

# 2025 Economic Development Strategic Plan Year 1 Report

## Letter from the Director

In August 2025, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors adopted a new Economic Development Strategic Plan, its second such plan in the office's 10-year history. Albemarle County's economic development program is relatively young – many localities in the Commonwealth have programs that began in the 1990s. That tenure does not dictate capability. This plan is ambitious but achievable, largely because of Albemarle's clear vision for the community as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan, resourced through the County's Strategic Plan, and executed daily by a dedicated team. The Economic Development Office works to create a business environment where entrepreneurs can launch new ventures, where small businesses can scale, and where established businesses can find their next strategic location.

The first year of the plan was transformational for our community. The largest deal in the Commonwealth of Virginia was announced in October, with AstraZeneca's commitment to a \$4.5 billion advanced biopharmaceutical manufacturing campus at Rivanna Futures, a property purchased by Albemarle County in 2023 for economic development purposes. This opportunity will bring 600 jobs with salaries starting at \$125,000 per year. AstraZeneca was drawn to this community because of its long-term commitment to sustainability, recruitment opportunities from quality schools at all education levels, and the strong quality of life attributes that make this region a great place for their employees to live. Existing businesses celebrated milestones as well – with Afton Scientific breaking ground on their new \$200 million facility and AgroSpheres cutting the ribbon on their new manufacturing facility as they transition into consumer sales.

We're building strong partnerships. Regional partners worked over many months to support the development of the Central Virginia Innovation Corridor Strategic Roadmap, an exploration and identification of what we can collectively do to raise the profile of Central Virginia as a place for life sciences, national security, and the dual-use opportunities that cut across both sectors to improve health, save lives, and secure our future as a nation. Piedmont Virginia Community College and the University of Virginia are both making strategic investments in research capacity, facilities and equipment, and personnel so they are ready to train the next generation of employees to fill the jobs being created in this community. CvilleBioHub, Central Virginia National Security Alliance, Venture Central, and Central Virginia Business Innovation Council are creating

networks for employers and employees to connect, collaborate, and coalesce around shared challenges and opportunities. The Virginia Wine Coalition and the newly launched Food & Beverage Accelerator project are working to create new market opportunities for area companies.

We're just getting started. In Year 2, we are working to ensure we have the right resources and infrastructure in place for the opportunities ahead –a pipeline of building and site opportunities, transportation and utility infrastructure aligned with industry needs, robust workforce programs, and entrepreneur support – while continuing to raise our profile in the biotechnology & life sciences and intelligence & national security sectors.

