Attachment D: Summary of Planning Commission and Board Input

The following is a summary of previous Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors input on Thriving Economy topics:

Use the Comp Plan to address site readiness and available land for target industries in the Development Areas

- November 14, 2023 PC work session: The Commission recommended strengthening site readiness language in the chapter. For future implementation, the Commission recommended leveraging grants and partnerships for target industries, especially for Tier 4 and 5 sites. The Commission noted infrastructure needs are a major factor to address for site readiness. The Commission is looking forward to updated data for this chapter along with the Economic Development Strategic Plan update.
- January 17, 2024 Board work session: The Board emphasized the need to better retain land designated office/flex/light industrial/research and development and avoid conversions to other land uses (e.g. residential). The Board asked staff to consider how businesses grow and expand locally and how they can find affordable and available spaces. The Board is also looking forward to updated data and the update for the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Use the Comp Plan to address the overlap between a thriving economy and housing affordable to the local workforce

- November 14, 2023 PC work session: The Commission highlighted the need for more opportunities for living and working in the same area, including through mixed-use developments. Having housing that is affordable to the local workforce is a critical need for both employers and employees and has the benefit of reduced commute times and related transportation emissions.
- January 17, 2024 Board work session: The Board also noted the importance of available and affordable workforce housing to attract and retain employers and the high cost of housing in Albemarle County.

Consider the needs of small businesses

- November 14, 2023 PC work session: The Commission noted the cost barriers associated with starting a small business in Albemarle County, especially finding affordable space. The Commission recommended leveraging building reuse grants and other tools to support building conversions and retrofits to divide up more affordable spaces for small businesses and startups.

Support local workforce development

- November 14, 2023 PC work session: The Commission emphasized the importance of workforce development and training for upward mobility, including through vocational/technical training. The Commission recommended collaborating with Albemarle County Public Schools on career opportunities and workforce development.
- January 17, 2024 Board work session: The Board also recommended greater coordination with Albemarle County Public Schools on local workforce development and recruitment.

Consider potential employment and economic development opportunities in the Rural Area, consistent with the Growth Management Policy

- November 14, 2023 PC work session: The Commission recommended greater consideration of the Rural Area in this chapter, consistent with the Growth Management Policy and the County's climate action priorities. The Commission noted that the local recreation economy generates significant revenue, including races, hiking, and other outdoor activities. The Commission recommended stronger language related to tourism (especially recreational tourism).
- January 17, 2024 Board work session: The Board recommended identifying specific economic activities in the Rural Area and also noted the importance of the local tourism industry.