



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the 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: PRINCE WILLIAM

Program Title: Small Business Project Management Program

Program Category: Community & Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Wade A. Hugh

Title: Director

Department: Development Services

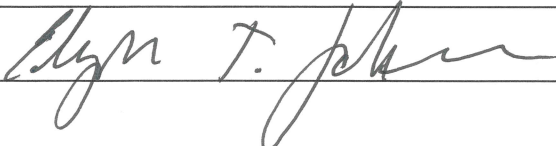
Telephone: (703) 792-4763 Website: www.pwcva.gov

Email: Whugh@pwcgov.org

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Elijah T. Johnson

Title: Acting County Executive

Signature: 

Prince William County Small Business Project Management Program

Executive Summary

Prince William County recognizes real estate decisions are critical to small businesses, not only from a financial perspective, but for the ability to attract customers, access a quality workforce, establish their brand, build community partnerships, and operate in a stable and predictable government environment. Identifying that there was a growing critical need to further support small business owners' real estate projects, the County commenced working to improve and better integrate small business assistance services across all County community development agencies and partner organizations. In FY2019, the Prince William County Board of Supervisors adopted and funded \$1M towards a 'Robust Economy' initiative to enhance the level of services for small businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs. The Department of Development Services spearheaded the initiative to support small business real estate projects, from healthcare services and professional collaborations to restaurants and specialty stores, aimed at improving entrepreneurs' and small business owners' experience within the County development process. "For the County to successfully assist small business owners, we needed to modify our Commercial Project Management Program to be more proactive. Commercial construction can be far more challenging than residential construction, so an owner who dabbled in residential construction - decks, porches, finished basements, etc.- can quickly find themselves overwhelmed by the commercial construction codes," said Wade A. Hugh, Director, Department of Development Services. Within three months of the initiative launch, the Small Business Project Management Program (SBPM) was officially rolled out. Since most small business owners and entrepreneurs move into existing tenant spaces, the County hired two Building Development Project Managers to assist the owners with their projects. A Land Development Project Manager was hired to assist owners with new commercial construction projects and the review and permitting of business signage.

In 2021, amidst a global pandemic, the SBPM Program achieved its highest yearly results on record with over 400 small business owners "Open for Business." This number reflects an increase of 80 more customers that opened a business, compared to calendar year 2020. As more businesses and repeat customers receive Program services, the impact of the Program, the trust built with the Program Managers, and the prosperity of the business community will increase the quality of life for our residents and pave the way forward for future entrepreneurs to become small business owners. 1



The Overview

Every four years the Prince William Board of County Supervisors develop a Strategic Plan. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Strategic Plan included 5 strategic goals and forty-seven community outcomes. A “Robust Economy” was a priority goal, that included eleven community outcomes. As part of the Robust Economy goal, an initiative was adopted and funded to enhance the level of services for small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs. The Department of Development Services spearheaded the initiative and launched the Small Business Project Management (SBPM) Program.

“The initiative was founded on the belief that if government aligns success with that of the customers we serve, like small business owners, we all grow better, faster, and stronger, together,” said Ann Wheeler, Chair-At-Large, Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

For the purposes of the SBPM Program, the County defined a small business as one that employees 35 or fewer employees. The County chose this threshold based on experience with assisting business owners.

Over \$1 million was set-aside for the collective small business programs initiative, which included:

- 3 Development Services Full-time Employees (FTEs) to be dedicated Program Managers.
- 1 Economic Development FTE.
- The Mason Small Business Development Center opened; and
- \$400K in Economic Development Incentive Funds to Brickyard to build a co-working space, which established a new location in the heart of Prince William.

Overall, these funds support the County's Strategic Plan aimed at increasing growth of small business jobs to over 1,000 per year and to help small business owners and entrepreneurs through the permit process of opening their facility of choice.

"For the County to successfully assist small business owners, we looked to the keystone of Development Services portfolio, the Commercial Project Management Program (CPMP) and how to shrink it to 'match-fit' the needs of the new program to be more proactive. We find that many small business owners who are just starting their business or expanding for the first time will try to manage their own construction projects," shared Hugh.

