

[https://newsadvance.com/news/local/town-of-bedford-secures-agreement-for-business-class-hotel-near-d-day-memorial/article\\_cbcc8b1c-0aca-11ee-90d9-d78afdd4913c.html](https://newsadvance.com/news/local/town-of-bedford-secures-agreement-for-business-class-hotel-near-d-day-memorial/article_cbcc8b1c-0aca-11ee-90d9-d78afdd4913c.html)

ALERT FEATURED BREAKING

BEDFORD

## Town of Bedford secures agreement for business-class hotel near D-Day Memorial

**Justin Faulconer**

Jun 14, 2023



Land on Burks Hill Road near the entrance of the National D-Day Memorial and Welcome Center is targeted for a new development in summer 2025, according to Town of Bedford officials.

The News & Advance file photo

---

Justin Faulconer



BEDFORD — Town of Bedford officials have reached an agreement with a developer to bring the first business-class hotel to Bedford County near the entrance to the National D-Day Memorial.

Bedford Town Council voted unanimously Tuesday to authorize a performance agreement with DDay Omstay LLC, the developer. The agreement is to bring a well-known brand of hotel to the town, a requirement in ensuring a “high-caliber hotel” is attracted to the town-owned land on Burks Hill Road near the memorial, the Bedford Area Welcome Center and the U.S. 460 interchange, according to a news release from the town.

“This is something that people have been wanting for quite a while,” Councilor Bruce Hartwick said. “I think this is a good deal.”

The Town Economic Development Authority (EDA) provided assistance with additional land at the site to improve access to the parcel and additional developable area while council contributed an incentive package that includes a portion of transient occupancy tax rebates and partial real property tax rebates at a declining rate over several years, the release states.

---

## People are also reading...

- 1 Oregon brothers Tez Johnson and Bo Nix grateful for opportunity to suit up together once more**
  - 2 Your right to know: Latest property transfers and building permits**
  - 3 Lynchburg man accused of murder in wife's death says Miranda rights were violated**
  - 4 "We will not tolerate this behavior" Lynchburg NAACP Chapter to hold town hall after racist flyers distributed**
- 

In exchange for economic development incentives, the developer will maintain the chosen hotel brand, which will include at least 85 hotel rooms and a 100-person meeting room that will complement space at the welcome center. The meeting room will accommodate users such as the D-Day Memorial, which for the past 22 years since opening has attracted crowds for events, and other businesses that can host functions that bring overnight visitors.

“The meeting space is a key component of the project that fills a gap in needed gathering space in town,” Mary Zirkle, the town’s director of planning and community development, said in the release. “This asset opens up Bedford as a destination for multi-day corporate events, receptions and parties located in a safe, small-town environment adjacent to attractions like D-Day, the Peaks of Otter and Smith Mountain Lake.”

Hartwick said the new hotel will generate more tax revenue for the town in future years.

“... We need something that is going to draw more people into our town, to come to our shops and restaurants,” Hartwick said. “Every little thing we can do to draw people here, let’s go for it.”

Mayor Tim Black welcomed Amit Patel, of DDay Omstay LLC and his family, at Tuesday’s meeting.

“We appreciate your willingness to invest in our community and bring your business-class hotel to Bedford,” Black said to the Patel family. “I’m excited. I look forward to you breaking ground. I look forward to the boost it is going to provide our other businesses in town. I know it’s been a long road to this point. We’re thankful you have chosen Bedford to build this business-class hotel.”

Black also thanked Zirkle and the town’s EDA for their efforts.

“They have done all the heavy lifting and deserve all the credit,” Black said.

Councilor Robert Carson said he hopes the new hotel will bring more such ventures for lodging that council said is much needed for the area.

“We know this will provide new job opportunities, enhance other businesses, and be a catalyst for future growth,” Black said in the release.

The incentives for the target site are intended to locate a hotel close to downtown Bedford to encourage activity in the central business district while maintaining the convenience of a bypass exit, according to town officials.

“This is an economic development project that reaches many levels of business enhancement from meeting an overnight accommodation need to maximizing patronization of local businesses, particularly in downtown,” Zirkle said “The Town EDA focused on a business-class hotel as one of three priority projects in its 2021 Strategic Plan.”

Jonathan Buttram, chair of the EDA, added: “We know the importance of a business-class hotel for attracting new companies and traveling visitors to the area so we made it a priority in our plan and aggressively pursued it. ... We are glad to see it reach this point in development.”

Town officials also thanked Bedford County, the county’s EDA and the Bedford Regional Water Authority for their work toward the project.

