



# Annual Report 2020

### Board of Directors

- Henry Taylor | Chairman
- George Bailey
- Lauren Bailey
- Bob Bennett
- Skip Elliott
- Ronnie Givens
- Kevin Hart
- Bill Hearn
- Jim Martin
- Lamont Stevens

### Ex-Officio Members

- Rita Berry
- Ken Jenkins
- Sandy Price
- Tanya Robinson

*Special thanks to former Vice Chairman Linwood Ling and former Mayor Anne Johnson for their service to this board.*



*Dorchester County's best days are ahead of us, of this I am certain. There is no where else in the world I would rather ride out this storm than right here.*



### Advance Dorchester

A funding initiative of Dorchester Economic Development Corporation, working to diversify the tax-base while bringing jobs and prosperity to the County.

## A Note

### From Director John Truluck

Looking back on 2019 and the beginning of 2020, it's difficult not to shake my head in disbelief at the events and challenges we've faced locally, nationally and globally. These were truly historic times. I am proud of the way Team Dorchester continued to **ADVANCE DORCHESTER** amid the uncertainty. With an almost seamless pivot we managed to uphold the traditional tenets of economic development in a new virtual world. BR|E was once again confirmed as the cornerstone of our industry, as we re-established relationships that had been placed on the back burner due to hectic schedules. Every challenge is a learning opportunity, and I've learned that Dorchester

County, our investors, our allies, and our team are made up of some of the best people in the business.

### The Future

Though times have been uncertain, and our typical accomplishments are fewer than we forecasted, we continue to see interest and activity in the County. The attributes that made us strong pre-tariff slowdown and pre-pandemic crisis remain the same. I am bullish on this region and believe that we will emerge from this tumultuous time stronger than ever. Make no mistake about it, Dorchester County's best days are ahead of us, of this I am certain. There is no where else in the world I would rather ride out this storm than right here.

# Our Investors

\$5,000+ Donors Leadership Council Members

Robert Bosch | Wells Fargo | BID Group | Bobbit Design Build  
 Bridge Commercial | Carolina Contracting Solutions | Edifice | Elliott Davis  
 TelecomSummerville/Dorchester County Chamber of Commerce | Home  
 Firmht's Companies | Landmark Construction | M&M Staffing | Murphy Law  
 O.L. Thompson | Parker Poe | Ronnie Givens | Showa Denko Carbon  
 Whiting-Turner Contracting Company | Thompson Turner Construction

\$2,500 Donors

Alliance Consulting Engineers | Ameris Bank | Boeing | Burr Forman  
 Davis & Floyd | DC Machine | ECPI University | Edisto Electric Cooperative  
 First National Bank of South Carolina | Hank Taylor | Knight & Whittington  
 M.B. Kahn Construction | Palmetto Rural Telephone Co-Op  
 Phillips & Jordan | Santee Cooper | Tony Pope | Summerville Medical Center  
 Synovus | Terracon | The Bank of South Carolina | Thomas & Hutton | Tupco  
 Waste Management

\$1,000 Donors

Allstate | Appraisal Services of South Carolina | Argos Cement | Asset Integration  
 Consultants | Avison Young | Berkeley Electric Cooperative | Brantley Construction  
 CBC Atlantic | Cypress Engineering | ECS Southeast | First Citizens Bank & Trust  
 G. Tupper III Construction | GEL Engineering | Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd | HLA  
 Hood Construction | LS3P | Marlboro Development Team | Mashburn Construction  
 McMillan Pazdan Smith | Michael Snyder | Miller-Valentine Group | Mortgage Equity  
 Partners | Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough | Nexen Pruet | Pinnacle Financial  
 Partners | REMAX | REV Federal Credit Union | S&ME | Samet Corporation | SC Power  
 Team | SeamonWhiteside | Servis1st Bank | South State Bank | South Carolina Ports  
 Authority | Southern First Bank | Stantec | Steinberg Law Firm | THS Constructors  
 Trident Construction | Truist United Community Bank | Womble Bond Dickinson