The Small Business Project Management Program (SBPM) was officially rolled out in October 2018. The Small Business Project Management Program Managers and partners disseminate knowledge to small business owners and entrepreneurs about building code regulations which prepares them to 'open for business' in a timely manner, saving on costs and time. Customer knowing what to bring for approvals is a vital component to their and our success.

"Small business projects are crucial to a robust and diverse economy, injecting new expertise and an innovative edge. Entrepreneurs and startups that work with our team of experts from the earliest stages of their business are typically better organized, well-informed, and prepared for the permit requirements ahead, as they launch with better network connections and more viable and agile operations," added Hugh.

During unprecedented uncertainty and change amidst a global pandemic, in August 2021, the Program surpassed 1,000 customers, marking an important milestone. To date, the SBPM Program has served more than 1,334 small business owners.

The Problem

“Opening a new business is a significant investment of financial and personal resources. Making wrong decisions can be costly for business owners,” said Wade A. Hugh, Director of Development Services. “Commercial construction can be far more challenging than residential construction, so a small business owner who dabbled in residential construction - decks, porches, finished basements, etc.- can quickly find themselves overwhelmed by the federal, state and local building and construction codes and regulations.”

The Challenge

“Prince William County’s business economy is predominately mid-sized businesses and small enterprises, with over 95% of businesses having 20 or fewer employees. For the County to successfully assist small business owners, we needed to modify our Commercial Project Management (CPM) Program to be more proactive,” said Wade A. Hugh, Director, Department of Development Services. “We looked to the keystone of Development Services portfolio, the CPM Program, and how to shrink it to ‘match-fit’ the needs of the new program.”

The Fulfillment of the Promise

Prince William County wants to assist all customers through the regulatory process to ensure new and existing businesses have a positive impact on their neighborhood and business community, is safe to occupy, and open as quickly as possible.

The Commercial Project Management Program is the keystone of Development Services portfolio, which in essence, is an innovative project-oriented culture. The project-orientated culture promotes an environment of efficient processing and decision making by mitigating regulatory silos. It was the CPM Program that set the foundation for the Small Business Project Management Program development processing system.

There are three key pillars to an innovative project-orientated culture, which are:

Project-Oriented Culture

Our development processing system has three key elements:

1. Project Approach
2. Partnership Approach to Customer Service
3. Project Management

Project Approach

The customer defines their "immediate project objective" by defining the project's Scope of Work and the desired outcome (e.g., Physical building changes; Tenant layout changes, Joint Occupancy Evaluation, Owner's Improvements; Business Use Authorization and Certificate of Occupancy). The County coordinates and facilitates the regulatory review and inspection processes to achieve the customer's "immediate project objective."

Partnership Approach to Customer Service

A partnership between the County staff and the customer, built on mutual trust and respect, provides superior project results. The partnership approach encourages open and positive communication that improves understanding, prevents errors, encourages options thinking and expedites issue resolution. This partnership results in a process which has greater predictability resulting in a more timely and efficient process. Three ideas and practices support this partnership:

1. Staff uses supportive communications.
2. Structured and adequate time is allotted to discuss and resolve issues.
3. Staff and customer are tasked to be creative in finding ways to resolve issues within the regulatory framework.

Project Management

1. The County created 3 FTE Program Manager positions to support the SBPM Program. Each Program Manager is responsible for ensuring the County staff is "speaking with one voice" to provide consistent and timely feedback and direction to customers. The Program Manager's key responsibilities are facilitating Project Early Assistance; monitoring and tracking

project progress to identify potential obstacles; and to ensure the Issue Resolution Process operates in an efficient and timely manner.

