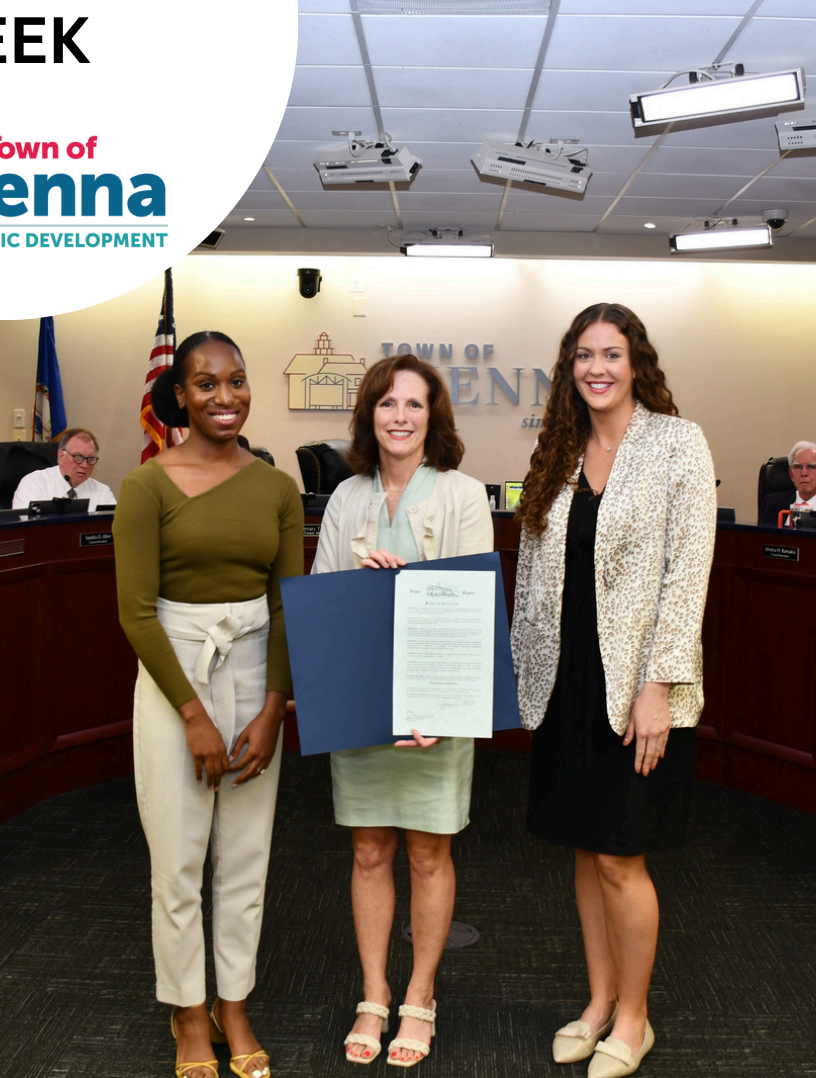




2024
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
WEEK



The logo for the Town of Vienna Economic Development features a stylized 'V' made of three upward-pointing arrows in red, green, and blue. To the right of the 'V' is the text 'Town of Vienna' in red and blue, with 'ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT' in blue below it.



Overview

This report examines the impact of Vienna's Economic Development Week 2024, from May 6-10.

The Town of Vienna's Economic Development Department (EDD or Department) produced Economic Development Week (EDW) which included events, education, and opportunities for engagement with the business community.¹

The Department had two primary goals for EDW 2024:

1. **Education:** Inform the community about economic development and the role it plays in making Vienna an exceptional place to live, work, visit, and do business.
2. **Business Appreciation:** Generate support and show appreciation for Town businesses.

Information about the Town of Vienna's EDW [programming](#), including a detailed schedule of events, was housed on www.ExploreViennaVA.com.

This [week](#) brought more new users to www.ExploreViennaVA.com than any other five-day stretch of May 2024. Of the 412 new users during May, 151 were during the five days of Economic Development Week. For reference, April saw 379 new users and June saw 164 new users.

