



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2020.** 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](#).

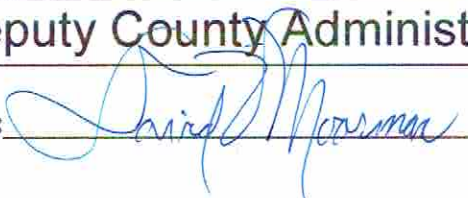
PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Botetourt County
Program Title: Botetourt Housing Strategy
Program Category: Community and Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Title: Deputy County Administrator
Signature:  6-30-2020

Virginia Association of Counties Achievement Awards Application 2020

Botetourt County – Housing Strategy

Executive Summary

For most of its history, Botetourt County has been a predominantly rural and suburban county more often seen as simply a bedroom community for the Roanoke Valley or as a retirement destination for people moving from the west and northeast. This led to a traditional housing stock of mostly low density, single-family homes that are owner occupied. As a result, broad access to and availability of housing options in the County were severely limited.

The demand for housing in the County, however, began to drastically increase in 2016. Over 1000 new jobs have been announced in the County since that time, and the Board of Supervisors set a goal of having the ability for those who work in the County to be able to live in the County. This would have the added benefit of helping to create a more complete community Botetourt as other businesses would grow up around a diversity of housing options and an increased population.

As a result of that goal, the County created a housing strategy to create more housing in the County. This strategy began with a consultant report analyzing the existing market and trends. Then, the County hosted a Housing Summit to bring together regional, state, and national partners to engage with the housing dilemma in the County and to begin developing solutions to the problem. This led to the creation of a series of recommendations and a Housing Toolkit that staff can use to help developers and builders meet the housing goals of the County.

The results of the program have been more than exceeded. Nearly 1000 new units have been approved or developed in the past three years. And, new tools are continually developed, the most recent being the adoption of a cluster ordinance to help maximize both development and green space.

Background and Program

Traditionally, Botetourt's housing stock has been mostly low density, single-family homes that are owner occupied. The County had not addressed a full-blown housing need/program until the fall of 2016. Economic growth that began in 2016 spurred conversations about existing housing stock and future housing needs. County leaders came to the realization that the need for a housing program was the result of attracting several economic development projects and realizing that housing stock was not adequate in supplying the demand created by those announcements. Nearly 1000 new jobs would result from those announcements at full buildout with the potential for more in the pipeline. After further study, staff found that a built up demand for the community already existed prior to the attraction of the new jobs to the area. Therefore, a team of folks were gathered to address the issues. The Botetourt County Department of Community Development, under the lead of Nicole Pendleton held meetings with the County Administrator with VHDA, DHCD and USDA-RD to understand programs and opportunities available. This led to a Housing Assessment Study in fall 2016

This Housing Assessment Study needed to be conducted for Botetourt County to be able to demonstrate the need for housing, to attract developers and builders, and to elevate the concept of an expanded housing program. Stu Patz and Associates were procured to conduct the Study. The results of the study became the keynote of the future Botetourt Housing Summit in early 2017. This launched the County's overall housing program and has changed the thinking about housing. Since then, the County has committed to supporting more housing options for current and future citizens.

Housing diversity is important to ensuring long-term community vitality. All people will have different housing needs as they reach all of life's milestones. A retired couple may be looking to downsize, while a young family may be looking for room to grow. A young professional with student loans might be looking for rental options, while he or she saves money for a home to purchase down the road. An eighty-year-old widow may no longer be able to care for her larger home and yard but would still like to remain

in the community she has volunteered in for the past 50 years. Creating housing stock for all of life's stages ensures that everyone has a chance to be part of the community.

Diversifying the housing stock is also a good fiscal strategy. The University of Illinois published a study that suggests that communities with a greater variety in housing types and zoning have a better opportunity to weather economic downturns. It looked at housing diversity and its connection with foreclosures during the housing crisis and concluded that communities with more diversity in types of housing have lower foreclosure rates.

