

Prince Edward County

2023 Annual Report



About Us

In 1754 Prince Edward County was established in Southern Virginia. Today, we stand at the crossroads of the closing days of the American Civil War and the birthplace of America's fight for civil rights in education. Home to 22,000 citizens, the County offers a rural, progressive lifestyle, two institutions of higher education, a vibrant arts and cultural community, a flourishing downtown shopping district and a rich abundance of college athletics and outdoor recreational offerings. To find out more, follow Prince Edward County on Facebook @PrinceEdwardCo and on YouTube.

Our Mission

The mission of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County is to represent all citizens, provide leadership, create vision and set policy to accomplish positive change and planned growth as well as providing essential services, enhancing the quality of life and maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Our Vision

A progressive, diverse and inclusive county that honors its heritage and collaborates with its citizens to achieve prosperity, educational excellence and lasting public safety, while ensuring fiscal responsibility.

Highlighting Progress Toward Our Strategic Goals



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & MOBILITY

The county completed a 0.28-mile-long industrial access road project off Commerce Road (Route 628) to open additional land in the Prince Edward County Business Park. The road was necessary to gain access to 100+ acres within the park that are currently landlocked. Construction included 1,500 feet of roadway built to state standards for acceptance into the VDOT road system and the extension of a water line. The cost was \$2.8 million, funded through a combination of grants from the VDOT Industrial Access program, the Tobacco Commission and a Prince Edward County contribution.



EDUCATION

As reported in September 2023, Prince Edward County Public Schools (PECPS) has shown significant improvement in some areas, including math and science. The elementary school received an Exemplar Award for continuous improvement by the Virginia Board of Education. PECPS stands out as one of 18 school divisions that has either maintained or improved its SOL pass rates. Prince Edward elementary, middle and high schools are accredited with conditions. The school system still has areas in need of improvement, including chronic absenteeism, which impacts attendance and student achievement.



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

As part of the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget, the Board of Supervisors increased the real estate tax rate by \$0.04 with \$0.03 going toward the Sandy River Project and \$0.01 earmarked for the proposed elementary school renovation. By being proactive, the board is spreading out the tax impact on our citizens while ensuring these two generational projects are funded.

In 2023, the county implemented a meals tax for restaurants and businesses located outside the limits of the Town of Farmville. One hundred percent of the proceeds will help pay for capital improvements at the Prince Edward County School System.



CULTURAL CENTER

The Prince Edward County Courthouse lawn was renovated in 2022 to include a new brick plaza, lighting, landscaping, irrigation system and flag poles. The project also included removal of brick columns and chains that discouraged public assembly. The renovated lawn provides the community with a beautiful gathering spot and a focal point for Main Street. The total cost of the project was \$335,500. (CIP Priority #8)

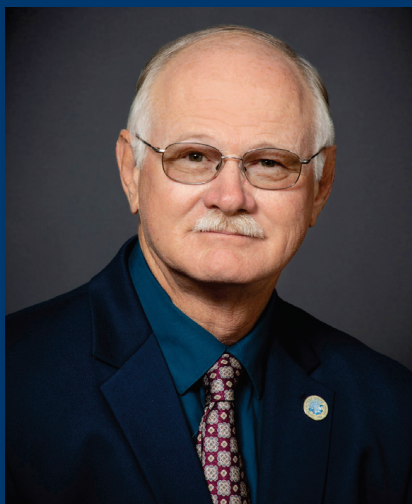


PUBLIC SAFETY & COLLABORATION

Prince Edward is working with the Town of Farmville, Longwood University, Hampden-Sydney College and local volunteer fire and EMS departments to implement a new public safety radio communications system. This will provide greater interoperability and coverage for our first responders. (CIP Priority #5)



A Message from the Chair of the Board of Supervisors



On behalf of the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors and County staff, I present the 2023 Annual Report to our citizens. It is the Board's vision that we are a progressive, diverse and inclusive county that honors its heritage and collaborates with its citizens to achieve prosperity, educational excellence and lasting public safety while ensuring fiscal responsibility.

