service providers from across the Commonwealth.

The Virginia Chapter of Meeting Professionals International held their statewide **Annual Education Conference** at The Virginian Hotel in August 2018.

In partnership with Liberty University, Lynchburg hosted the **2018 Miss Virginia Pageant**, with a single event economic impact of more than \$250,000 to the City.



City Streets & Country Roads Artisan Trail

Weaving Adventure through the City of Lynchburg and Counties of Amherst, Appomattox and Campbell

The Office of Economic Development & Tourism took the lead to establish an artisan trail in the Lynchburg region. A program of the Artisan Center of Virginia with support from the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Trail localities, the Artisan Trail Network connects artisan lovers to artist studios, galleries, retailers, agri-artisan farms, tasting rooms and markets, highlighting their stories and unique ways of life.



A diverse, highly-skilled workforce is an important asset for any urban community.

In order to weather the inevitable booms and busts of the modern economy, Lynchburg must provide skills training and pathways to job opportunities within the City's target industry clusters. While this will not eliminate income stratification or workforce skills gaps, it allows individual residents to achieve their full economic potential, improving the City's fiscal growth and stability.

TechHire

TechHire Lynchburg is an economic empowerment program designed to connect willing and able Lynchburg job seekers with middle and high skill jobs at local businesses. TechHire creates access to the job market for low-income Lynchburg citizens with a non-traditional educational background by matching them directly to an employer with an open job.

The program is focused on serving individuals between the ages of 18 and 29, living at or below the federal poverty rate, and not currently enrolled in post-secondary education.

Placed

8 TechHire

fellows

Fellows

100%

have achieved economic stability

Opportunity Lynchburg partnered with the **Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation** to provide support for Lynchburg City Schools Empowerment Academy.

Opportunity Lynchburg is a sponsor of Lynchburg Business Magazine's **Millennials on the Move**, now in its fourth year of recognizing young talent in Lynchburg's business community.



Goal

Number 3

Support talent development for Lynchburg's target industry clusters

This is Lynchburg. Welcome Home.

In 2017, the Economic Development Authority was awarded a Bronze Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) for "This is Lynchburg: Welcome Home," a video project in collaboration with the Young Professionals of Central Virginia (YPCV).

IEDC's prestigious awards program recognizes the world's best economic development marketing materials, programs and partnerships, honoring organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban and rural communities.

"Our goal is to increase engagement of young professionals - welcoming them and inspiring them to live, work and play in Lynchburg. This video certainly showcases the "stickiness" factor of the City and allows YPs to see themselves here."

- Anna Bentson, Assistant Director, Economic Development & Tourism

Create Lynchburg

In February 2018, the Office of Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center, and the Academy Center of the Arts partnered to host the 2nd Create Lynchburg Conference.

Nearly 100 artists and makers convened with the goal of equipping artists and organizations with the tools, resources, and connections to be successful in business and have a positive economic development impact in the greater Lynchburg community.

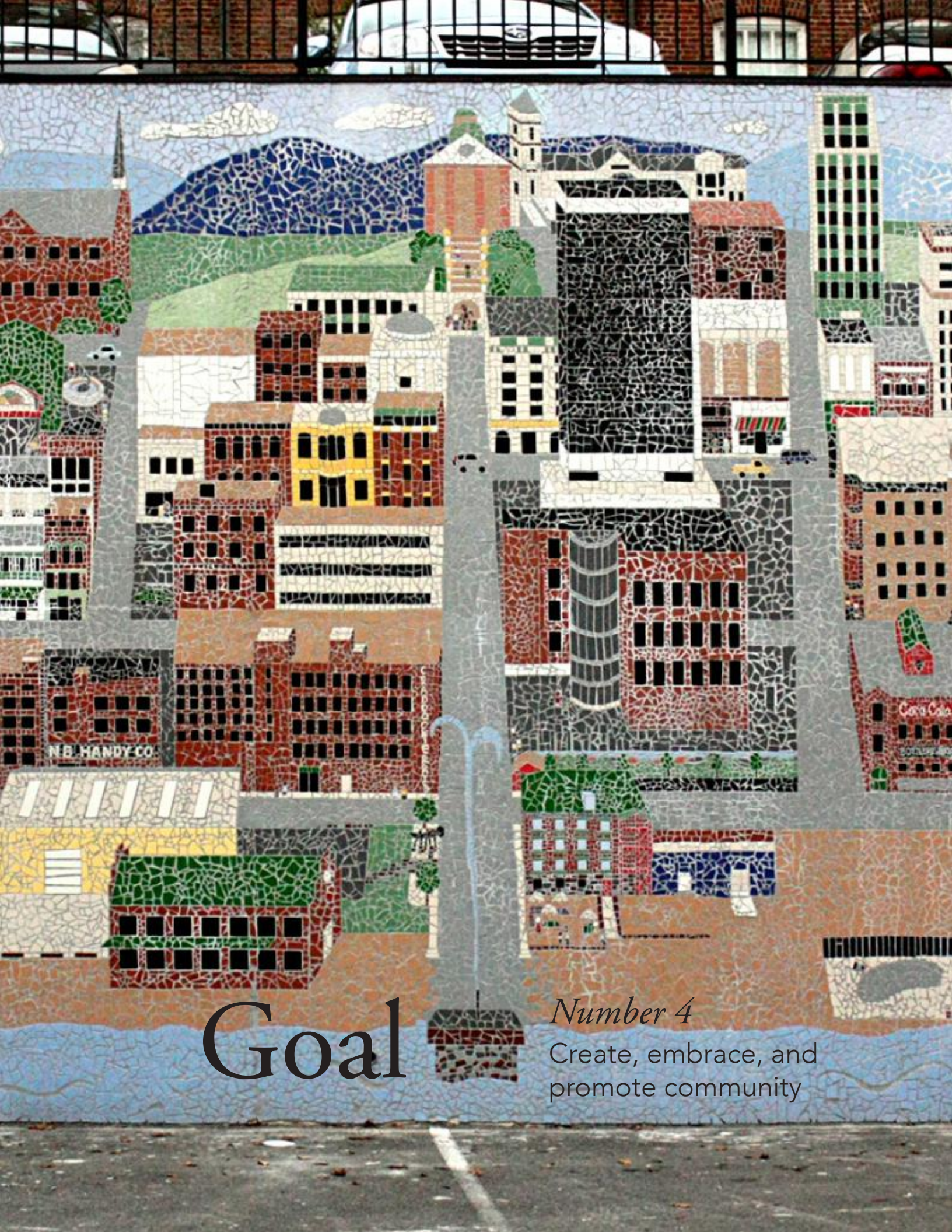
"From Lynchburg's participation with Americans for the Arts national economic impact study we know that the arts in Lynchburg generates at least \$10.8 million in economic impact. Efforts like Create Lynchburg elevate the arts as a critical economic sector."