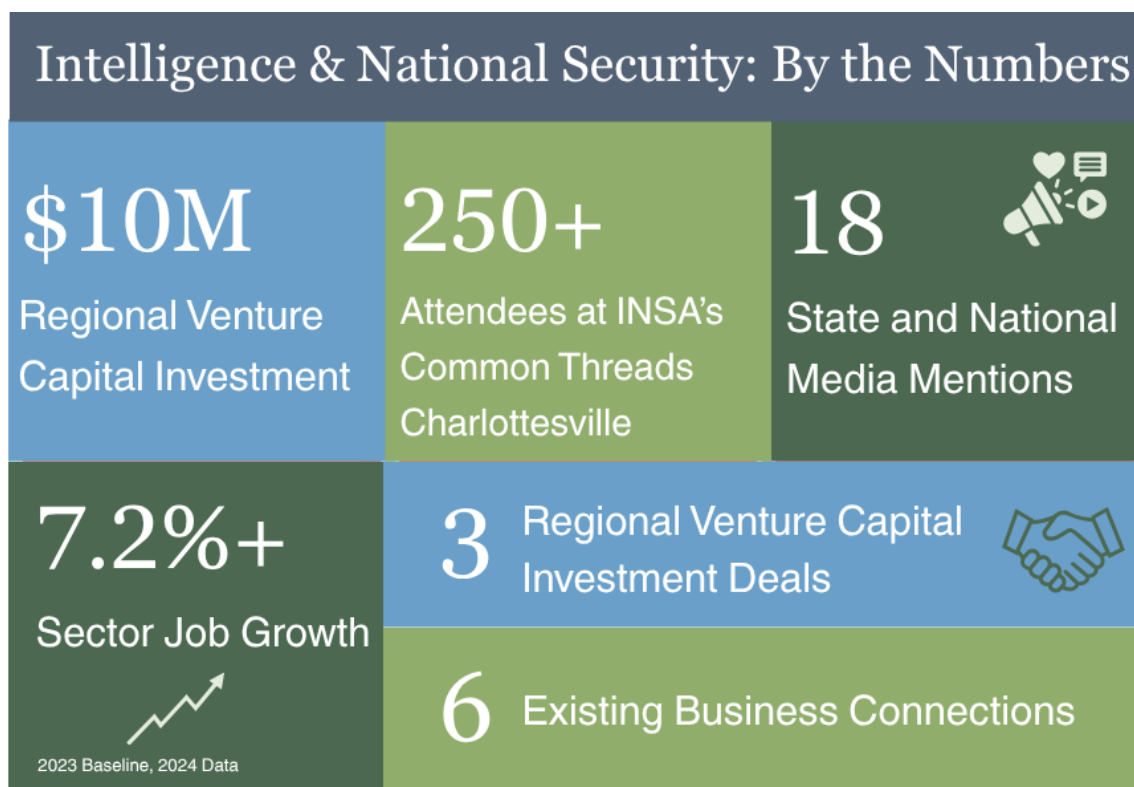
Emily Kilroy

## Lead in Intelligence & National Security

### What the Plan Says

We will lead Virginia's intelligence and national security innovation economy. Albemarle is home to one of the state's most significant national security assets, Rivanna Station, and has a highly skilled workforce. The County's investment in Rivanna Futures creates a generational opportunity to turn this quiet strength into a signature identity. Strategies focus on land readiness, talent pipelines, branding, and coordinated sector engagement.

### By the Numbers



### Notable Media Mentions:

- Reuters [AstraZeneca breaks ground at \\$4.5 billion Virginia plant as drugmakers court Trump](#)
- Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News [Top 10 U.S. Biopharma Clusters 2026](#)
- Manufacturing Today [AstraZeneca commits \\$4.5B to build US drug hub in Virginia](#)
- PharmaSource [AstraZeneca Expands US Manufacturing with \\$4.5B Virginia Facility](#)

## Stories

### *Raising Our National Profile*

Albemarle County's intelligence and national security sector has a relatively quiet presence in the regional economy, despite employing thousands of people across several organizations, including federal agencies, defense contractors, and startups. Numerous events highlighted our region on a national or state scale, offering an exciting opportunity to share our story and raise our profile in this sector.

### Common Threads Charlottesville

Common Threads Charlottesville, hosted by the Intelligence and National Security Alliance ([INSA](#)), returned to Albemarle County on December 16. Nearly 300 attendees heard a keynote from Anderson Sale (U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command - INSCOM) and a panel featuring COL Jay McGee (National Ground Intelligence Center - NGIC Commander), Elizabeth Mitchell (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency - NGA Charlottesville Chief), Dr. Philip Potter (National Security Data and Policy Institute), and Emily Kilroy (Albemarle County Economic Development), moderated by Mark Munsell (formerly NGA). INSA continues to be a key partner in the Rivanna Futures project, lifting the Charlottesville-area Intelligence & National Security Community to the national stage and creating actionable opportunities to grow the vibrancy of this sector.

### National Security Data & Policy Institute Annual Conference

The National Security Data & Policy Institute at the University of Virginia launched in 2024 with a \$20 million federal contract to support research at the intersection of data science and national security. In March, NSDPI launched its annual conference, bringing more than 200 professionals from all levels of government, academia, and the private sector to Charlottesville to engage in conversations and learning around data, technology, and competition.

### Ecosystem Development: TomTom Innovation Summit Spotlights Defense & Intelligence Sector

Venture Central hosted a conversation at the TomTom Innovation Summit in April that included Jennifer Thabet (DARPA Small Business Programs Office), Emily Pochter (Virginia Economic Development Partnership), Daniel Bailey (Go Line Strategy Group), Sunnie Capelle (C-Star Solutions), Nat Puffer (In-Q-Tel), and Brian Ralston (General Atomics Intelligence). The panel explored how our region can activate, grow, and scale the defense and intelligence innovation base and shared information about federal and state programs to support innovative products and services for an audience from across the Commonwealth.

### *Ecosystem Development: A Statewide Focus*

Albemarle County has made strategic connections within the Commonwealth of Virginia to raise the region's profile and foster collaboration. From the maritime industrial base in Hampton Roads, to the federal agency concentration in Northern Virginia, to the military intelligence cluster in Albemarle County, and a whole host of private activity and academic research across the Commonwealth, we have sought to leverage all of Virginia's defense assets. This has included engagements with Secretary of Veterans Defense Affairs, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the Governor's Office, and the Hampton Roads Alliance, among others.