Buttram said Bedford County is the fifth largest locality in Virginia and doesn't have a business-class hotel. "It's a big win for everybody," he told council.

The hotel is expected to open in summer 2025.

**Justin Faulconer**, (434) 385-5551

**[jfaulconer@newsadvance.com](mailto:jfaulconer@newsadvance.com)**

**By Justin Faulconer**

---

[https://newsadvance.com/news/local/a-spring-in-the-desert-bedford-town-eda-has-big-plans-for-workforce-training-center/article\\_6b17eec2-0ba8-11ee-8e59-0f7cd58f2348.html](https://newsadvance.com/news/local/a-spring-in-the-desert-bedford-town-eda-has-big-plans-for-workforce-training-center/article_6b17eec2-0ba8-11ee-8e59-0f7cd58f2348.html)

TOP STORY

## 'A spring in the desert': Bedford town EDA has big plans for workforce training center

**Justin Faulconer**

Jun 17, 2023



The former Winoia facility on Abrasive Avenue in Bedford closed in 2020, resulting in nearly 40 lost jobs. The Town of Bedford plans to acquire the building later this summer and use it as a workforce training center.

Photo credit: Town of Bedford Economic Development Authority

---

Justin Faulconer



BEDFORD — Three years after the Winoa USA business closed in Bedford, eliminating 38 jobs, the town’s Economic Development Authority has its sights on purchasing the shuttered 60,000-square-foot facility and training a new crop of workers that will bolster the local workforce.

Jonathan Buttram, chair of the EDA, spoke on those efforts before Bedford Town Council on June 13, outlining the goals and strategies of the plan to buy it and set up a training ground operation for metal fabricator workers and other skills. The Roanoke and Lynchburg region ranks in the top 10 in the nation for metal fabrication businesses.

“The Roanoke-Lynchburg region has a serious deficit in skilled labor that they need to sustain the local metal fabrication industry,” Buttram said. “It’s a big deal for this region — metal fabrication.”

Buttram told council workforce development is a major focus in the state and a vocational school that specializes in metal fabrication is an endeavor that will attract companies and make Bedford a destination for bridging the gap in training needs for employers.

---

## People are also reading...

- 1 **Oregon brothers Tez Johnson and Bo Nix grateful for opportunity to suit up together once more**
  - 2 **Oregon spoils Liberty's upset hopes in Fiesta Bowl on New Year's Day**
  - 3 **Snow and ice likely for parts of Virginia this Saturday**
  - 4 **Comings and goings of 2023**
- 

“Our solution is to create a first-of-a-kind regional workforce development center consisting of teaming with public and private industry partners in the development of a first-class teaching facility,” Buttram said.

Central Virginia Community College is highly excited about the effort and the plan also is on Virginia Tech’s radar, Buttram told council. He said there is no such facility in the region for industry-specific training, which is shouldered by companies, some of which operate in conditions that are dangerous for newcomers not familiar with those settings.

The hands-on training will be highly beneficial for teenagers who have just graduated from high school and other workers looking to get into the industry and work with machines, Buttram said. The facility on 16 acres on Abrasive Avenue in Bedford is positioned to cater to Roanoke and Lynchburg, he said.

“You almost feel obligated, to tell you to the truth, to make this into a regional training center for both of the two largest cities in southwest Virginia, and that’s what we are going to do ...” Buttram said, adding the EDA hopes to own the building after Aug. 1. “It’s a big asset for the EDA.”

Mary Zirkle, the Town of Bedford’s planning and community development director, said the town and EDA look forward to the Bedford Metal Workforce Training Center being a transformative project for Bedford.



“This asset and what it becomes will service the workforce pipeline in both the Roanoke and Lynchburg regions, and we hope even on a national level,” Zirkle said.

Buttram said the facility’s location in close proximity to a proposed Amtrak station for Bedford is beneficial for leveraging Richmond lawmakers for a new train station that would allow prospective workers to come to the town.

The EDA has been awarded \$100,000 to develop a master plan for the project, which Buttram said is targeted for summer 2024, and the authority will do further work to secure funding and seek out industry partners.

“I look at this center as like a spring in the middle of a desert,” Buttram said. “If we can start producing able-bodied employees that know how to do things, companies will come here because we will be a source of talent. Companies like that.”

The goal of filling up Bedford County’s business and industrial parks also will benefit from the project, he said. The building also lends itself to being used as a foundry, according to Buttram.

“There is no commercial skill foundry that is dedicated to training and research,” Buttram said. “All foundries are production only.”

