

## Theme 1: Economy

### Mission

**T**he Town and County have built, natural, social, and human assets that are increasingly scarce.

These include our small size and population, low cost of living, architectural history, adult education programs, clean air and water, diversity of plants and animals, fields and forests, civic organizations, and friendly people.

Orange Train Depot, Montpelier, and Rt. 20 Farm Across from Town



We seek to participate in the regional, national, and international economy in ways that sustainably use these increasingly unique resources. We will encourage economic development that utilize these assets as capital to be protected and enhanced and discourage economic growth that exploits them.

The Town will seek ways to support small businesses and will work to facilitate commerce that complements industrial, agricultural, and tourism enterprises in the County.

Background:

The Town's geography and demographic make-up has a great impact on our economy. Residents in the area increasingly commute to Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, and points north. According to recent census data, Orange County has the second-highest percentage of residents in the Planning District commuting to work outside of the County (source: U.S. Census (2000) Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission).

Figure 2: Out Commuters in Region

| Out-commuters       |  |                                     |        |         |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Locality            |  | Total workers by place of residence | Number | Percent |
| R-RRC               |  | 65,810                              | 29,864 | 45.4%   |
| Culpeper County     |  | 16,042                              | 8,649  | 53.9%   |
| Fauquier County     |  | 28,224                              | 11,822 | 41.9%   |
| Madison County      |  | 6,057                               | 2,518  | 41.6%   |
| Orange County       |  | 11,935                              | 5,338  | 44.7%   |
| Rappahannock County |  | 3,552                               | 1,537  | 43.3%   |

Orange does not possess interstate transportation infrastructure generally essential for big manufacturing. Nor does the Town have a low cost power source. We also do not have a large labor force of unemployed persons.

Figure 3:  
Unemployment Rate of Area Counties: U.S. Census (2000)  
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission

| Employment Status |                                    | United States | Virginia  | R-RRC   | Culpeper | Fauquier | Madison | Orange | Fauquier |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|--------|----------|
| Total             | Population 16 years and over       | 217,168,077   | 5,529,980 | 104,556 | 26,543   | 42,007   | 9,875   | 20,562 | 5,569    |
|                   | Labor force                        | 138,820,935   | 3,694,663 | 68,819  | 16,832   | 29,446   | 6,384   | 12,485 | 3,672    |
|                   | (%)                                | 63.9          | 66.8      | 65.8    | 63.4     | 70.1     | 64.6    | 60.7   | 65.9     |
|                   | Civilian labor forces <sup>a</sup> | 137,668,798   | 3,563,772 | 68,714  | 16,825   | 29,367   | 6,373   | 12,477 | 3,672    |
|                   | Employed                           | 129,721,512   | 3,412,647 | 66,785  | 16,285   | 28,622   | 6,170   | 12,117 | 3,591    |
|                   | Unemployed                         | 7,947,286     | 151,125   | 1,929   | 540      | 745      | 203     | 360    | 81       |
|                   | Unemployment rate (%)              | 5.8           | 4.2       | 2.9     | 3.2      | 2.5      | 3.2     | 2.9    | 2.2      |
|                   | Armed forces                       | 1,152,137     | 130,891   | 105     | 7        | 79       | 11      | 8      | 0        |
|                   | Not in labor force                 | 78,347,142    | 1,835,317 | 35,737  | 9,711    | 12,561   | 3,491   | 8,077  | 1,897    |
| Males             | Population 16 years and over       | 104,982,282   | 2,675,692 | 51,431  | 13,549   | 20,504   | 4,816   | 9,822  | 2,740    |
|                   | Labor force                        | 74,273,203    | 1,964,591 | 37,539  | 9,272    | 16,113   | 3,471   | 6,652  | 2,031    |
|                   | (%)                                | 70.7          | 73.4      | 73.0    | 68.4     | 78.6     | 72.1    | 67.7   | 74.1     |
| Females           | Population 16 years and over       | 112,185,795   | 2,854,288 | 53,125  | 12,994   | 21,503   | 5,059   | 10,740 | 2,829    |
|                   | Labor force                        | 64,547,732    | 1,730,072 | 31,280  | 7,560    | 13,333   | 2,913   | 5,833  | 1,641    |
|                   | (%)                                | 57.5          | 60.6      | 58.9    | 58.2     | 62.0     | 57.6    | 54.3   | 58.0     |

For additional data and analyses, see Appendix I: Economic Analysis.