The Board continues to work hard on implementing our 2018-2038 Strategic Plan and addressing needs in our community, including economic development, public safety and public education. As the information in this Annual Report shows, Prince Edward County is moving forward and growing in a fiscally responsible manner, working to meet the needs of our citizens while prudently planning for the future.

Llew W. Gilliam Jr., Chair Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors

By the Numbers

1,188 building inspections	1,712 fire calls
900 building permits issued	4,046 EMS calls
\$56,530,909 valuation of building permits	8,658 Sheriff's Office calls
195 zoning permits issued	\$280K median home sold price
1,632 visitors to Visitor Center	\$186 per square foot median home listing price
47,939 items checked out of library	23.6% poverty rate
21,927 total population	8,030 citizens served by DSS
69% population born in PEC	\$72,767,846 DSS benefits to PE citizens
13,412 registered voters	31,158 tons of trash accepted at P.E. landfill
32.3 years median age	271 tons of metal recycled
\$49,019 median household income	20 tons of televisions recycled
\$330K median home listing price	113 tons of solid waste reduced
253 dogs and cats housed at P.E. Animal Shelter.	

Other Capital Improvement Accomplishments

Elementary School Renovation | CIP Priority #2

On August 31, 2023, the Board of Supervisors selected a renovation option for the Prince Edward County Elementary School, removing buildings E and F and constructing an administrative section. The new construction will connect buildings C and D, as well as buildings G and H, improving access, traffic flow and security. It will also provide more seating options, larger classrooms and more options for hands-on learning. The relocated front entrance will decrease traffic on Zion Hill Road and address drop-off and pick-up issues. The current estimate is \$43.3 million.

Rice Convenience Site | CIP Priority #7

The Rice Convenience Site was the first of the county's seven convenience sites to be upgraded. In addition to paving and fencing replacement, the site needed reconfiguration and expansion to accommodate future growth and demand. The total cost of the project was approximately \$925,000. Improvements included:

- Expanded site footprint
- New commercial entrance (Original entrance was close to Route 460 and did not meet VDOT requirements.)
- Stormwater management
- Leachate collection system
- Expanded recycling container space
- Paving
- Modern LED (high-efficiency) lighting
- New signage and fencing
- Site landscaping

High School Track | CIP Priority #8

In 2023, PECPS completed renovations on the high school track. The existing track had a number of cracks and a deteriorating asphalt surface that prevented its use. The total replacement cost was \$340,640.

Broadband Expansion Project

In 2021, Kinex Telecom was contracted to provide an expansion of broadband access and capacity to underserved portions of Prince Edward County. The project is funded through a combination of federal, state, county and private investments. As of September 3, 2023, 205 miles of middle-mile conduit and fiber have been installed in the county. Additionally, 2,680 passings have been completed with a total of 104 customer installs.

Grants Awarded | \$1,485,523 Total Grant Funds Received

Comprehensive Community Corrections and Pretrial Services Grant | \$684,718

Funding for Piedmont Court Services, which provides local probation and pretrial services for nine counties with Prince Edward County serving as the fiscal and administrative agent.

Agriculture & Forestry Industries Development Fund Grants | \$75,000

\$50,000 to support upgrades of infrastructure and equipment at the cannery. \$25,000 to support the development of the Sandy River Distillery.

Virginia Tourism Corporation Regional Marketing Grants | \$20,000

To support the tourism marketing of Prince Edward County and the Town of Farmville.

Assistant to Firefighters Grants | \$527,157

\$364,572 for the purchase of self-contained breathing apparatuses (SCBA) and \$162,585 for the purchase of thermal imaging cameras for all seven county fire departments.

Virginia Tourism Corporation ARPA Grant | \$30,000

For planning and design services for the wayfinding signage master plan project.

Virginia DEQ Litter Prevention & Recycling Program Grant | \$11,294

To help cover the expense of recycling televisions and other electronics.