The EDA has received a letter of support from the American Foundry Institute and Virginia Tech also is supportive of the foundry idea, Buttram said. The authority also has heard the U.S. Navy is in need of tens of thousands of metal fabrication workers and foundry-related training is a big part of that, he said.

“I think it’s a big thing for Bedford to be able to see if we can get this thing off the ground,” Buttram said. “It’s not something we have to do — this is something we want to try to do.”

The town received just more than \$316,000 to support restoration of a brownfield site at the former Winoia steel foundry, the governor’s office announced in October.

Brownfields are defined in the governor's news release as "properties in which redevelopment or reuse is complicated by the presence of hazardous materials, pollution, or contaminants." The grant money provided through the commonwealth is to help remediate these sites so they can be safely cleaned up, restored and made ready for use of something new, usually under the umbrella of economic development.

The former Winoa USA plant will be cleaned of the black dust that has been stuck to walls and other parts of the structure since the 1970s, left over from the foundry process, Zirkle said in October.

Buttram said the EDA didn't want to see the Winoa foundry site become a vacant warehouse and the authority's goal is to be a proactive body and not just a reactive one. He added the project also ties in well with another major economic development goal: the addition of a business-class hotel next to the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford.

Council voted to authorize an agreement for the hotel project with a developer just minutes before Buttram's presentation on the Winoa facility plans.

Bedford Town Councilor Bruce Johannessen said he is glad the workforce training facility project is moving forward.

"We are located in a great place between two cities," Johannessen said. "It can't help but be a good thing for the Bedford area to be involved in this."

Vice Mayor C.G. Stanley said the training facility turning out trades workers in areas such as welding and electrical is good for area employers.

"It's a big demand. It will bring people into Bedford," Stanley said. "This is much needed."

Councilor Robert Carson said the D-Day Memorial in town draws thousands of tourists each year and some of those people think about moving to Bedford.

“We have to have something to offer,” Carson said. “We have to be willing to take a chance on things that we think is going to bring people in.”

**Justin Faulconer**, (434) 473-2607

**[jfaulconer@newsadvance.com](mailto:jfaulconer@newsadvance.com)**

**By Justin Faulconer**

---

DEVELOPMENT

## A new Dunkin, Royal Farms store among projects advancing in Bedford

Justin Faulconer

Sep 11, 2023



A new Dunkin' location, a Royal Farms gas station and convenience store, a 130-unit residential development and a Hampton Inn by Hilton hotel are among several projects moving forward in the town of Bedford, the town announced Monday.

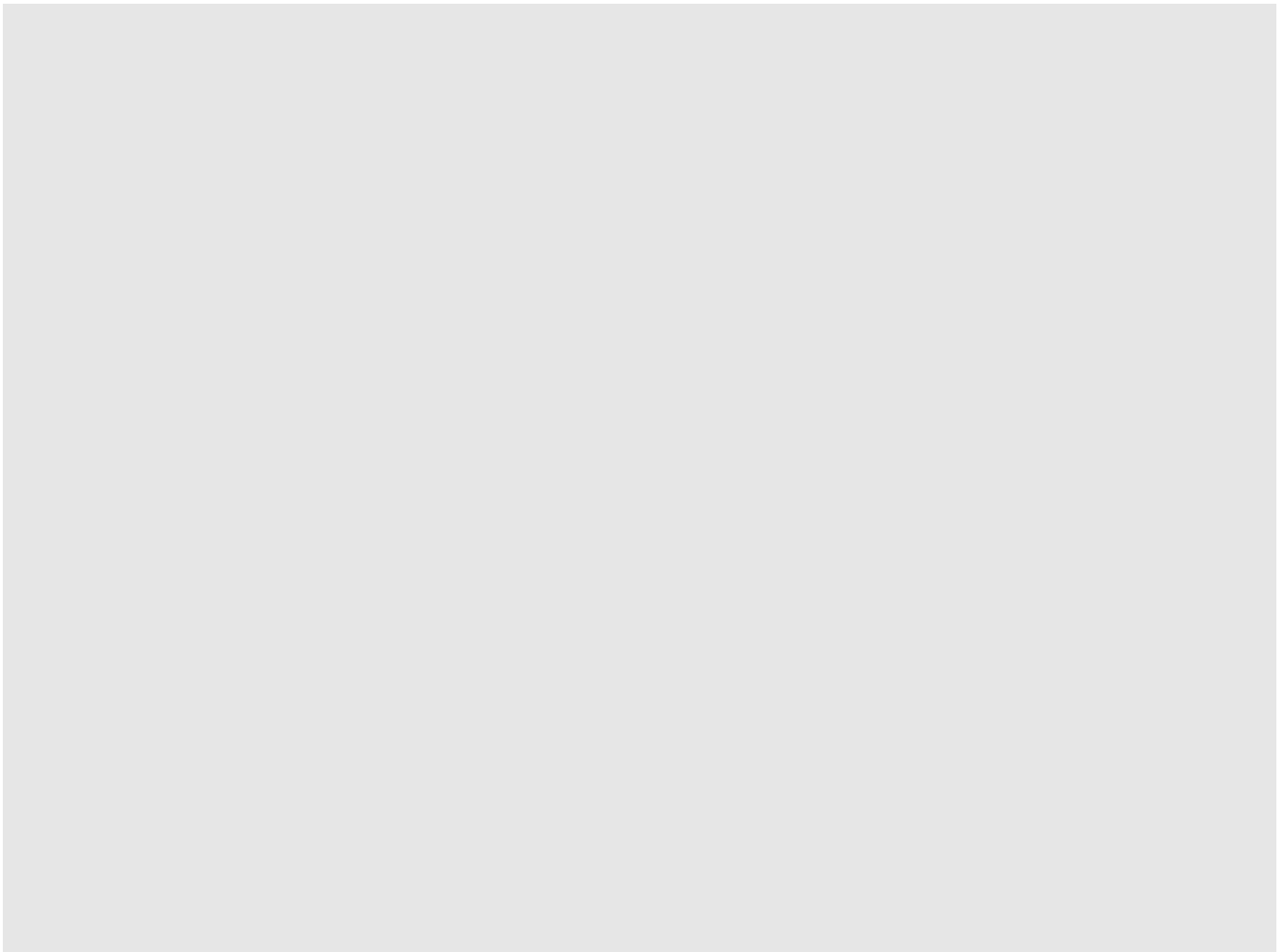
The new Dunkin' donut chain is locating on the site of the former Little Caesars on U.S. 460 across from the Walmart shopping center; the Royal Farms is under construction in the Harmony Town Center; the residential development is between Fuqua Mill Road and Independence Boulevard at Old Dominion Boulevard; and the new hotel is locating on Burks Hill Road at Tiger Trail.