The following economic policies are intended to help mitigate the negative impacts of growth in out-commuters and our relatively low unemployment rate.

Goal EC1: Encourage the retention and expansion of Town businesses.

Action EC1.1: Scale the requirements for land development planning and engineering studies to project size and complexity.

Analysis:

The Town Planning Office already customizes site plan requirements for project type and scale. Further consideration of the details of the requirements should be analyzed.

|                     |                                                |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator EC1.1.1:  | Site plan requirements                         |
| Benchmark EC 1.1.1: | Scaled requirements for project scale and type |



|                            |                                                     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Progress EC1.1.1:          |                                                     |
| Responsible Party EC1.1.1: | Town Planner<br>Planning Commission<br>Town Council |
| Implementation EC1.1.1:    | 2007-2008                                           |

Action EC 1.2: Hire Town Economic Development Coordinator.

Analysis:

In recent years, the Town has continued to address economic development. The Orange Downtown Alliance (ODA) was charged with business recruitment for the Downtown (see Comprehensive Plan Overview). More recently, a Compatible Economic Development Coordinator was hired with environmental funds from DCR. The coordinator focused on gathering of information on the 10 acres of Town-owned land on Lafayette Drive for future use as a business park. The Town has also reached an agreement with the County to receive assistance from their Economic Development coordinator.

Greater resources are needed, however, to provide focused energy on economic development needs for the entire Town. Options include the following:

- Expanded ODA role as the Economic Development organization for entire Town.
- Expanded role for the Chamber of Commerce.

- Expanded role for the Town Planning Office.
- New position in Town Government.

Indicator EC1.2.1                      Town-wide Economic Development Coordinator  
Benchmark EC 1.2.1                  Coordinator hired



Progress EC1.2.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.2.1:    Town Manager  
                                         Town Council  
                                         Non-profit organizations  
Implementation EC1.2.1:       2007-2008

Indicator EC1.2.2:                      Total # businesses in Town  
Benchmark EC 1.2.2:                  Increasing trend



Progress EC1.2.2:  
Responsible Party EC1.2.2:    Town Manager  
                                         Town Planner  
Implementation EC1.2.2:       2007-2008

Action EC1.3: Support and strengthen existing businesses through changes in license fees and tax rates.

Analysis:

Business owners in Orange note the difficulty of operating a profitable local enterprise. There is a need for expanded discussions about this issue.

Indicator EC1.3.1:                      Business tax structure meetings  
Benchmark EC 1.3.1:                  2 meetings



Progress EC1.3.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.3.1:    Steady Progress Consortium  
Implementation EC1.3.1:       2007-2008

Action EC1.4: Continue policy of no business license requirement by Town.

Indicator EC1.4.1:                      Business license  
Benchmark EC 1.4.1:                  Continuation of no-license policy



Progress EC1.4.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.4.1:    Town Council

Implementation EC1.4.1:      Town Manager  
2012 and beyond

Action EC1.5: Expand enterprise zone to entire Town.

Indicator EC1.5.1:              Enterprise Zone Boundaries  
Benchmark EC 1.5.1:          Boundary expanded to Town boundaries.



Progress EC1.5.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.5.1: Town Council  
Town Manager  
Implementation EC1.5.1:      2007-2008

Action EC1.6: Create a Master Marketing Plan for the entire Town.

Analysis:

See Appendix II: *Which Way is Up?* findings

Indicator EC1.6.1:              Town business marketing plan  
Benchmark EC 1.6.1:          Plan completed



Progress EC1.6.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.6.1: ODA and/or consultant  
Town Council  
Town Manager  
Implementation EC1.6.1:      2007-2008

Action EC1.7: Encourage business meetings similar to the *Which Way is Up?* discussion.

Indicator EC1.7.1:              Business meetings  
Benchmark EC 1.7.1:          1 meeting per year



Progress EC1.7.1:  
Responsible Party EC1.7.1: ODA  
Implementation EC1.7.1:      2012 and beyond

Goal EC2: Create Heritage Economic Development.