As a result of the Housing Summit, in 2018, with funding from VHDA, the County continued the momentum and began to explore tools and strategies to diversify housing stock to ensure that the scale and location of new residential development aligns with land suitability, helps create stronger communities, and reinforces the county's rural character.

The 2019 Housing Policy Toolkit presents guidance to aid the County in accomplishing these goals. The first section provides a summary of the critical market-based and demographic trends affecting housing-demand and an analysis of the potential supply factors related to land suitability and existing policies. The second section describes the four major objectives for driving the County's housing strategy and includes a menu of policies, strategic and funding tool options to encourage diverse housing options. Finally, it includes some visualizations and descriptions of the different housing typologies that would be appropriate in scale to help achieve a more diversified housing stock over time. This has become a working document for the County to help meet its housing goals.

Lastly, as a result of the concept of a Housing Summit and its continued impact, several other localities have explored the concept of developing a Housing Summit or developing a Housing Study. The following Counties have held a Summit or performed a Housing Study in some way or have discussed those possibilities as a result of Botetourt's efforts: Alleghany, Franklin, Bath, and Roanoke.

Persons and Organizations Involved

From the very beginning, Botetourt officials knew that the success of increasing a diversity of housing options in the County would require broad regional and even state support. The goal of the Housing Summit in Botetourt was to ask all who had an interest in housing to be in attendance in order to begin the necessary conversations. Representatives and leaders from the following Botetourt County departments formed the core planning group for the summit: County Administration, Economic Development, Planning and Zoning, and Building. To implement the summit, staff connected with and brought in state and local political leaders, local and regional realtors, local and regional financial institutions, DHCD, VHDA, USDA-RD, VA Community Capital, the Roanoke Valley Homebuilders Association, developers, builders, land owners, the Botetourt Chamber of Commerce, the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Western Virginia Water Authority, and Stu Patz and Associates. Such a diverse group of stakeholders had never been brought together before in the same room in order to tackle the problem of housing in the area.

Following the Summit, Planning and Zoning staff lead the efforts to bring the plans, conversations, and excitement from the Summit into reality. The County won a planning grant from VHDA and began working with Renaissance Planning to develop a Housing Policy Toolkit for the County to use. A Housing Steering Committee consisting of staff, elected and appointed officials, developers, realtors, property owners, financial professionals, and others formed to help guide the housing planning efforts.

Expected Outcomes and Results

The expected outcome was that a minimum of 500 housing units would be built in Botetourt to help to start mitigating the need of housing from the realized and planned economic growth in the County. These units would represent a diversity of housing options, including apartments, townhomes, and traditional single-family detached residences in both medium and high density developments.

A secondary expected outcome of the Summit was to create excitement in the region about Botetourt as a willing partner in developing housing opportunities. In the past, Botetourt had sometimes been perceived as a passive participant in many housing related discussions.

In the time since the Housing Summit, the results have been consistently and continually felt in Botetourt. At present, more than 950 housing units have been approved, are under development, or are being delivered on a daily basis. Thus, approximately two times the number of housing units in the predicted outcomes of the Summit have been obtained and even more plans are being delivered to the Botetourt County Department of Community Development office on a regular basis. This increased interest in the County has been a direct result of the excitement generated in the time after the Summit.

Two notable developments have helped to spur this growth. Daleville Town Center (DTC) has seen an expansion of its existing apartment offerings by building 95 new units. The DTC has also either built, is building, or plans 35 new townhomes at multiple price points and 46 single-family detached homes. The DTC also has additional commercial amenities to support the new housing. The Reserve at Daleville, a second development, has been constructing 188 apartment units in order to increase the availability of rental housing in the County.