“These initiatives, which demonstrate the Town’s dedication to fostering economic growth and enhancing community well-being, evolved from creating an environment that encourages private investment,” a news release from the town’s economic development said.

---

## **People are also reading...**

- 1 "We will not tolerate this behavior" Lynchburg NAACP Chapter to hold town hall after racist flyers distributed**
  - 2 A new hub for dance enthusiasts new and seasoned welcomed at Easy Speak Dance Hall & Events**
  - 3 Winter Storm Warning for Saturday in SW Virginia**
  - 4 Oregon brothers Tez Johnson and Bo Nix grateful for opportunity to suit up together once more**
- 



Royal Farms under construction in the Harmony Town Center in Bedford.

Justin Faulconer

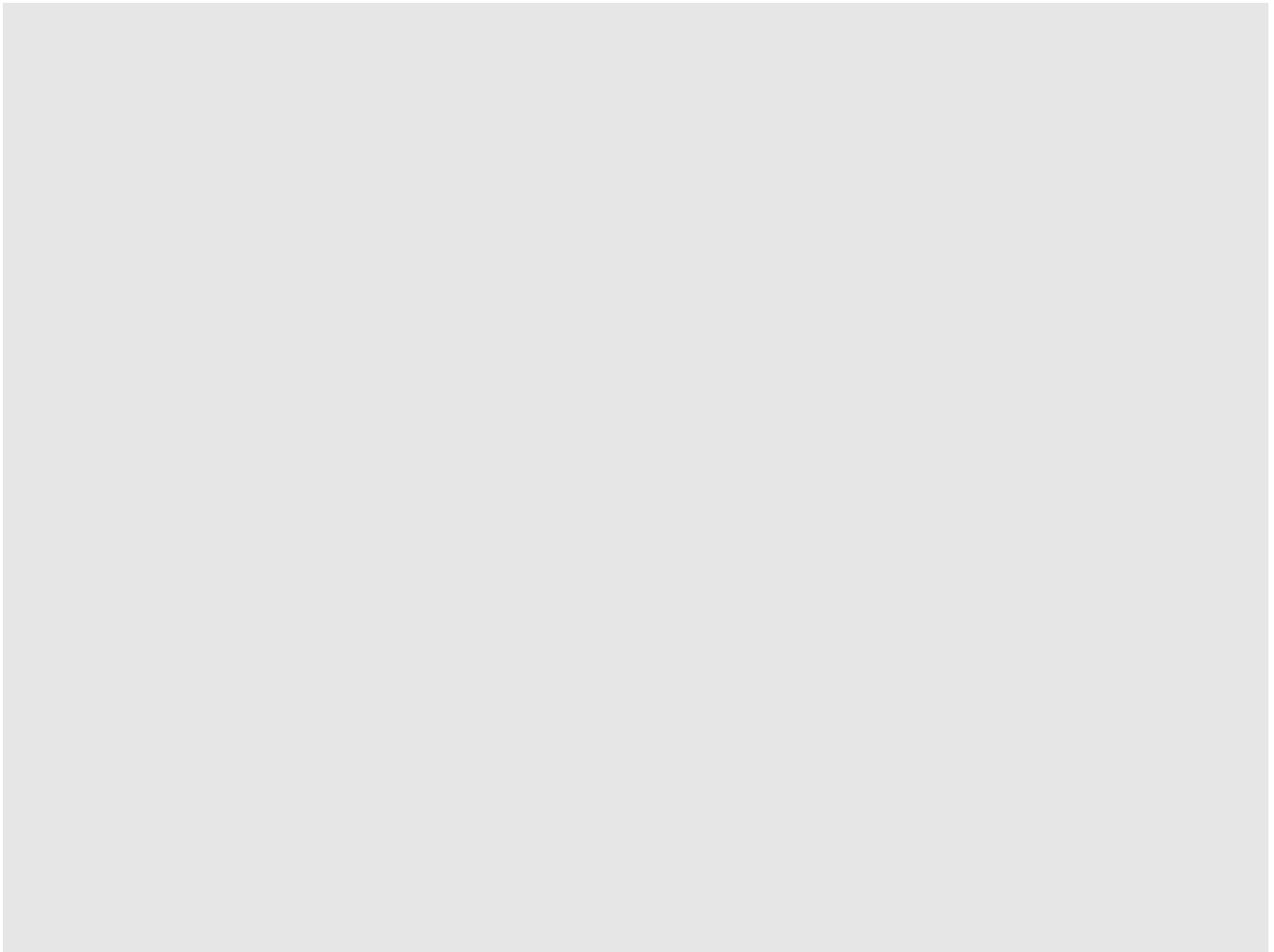
Royal Farms, known for its fried chicken and large fries, will be the Maryland-based chain's first store in the Bedford area. Royal Farms, which currently is under construction just off U.S. 460, is expected to open in spring 2024, according to the release.

The area surrounding the recently-announced Hampton Inn hotel, near the National D-Day Memorial, was rezoned by Bedford Town Council to the General Commercial, or B-2, zoning district classification.

“Although additional developments have not been discussed on this site, General Commercial zoning allows for the establishment of businesses such as restaurants, office space, and other service businesses,” the release said.

The recently-approved residential subdivision at Independence Boulevard, to be called Eastyn Crossing, will include homes priced in the mid-\$300,000 range and amenities such as a pavilion and playground. DBI Capital Group, LLC is spearheading the project and will bring in a regional builder, the release said.