2. Customers are encouraged to appoint a project representative (i.e., Project Manager; Owner's Representative) to promote the customer's team "speaking with one voice" and to foster the partnership approach.
3. The Project Team includes the customer's team members (i.e., owner; tenant; designer; builders; contractors) and the County's team members (i.e., Plan Reviewers; Development Technicians; Inspectors). The Project Team is expected to communicate and resolve issues in a timely manner to support the completion of the project. If an issue cannot be resolved in a timely manner, the Program Manager and customer's Project Manager should be notified.
4. The Program Manager and the customer's Project Manager are responsible for jointly overseeing the Project Team and the project and coordinating the resolution of issues that have been elevated by the Project Team.

In addition, the Department of Development Services already has a customer interview process in place where a panel, comprised of industry members and county staff, asks small business owners, contractors, architects, and engineers how the process worked out for them. Hugh said the interviews conducted so far have been positive and helped identify areas for continued improvement.

With the Program in place, fully staffed and operational, small business representatives or owners come into the SBPM Program's dedicated and privately set office to meet a Program Manager, who can pre-assess their needs requirement with address validation and determine which Program Manager shall be assigned and dedicated to their project throughout the duration of the process.

The Financial/Staffing Resources

Over \$1 million was set-aside for the collective small business programs initiative, which included:

- 3 Development Services Full-time Employees (FTEs).
- 1 Economic Development FTE.
- The Mason Small Business Development Center opened; and
- \$400K in Economic Development Incentive Funds to Brickyard to build a co-working space, which established a new location in the heart of Prince William.

Overall, these funds supported the County's strategic plan aimed at increasing growth of small business jobs to over 1,000 per year and to help small business owners and entrepreneurs through the permit process of opening their facility of choice.

The Results

Success is measured by the Program's ability to impact the small business community.

Over 7 small businesses open weekly in Prince William County, on average, with thanks to the dedicated team of experts and County partners.



“Small businesses are the backbone of our business ecosystem and help create a sense of place and improved quality of life for our residents,” said Wade Hugh, Director, Department of Development Services.

Prince William County’s business economy is predominantly small- and mid-size enterprise, with over 95% having 20 or fewer employees. The County also has a growing entrepreneurial sector, particular in technology services. Entrepreneurs and start-ups that work with our team of experts from the earliest stages of their business are typically better organized, well informed and prepared for the permit requirements ahead, as they launch with better network connection and are more viable and agile operations.

Since 2018, the Prince William County Department of Development Services' Small Business Project Management Program has served more than 1,334 small business owners. Significant progress has been made to raise the Program profile and elevate our service offerings portfolio through integrated marketing and communications to better serve small business.



401 entrepreneurs, startups and small businesses 'opened for business' in Prince William County in 2021.

Find out about how the Small Business Project Management Program can help today!

(703) 792-6930
DDS@pwcgov.org

PRINCE WILLIAM
Development Services

Furthermore, the Program has five areas of engagement that include:

Projects: At times, course corrective action requires new project plans to be developed to ensure compliance.

Partnerships: County agencies and external organizations are involved.

Educational Outreach, Public and Media Relations: Quarterly Reports, News Releases and Earned Media (free) coverage.

Social Media: Business promotion with a tailored “Welcome New Business Neighbor” marketing campaign.

Publications: Sharing monthly success stories of new business projects, online and via email.

In addition to the value-add the SBPM brings to customers, internal benefits are also realized:

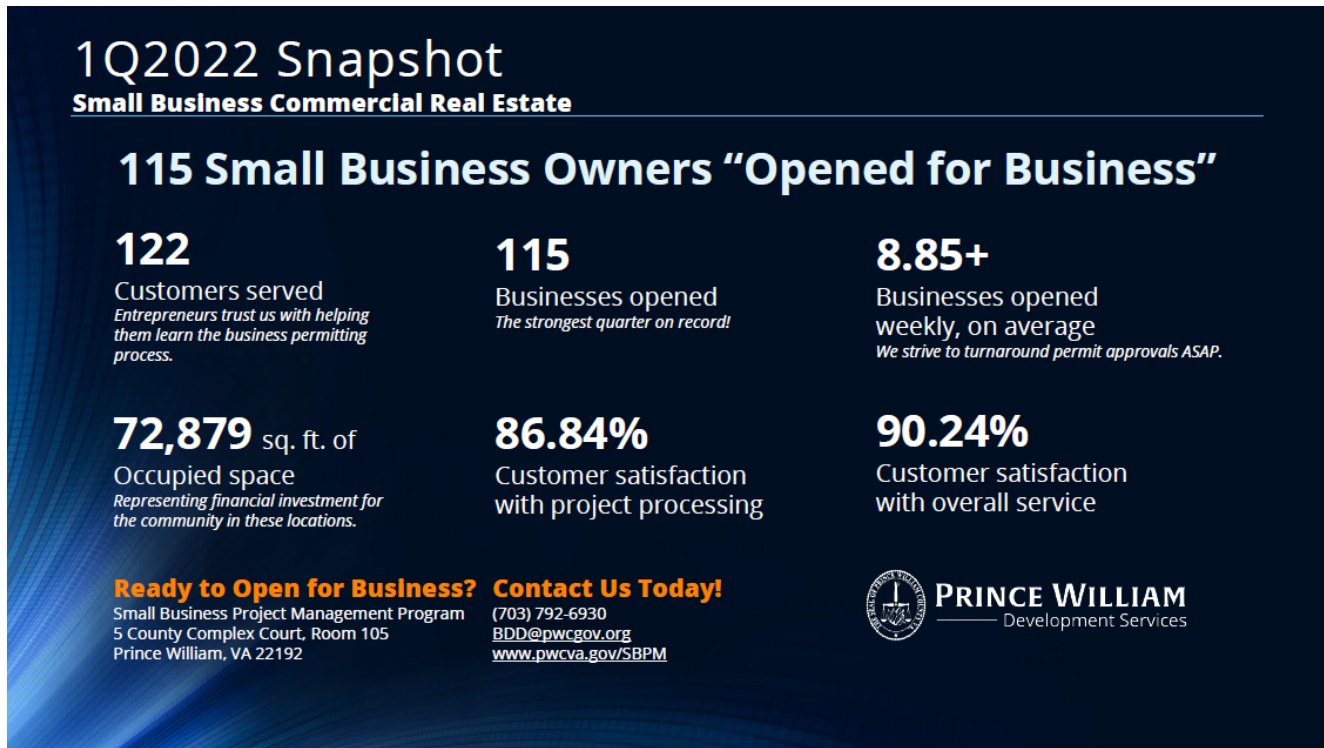
- Embeds a customer-centric project orientated culture throughout the Department.
- Promotes an environment conducive to efficient processes.
- Supports Customer Relationship Management (CRM); and
- Ensures we are “Speaking with one Voice.”

“Getting the small business owner into the SBPM program to talk with one of the dedicated project managers serves another purpose as well,” Hugh said. “While we have them here, we explain some of the processes, so when they’re ready to take that next step, they know exactly who to call, and we can help them even before they get their plans ready to submit.”

The County’s service offerings continue to attract numerous businesses from across the Nation and within the Greater Washington, DC Metropolitan area. Always “Open for Business” it partners closely with leaders of industry who share a common vision, including state government, educators at leading universities and community colleges, commercial developers, economists, experts, and leaders from major corporations. We work continuously to address integration and expansion capabilities that enable a climate for market growth with greater efficiency.

Examples:

Performance Snapshot:



Social Media:



Monthly Publications:



Prince William County's Department of Development Services announced its [Small Business Project Management Program \(SBPM\)](#) supported thirty-two small businesses, that successfully 'Opened for Business' in March 2022. Thirty businesses were new to the County and two were existing businesses that either expanded or relocated elsewhere within the County.

Global Foods Warehouse on Build America Drive expanded. [Corn Dogs by Mr. Cow](#) opened at Potomac Mills and [Jimmy Johns](#) opened in Merchant Plaza. Chic Nail opened next to Food Lion on Hoadly Road and Gladys Creation opened at 2980 Prince William Parkway.

