

# APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Stonebridge Recreation Center: Collaboration Equals Success for Community**

## **Executive Summary**

Chesterfield County (County) and the Chesterfield Economic Development Authority (CEDA) seized an opportunity for revitalization in an area of the county in decline. Together, they developed an innovative solution to address the needs of the community with a public/private partnership that serves as a model for other localities.

Chesterfield leaders had been considering ways to address the need for expanding recreation services to underserved areas of the county. As a result, the Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation Department (Department) partnered with the Chesterfield Economic Development Authority and the Richmond Volleyball Club (RVC) to provide new opportunities for senior adult programming and a new sports tourism/recreation venue for the County. The result of this collaboration is the new Stonebridge Recreation Center, home to Parks and Recreation services and the Richmond Volleyball Club.

With \$7 million in funding from the CEDA, the Stonebridge Recreation Center was completed in March 2018. The facility serves a dual purpose as a hub for senior adult recreation programming and as a state-of-the-art indoor volleyball venue. The facility has exceeded expectations for popularity, usage and revenue. The County has benefitted from increased tax revenue and redevelopment of a declining commercial area of the community. Working together, three unique partners cooperated to meet distinct community needs in one cohesive project. This successful alliance has laid the groundwork for future partnership opportunities that can focus on complementary goals.

## **Challenge Faced**

Chesterfield County is home to over 343,500 people within its 446 square miles. Since 2000, the County has experienced a 90% increase in the 65 and older segment of the population.

Population projections for 2035 indicate that the 60-79 age group will increase by 100% and the 80-plus age group will increase by 200%. While the Department operated two recreation centers with heavy programming for the older adult population plus multiple leased facilities specifically dedicated to older adult programming, the citizen demand for high quality 50+ programming continued to exceed what was offered. The two recreation centers provide a variety of programming which includes fitness and craft classes, card and social clubs, themed celebrations and educational seminars within 5,000 square-foot facilities. The centers have small classrooms, a multi-purpose room, kitchen area and office. Originally funded by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the centers are located in the southern area of the county, where the population density is the lowest and socio-economic needs are the greatest. The two leased spaces are in local churches in the northern and western sections of the county. A third location was recently closed when the church dissolved. While located in greater population areas of the county, recreation programming at the church sites is limited by space constraints and staffing limitations. Additionally, access to older adult recreation services is restricted by geographic distance and the willingness or ability of this population to travel to participate. Although the department has operated programs for older adults for many years, management recognized the need to provide increased recreational opportunities and programming for this growing citizen population in other areas of the county.

## **Description of the Project**

The Chesterfield Economic Development Authority saw an opportunity to repurpose use of a defunct commercial property (Cloverleaf Mall) into a multimillion-dollar mixed-use center. The CEDA imagined a retail, residential and commercial center that would be a destination area with hotels, residential property, retail establishments, food and entertainment services. The location was very attractive because of its proximity near other commercial development and easy access from Midlothian Turnpike and Chippenham Parkway, two major county arteries. Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation Department had a need for a recreation center in this area of the county, with specific deficiency of programming for senior adults. The Richmond Volleyball Club also had a necessity to expand their services into Chesterfield County, where many of their members reside.

In 2017, the CEDA entered into a cooperative partnership with Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation and the Richmond Volleyball Club. This private and public partnership allowed the Department to quickly address the needs of the increasing senior population in the eastern portion of the County. The Stonebridge Recreation Center/Richmond Volleyball Club facility was the result of this partnership. Construction of the facility began in spring of 2017. The joint-use building opened with a ribbon-cutting in April 2018 and includes a 5,000 square-foot recreation center and a 45,000 square-foot athletic facility. The Stonebridge Recreation Center portion includes classrooms, art room, multi-purpose room, kitchen area and office. The department hosts activities such as senior fitness classes, senior technology lectures, health screenings, senior art and hobby classes, senior sports programming, social programs and financial wellness classes. The center is the first facility of this type in this area of the county. The athletic side of the building is operated by Richmond Volleyball Club and includes eight

courts for league play and instruction, as well as a mezzanine area for spectators. This gym space will also allow RVC to host larger tournaments that span the entire region, bringing in more visitors, and economic impact, to Chesterfield County and the metro-Richmond area. The agreement between the Department and RVC allows use of the gym facilities for department programming when the courts are not otherwise in use.

### **Budget and Staffing**

Initial development costs for construction of the building totaled \$7.5 million. However, those funds were provided by CEDA who is recouping that investment through a long-term lease with RVC. This alternative funding mechanism allowed the Department to devote its operational dollars to creation of high quality 50+ programming and classes. The County's operating costs for the location totaled \$92,801 in FY18. Operating costs for FY19 are budgeted at \$200,208. These costs include staffing of one full time and four part-time staff to manage the recreation programs and center six days per week. Other operating and building maintenance costs total \$110,000. In FY18 the Stonebridge Recreation Center generated \$9,103 in revenue. As of March 31, 2019, the location has generated \$42,000 in revenue and is expected to exceed the budgeted revenue projection for the venue. This increase is the result of citizens becoming increasingly aware of the recreational opportunities provided at the location and their strong response to new programs being offered at the site. Income from room rental at the center provides another revenue stream.