Analysis:

A business theme that has already proven limited ability to generate revenue is "heritage economic development". Heritage development is the expansion of the Town's economy

through tourism-related revenue streams. Tourism is a potential growth industry for the Town and County. The combination of nearby major visitor attractions in Charlottesville and Fredericksburg, proximity to large metropolitan areas, scenic views and attractive landscapes, recognized historic and architectural resources, and a rural, unhurried pace of life make Orange County an attractive destination for visitors. The restoration of Montpelier to the architecture of James Madison's home is expected to result in a level of tourism someday similar to that now found at Monticello. The capture of revenue through food, lodging, service, and specialty commercial businesses associated with this increase in visitation is an essential element of the Town's economic development strategy.

#### Town of Orange Farmer's Market and Orange County Winery



A great deal of energy has been expended by Town non-profit organizations and Montpelier in recent years toward this end. However, there has not been a focused, measurable program launched to raise revenues significantly in the Town.

Action EC2.1: Convene a Summit on Heritage Economic Development for the Town, County, Montpelier, and Woodberry Forest, involving a diversity of stakeholders from the community.

Indicator EC2.1.1:

Summit at Montpelier

Benchmark EC2.1.1:

1 meeting held

Progress EC2.1.1:



Responsible Party EC2.1.1:

Chamber of Commerce  
ODA  
Orange Garden Clubs

Historical Societies  
Bed and Breakfast Associations  
Town of Orange  
County of Orange  
Woodberry Forest Staff  
Montpelier Staff

Implementation EC2.1.1: 2007-2008

Action EC2.2: Create a Compact signed by representatives from the four major organizations to jointly work on long-term programs that provide benefit to all.

Indicator EC2.2.1: Orange Compact  
Benchmark EC2.2.1: Compact signed by each major organization

Progress EC2.2.1:



Responsible Party EC2.2.1: Chamber of Commerce  
ODA  
Orange Garden Clubs  
Historical Societies  
Bed and Breakfast Associations  
Town of Orange  
County of Orange  
Woodberry Forest Staff  
Montpelier Staff

Implementation EC2.2.1: 2007-2008

Goal EC3: Create new knowledge-based and professional jobs in the Town.

The Junction, May Fray Street



Analysis:

In addition to policies and programs designed to assist existing businesses and expand Heritage Tourism revenues, this Plan also calls for the development of new business types not currently found in the Town. Knowledge and professional businesses, such as those that outsource to the Federal Government in Washington, can only be recruited through the creation of conditions in which the owners and employees would like to relocate to. These conditions include the following:

- Appropriate commercial real estate for purchase and rent.
- Liberal Arts secondary education program to help students return to Orange with the skills they need to build a better community.
- Broadband infrastructure.
- High end housing for business owners and managers.
- Amenities; specifically health and cultural infrastructure, art, theatre, and wellness facilities.
- Health care.

Action EC3.1: Create a Vision for Knowledge-based Economic Development.

Indicator EC3.1.1:

Economic Development Vision

Benchmark EC3.1.1:

Completion of Vision

Progress EC3.1.1:



Responsible Party EC 3.1.1: Town of Orange  
Orange County Public Schools  
Germanna Community College  
Chamber of Commerce  
Implementation EC 3.1.1: 2007-2008

Action EC3.2: Create a liberal arts education program, an Orange New Century Program, in partnership with Woodberry and Orange County High School to help train students to return to Orange to work in business and government sectors.

Indicator EC3.2.1: Orange New Century Program  
Benchmark EC3.2.1: Program offered by OCHS



Progress EC3.2.1:  
Responsible Party EC 3.2.1: Town of Orange  
Orange County Public Schools  
Woodberry Forest School  
Germanna Community College  
Chamber of Commerce  
Implementation EC 3.2.1: 2008-2010

Action EC3.3: Build telecommunications infrastructure.

Analysis:

“Broadband is an accelerator of economic development. This is because there are significant economic benefits to using broadband technologies for many applications. With broadband access, worker productivity increases, jobs are created, and wages grow”.

