

Annual Report 2022-2023

Year in Review

On behalf of Wicomico County and early in our fiscal year, we applied for and received a \$3.298 million grant from the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund to establish an Aviation Maintenance Technician program at the Salisbury-Ocean City: Wicomico Regional Airport (SBY), create a strategic plan for SBY and work toward shovel-ready sites at the airport.

Teaming with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), the state Maryland, Wicomico County and Piedmont Airlines, the 12-month Aviation Maintenance Technician program will create a pipeline of mechanics and enhance the aviation and aeronautics sector for our region. Beginning with an initial cohort of twenty-five students, the program is expected to begin in the spring of 2024 with the first graduating class in 2025. SWED is brokering all transactions associated with establishing this program.



Maryland Governor Moore and Senate President Ferguson visited SBY to learn more about the AMT program.

The strategic plan seeks to capitalize on the AMT program, the planned runway extension from 6,400' to 7,600' and infrastructure at SBY. In addition, the plan will explore new challenges and opportunities within the aviation and aeronautics industry.

Shovel-ready sites at the airport make it easier and quicker for interested prospects and airport tenants to construct a facility.

Year in Review

With a regional airline headquartered at SBY along with UMES' aviation management degree, pilot training and aviation mechanic programs, it's a robust offering unparalleled anywhere in the nation.

Site Readiness

Lacking large, vacant industrial properties in a very competitive market hinders our collective ability to attract new firms to our community and accommodate resident firms in their expansion plans. Windows of opportunity are short and those communities with the infrastructure in place for quick build-out will be those communities that will take advantage of new opportunities.



Our shovel-ready site program seeks to design a facility (or facilities) for specific sites and address all permitting issues associated with site approval. By doing so, we can mitigate the time to construction by eliminating the twelve to eighteen month site approval process.

As mentioned earlier in this report, SWED is working toward shovel-ready sites at our regional airport. SWED is also interested in working with private developers and landowners wishing to market their property as 'shovel-ready'.

More information about the program can be found at www.swed.org/shovelready.

We were pleased to initiate and support the extension of natural gas to the airport and specifically to the industrial park at SBY. Completion of the project is expected in the next several months. Having infrastructure in place to support development equals new investments and jobs for our community. Special thanks to Wicomico County and the Maryland Energy Administration for funding this project.



Year in Review

We were pleased to support Chesapeake Shipbuilding in the company's grant application to the Maritime Administration's Small Shipyard Grant program. The successful initiative, along with funds from the company, helped secure new equipment to help maintain competitiveness against European vessels entering the U.S. market. The company announced the addition of a hundred new jobs over the next several years.

We received funding for a new program targeting new businesses within the agriculture and resource-based industries. The goal of this initiative is to foster growth in Wicomico's emerging agriculture and resource-based businesses by partnering in



a cost-share grant initiative with the Maryland Agricultural and Resource Based Industry Development

Corporation (MARBIDCO). Grant applications are expected to be available near the end of calendar year 2023.

We continued our long standing practice of calling on resident businesses, inclusive of those firms with offices outside of Wicomico's jurisdictional border. Calling on our existing customers allows us to better understand the needs of our business community and to tailor programs and services to meet those needs. At the same time, we recognize that attrition will occur and attraction of new businesses and jobs to our community is an important component to our program.

To that point, we assisted Marvel Road LLC in its acquisition of a facility in Northwood Industrial Park. The holding company will lease the facility to a sister entity for distribution of fragrances to other businesses and consumers, construct a new facility for manufacture of fragrance at the same site and create approximately twenty-five new jobs. Progress will be seen in the coming year.

Year in Review

SWED was pleased to once again work closely with Wicomico County and its bond counsel in preparing and presenting to credit rating agencies. This past year, both Moody's and S&P Global Ratings visited Wicomico for a community tour followed by credit presentations.

S&P Global
Ratings

MOODY'S

Public speaking engagements enhance collaboration among many partners throughout our region. We were pleased to present at this year's Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce' Economic Forecast event, Wicomico Rotary Club, Perdue Agribusiness, the Maryland Economic Development Association's Fall Conference at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Greater Salisbury's Transformational Community Leadership cohort. Our 54th Annual Meeting was held in October, 2022 at Bordeleau Vineyard & Winery.

Our Strategy Forward

Our strategy for the coming year is to capitalize on our assets, develop additional and innovative programs to target job growth and work collaboratively with our many partners for the betterment of all.

Targeted Economic Sectors

Agribusiness, Health Care
Higher Education, Manufacturing

Infrastructure Investments

Entrepreneurship

Industry Diversification

Strengthened Partnerships



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