### *Ecosystem Development: The Defense Affairs Committee becomes the Central Virginia National Security Alliance*

In 2020, Albemarle County partnered with the City of Charlottesville, Greene County, the University of Virginia Foundation, and other partners to create a Defense Affairs Committee and to hire a Program Coordinator to support the defense community in our region. As recognition of the intelligence and national security sector's importance in Central Virginia's economy has grown, regional partners made a strategic decision to broaden the sector's geographic footprint to all of Central Virginia, enhancing the sector's vitality by better aligning the scope of effort with local and regional economic development. In January 2026, the organization moved to the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, changed its name to the Central Virginia National Security Alliance (CVNSA), and hired a new Director, Miles Davis, who brings a depth of experience working for more than 20 years in national security, including 12 years at the National Ground Intelligence Center in Albemarle County.

*CVNSA's mission is to strengthen the local national security ecosystem and advocate at the State and Federal level for national security-related business attraction, retention, and growth in partnership with Central Virginia economic development professionals.*

This year, CVNSA presented on regional sector activity alongside Albemarle County to the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus, represented our region at the Virginia Defense Forum, and actively participated in the Governor's Economic Development Policy Listening Tour to elevate the profile of intelligence and national security activity in our region and illuminate opportunities to strengthen the sector across the Commonwealth. The Alliance is excited to support programming to bring industry, government, and academia together over the next year.

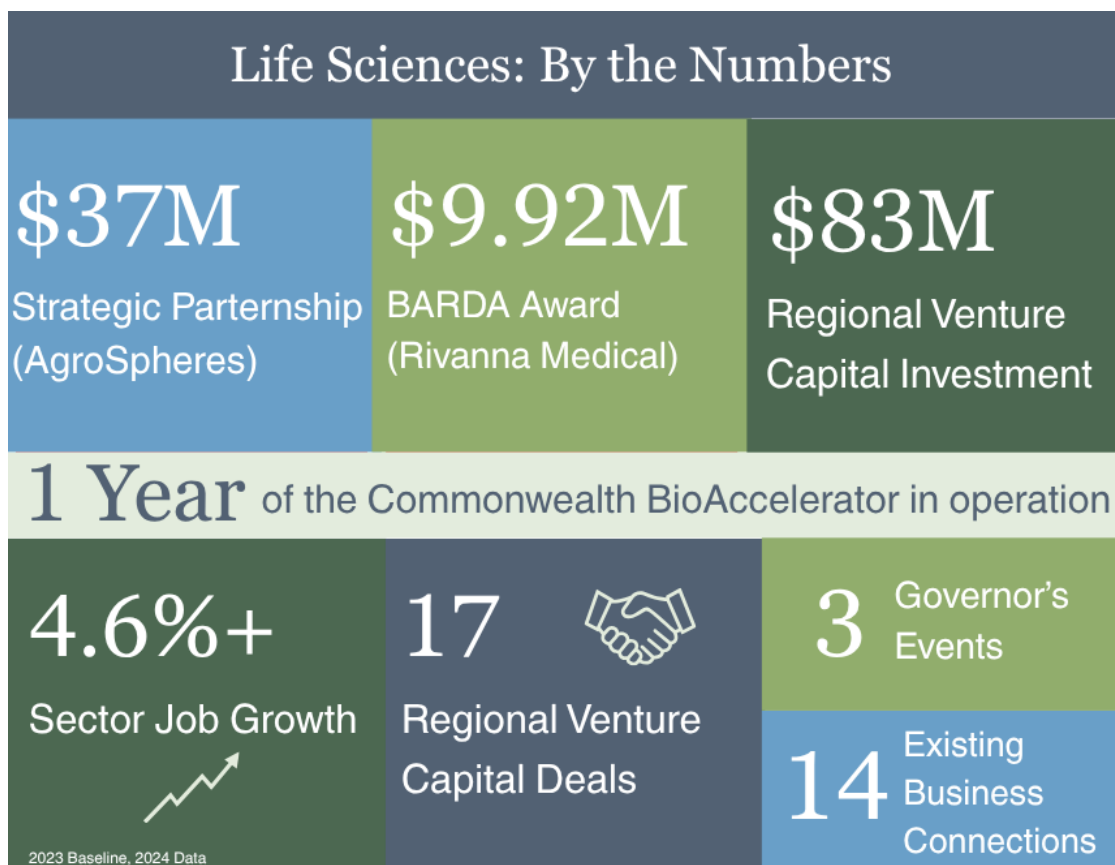
## Discover in Life Sciences

### What the Plan Says

We will grow into the Mid-Atlantic's premier destination for biotechnology and life sciences innovation. Already a \$269 million industry in Albemarle, the life sciences hold

clear potential for expansion. This goal supports the development of core laboratory facilities, specialized research service laboratories, and increased capital access and national marketing, all in partnership with CvilleBioHub and UVA.