## Your Investment Supports Our Four Pillars:

**Marketing** - Reaching the right audiences with the right message at the right time.

**Product Development** - Preparing our sites & buildings for future industrial growth.

**Prospect Development** - Hosting, traveling and doing what it takes to close the deal.

**Workforce Development** - Training our citizens for the high-skill, high-pay jobs coming to the County.

FISCAL YEAR 2019-20  
BY THE NUMBERS

3  
ANNOUNCEMENTS



\$13.2 MILLION  
IN CAPITAL INVESTMENT FOR DORCHESTER COUNTY

136  
JOBS CREATED



154  
EXISTING INDUSTRY VISITS



FOUR YEAR TOTALS

JOBS CREATED 1,494  
CAPITAL INVESTMENT \$278,600,000

## Your Investment is Greatly Appreciated

When we set out on the Advance Dorchester fundraising initiative, we had no idea what to expect. Our third-party consultants gave us a goal based on their feasibility study, but this business community responded with enthusiasm that inspires us every day. To those who have been with us from Day One, thank you for believing in and supporting our work. To those companies who have joined us this fiscal year, we welcome you with sincere appreciation. Together we will **Advance Dorchester!**



### Bridge Commercial

New Leadership Level investor.  
Commercial Real Estate Services



### Edifice

New Leadership Level investor.  
General Contractors



### Terracon

Environmental, Facilities,  
Geotechnical & Material  
Engineering



### Trident Construction

Commercial Construction &  
Design-Build



# Our Team

**G**reat success is only possible with team work. We are fortunate to have a supportive County Administration, County Council, Board of Directors, and team of Allies.



**John Truluck**  
Executive Director



**Wendy Smith**  
Deputy Director



**Joy Tyson**  
Marketing & Investor  
Relations Manager



**Joe Affsprung**  
Project Manager



**Amy Dixon**  
Administrative Assistant

### ZOOM CALLS

To connect with our Existing Industry and Investors, we held seven Zoom Meetings during the COVID-19 closure.

### E-BLASTS ISSUED

We strive to be a source of reliable and relevant information. During the COVID-19 crisis, we sent 20 e-blasts to 234 Existing Industry partners.

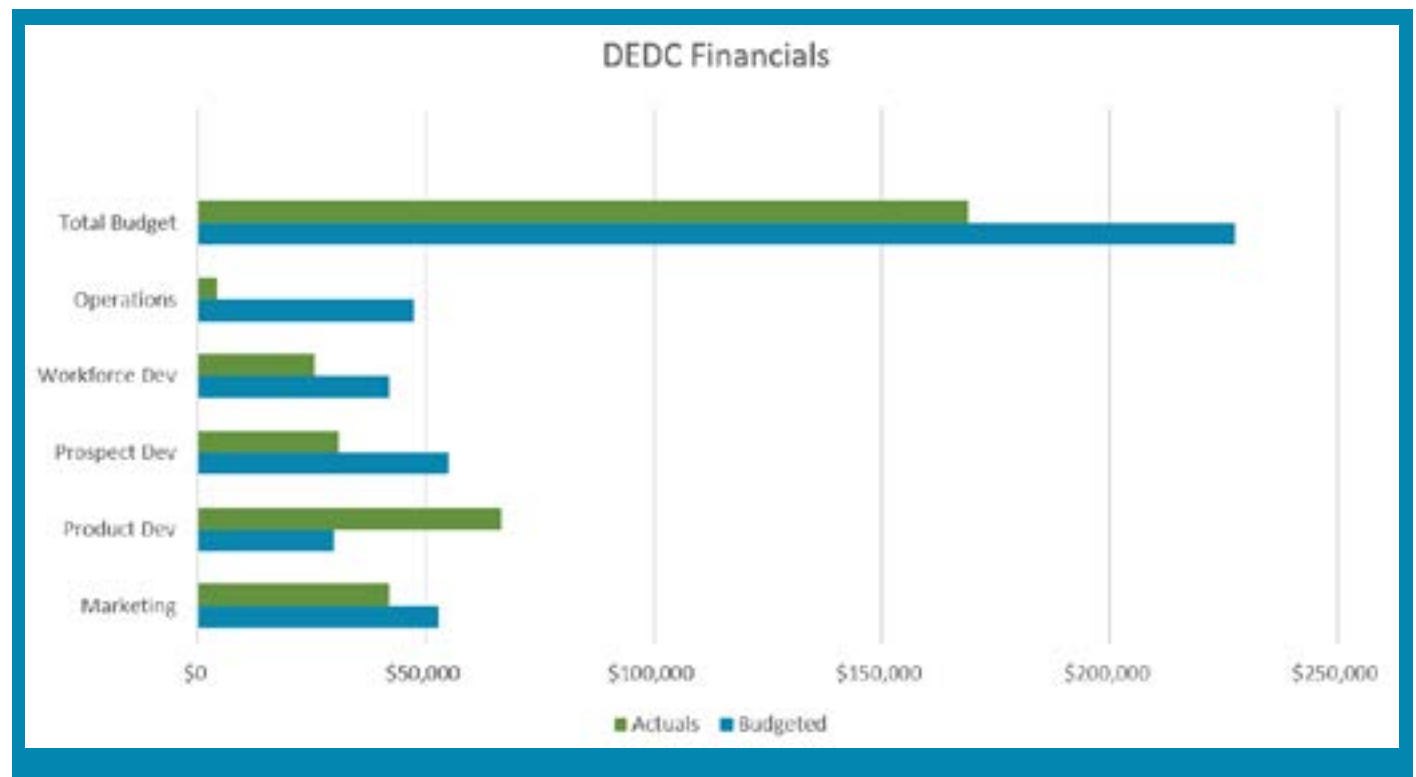
### VIRTUAL ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