Week-at-a-glance

Economic Development Week 2024 featured key events as well as weeklong efforts and programming. The following is a day-by-day breakdown of the week, followed by more details about each specific element.

Monday: Official Proclamation for EDW and presentation to Vienna Town Council

Tuesday: Two business retention visits²

Wednesday: Thrive Business Awards Ceremony

Thursday: GrowCon, Comprehensive Plan Conversation, and TBLC meeting

Friday: One business retention visit and a site tour

All week long: Social media campaign aimed at education and business support

Breakdown of events

Below you'll find details about each specific event or program the Department produced during Economic Development Week.

Official Proclamation + Presentation to Town Council

Monday, May 6, 2024: The Department made a presentation at the Town Council meeting to educate the community about why we celebrate Economic Development Week and how economic development improves quality of life for those who live, visit and do business in Vienna.

Mayor Linda Colbert signed an official proclamation for May 6-10, 2024, to be Economic Development Week in the Town of Vienna.

¹ The [International Economic Development Council \(IEDC\)](#), the largest membership organization serving economic developers, created [Economic Development Week](#) to recognize the work that economic development organizations do in their communities.

² Business retention visits are conducted year-round. These visits are an opportunity for the Department to learn more about a business, including understanding industry successes and challenges and how the Town can best support growth and future expansion efforts.

Business Retention Visits

The Economic Development Department conducts business retention visits year-round. During Economic Development Week, the Department invited members of the Town Council and the Town Business Liaison Committee to participate in these visits and experience the Town's business retention strategy in action. These visits are an opportunity for the Department to learn more about a business, including any future opportunities, roadblocks, or how we can best support future expansion efforts.

Individual Business Visits

The Economic Development Department visited two businesses on Tuesday, May 7:

- **Blue Ribbon Barbershop**, a new business whose owners are community engagement-minded and want to be a part of Church Street's growth and evolution into a strong commercial corridor and tourism destination.
- **Gimga Design Group**, a full-service creative agency that has operated in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area for 33 years, with more than 13 years in the Town of Vienna. We discussed where Gimga hopes to go in terms of future growth and how the Town can be supportive of that effort.

Shopping Center Visit + Tour

On Friday, May 10, the Department conducted a business retention visit with representatives from First Washington Realty, the commercial real estate agency that owns Cedar Park Shopping Center (and Maple Avenue Shopping Center). The Center is home to more than 20 businesses in the Town.

There were two components to this business retention visit: 1) a meeting discussing the future of Cedar Park Shopping Center, including opportunities and potential challenges; and 2) a site tour. FWR discussed areas they would be interested in developing placemaking opportunities.

Thrive Business Awards Ceremony

The Department, in partnership with the Town Business Liaison Committee, hosted the Thrive Business Awards Ceremony to honor 75 commercial and home-based businesses that have thrived in Vienna for 20 years or more. The awards celebrate milestones at the 20-year mark and every five years thereafter. A notable highlight of the event was the recognition of Merle Norman for its remarkable 70 years of service to the community. The ceremony was well attended, with over 40 people joining the celebration.

GrowCon

The Department collaborated with the Fairfax County Public Library and the Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives to host GrowCon, a half-day conference aimed at jumpstarting business growth, featuring experts across industries at the local and federal levels.

The Department produced 4.5 hours of programming featuring more than a dozen experts to speak on topics like Cultivating Capital for Financial Growth, Finding and Expanding Commercial Locations, Staffing for Growth, Marketing, Capital Acquisition, and more.

More than 60 local business owners and entrepreneurs attended this free, educational event.