State Homeland Security Program Grant | \$88,500

To offset the cost of radio consulting services for the design of a countywide public safety radio system.

Library of Virginia Circuit Court Records Preservation Program | \$28,184

To reformat and reindex Deed Books 48-93 (1754-1916) for local records preservation.

Miscellaneous Law Enforcement Grants | \$20,670

For various public safety initiatives by the sheriff's office.

Tax Dollar Transparency: Where Every Cent Counts



Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Total County Revenues: \$73,940,112

Awards & Accolades

Virginia Association of Counties Achievement Award

For the first time ever, the county was recognized for “Our Recipe for Success,” the partnership between the **Prince Edward Cannery** and **Virginia Food Works**, which fosters a unique and creative solution for preserving local produce; serving home canners, local farmers and food entrepreneurs; and creating additional value and support for the county’s cannery.

Class A Commercial Driver’s License with Tanker Endorsement

Congratulations to **Daniel Townsend**, refuse driver with the County’s Solid Waste Department, who completed the Southside Virginia Community College Truck Driver Training Program, graduated with a 4.0 grade point average and received his Class A Commercial Driver’s License with Tanker Endorsement.

Master Governmental Treasurer & Master Deputy Treasurer Certification

Treasurer **Donna Nunnally** and members of her staff successfully completed this certification, designed to advance the professionalism of local governmental treasurers and staff. Certified deputy treasurers now include **Stephanie Bappert, Jenna Powell** and **Amy Bryant!**

Gordon N. Dixon Award

Executive Director of the Commonwealth Regional Council **Melody Foster** was presented this prestigious award. The Dixon award recognizes planning district commission directors who exhibited excellent leadership and made outstanding contributions to promoting regionalism in the Commonwealth.

Moral Reconciliation Therapy Certification

We are proud of Piedmont Court Services Senior Probation Officer **Rebecca Staton**, who was certified in Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) in January 2023. MRT is a cognitive skills group used to teach probationers moral reasoning with the goal of changing negative behavior and reducing recidivism.

Looking Ahead

Animal Shelter Update

Replacing the County Animal Shelter remains a top priority. The existing facility is too small for the community’s needs and struggles to meet state regulations. In recent years, the number of animals housed at the shelter continues to grow. The county has identified a potential location for a new shelter and is hiring an architect to design a new facility.

Heartland Innovative Technology (HIT) Park

Prince Edward County continues to work on extending utilities to serve the HIT Park, including engineering to bring water and sewer services to the site. To grow the county’s economy, the Industrial Development Authority hired a consultant to actively market the HIT Park to potential data center users. An economic analysis firm’s fiscal impact study forecasts local tax revenues in excess of \$10 million annually from the HIT Park after full buildout.

Sandy River Reservoir

In 2023, the county made significant strides towards the development of the Sandy River Reservoir as a public water supply. The county received an updated draft water withdrawal permit from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and furthered discussions with the Virginia Department of General Services to serve state facilities near Burkeville, which will provide a custom base for development and funding of the treatment plant. In addition to providing a long-term backup water supply for the Town of Farmville, the system will support future economic growth in Prince Edward County, including the development of the HIT Park.

Landfill Expansion

The county received a permit modification from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to increase the maximum daily tonnage from 175 tons of trash per day to 300 tons. This should provide the county with ample capacity for a number of years. In addition, the county is working with our landfill engineer on the design of Cell F, a 3.4-acre cell that will provide an additional 370,000 CY of waste disposal volume. Our current cells, A-E, have a bit over two years of life left. We plan to construct Cell F in 2024, which will add approximately 12 more years of life based on our current compaction and intake rates.

Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, a document mandated to be reviewed and/or updated by the Code of Virginia every five years, is a guide for implementing the vision of the county. Prince Edward County has engaged The Berkley Group to assist with updating the plan. Having worked with the Town of Farmville on its 2020 Comprehensive Plan update, The Berkley Group is familiar with our community. The project will begin in the fall of 2023 and be completed in 2025. Citizen input is an important part of this planning process.

Contact Us!

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