Geoffrey Kershner, Academy Center of the Arts

In 2017, Lynchburg ranked #6 in the Gallup-Sharecare Well-Being Index

The ranking identifies communities with an engaged workforce, less daily stress and physical pain, and lower rates of obesity and depression.





Goal

Number 4

Create, embrace, and promote community

Quality of place has a major influence on where talent decides to locate. Communities that attract the most talented, highly skilled residents tend to have a strong local identity characterized by a diversity of cultural assets.

Cities with a firm “placemaking” strategy – one that leverages their strengths to maximize local health, happiness, and well-being – are seeing higher levels of investment and development.

James River Arts & Cultural District

The District is a geographic overlay that provides support for local arts and cultural activities in and around Downtown Lynchburg. Funded by the amusement tax generated in the District, in fiscal year 2018, \$35,000 in grants from the Office of Economic Development & Tourism catalyzed 14 projects with an estimated economic impact of more than **\$2.7 million.**

Group Familiarization Tours

Tourism sales staff coordinates visits from group tour and travel organizers. Development of itineraries include visits to local attractions, historic sites, dining and lodging facilities.

In September 2017, four tour planners from China visited Lynchburg as part of a United States tour to promote travel 2nd and 3rd tier destinations to self-guided Chinese travelers. In 2016, the total number of the outbound travelers from China reached to 120 million.

In April 2018, 25 AAA planners included Lynchburg in a tour of the Blue Ridge Parkway to promote to individuals and groups.

Developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem

CO.STARTERS is a nine-week program that equips aspiring entrepreneurs with the insights, relationships and tools needed to run business ideas into action and turn passion into sustainable and thriving businesses.

In three years, more than CO.STARTERS has graduated more than **sixty small businesses.**

“There’s no glitz and glam when it comes to this course - it’s the actual and factual. The best part about CO.STARTERS is that you learn in a personal, realistic setting and you are surrounded by people who have succeeded and failed in business. It’s eye-opening.”

- *Jaylin Randolph, Spring 2018*

American Evolution

In Fall 2018, the Office of Economic Development & Tourism, in partnership with the Lynchburg Museum, Old City Cemetery and 434 Marketing, will release “Little Did They Know” a professionally produced postcast series highlighting the voices of Lynchburg’s rich history. The series is supported by a grant from American Evolution, a statewide commemoration of the events of 1619 and themes of democracy, diversity and opportunity.

Economic development is only as powerful as the story it tells.

For cities to be successful in their efforts to attract new talent and companies, they must craft a compelling narrative that signifies who they are and communicates a strong sense of culture and community. By telling a story that highlights their local assets, cities can distinguish themselves from their neighbors and re-shape their public brand.

In 2018, the Office of Economic Development & Tourism launched LYH, a new brand for tourism development and marketing.

With a series of thorough research tasks, which focused on the average tourism traveler, three key buyer personas were discovered:



Local Lecia:
The 25-35 year old female who lives and works in Lynchburg and can be an ambassador for the city.