Vienna's Comprehensive Plan: A Public Conversation on Economic Development Chapter & TBLC Meeting

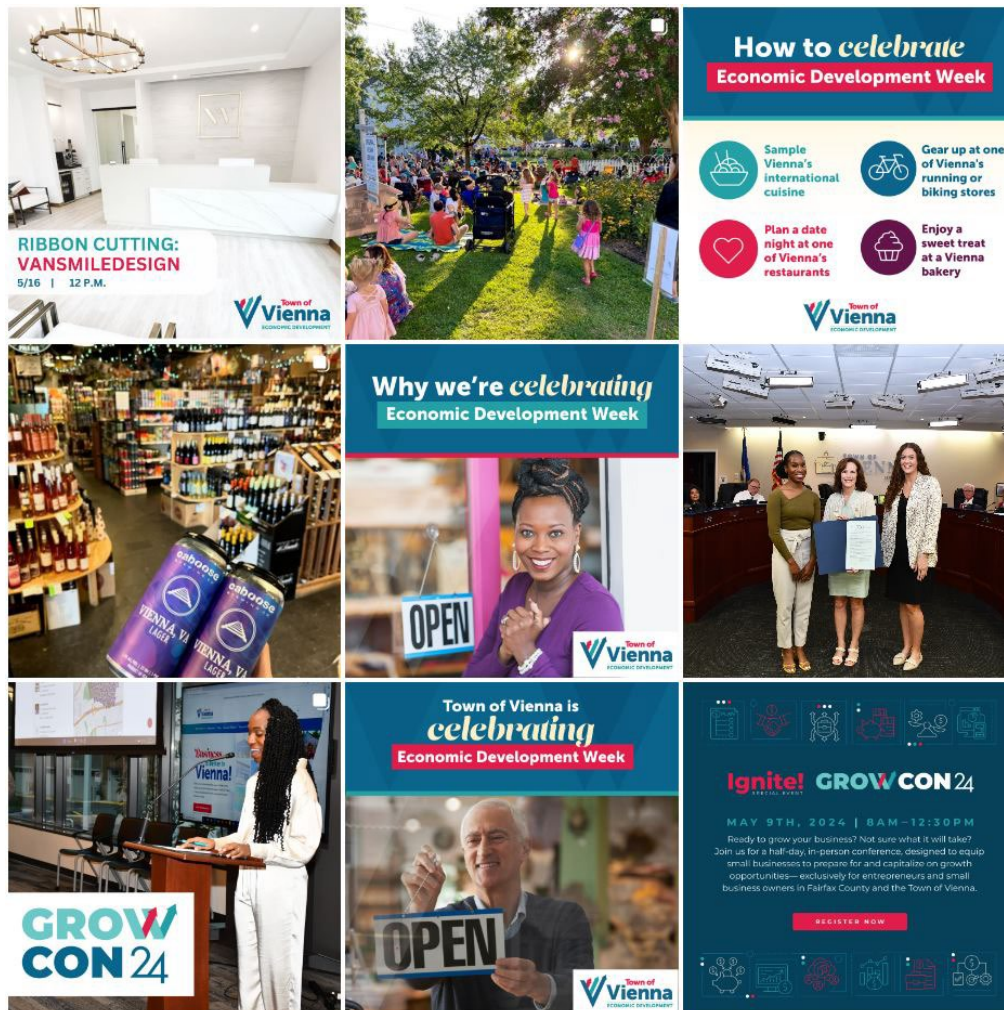
The Economic Development Department, in collaboration with the Town Business Liaison Committee (TBLC) and the Department of Planning and Zoning, hosted a public conversation about Vienna's Comprehensive Plan before the regularly scheduled TBLC meeting.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan is currently in the review and updating process. Event guests were invited to learn about the plan and provide feedback about the economic development chapter. The conversation resulted in more than 50 new comments and pieces of feedback collected and submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Social Media Campaign

The Economic Development Department's social media campaign during EDW was aimed to provide information about the week itself and the field of economic development in general, as well as to generate support for Town businesses.

Posts related to Economic Development Week reached 1,800 accounts on Facebook and 540 accounts on Instagram.



Looking Ahead: 2025 Economic Development Week

Economic Development Week was a success, and we look forward to improving the program in the future. Ideas and goals for future growth center around increasing participation at events across EDW, by Town Council members, business owners, and community members, as well as scaling elements of the program in size.

Specifically:

- If capacity allows, conduct at least two more business retention visits.
- Encourage Town Council attendance at business retention visits.
- Increase registration for GrowCon by at least 5%.
- Increase community attendance at the TBLC meeting.
- Start marketing for EDW earlier to boost overall attendance at events. Including postcards for businesses marketing the program from the start of the year.