## By the Numbers



## Stories

### *Ecosystem Development: Commonwealth BioAccelerator*

Cville BioHub's Commonwealth BioAccelerator expansion marks a major milestone in regional efforts to build a dynamic life sciences ecosystem. Equipped with state-of-the-art wet labs, shared office space, and professional mentorship services, the Commonwealth BioAccelerator provides early-stage companies with the critical infrastructure needed to build robust, fundable operations. By bridging the gap between initial research and commercialization (creating a profitable product or service), the Commonwealth BioAccelerator is helping propel innovation while stimulating sustained economic growth.

### *Growing Private Sector Investment: AstraZeneca Announcement*

AstraZeneca's landmark \$4.5 billion investment to establish its largest pharmaceutical manufacturing campus at Rivanna Futures has heralded a new era of private sector investment in the region. The project will generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs, anchor an emerging life sciences ecosystem, and cement Central Virginia as a premier life sciences innovation destination. Aligned with the County's strategic goals and driven by collaborative partnerships, this unparalleled economic growth opportunity will diversify and bolster the County's tax base, benefiting residents for generations to come.

### *Growing Private Sector Investment: Afton Scientific Groundbreaking*

Afton Scientific's \$200 million expansion in Albemarle County is a premier example of home-grown firms driving the region's rapidly growing biotechnology sector. By breaking ground on a brand new, 285,000 SF biopharmaceutical facility, Afton Scientific is transitioning from medium-scale to large-scale global commercial manufacturing while creating more than 200 high-paying, advanced manufacturing jobs. The company's commitment to expanding its local footprint highlights Central Virginia as a critical hub for drug manufacturing supply chain resilience.

### *Growing Private Sector Investment: AgroSpheres Ribbon-Cutting*

AgroSpheres' launch of its first-ever commercial production biomanufacturing facility in Albemarle County marks a pivotal milestone for both the company and the region. Born out of research that began at the University of Virginia, AgroSpheres' rapid transition from scientific discovery to full-scale manufacturing highlights the power of a robust regional ecosystem that fosters innovation through strategic partnerships and accessible infrastructure. The agricultural biotechnology pioneer has already invested \$10 million in the region and plans to reach a total investment of \$25 million by 2030.

### *Building the Workforce for the Futures: BioBridge Report*

CvilleBioHub's "BioBridge: Developing Talent to Tomorrow's Breakthroughs" Talent Pathways Initiative (TPI) is a data-driven regional workforce strategy funded by GO Virginia Region 9, designed to unlock the rapid growth of Central Virginia's biotech and life science sector. In testament to the area's strong ecosystem partnerships, the initiative drew on support and expertise from the University of Virginia, Piedmont Virginia Community College, Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville's Economic Development Offices, Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, Virginia Career Works and regional sector employers.

The study, led by TEConomy Partners, reported initial findings that highlight above-average job growth, high average wages, and a rapidly mounting talent shortage, especially in lab support, specialized technical, engineering, and commercialization roles.

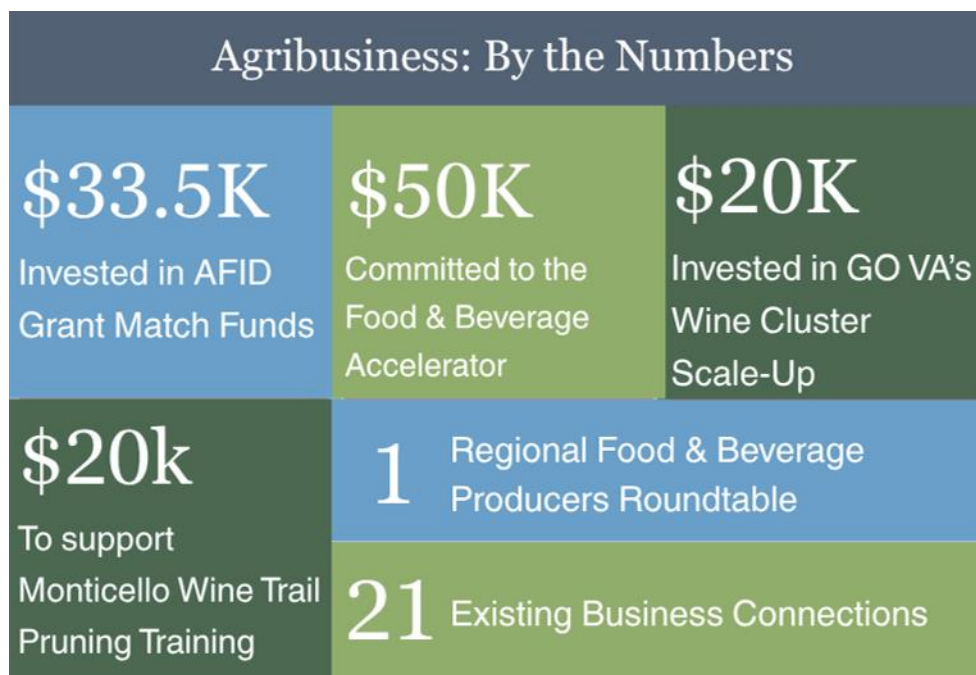
Moving forward, the project proposes strategic priorities to build technician pipelines, address specialized talent gaps, strengthen regional coordination, and promote a unified bioscience brand to attract and retain skilled workforce. Regional partners are collaborating on how to meet these needs through intentional, accessible pathways designed for students of all ages.