In addition to the direct increase in both number and diversity of housing options, other indirect benefits have occurred. The student population of Botetourt County Public Schools has reversed the normal trend of loss, and the school system has the largest incoming Kindergarten class ever. Approximately 470 students have been added to the rolls of the school census, and many of those are a direct result of increased housing in Botetourt and/or due to the increased interest and excitement around the need for housing in Botetourt to support the approximately 1,200 new direct jobs that have been recruited since January 2016.

Other indirect benefits of the Housing Summit and the resulting housing development has been an expansion of restaurant and commercial growth in the southern part of the County.

Lastly, the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission continue to improve the zoning ordinance to allow for more innovative housing developments in the County. As recently as May 2020, the Board approved a cluster development ordinance that was in line with the recommendations from the Housing Summit and Housing Toolkit.

Beneficiaries of the Program

In general, the majority of the increase in new housing stock in Botetourt has occurred in the southern part of the County. The increase in that area has also increased the demand for housing in general. Last week, the Editorial Writer of the Roanoke Times, mentioned to the County Administrator that the growth has caused Botetourt to be included as a “player” in the region.

Anecdotal information indicates that an increase in activity for existing businesses and entrepreneurship. Tizzone’s, a local restaurant, has expanded its space in order to meet community demand. Bryant Orchards has a new commercial facility in Daleville to offer local farm products. And, a new office building under construction in Daleville will house realtors and other professionals involved in real estate transactions in order to better meet the demand for those services in the County. A new Sheetz convenience store has also opened with the stated goal of serving the citizens of the County due to increased demand. Even new lawn care companies continue to pop up.

From the real estate world, it has been a regular story that listed houses sell for asking price or more within hours rather than weeks, months, or years like they had been before.

There have been multiple benefactors as a result of the Housing Summit and continued efforts. The County has benefitted from higher home values, the public has given more attention to Botetourt as a growth area, the real estate market has improved, local home mortgage companies have profited, and the school system has received additional state funding as a result of the increase school census.

Conclusion

Overall, the Housing Strategy has been a phenomenal success. From inception to execution, the County has been able to increase both its number and type of available housing, surpassing initial goals set for the program. The Summit and the Toolkit have put Botetourt on the map for developers who are looking for creative approaches to housing, and the Board and community have been generally receptive to those approaches. This means that Botetourt has a bright future for those wanting to both work and live in the County.

HOW DO YOU SUPPORT TRANSITION...

► From predominantly this:



► To more of this:



TIMELINE: 2016



Gateway
Center
Market
Study



Arkay
Expansion,
60 Jobs
\$11M



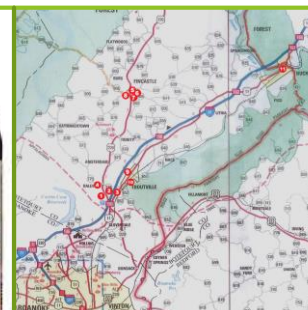
Eldor,
650 Jobs,
\$106M



VCC,
190 Jobs



Ballast
Point,
182 Jobs,
\$59M



First Housing
Study Begins



Dwelling,
Mixed Use
Amendments



Canatal
Steel,
38 Jobs,
\$15M

TIMELINE: 2017-2019

												
Housing Summit	DTC Apartments, 95 Units	Harkness Screens, 50 Jobs, \$35M	Altec, 180 Jobs, \$30M	Sanderson Ridge OLL, 55 Lots	Gateway Crossing Area Plan Adopted	Cathcart Apartments, 266 MF*	Hotel Conference and Feasibility Study	Fieldstone, 288 Apartments, 376 Total	Pratt, 50 Jobs, \$20M	Comp Plan Community Meetings	Housing Policy Toolkit	Metalsa, \$25 Jobs, 64M

LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ Partnerships ALWAYS
- ▶ Suitability + Market Demand + Policy Intent = Housing Opportunity
- ▶ Look for the OPEN (or cracked open) doors
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask a question
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask it again (ask it a different way)
- ▶ It's not YOUR win: It's everyone's!
- ▶ Value in being small
- ▶ Keep the ball rolling!!