

Hopewell/Prince George Chamber and Visitor Center Receives Virginia Tourism Corporation DMO WanderLove Recovery Grant for Tourism Marketing

HPG Chamber and Visitor Welcome Center has received \$9934 from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) DMO WanderLove Recovery Grant Program, a new grant made available to Virginia's Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) across the Commonwealth that have been heavily impacted by the novel coronavirus pandemic to fund recovery marketing initiatives. \$866,504 in marketing grant funds were awarded to 90 Destination Marketing Organizations as part of the DMO WanderLove Recovery Grant program.

HPG Chamber will use the VTC WanderLove grant funds to create a dedicated tourism web site, itineraries for visitors, a video promoting our hidden gems, scenic routes, downtown, and outdoor experiences. We will create a robust marketing program using our existing social media platforms. We know that the local community will be inspired to venture out and even encourage out of town family members to come home to wander Virginia. These tours will expose people to our area and generate return visits because of the warm welcome they will receive from our hospitality professionals.

"We are already seeing retirees and families with small children stopping at the Visitor Center to get information on places they are touring this summer. Everyone of them has said something like... we've lived in Virginia for 15 years and it's about time we get to know the state a little better and have fun exploring."

As Virginia begins reopening, there is a lot of pent-up demand for leisure travel and people are seeking safe, close-to-home destinations that allow for social distancing and access to open spaces. With this in mind, the WanderLove campaign provides travel inspiration for road trips, outdoor recreation, hidden gems, small towns, and Virginia's signature [LOVEworks program](#).

"Virginia tourism is a critical sector of our economy and has been heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic," said Governor Ralph Northam. "Getting travelers back on the road and spending money in our cities and towns is one of the fastest ways to inject dollars back into our economy and our communities. The Virginia Tourism Corporation's DMO WanderLove Recovery Grants gives localities the ability to market their destination as safe and welcoming when visitors are ready to resume travel."

Tourism is one of the HPG area's important economic engines. HPG has 16 hotels and a camp ground. The tourism and hospitality entities have also been among the hardest-hit by the pandemic, experiencing decreased revenue and job loss, along with the permanent closure of some hospitality sector businesses. A revived tourism economy can help spur new economic activity, restore jobs, and inject critical funds back into the localities.

About HPG Chamber and Visitor Center

HPG Chamber has been serving business for 100 years and has been the City of Hopewell and Prince George County's Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and the manager of the State Certified Visitor Center off I-295 featuring our unique LOVEworks since 2014. The tourism plan the DMO follows grew from the community-wide DRIVE Tourism program provided by the Virginia Tourism Corporation. To learn more, visithpg.com

About Virginia Tourism Corporation

Virginia Tourism Corporation is the state agency charged with marketing the Commonwealth as a premier travel and film destination. In 2018, visitors to Virginia spent \$26 billion, which supported 234,000 work opportunities and contributed \$1.8 billion in state and local taxes. In 2019, Virginia is for Lovers celebrates its 50th anniversary. To learn more, visit virginia.org