A1 Non-Medical Transportation and the Key Outlet both opened on Old Bridge Road. Queen of Tobacco, [Good Life Financial Advisors of NOVA](#), and Complex Nail & Spa all opened their doors on Marblestone Drive in the Occoquan District.

"As communities change, so do the buildings they use. Updated building codes play an essential role in the resilience and adaptive use of buildings, keeping a sense of continuity while also reducing outdated, unused buildings," said Wade A. Hugh, Director, Department of Development Services.

[Chiyoshi](#), a Chinese and Japanese restaurant opened in Marumsco Plaza shopping center, located in the Woodbridge District. Route 1 Furniture and Mattress Closeout Store and Latin Beauty Salon opened nearby. Hercules Entertainment, Divine International and Woodbridge Faith Center also opened in Woodbridge.

In the Brentsville District, [North Star Contracting, Inc.](#), a water damage restoration service, opened in Gainesville; [Computer Wingman](#), an IT support enterprise for residential, small business and medical practices, opened on Hornbaker Road in Manassas; and Festival Tailor and Liberty Shoe Repair in Manassas Mall changed tenants.

[Mehfil Restaurant and Banquet](#) changed tenants and World Financial Group moved into Suite 300 at 10432 Balls Ford Road, in the Gainesville District. [Press Mechanical Contractors, Inc.](#), a commercial HVAC and plumbing contractor that specializes in flagship retail, opened in Gateway Court. [Bella Aesthetics MedSpa](#) opened in Studio 4 at 10980 Bulloch Drive in Manassas. [Integrity Home Mortgage](#) relocated to Heritage Village Plaza and [Von Keller Thelin](#), a Law Firm, received its certificate of occupancy.

News Releases:



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Ginny Person
Prince William County, Virginia
Department of Development Services
gperson2@pwcgov.org

For Immediate Release

Prince William County Celebrates 1,000 Small Business Customers Milestone

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VA – September 15, 2021 – [Prince William County Department of Development Services](#) is celebrating its [Small Business Project Management Program](#), a Board of County Supervisors initiative to support small business owners, startups, and entrepreneurs, which has surpassed 1,000 customers, marking an important milestone for the program.

From healthcare services and professional collaborations to restaurants and specialty stores, these entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses have continued to innovate and to help their customers adapt to the next normal.

Ann Wheeler, Chair-At-Large, [Prince William Board of County Supervisors](#), said: "This milestone is a testament to each and every small business owner that has chosen Prince William County to help them create a thriving business, even in times that reflect unprecedented uncertainty and change. The Small Business Project Management Program initiative was founded on the belief that if government aligns success with that of the customers we serve, like these small business owners, we all grow better, faster, stronger, together."

"Thanks to the dedicated team of highly trained professional experts, this milestone is proof of the continuing success of the program. This program is an extension of the Department of Development Services highly successful [Commercial Project Management Program](#) which creates value for our customers by helping them navigate all the regulations, nodes of work, and sourcing it takes to stand up and open a business," said Wade A. Hugh, Director of [Department of Development Services](#), Prince William County.

Opening a new business is a significant investment of financial and personal resources. Prince William County wants to assist all customers through the regulatory process to ensure new and existing businesses have a positive impact on their neighborhood and business community, is safe to occupy, and open as quickly as possible. Find out how to start, by visiting PWCVA.gov [here](#).

About the Prince William County Small Business Project Management Program

Since 2018, the Prince William County Department of Development Services' Small Business Project Management Program has served more than 1,334 small business owners. The County recognizes real estate decisions are critical to businesses, not only from a financial perspective, but for the ability to attract customers, access a quality workforce, establish their brand, build community partnerships, and operate in a stable and predictable government environment. The Prince William County Board of County Supervisors adopted and funded an initiative to enhance the level of services for small business owners, startups, and entrepreneurs in FY2019. The Department spearheaded the initiative to improve entrepreneurs' and small business owners' experience within the County development process and launched the Small Business Project Management Program in October 2018. For this purpose, the County defined a small business that employees thirty-five or fewer employees. For more information call (703) 792-6930 or email DDS@pwcgov.org.