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**Middle Peninsula Alliance Partners Selected to Participate in Economic Development Pilot Program**

–Region to receive technical services through Small Scale Manufacturing Pilot Program –

Saluda – On January 24, the Middle Peninsula Alliance, with its partner Main Streets from Gloucester, Mathews, Tappahannock and West Point, was selected to participate in a Small Scale Manufacturing Pilot program provided by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, through the Virginia Main Street program in partnership with the National Main Street Center.

A total of five communities across Virginia were selected for participation. The purpose of the pilot is to provide technical assistance to communities with potential to have small scale manufacturing as an economic development and revitalization strategy and identify opportunities and resources for scale up and implementation strategies. The pilot will kick off in February and final reports will be complete before July 2020.

“Small scale producers are key to strengthening local and state economies,” said Matthew Wagner, Ph.D., Vice President of Revitalization Programs at the National Main Street Center. “These types of producers create jobs, drive tourism, and foster businesses that spur long-term growth within a community.”

Small scale manufacturing has emerged as a powerful way to tie opportunity to place and can fill a key missing piece in today’s local downtown and community development efforts. Data suggests that this form of manufacturing is rapidly growing in downtowns across the country, expanding and diversifying the employment and retail opportunities found there. Today’s consumers are looking for products with a story, that are locally made, and that appeal to their individualism. As a result, from microbrewers to apparel and bike manufacturers, many more people are beginning to blend retail, manufacturing and wholesaling opportunities at a much smaller scale, leading to growing tourism, diversified employment, and well-paid job opportunities for local communities.

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**ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MAIN STREET PROGRAM**

The Virginia Main Street program, managed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), provides assistance and training to help communities increase the economic vitality of their downtown commercial districts. Virginia Main Street uses the National Main Street model to help communities revitalize their downtowns by focusing on their unique heritage and attributes. The program helps communities implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy that creates economic growth and pride in downtowns.

For more information about the Virginia Main Street program, call (804) 371-7171 or visit [www.virginimainstreet.com](http://www.virginimainstreet.com)

**ABOUT THE MIDDLE PENINSULA ALLIANCE**



The Middle Peninsula Alliance is the designated Regional Development Organization with a mission to promote the assets of Virginia's Middle Peninsula by connecting people, ideas and resources to develop new opportunities and visibility for the Region. The Middle Peninsula Alliance includes the Counties of Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, and Middlesex and the Towns of Tappahannock and West Point.

For more information on the Middle Peninsula Alliance and its programs, contact Liz Povar, Principal Officer, at 804-399-8297 or Dawn Kirby at 804-758-2311, or go to [www.mpava.com](http://www.mpava.com)