“The addition of new single-family residential units will increase the number of town residents to shop in Bedford businesses, drive demand for the creation of new businesses, and bring more school-age children to Bedford County Public Schools within the Liberty Zone,” the release said. “Overall, the Town anticipates these initiatives will stimulate the local economy, increase job opportunities, and enhance the Town's appeal to both residents and visitors, further making Bedford an attractive and relevant small town.”



In this July 6 file photo, a view of the National D-Day Memorial from the Bedford Area Welcome Center is shown. A new first-class hotel is set to be built to the right of the memorial's entrance on Burks Hill Road.

Paige Dingler, Amherst New-Era Progress file

The business-class hotel was a high priority in the Town of Bedford Economic Development Authority's strategic plan, officials have said.

Mary Zirkle, the town's director of planning and community development, said the Office of Economic Development is pleased to move all four ventures quickly to fruition.

"These projects did not happen overnight, with all of them taking time to develop," Zirkle said in the release, which added: "Through patience, diligence, and resourcefulness, the Town has been committed to accelerating economic progress within Bedford."

Mayor Tim Black in the release said town officials welcome the expansion of new businesses and residential development.

“The commitment from Town Council, the Economic Development Authority, and Town staff to grow our community responsibly is starting to bear fruit,” Black said. “Bedford continues to enhance its reputation for being a great place to live, work, and invest in, and I am hopeful this momentum continues.”

**Justin Faulconer,**

(434) 473-2607

**[jfaulconer@newsadvance.com](mailto:jfaulconer@newsadvance.com)**

**By Justin Faulconer**

---