From “The Economic and Social Benefits of Broadband Development”, TIA Whitepaper, October, 2003

In 2003, the County of Orange, Town of Orange, Orange County Public Schools, and Town of Gordonsville, began working together to bring broadband internet access to the Orange region. After examining the various methods of broadband internet access, wireless technology was chosen as the desired medium. The technology is inexpensive, reliable, and solves the “last mile” issues that make other broadband technologies so difficult to implement in rural areas.

Goals of the program include:

- Each agency will be able to build its own wireless Wide Area Network to suit its needs.
- All agencies will have high speed internet access available to them to better serve their constituents.
- The agencies will have the capacity for their Wide Area Networks to communicate to create a Metropolitan Area Network.
- The agencies will have the ability to offer broadband internet access as a tool for economic development.
- The agencies will cooperate to consolidate their demand for services to ensure the greatest capacity at the least cost.

Indicator EC3.3.1: Town of Orange Wireless Network  
Benchmark EC3.3.1: Completion of network in Town and County Government buildings



Progress EC3.3.1:

Responsible Party EC3.3.1: Town of Orange  
County of Orange  
Orange County Public Schools  
Town of Gordonsville

Implementation EC3.3.1: 2005

Action EC3.4: Construct socio-economically advantaged housing for business owners and managers.

Analysis: Recent housing data show a disproportionately small percentage of high-end housing in the Town (see Appendix 3: Housing Data and Analyses)

Indicator EC3.4.1: # units constructed at three highest housing value ranges as defined by U.S. Census data  
Benchmark EC3.4.1: 100 units



Progress EC3.4.1:

Responsible Party EC3.4.1: Builders  
Developers  
Town of Orange  
Implementation EC3.4.1: 2008-2010

Action EC3.5: Build commercial real estate attractive to knowledge-based businesses.

Silk Mill Building



Indicator EC3.5.1:  
Benchmark EC3.5.1:

New office space  
20% increase in square footage

Progress EC3.5.1:  
Responsible Party EC3.5.1:



Builders  
Developers  
Town of Orange  
2009-2011

Implementation EC3.5.1:

Action EC3.6: Encourage Orange Downtown Alliance to expand focus to entire Town.

Analysis:

The Orange Downtown Alliance (ODA) has, since its inception, focused on business recruitment in the Downtown only.

Indicator EC3.6.1:

ODA Charter or Mission

Benchmark EC3.6.1:

Town-wide focus



Progress EC3.6.1:

Responsible Party EC3.6.1:

ODA Board of Directors

Town of Orange

Implementation EC3.6.1:

2006

The following Actions, essential to the Goal of business expansion in Town, are more fully developed in each of the referenced Themes.

Action EC3.7: Build recreational amenities attractive to knowledge-based business owners and employees (see Theme 11: Recreation).

Action EC3.8: Build health care facilities attractive to owners and employees (see Theme 8: Public Safety and Community Health).

Action EC3.9: Create continuing education program housed in the Town of Orange (see Theme 3: Education).

Action EC3.10: Redevelop Madison Road and Byrd Street (see Theme 12: Planning Sectors).

Action EC3.11: Construct Spicer's Mill Extension (see Theme 4: Transportation).

Action EC3.12: Construct May Fray Connector to reduce truck traffic (see Theme 4: Transportation).

Action EC3.13: Construct Harper Drive-Miller Road to connect Spicer's Mill Road and Rt. 20 (see Theme 4: Transportation).

Action EC3.14: Beautify town (see Theme 5: Architectural Assets and Aesthetics).

Goal EC4: Ensure adequate financial resources for in-Town arts and cultural organizations.

Analysis:

Arts and cultural organizations are major components of the Town's social capital. Social capital is the matrix in which knowledge companies with professional staff prefer to work. A small Town environment with deep social capital are attractive assets to urban companies interested in relocation to more family-friendly places.

Indicator EC4.1.1:

Fine Arts Council Endowment

Benchmark EC4.1.1:

1 million dollar endowment



Progress EC4.1.1:

Responsible Party EC4.1.1:

Fine Arts Council  
Businesses  
Foundations  
Town of Orange  
Private Donors  
2007-2008

Implementation EC4.1.1: