

# Hampton Roads Partnership Annual Report Highlights 2006-07



The Hampton Roads Partnership has been characterized as a convener, a facilitator, an organization that has been effective in laying the foundation for regional successes for which it rarely claims direct responsibility. The value and benefit of bringing the region's leaders to the table to discuss regional collaboration and cooperation is not always easy to measure.

Regional successes achieved in the past year as with the previous ten years of our existence were the result of the relationships formed and strengthened through the work of our organization. These relationships extend beyond our board members to include: other community organizations and industry; local elected officials; and, state executive and legislative levels of government. This is especially evident in the past year with the diligent work of many on transportation and advancing the Modeling and Simulation industry. Additionally, the Partnership can and should be credited for helping to foster a change in thinking and acting with regard to successful regional cooperation.

In reviewing the past year, there are many Partnership initiatives accomplished that translate into successes for the entire region. It is also fair to say that many of these successes may not have occurred, or achieved as much without the Hampton Roads Partnership. The following summarizes where the organization has made a difference during the past year:

## **Hampton Roads Indicators Project**

In 2006 the Partnership met with the Co-Chairman of the Council on Virginia's Future. The Council is an advisory board to the Governor and the General Assembly that supports the development and implementation of a roadmap for Virginia's future. As the Partnership prepared to update its regional plan it made sense to incorporate measures being tracked by the state as well as add measures particular to the Hampton Roads region.

Our Planning Committee identified four major areas of focus – transportation, education, and the economy with an emphasis on the port and modeling and simulation. Efforts are underway to publish a scorecard on these measures along with the statewide indicators tracked by the Council on Virginia's Future.

### **Preserving and growing Federal assets in Hampton Roads**

Impacts associated with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendations were significant for the Commonwealth of Virginia and Hampton Roads in particular, given its heavy concentration of federal assets. One of the priorities being aggressively pursued by the localities is working to retain what we have and attract new Federal government assets.

The Partnership began this process by meeting with the federal legislative delegation to present the region's concerns over transferring a Norfolk based aircraft carrier to Jacksonville, FL. There were also grave concerns over the impacts associated with closing Ft. Monroe Army Base and Naval Air Station, Oceana. Such impacts have heavy economic consequences. In addition to our treasured military capabilities, other federal assets such as NASA Langley Research Center were faced impending federal budget cuts. Our Federal elected officials and their staff members were approached by the Partnership as one voice on behalf of the region.

The Partnership is pleased to work closely with the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance (HRMFFA), an initiative of the Hampton Roads Mayors and Chairs Caucus. The Partnership assisted in developing the organization's By-laws and a book keeping system that will be transferred to the staff of the new organization. Additionally, we are a financial contributor and the Partnership President sits on the HRMFFA Board of Directors. Under the leadership of HRMFFA's Executive Director Frank Roberts, the organization has secured two Virginia National Defense Authority (VNDIA) grants and is financially strong. The HRMFFA office shares space with the Hampton Roads Partnership and we look forward to offering them support where it is needed.

### **Growing jobs and attracting capital to Hampton Roads through Modeling and Simulation (M&S)**

Modeling and simulation refers to the process of developing a mathematical model of a real world condition and then running multiple simulations to extract information concerning that model. Such information can be used to enhance the effectiveness of the processes a model describes allowing them to be made more efficient and profitable. Hampton Roads has the infrastructure and assets to develop this fast growing industry cluster.

During the past year the Partnership led a strategic planning effort involving members of the M&S industry in Hampton Roads. The effort was designed to position Hampton Roads as the nexus for command and control M&S activities. We anticipate this strategic plan will be helpful in positioning Hampton Roads for another significant state budget request which is being developed. An economic impact study by Angle Technology in 2004 was an important measure for the M&S industry. We are participating in an update of that study which is currently underway.

The Partnership coordinated and helped write the successful US Department of Labor WIRED grant that will bring \$5 Million to the region over the next three years to fund workforce projects related to Transportation Warehouse and Distribution

industries (TWD) and integrate M&S technologies into the existing TWD industries. Funds will be targeted toward assisting the Hampton Roads and Crater (Petersburg area) regions adjust to BRAC and industry plant closures (i.e., Ford Motor Co). The Partnership will administer at least \$460,000 of these funds.

The Partnership is currently involved in planning an international conference to be held annually in Hampton Roads highlighting M&S as a decision making tool across multiple industries: medicine, transportation, education/training, and homeland security/defense along with gaming and interoperability as cross-cutting tracks. The inaugural conference, known as MODSIM World 2007 will be held in September 2007 at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The Partnership allowed the use of one of its subsidiaries, the Center for Public Private Partnership (CP<sup>3</sup>), as the managing organization for the conference and the Partnership President sits on its Board of Directors. MODSIM World 2007 will bring international attention to M&S activities and opportunities in Hampton Roads and will allow the region to better compete for new business and new businesses while also raising the public awareness of this industry.

#### **Promoting better regional cooperation through regional citizenship**

William R. Dodge describes regional citizens as “citizens who recognize their future is interwoven with that of their neighbors and they must work together to address crosscutting challenges if they are to successfully compete in the global economy.”

A strong sense of regional citizenship is necessary if we are to compete in the highly competitive global economy. Therefore we must provide citizens with opportunities to become involved in issues of regional consequence. It is incumbent upon the Partnership to focus on ways to build public interest, increase involvement and build enthusiasm among our diverse population. If we are successful we will be able to sustain regional citizenship, much the same way we identify as sports fans, and collectively support the “home team” by working together as citizens of a metropolitan economy to promote local and regional prosperity and quality of life.

The Partnership is promoting regional cooperation using two approaches. The first approach focuses upon the leaders of our local communities through a Convocation of Regional Stewards. We successfully brought two elected officials from sixteen localities together who do not ordinarily meet, to begin developing relationships. The gathering of this group also provides a platform to address regional issues. Specifically, they are seeking ways to think collectively as a region, look at some of our regional and local challenges and recognize what regional actions could be used to address those challenges. After two meetings the focus is on developing a regional compact or agreement to work together on specific issues, including a regional legislative agenda. The Partnership’s efforts to bring local and state legislative officials together to address regional issues will be enhanced by the work of this group.

The second approach we launched this past year was to instill pride in our region by promoting the heritage and history our communities share. We have started this long

term goal by promoting a simple regional branding statement – *Hampton Roads: America's First Region*. Being a part of America's First Region (AFR) has been timely with the Jamestown 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2007.

A very successful campaign launched this year thanks to WAVY-TV 10. Their staff developed a series of three-minute productions highlighting every locality (17) in the region using AFR in the promotion. Over the past year we have promoted AFR on 30 static billboards around Hampton Roads as well as with the moving Admobile. We developed a historical poster highlighting "Firsts" in Hampton Roads and provided a poster to every 4<sup>th</sup> grade public and private school classroom in Hampton Roads. We appreciate and thank the businesses that sponsored these promotions aimed at raising awareness of the region, for without their support these activities would not have happened.

The General Assembly approved a Resolution, every member of the Hampton Roads Delegation signing on as a patron, proclaiming Hampton Roads as America's First Region. Our AFR Banner flew on the NASA Space Shuttle Atlantis and will be ceremoniously presented to the Partnership by members of the flight crew in September at the Virginia Air and Space Museum. These are but a few of many events that have promoted the spirit and value of regional citizenship.

#### **Hampton Roads Partnership – viewed as a convener/facilitator by the members of the Hampton Roads State Legislative Delegation**

As mentioned above, the Partnership was successful in getting every member of Hampton Roads Delegation to support a proclamation declaring Hampton Roads as *America's First Region*. The Proclamation was presented by Delegates Glenn Oder and Terrie Suit at a spring legislative reception held at the Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center. The outstanding turnout from the General Assembly Delegation for this event has been attributed to the relationships cultivated during the session.