## Grow a Modern Agribusiness Economy

### What the Plan Says

We will transform Albemarle's agricultural legacy into a modern agribusiness economy. Agribusiness is an economic strength, but many farms and producers are at a transition point. Strategies address zoning, infrastructure, business planning, market access, and rural tourism to modernize and grow Albemarle's farming and food and beverage economy.

### By the Numbers



### Stories

#### *Ecosystem Development: Charlottesville-Albemarle Food & Beverage Producers Roundtable*

In May, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Food and Beverage Producers Roundtable brought together local producers, regional partners, and economic development practitioners for a dynamic conversation focused on strengthening our food and beverage ecosystem. Organized by Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville's Economic Development Offices, the roundtable set the stage for a collaborative discussion about shared goals and emerging opportunities in the region.

Participants heard from the Virginia Small Business Development Center, with Christopher Van Orden highlighting essential small business support tools available to

food and beverage entrepreneurs. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, represented by Michele Bridges, provided insight into state-level programs that help producers navigate regulations, expand operations, and reach new markets.

Producers shared their experiences and ongoing needs, from production space and distribution issues to workforce, technical assistance, financing, and market access challenges.

### *Ecosystem Development: Exploring BEACON Kitchen to support Food and Beverage Producers*

Earlier this year, Economic Development Authority Chair, Don Long and EDO staff were invited to tour BEACON Kitchen, a dynamic shared-use commercial kitchen incubator in Charlottesville operated by New Hill Development Corporation to discuss ways that the County can help support the operation. This 10,000 square foot licensed facility provides flexible hourly and monthly access to industry-standard equipment, cold and dry storage, packaging tool, and backend support like menu design, bookkeeping, and marketing. Co-created with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), food truck manufacturers, and local food entrepreneurs, BEACON offers a turnkey environment where aspiring chefs, bakers, caterers, and food producers can launch or scale their brands without the upfront cost of owning a commercial kitchen.

This resource, available to Albemarle County food and beverage producers, helps reduce capital barriers, increase production capacity, and reduce time-to-market. Producers who currently operate out of BEACON kitchen, like Albemarle County-based Penny's Imperfect Pizza, have significantly increased their production and sales and have been able to leverage their success into a Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Infrastructure Grant award from VDACS, matched by Albemarle County to invest in new equipment for their operation.

BEACON's mentorship services and community network also foster collaboration and entrepreneurship throughout the region, reinforcing Albemarle's broader goal of building a modern agribusiness economy

### *Ecosystem Development: Virginia Wine Coalition*

Through a GO Virginia grant match, Albemarle County supported the work of the Virginia Wine Coalition, a collaborative group dedicated to advancing the Commonwealth's viticulture and enology (or, grape growing and winemaking) sectors. Albemarle County's Economic Development Authority approved a \$20,000 local match for a GO Virginia Region 9 implementation grant, enabling the Coalition to access additional state funds and support regional wine-industry initiatives

Through partnerships with the Virginia Wineries Association, the Coalition pursued regional promotion efforts, funding for marketing initiatives, and educational programming that highlighted the Monticello Wine Trail and Albemarle's growing wine industry. The Coalition also supported efforts to amplify visibility and access to resources for local grape growers and vintners, including:

- Hosting Coalition-led workshops
- Facilitating connections between local wineries and state tourism campaigns
- offering logistical support for participation in statewide wine events.

This collaboration contributed to tangible benefits across Albemarle's wine community, including increased consumer engagement, expanded wine tourism opportunities, and enhanced capacity among small and mid-size wineries. The collective impact of support from the County enabled the Coalition to deepen partnerships with higher-education institutions, agribusiness agencies, and tourism boards, reinforcing Albemarle's status as a premier wine region in Virginia. As a result, the Virginia Wine Coalition's initiatives laid essential groundwork to sustain growth, innovation, and regional pride throughout the Montgomery Wine Trail and broader viticultural ecosystem.