To continue BR|E industry visits while abiding by new COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, we turned to virtual meetings, hosting 66 to-date.

OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE

# Financial Report

Our second year of the Advance Dorchester campaign brought new investors as well as continued support from our partners and allies around the state. Investments have exceeded our original goal for the second year in a row, and we are sincerely appreciative for each investor who demonstrates their faith in us. Projected expenditures, including travel, prospect development and investor events were reduced significantly. Of our total approved budget of \$227,500.00 our actual expenditures were \$168,971.11.



Investors  
**86**

Investment Pledges  
**\$189,700**

# Marketing

The COVID-19 outbreak significantly limited our opportunities to market the County with traditional methods. The elimination of most in-person events and meetings forced us to rely on digital and virtual marketing platforms.

## Website

As the number one way to reach site selectors and potential prospects, evaluating our website's content quality and engagement performance became a critically important task. Understanding emerging trends in our unique visitor count, pageviews, bounce-rate, and number of pages viewed during a single session as compared to industry benchmarks helped us

develop a strategic plan to improve the quality of content on our site.

## Advertising

In addition to strategic print ads, social media advertising will be instrumental in the marketing of Dorchester County properties and workforce development programs. The flexibility of testing ads and targeting specific audiences makes this tool cost-effective and efficient.

**MARKETING METRICS  
FISCAL YEAR 2019-20**

**SOCIAL MEDIA STATS**

- IMPRESSIONS: 47,008**  
**PAGE LIKES: 1,184**  
(+11%)
- IMPRESSIONS: 52,505**  
**FOLLOWERS: 789**  
(+11%)
- IMPRESSIONS: 80,849**  
**FOLLOWERS: 783**  
(+47%)

**PRINT & DIGITAL ADVERTISEMENTS**





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**EMAIL MARKETING**

**1,674 SUBSCRIBED (+273)**  
**35,376 EMAILS DELIVERED**

**WEBSITE STATS**



**7,818 VISITORS**  
(+109.65%)

**19,039 PAGEVIEWS**  
(+87.63%)

**TOP PAGES**  
ABOUT US/STAFF  
SITES & BUILDINGS  
NEWSROOM

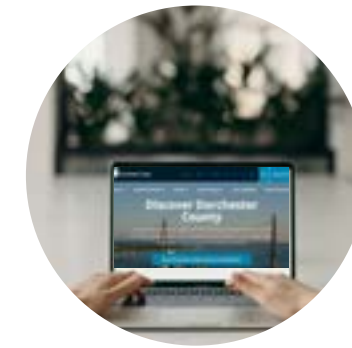
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**TOP PAGES**  
ABOUT US/STAFF  
SITES & BUILDINGS  
NEWSROOM