Mom Melissa:
The 45-55 year old mom who travels with her kids to Lynchburg for sports events, and works to find activities, recreation and learning opportunities for the whole family.



Explorer Emily:
The 25-35 year old woman who travels to Lynchburg on the weekends to experience the arts and culture available in Lynchburg.

Keeping these key demographics in mind, the Office of Economic Development & Tourism created a brand that is inclusive, representative of the city's vibrancy and adaptable enough to grow as the city grows.

LYH

LYNCHBURG, VA

Goal

Number 5
Tell the City of Lynchburg's Story

Top Inquiries by State:

Virginia
Ohio
Pennsylvania
New York
North Carolina

Top Inquiries by Country:

Germany
Canada
United Kingdom
Australia
France

Opportunity Lynchburg

5,338 unique website users	7,784 website sessions	712 Facebook Followers	969 Instagram Followers
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Tourism

163,593 unique website users	211,932 website sessions	11,476 Facebook Followers	1,797 Instagram Followers
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The Visitors Center will undergo a full renovation in early 2019 to fully showcase the Lynchburg Experience.

Advertising and Media

27 earned media articles placed in fiscal year 2018 in publications such as Blue Ridge Outdoors, Boomer Magazine, the Huffington Post and Yahoo Finance.

In February 2018 **C-SPAN** featured Lynchburg on the "American Cities Tour." **C-SPAN** visited literary and historic sites where local historians, authors, and civic leaders were interviewed.

In June, Lynchburg was featured in **Site Selection Magazine**, highlighting the growth of the City's nuclear industry, higher education institutions and new technology sector.

29 advertisements placed in **22** publications, including native online and social posts

In 2018, the City of Lynchburg published **film guidelines** to support filmmakers wishing to produce movies and independent film projects within the city limits.

"The people I want to work with are here. I call it blue-collar brilliance. They have a tremendous work ethic. Those who do move away want to come back home. There is something about this area that calls people home."

- Carroll Moon, CFO of Cloudfit Software, Inc., Site Selection Magazine

CRUSH Friday



The City of Lynchburg has partnered with Virginia Tourism Corporation on the CRUSH Friday campaign—an effort aimed at getting Millennials to take vacation time in Virginia. The campaign, in partnership with local tourism attractions, primarily targets Millennials in the greater Lynchburg region through social media with a goal of encouraging individuals—who left 665 million vacation hours on the table last year—to take time off and explore their city. The efforts included social media outreach, printed signage, print materials and partnerships with organizations like SnowFlex, Academy Center of the Arts, Parry Restaurant Group and the Downtown Lynchburg Association.

Who We Are

In 2017, the City's offices of Economic Development & Tourism merged together. Last fall, the Lynchburg Museum System reorganized to fall under the Office of Economic Development & Tourism, a strategic move that increases coordination and positions the City's historic sites as drivers of economic development and tourism.

Economic Development & Tourism Staff

The Office of Economic Development & Tourism is the City of Lynchburg's economic development and tourism agency. With a focus on developing people and place, staff leads business retention, expansion and attraction efforts, entrepreneurship and tourism initiatives, and business marketing and promotion for the City.

Marjette Upshur - Director

Anna Bentson - Assistant Director

Lisa Meriwether - Tourism Sales Manager

Andrew Marks - Tourism Sales Coordinator

Jason Witt - Economic Development Coordinator

Krista Boothby - Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator

Melissa Dismond - Administrative Associate

Vivian Layne - Travel Counselor

Economic Development Authority

The Economic Development Authority of the City of Lynchburg is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and serves as the incentive arm of the City. The Authority takes an active role in economic development efforts, pursuing investment and development opportunities, and elevating the economic profile of the City.

Louise E. Mitchell - Chair

Mark Strosnider - Vice Chair

John M. Stone - Secretary - Treasurer

William T. Lovern - Assistant Secretary - Treasurer

Gerard E. Swienton

Georgeann Snead

Rex D. Geveden

Lynchburg Museum System Staff

Ted Delaney - Director and Chief Public History Office

Laura Wilson - Curator

Whitney Roberts - Museum Educator

Tanya Anderson - Administrative Manager

Staff Memberships and Affiliations

International Economic Development Council
Workforce Development Board
Virginia Community Capital
Virginia Downtown Development Association
Virginia Economic Developers Association
Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities
Americans for the Arts
National Tourism Association
Blue Ridge Parkway Association
Meeting Planners International
Virginia Society of Association Executives
National Association of Sports Commissioners

Society of Government Meeting Professionals
North American Travel Journalists Association
Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Association
American Marketing Association
Public Relations Society of America
Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations
Virginia Association of Museums
Downtown Lynchburg Association
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
Riverviews Artspace



While we represent Lynchburg as your economic development and tourism team, each and every one of you *are* Lynchburg. It's important that we all commit our time, energy and effort into helping our city grow, thrive and succeed.

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