#### *Supporting Shared Infrastructure: Regional Collaboration supports Siller Pollinator Company's Goal to Build a Mobile Honey Processing Facility*

For honey producers to be able to sell their products, it must be processed in a certified facility, which can be a barrier for small-scale producers. Over the course of the last year, Albemarle County, Fluvanna County and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), partnered with Siller Pollinator Company to support the creation of a Mobile Honey Processing Facility to provide affordable, regulated access to regional honey producers.

In its first year of operation, the mobile unit served nearly 100 producers and appeared at conferences, club meetings, university events, and community gatherings across the Commonwealth. Honey processed through the trailer supported retailers, breweries, meaderies, cosmetic producers, spas, and farmers' markets, keeping economic benefit circulating within Virginia and strengthening the state's agribusiness ecosystem. The initiative also created new honey industry jobs and strengthened connections among producers, partners, and support organizations. Project funding included \$26,000 from the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Infrastructure Grant Program, \$13,000 in local cash contributions from Albemarle County and Fluvanna County, and \$7,141.72 in local in-kind support, demonstrating how shared investment can fuel meaningful agricultural innovation.

## Empower Talent

### What the Plan Says

We will make Albemarle the place where talent and entrepreneurs stay, scale, and succeed. Despite high educational attainment, the county struggles to retain young and mid-career workers. This goal aims to build student engagement, young professional networks, entrepreneurship, career pathways, and housing and childcare access.

### By the Numbers



### Stories

#### Ecosystem Development: Venture Central Convening Ecosystem Partners

Venture Central spent 2025 intentionally bringing together a diverse network of ecosystem partners to bolster Central Virginia's entrepreneurship landscape. Key forums included two Entrepreneur Service Organization (ESO) convenings, regular CEO advisory board meetings, and a Homegrown Innovators Roundtable with the Tom Tom Foundation, where founders from biotech, AI, defense, and consumer startups shared insights on regional strengths and challenges. These sessions revealed the need for shared infrastructure, talent pipelines, peer collaboration, capital access, and resources, and spurred actions like developing a regional Entrepreneur Resource Map and launching peer CEO groups.

Venture Central also strengthened its ecosystem infrastructure by expanding its board to include founders, communications talent, and legal expertise, and by standardizing

governance and operational processes. Through these partnerships with local economic development offices, the University of Virginia, accelerators, and regional funders strengthened connections, fostered coordination across organizations, and laid the groundwork for catalytic programs like the 434 Accelerator and a Food and Beverage Accelerator.

### **Celebrating Innovation: CBIC Gala Recognizes Albemarle Businesses**

Award winners – Afton Science, RIVANNA, Rhoback, New Hill Development

The 2026 CBIC Gala celebrated standout leaders and organizations shaping Charlottesville’s innovation ecosystem, with Albemarle County businesses representing success across the region.

- Afton Scientific earned both Entrepreneur of the Year, awarded to Thomas Thorpe for driving major expansion and innovation in sterile injectable manufacturing, and Employer of the Year for its strong workplace culture and regional economic impact.
- RIVANNA Medical was named Innovator of the Year in recognition of its breakthrough advancements in medical imaging and diagnostic technology.
- Rhoback captured Business of the Year, reflecting its rapid national growth and continued commitment to this community as the home of its internationally popular performance apparel brand.
- New Hill Development Corporation rounded out the honorees, receiving Partnership of the Year for its community-driven economic development work and its leadership in expanding equitable opportunities for historically underserved communities.

### ***Ecosystem Development: Piedmont Ascent Small Business Conference and Piedmont Pitch Competition***

Piedmont Ascent Business Conference brought together entrepreneurs, small business owners, and regional support organizations for a day of learning, connection, and inspiration. With sessions focused on marketing strategy, digital tools, branding, and customer engagement, the event equipped businesses at every stage with practical skills to compete and grow in a rapidly evolving marketplace. The conference, co-hosted by Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville’s Offices of Economic Development, the Central Virginia Small Business Development Center, and the Community Investment Collaborative, also served as a powerful convening moment for the region’s entrepreneurial community, strengthening relationships and building momentum for shared economic success. The day concluded with the Piedmont Pitch, where six entrepreneurs presented their ventures to a panel of judges for \$15,000 in prize funding.