**OPPORTUNITY ZONES**



In partnership with the Town of Summerville, we launched a marketing campaign including a prospectus, micro-site and email marketing strategy promoting Dorchester County's three Opportunity Zones.



## Web Metrics

Visitors to our site are up **93.43%** over the previous fiscal year. We recorded traffic from India, South Korea, Ireland, Germany & Canada. Our redesigned Sites & Buildings pageviews are up **19.13%** from this time last year. Bounce rate & average time spent each session are below industry benchmarks and will be our focus this year.



## Social Media

Our social strategy shifted to best reach segments of our target audience on the platforms they frequent. LinkedIn has moved up in priority over Facebook for general posts & targeted ads. Twitter has become a top driver for website traffic with audiences averaging twice the time browsing our website than visitors originating from any other social platform. Instagram will be added to our social outreach this year.



## Email Marketing

The importance of an up-to-date database and strategic email communication plan was reinforced by the recent pandemic as we strived to be a consistent and trustworthy source of information for our existing industry, investors, and allies. This is an area that requires constant diligence and evaluation. Our email engagement numbers are on par with industry benchmarks, but we have identified areas to improve upon.

# Product Development

**A** wise man once said, “you cannot sell from an empty wagon” and that’s why we must continuously work to prepare our product and improve our infrastructure to meet the needs of tomorrow. The success we’re having today wouldn’t be possible without work done a decade earlier.



## Water

- Installation of a 750,000 water tank in Ridgeville
- Completion of pump station and force main at Muckenfuss Industrial Park
- Securing \$5.12 million for Winding Woods Reach

## Roads

- Road construction in Muckenfuss Industrial Park is currently underway

# Prospect Development

**D**espite our limited travel opportunity this year our prospect development efforts were successful. We more than doubled the number of RFIs completed this year over the previous fiscal year and hosted more prospects than last year as well. This is a great indication of the level of interest Dorchester County is garnering.



## MARKETING MISSIONS

- Site Selectors Guild in Utah
- 2 European Marketing Missions
- 1 Domestic Marketing Mission to Philadelphia

89

Projects Worked

20

Prospect Visits

4

Marketing Missions



# Workforce Development

**H**istorically low unemployment rates have necessitated our continued investment in Workforce Development programs. Fortunately, Dorchester County's manufacturing community was spared the majority of the impact of the drastically shifting landscape surrounding COVID-19. We see this as an opportunity to retrain citizens who have lost their retail and service industry jobs and are interested in pursuing a career in manufacturing. Programs like ManuFirstSC and Adult Apprenticeships are crucial to helping

our citizens launch new careers and recover from the unexpected change in employment.

## STEMersion

We are proud to have delivered the 2020 Tri-County STEMersion virtually. With 18 Dorchester County educators and a Dorchester County industry participating, Virtual Tri-County STEMersion was a huge success. We are optimistic about the future of this program and eager to roll out a Guidance Counselor version as early as this fall.



## ADVANCING OUR WORKFORCE

### ManuFirstSC

150

Dorchester County residents have completed this training program. This certification is equivalent to 1-year manufacturing experience.

### STEMersion

52

Dorchester County educators have completed STEMersion, which offers collaboration between STEM classroom lessons and the needs of today's manufacturing industry.

### Apprenticeships

71

Dorchester County students and 68 adult residents participated in Apprenticeship Carolina.



*Dorchester County is home to one of the longest free-flowing blackwater rivers in North America, the Edisto River. Whether you are paddling or leisurely floating, the Edisto is an ideal way to spend a Lowcountry summer day. Edisto River Adventures can help you plan your expedition.*

## CONTACT

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