### **Results and Success of the Project**

The growth of senior programming at the Stonebridge Recreation Center has been phenomenal. In its first partial year of operation, staff offered 78 programs which focused on the existing

programming platforms in place at other senior locations within the system. Staff challenged themselves to create new and exciting programs for citizens in FY19. The result, in no small part due to participant input, is an increase of 91% in new senior programming. Typical senior activities at the center include fitness classes, craft programs and card groups. Due to requests from the public additional programs have been offered: ballroom dance and ballroom boogie, Pinochle, cribbage, table tennis, chair volleyball, and an indoor walking club. More popular programs include yoga, tai chi, low impact aerobics, luncheons and watercolor classes. Programs such as AARP driving programs and diabetes self-management lectures are very well attended and offered in partnership with other agencies.

The 50+ segment of the population has responded enthusiastically to these increased offerings. Over 1,350 senior citizens participated in Stonebridge programming in FY'18. This venue has provided a much-needed outlet for senior citizens within the community. This consistent interaction with their peers has addressed the issues of elder isolation, physical fitness, social needs satisfaction, and allowed participants to learn new skills and take up new hobbies. This year participation has increased 102%.

### **Impact on Community**

Public response to the recreation center has been positive. Programs focusing on fitness and wellness have already had an impact on the community. The breadth of recreation services offered will enhance the mental and social health of the community as well. Comments from participants:

“My health has many challenges; this center helps to keep me going.”

“The fitness classes here for seniors are important for health, balance and improving our cardio.”

In response to the high demand for programming and to meet citizen needs, this recreation center operates with extended hours into the evenings and on Saturdays. Recreation programs are now offered to accommodate the working portion of the senior population along with the retired seniors.

Unique to this facility is the contribution of the RVC program to sports tourism and the tax base for Chesterfield County. The case for sports tourism cannot be understated. In FY18 Chesterfield County saw \$40.2 million in economic impact and over \$1.5 million in additional tax revenue.

“Sports tourism has been a huge economic driver for the Richmond region in recent years, totaling more than half of our events bookings. Facilities are the number one factor in attracting lucrative tournaments to the area,” said Jack Berry, president & CEO of Richmond Region Tourism. “The new space at Stonebridge is an exciting addition to the Richmond Region’s sports tourism offerings.”

The Richmond Volleyball Club has experienced brisk activity, locally and regionally, in the new facility. “We can hardly believe it's been a year since we opened our doors in Chesterfield County in the newly revitalized Stonebridge area at Chippenham Parkway and Midlothian Turnpike! This public-private partnership with Chesterfield County is a premier tournament facility bringing in teams from up and down the east coast,” said Darcy Carroll, Executive Director of the Richmond Volleyball Club.

The venture into Stonebridge has encouraged additional private investment along this depressed corridor, transforming it into a vibrant community. In an area of renewal, Stonebridge is a strong visual amenity.

## **Worthiness of Award**

The Stonebridge Recreation Center is a shining example of what local government can do in partnership with private entities. The redevelopment of a declining commercial property into a vibrant and viable multi-use facility was a complete reversal. The Stonebridge development has created revitalization in adjacent areas of this community. By taking advantage of an opportunity to collaborate with a local volleyball club, the Department and the CEDA were able to integrate the distinct needs of all partners. Because of this facility, the County has realized increased tax income, increased visitation from sports tourism, and increased service levels to the community. “We are so glad to celebrate the opening of this new recreation facility,” said Board of Supervisors Chair Dorothy Jaeckle. “This collaboration between the Economic Development Authority of Chesterfield, Chesterfield Parks and Recreation and the Richmond Volleyball Club is an excellent example of a truly successful public-private redevelopment partnership.” This collaboration demonstrates a unique partnership model for other localities to follow.

Prior to the establishment of the Stonebridge Recreation Center seniors within eastern Chesterfield County had limited recreation opportunities. The new programs offered by the center filled a gap in the existing recreation offerings and have allowed thousands of area residents to increase their physical activity, socialize with peers, learn new skills, and build relationships with others. The center has quickly become a much-needed hub for senior recreation in a previously underserved area. For many participants, it was their first exposure to department recreational programming. Participants, impressed by the quality of the services offered, have also signed up for other classes and programs offered by the department. The Stonebridge Recreation Center has grown into an irreplaceable component of the region’s recreation landscape.



## Chesterfield County, Virginia

### Stonebridge Recreation Center: Collaboration Equals Success for Community



Richmond Volleyball Club

Above left: Volleyball Club entrance  
Below left: courts during tournament





### Stonebridge Recreation Center

Above left: Recreation Center entrance



### Recreation Center programs:

Above left: luncheons

Above right: classes

Left: badminton

Below left: fitness classes

Below right: social groups

