

**ST. MARY’S COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

The purpose of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) is to provide the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County with advice and assistance concerning the development and implementation of a comprehensive economic development strategy to guide the diversification of the County’s future economy.

Each member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of office of three years. Members of the St. Mary's County Economic Development Commission during 2021 are as follows:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
*John Barr Jr.	Member, Vice Chair	12/31/2024
Lisa Creason	Member, Secretary	12/31/2023
*Phil Dorsey	Member	6/30/2022
Barbara Ives	Member	6/30/2023
Christine Bergmark	Member	Ex-officio
Tristan J. Marino	Member	12/31/2025
Gerald E. Meyerman	Member	June 30, 2025
Rick Tarr	Member	Ex-officio
Elizabeth Torgerson	Member, Chair	12/31/2025
Brooke Turner	Member	6/30/2023
Curtis Brown	Member	6/30/2023
Dale Moore	Member	12/31/2025
Theresa Mitchell	Member	12/31/2023

The following shall be ex-officio members:

- one (1) member from the Naval Air Station Patuxent River
- one (1) member from the St. Mary’s County Chamber of Commerce.

*Served for a portion of CY2022

ACTIVITIES IN 2022 CALENDAR YEAR

The EDC met three (3) times in 2022 to discuss the progress of implementing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), to complete and approve the 2022 update to the CEDS and to learn about other initiatives of the Department.

Topics Discussed by the Economic Development Commission

- January 19, 2022
 - State of Education in St. Mary’s County
 - CEDS Process Update
 - Election of Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)
- April 20, 2022

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- CEDS Update
- October 20, 2022
 - DRAFT Final CEDS Approval
 - Calendar Year 2023 Meeting Schedule

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

- The EDC’s primary mission is to help develop a CEDS, monitor progress, and update the CEDS when necessary. The CEDS was approved in 2017, so the update is due five years later, in 2022. The 2017 CEDS was a very comprehensive document that was drafted with several outside consultants. The update will not require such an in-depth dive. To guide the 2022 CEDS update and to ensure the 2022 CEDS adequately sets the foundation and framework for DED’s workplan for the coming five-year period, the EDC established three (3) working groups:

Document Review Workgroup – This committee reviewed the current CEDS document to ensure findings and recommendations are still valid and to suggest minor revisions where necessary. This includes identifying where new research is needed.

Economic Resilience Workgroup – This committee will guide the drafting of a new section for the CEDS that addresses how DED can best position itself, given the changes to the economy and business organization that are occurring due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other potential disruptors, aligned with the St. Mary’s County Continuity of Operation Plan.

New Initiatives/Projects Workgroup – This committee will determine if the CEDS can be enhanced by the addition of new projects or sections (aside from resiliency). This committee will address the question, “is new material needed to properly inform a five-year workplan for DED, given the established priorities?” Sustainable Communities and the Regional Innovation Collaborative are two examples of recent initiatives that may be added to show alignment with the CEDS.

- An RFP was distributed to identify a firm to draft the 2022 St. Mary’s County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The consultant, 4th Economy, reviewed the preliminary work of the County’s Economic Development Commission (EDC) related to economic resilience and new initiatives and conducted stakeholder meetings to include focus groups to validate and refine the work of the EDC related to the economic development environment and the resilience solutions in identified areas. The consultant met with the DED team to understand identified new initiatives and review updated economic data and incorporate that data and information into the final report. The consultant advised on and submitted an action plan for DED to achieve its economic development resiliency solutions. The firm incorporated economic resiliency throughout the plan to reduce vulnerabilities in identified areas, compiled, and organized existing new initiatives, incorporated new data from Select USA, and produced a final CEDS document. The EDC approved the final update to the CEDS on October 20, 2022. The update to the CEDS will be presented to the St. Mary’s County Commissioners on January 24, 2023.

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PLANS FOR THE CURRENT YEAR

- The Commission will continue to meet on a quarterly basis the third Wednesday of the month.

**2022 Meeting Calendar is as follows:

January 18, 2023
July 19, 2023

April 19, 2023
October 18, 2023

**Commissioner and citizen attendance are always welcome.

- The Commission will continue to provide feedback concerning the implementation of a comprehensive economic development strategy to guide the diversification of the County’s future economy.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- The Commission will continue to promote and discuss initiatives, projects, and programs as they relate to the St. Mary’s County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.