

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



2014 Achievement Awards

Call for Entries



2014 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 2, 2014

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2014.**

Program Information

Locality Smyth County
Program Title Mega Site Project
Program Category Economic Development

Contact Information

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Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Michael L. Carter
Title County Administrator
Signature Michael L. Carter



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Michael L. Carter – County Administrator

Scott R. Simpson – Assistant County Administrator

2014 VACo Achievement Awards

SMYTH COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Program Category: Economic Development

Through collaboration and innovation, Smyth County, Virginia identified a problem and turned it into an opportunity. Now, Smyth County has an industrial mega site that is pad ready with the necessary infrastructure in place to support an advanced manufacturing industry. During the course of this project, Smyth County received the largest grant in the county's history. This project has the potential to create over 300 jobs and bring in over \$300 million in private capital investment. Smyth County's mega site project is unique in Southwest Virginia and is critical to enhance the local economy.

Mega Site at Pathway Park in Smyth County, Virginia

Most everyone is familiar with the term “Build it, and they’ll come,” and, in some cases, that has proven to be true. In Smyth County, the belief is “If you prepare it, they’ll come and build it how they want it.” Hopefully this statement will prove to be true when an advanced manufacturing industry locates on the site of Smyth County’s most recent project, the Mega Site at Pathway Park. County officials took on this project in an effort to give Smyth County a competitive advantage among the other counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia to attract a private industry to create jobs for the residents of Smyth County and its neighboring counties. This project is unique for Smyth County and required innovation and collaboration.

The first step in creating a solution is identifying the problem. In 2011, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors and the Economic Development Authority (EDA) of Smyth County identified a problem that was hindering the county’s economic growth. That problem was an empty 566,325-square-foot dilapidated building sitting on 70 acres of prime industrial property conveniently located adjacent to Interstate 81. The building was large in size, rectangular in shape, and had low ceiling heights. It was impossible to find an industry whose needs would be met by what the building had to offer. After many failed attempts to attract an industry to the building, county officials decided it was time to try something else.

The EDA of Smyth County, with the support of the Smyth County Board of Supervisors, established a plan to redevelop the 70-acre site. They believed the property offered an opportunity to develop a unique and attractive mega site by demolishing the dilapidated building and improving the site to provide a flexible, ready-to-go building pad. In November of 2011, the EDA of Smyth County applied for a grant from The Tobacco Indemnification and Community

Revitalization Commission through their Mega-Site Industrial Site Program which was established to help develop large industrial real estate to attract private industry. The funds from the grant would be used to fund the plan established by the EDA.

In January 2012, the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission awarded a grant to the EDA of Smyth County in the amount of \$4.9 million, and the EDA purchased the 70-acre site for \$3,225,000 using funds from the grant. The grant was the largest grant ever received by the county. The grant required a match in the amount of approximately \$700,000, so the EDA bid and awarded the demolition work on the building on a net basis. The demolition work was awarded to Berry Enterprises for approximately \$139,000. That amount was achieved after Berry Enterprises paid the EDA \$700,000 for salvage rights of the building and the EDA paid Berry Enterprises \$839,000 in progress payments. The demolition work on the building met grant requirements, and the \$700,000 served as the match for the grant. Most importantly, no tax payer money was spent on the project. The purchase of the site, demolition, engineering, and other site costs were covered by funds from the grant and the money acquired for salvage rights of the building. The concrete pad from the demolition of the building was also recovered and crushed to be used for future development of the mega site. The project was staffed by several county officials and by members of the EDA, but the leader on the project was Assistant County Administrator, Scott R. Simpson. Scott is also the county engineer and was a key player throughout the process of this project.

The Mega Site at Pathway Park was completed in May 2014 and is pad ready with the necessary infrastructure in place. The utility infrastructure includes: 34.5 kV of electricity served by an Appalachian Power substation within 4,500 feet of the site and has a 6 MW capacity available; a 4” natural gas line with 60 PSI of pressure; an 8” water line with the capacity of

850,000 GPD; a 300,000 gallon water tank on site; a 10” sanitary sewer line with the capacity of 630,000 GPD; high-capacity fiber via multiple routes and providers; and 2,500 feet of rail siding for Class A rail service with Norfolk Southern. In addition to the infrastructure, the site offers 1,900 feet of Interstate 81 frontage within one mile of Exit 35 and two miles of Exit 32. The site is also located in an Enterprise Zone with state and local job creation and real estate improvement grants. Located between Roanoke, Virginia and Bristol, Virginia/ Tennessee, the site offers market access to two-thirds of the United States population within a day’s truck drive.

The Mega Site at Pathway Park is considerably smaller than what is typically required to qualify for a mega site, but it can accommodate a very large building of up to 1.7 million square feet. That translates into approximately \$300 million in private capital investment and the creation of over 300 jobs. Smyth County identified a problem and turned it into an opportunity. Now, Smyth County has a unique site that is pad-ready and is well positioned to attract an industry that could greatly enhance the economy in Smyth County.

DEMOLITION PROCESS



COMPLETED PROJECT