Among the standout participants was Penny's Imperfect Pizza, a farm-based sourdough pizza company operated by Olive Branch Gardens in Barboursville. Using ingredients grown on their own regenerative farm or sourced from local producers, Penny's crafts small-batch, "grow-and-dough" frozen pizzas that prioritize freshness, flavor, and community connection. Their products are sold at BEACON Kitchen, farmers markets, wineries, and retailers across the region, showcasing how local agriculture and food entrepreneurship can thrive together. Penny's Imperfect Pizza impressed judges with its mission-driven business model, commitment to local sourcing, and growing regional presence, earning them a share of the \$15,000 Piedmont Pitch award alongside Ctrl Alt Recycle. Their win highlights the creativity and momentum of Central Virginia's food entrepreneurs and the value of platforms like Piedmont Ascent in helping them rise.

### *Workforce Development: Venture Studios & CBIC Tech Tour*

As part of its new Scholars Studio career pathways education model, Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) launched Venture Studio to cultivate the next generation of entrepreneurs, innovators, and problem-solvers. Designed as a hands-on, real-world learning pathway, Venture Studio gives students the opportunity to explore business concepts, test ideas, understand market needs, and collaborate with peers and regional industry leaders. Through project-based learning and mentorship from community professionals, students learn how to turn concepts into viable ventures, building confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills that will carry them into future education and career pathways.

Albemarle County's EDO proudly supports this work, with EDO staff serving on the Venture Studio Advisory Board to help connect students with local entrepreneurs, innovation resources, and career exploration opportunities. This partnership strengthens the bridge between education and industry, ensuring young innovators gain direct exposure to the region's growing entrepreneurial ecosystem. By aligning instruction with real-world business insights and regional economic priorities, EDO's involvement helps to position Venture Studio students for success, empowering them to imagine, build, and launch ideas that may one day contribute to Albemarle County's vibrant innovation economy.

The 2025 CBIC Tech Tour, conducted in partnership with Albemarle County Public Schools, engaged nearly 400 middle and high school students in an immersive exploration of Central Virginia's innovation ecosystem. Beginning at North Fork and Piedmont Virginia Community College, students visited leading technology companies, including Signature Science, Perrone Robotics, Castle Hill Gaming, MITRE, SRC, Afton Scientific, AgroSpheres, and Crutchfield, where they experienced robotics, artificial intelligence, and real-world technology applications while learning about locally available career pathways.

*Workforce Development: Expanded Biotech and Cybersecurity Programming at PVCC*

To align with growing regional industry demands, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) has recently expanded its biotechnology and cybersecurity programs. In biotechnology, PVCC offers an [Associate of Science degree within its Physical and Natural Sciences](#) division, designed for both transfer students and individuals seeking entry into research lab positions. The college plans to develop hands-on biotechnology and pharmaceutical manufacturing training, including a proposed simulated clean room (a specially controlled environment engineered to maintain an extremely low concentration of airborne pollutants), supported by pending grants totaling about \$7 million and aligned with local employer demand over the next decade.

In cybersecurity, PVCC offers two pathways: a Career Studies Certificate and an Associate of Applied Science degree in [Information Systems Technology with a Cybersecurity](#) specialization. These programs prepare students for industry-recognized certifications, such as CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+, and equip them for careers as network administrators, security specialists, and penetration testers. The cybersecurity curriculum is further bolstered through partnerships with local high school programs like CATEC, where students can earn college credit and certifications, providing accelerated pathways into tech careers and enhancing workforce readiness across Central Virginia.

*Workforce Development: [InternshipsVA \(InVA\)](#)*

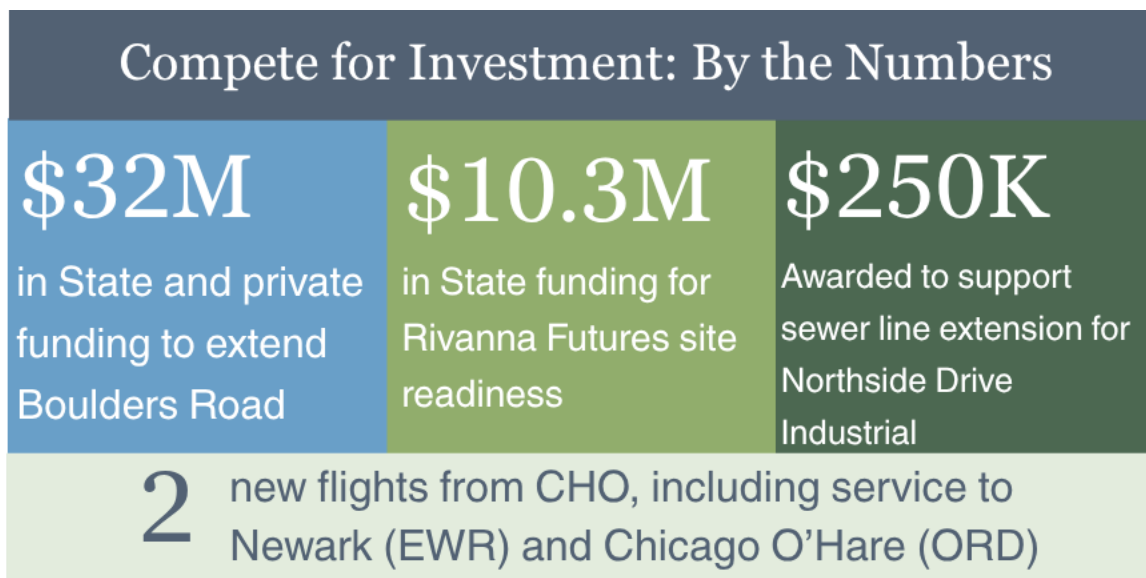
Too many students educated in Virginia end up building careers outside of Virginia. [InVA](#) is a statewide program launched in 2026 and led by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) to help employers build high-quality paid internship opportunities. It offers tools such as employer toolkits, templates, and trainings, along with funding support—employers are eligible for a 50% wage reimbursement grant. The program connects businesses with college student talent through platforms like Handshake, helping local organizations strengthen their workforce pipelines and improve intern-to-hire retention rates, which exceed 50% nationwide.

## Compete for Investment

### What the Plan Says

We will position Albemarle as Virginia’s most investment-ready county—ready to compete, build, and lead. Success will require faster permitting, smarter incentives, ready sites, stronger storytelling, and the infrastructure to support growth. This goal ensures the County has the tools, systems, and brand to compete for the next generation of investment.

### By the Numbers



### Stories

#### *Ecosystem Development: Innovation Corridor Strategic Roadmap*

This year, the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development led a regional effort to identify line-of-site economic development opportunities to leverage the critical assets and research & development strengths of the entire Central Virginia footprint – resulting in the Central Virginia Innovation Corridor Strategic Roadmap. Funded by GO Virginia, the effort identified a focused portfolio of forward-looking growth opportunities in biosciences and national security and laid out a set of cross-cutting strategic actions intended to strengthen the regional ecosystem needed to realize them. Work has already begun to advance key actions outlined in the roadmap.

#### *Strategic Investments: Rivanna Futures Sites Readiness*

Albemarle County purchased 462 acres of property adjacent to Rivanna Station in December 2023 to grow the intelligence and national security ecosystem. Since that

time, Albemarle County has begun to implement a multi-year site readiness effort, beginning with technical analyses and due diligence, rezoning 172 acres of the property for Light Industrial/Office, and applying for grant funds to undertake sitework, including extending utilities, clearing trees, and grading to establish development pads. Albemarle has been awarded more than \$10.6 million in state funds through GO Virginia and the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program to advance this work.

Another key infrastructure need for Rivanna Futures' development is extending Boulders Road from its current terminus back to US-29 at Austin Drive. Thanks to support from the Commonwealth of Virginia and AstraZeneca, this road project is in design and is expected to begin construction in Spring 2027.

#### *Strategic Investments: Northside Drive Industrial*

Albemarle County proudly supported the advancement of the Northside Drive Industrial project through a Building Reuse Grant award of \$250,000 and a synthetic tax increment financing agreement of up to \$350,000 over a 10-year period. Led by Southern Development Group, the project will bring much-needed industrial space to the region and create opportunities for businesses in manufacturing, logistics, and research.

The new development will begin on a 9.2-acre parcel strategically located along Route 29, one of the county's few remaining undeveloped sites zoned for heavy industrial use. The first phase of the project will develop a modern, 72,000-square-foot industrial building intentionally designed for adaptability. Its 50' wide-increment bays feature a customer-oriented front entry and a loading dock with truck travel ways in the rear. This layout can accommodate a variety of commercial and industrial needs, including showroom and storage space for customer-facing businesses, small-scale production areas, and flexible research and development space for scaling start-ups. It could also provide warehousing capacity for regional-scale businesses. The project aligns with Albemarle's long-term economic development [strategic plan goals](#), including maintaining a pipeline of sites and buildings that meet the needs of key industry clusters.

#### *Policy Development: Zoning Modernization*

Currently underway is the [Zoning Modernization](#) (ZMod) effort that seeks to align the Zoning Ordinance with the latest [Comprehensive Plan, AC44](#). The multi-year ZMod project will restructure and modernize the Zoning Ordinance to create a streamlined, user-friendly document that addresses Albemarle County's future zoning needs.

This new approach will support economic growth while preserving what makes Albemarle County special—its rural character, natural resources, and vibrant

communities. The updated ordinance will better implement the Comprehensive Plan goals and ensure land use regulations keep pace with Albemarle's evolving needs.