During the General Assembly session, the Partnership worked closely with members of the Hampton Roads delegation, providing them information and support as they negotiated the transportation bill. A separate corporation called *Move Hampton Roads* was established by leaders of the Partnership to raise and disburse funds to a lobbying firm to assist during and following the legislative session. The Partnership was the point of contact for General Assembly members, local government legislative liaisons, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, and our advocacy groups on transportation. As the session progressed, we garnered unprecedented support from board members and advocacy groups for a three-point position supporting the MPO-approved Regional Transportation Plan, the resources required to fund the major projects of the plan, and the regional authority to manage the projects. We learned that the Hampton Roads Partnership had gained the reputation as the "go-to" organization and earned respect among all parties involved in the process. As Senator Ken Stolle said on Cathy Lewis' "Hear Say" radio show aired on WHRV following the regular General Assembly session, "a transportation bill probably would not have happened without the Hampton Roads Partnership".

Once the bill was passed, work continued with local elected officials from the twelve cities/counties voting to empower the Hampton Roads Transportation Authority (HRTA). The Partnership coordinated the advocacy efforts, worked directly with each Council/Board member to answer questions and address concerns, and attended all work sessions and council meetings. The Partnership's goal of a "transportation plan" was achieved when nine of the twelve localities voted to support a resolution empowering the HRTA. The Partnership currently provides support to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission in their role staffing the newly formed HRTA.

### **Promote and assist the Hampton Roads Research Partnership**

When the Commonwealth of Virginia cut the Regional Competitiveness Program funding in 2002 the Hampton Roads Research Partnership (HRRP) was forced to find an alternative means of funding its mission. Its future appeared uncertain. Through the efforts of the HRRP Executive Director Dr. Lee Beach and Partnership Director of Special Projects Robert Sharak, and HRRP members Old Dominion University, Eastern Virginia Medical School and the College of William and Mary, the Hampton Roads Research Partnership redirected its focus from a broad based science and technology organization to a team focused on strengths of the member organizations: modeling and simulation, sensors, and bioscience.

The HRRP was awarded a \$915,000 US Economic Development Authority grant (matched by another \$916,000) for promoting development of the M&S, Sensors and Bioscience industries in our region. HRRP is not only viable now but has a work plan that is geared to promoting economic development in high wage industries that are the focus of our current strategic plan and the indicators project.

### **Promoting economic development in Hampton Roads through the Hampton Roads Film Office (HRFO)**

The Hampton Roads Film Office (HRFO) was established to promote the region as a site for film opportunities and to attract production dollars to the region. Approximately \$140,000 was raised to launch the Film Office and to date it has been successful in fulfilling its mission.

In 2007, Hampton Roads was named by Movie Maker magazine as a "Region on the Rise" in its annual Top Movie Cities in '07 and listings and articles in many publications across the country. The HRFO has been instrumental in bringing over 12 out-of-town production companies to Hampton Roads, generating revenue to the region by filling hotel rooms and through other expenses associated with crew and production.

### **Strengthening the Hampton Roads Partnership as an organization**

With the guidance and assistance of a nominating committee, nine new businesses were approved for membership in the Hampton Roads Partnership at the board's annual meeting held in June. Membership representation was expanded to include representatives of K-12 education and the arts community. To grow the membership, the board amended the organization's by-laws to increase the maximum

number of members from 100 to 150. This increase was necessary as many businesses and organizations have approached our organization leaders about becoming a part of the Partnership. More and more the Partnership being is recognized by others for the important role it plays in promoting and developing the region.

Additionally, the profile of the Partnership has been visibly raised in the community and state in the past year. Many recognized our effort and significant contribution to bringing the transportation bill (HB 3202) to fruition. As mentioned earlier the Partnership was considered the lead organization in building consensus and mobilizing other groups to support this important regional need.

The Partnership helped to staff the Hampton Roads State Legislative Caucus during the General Assembly session. Our relationship with members of the delegation has improved dramatically as a result of the staffing assistance provided. Other members of the General Assembly have a greater appreciation and respect for the Partnership as well. Even those on different sides of an issue have a greater respect for the Partnership and its mission.

The Partnership is recognized by the Governor and his administration as the organization in Hampton Roads to call when they need something done. The Governor, in recognizing the stature of the Partnership and the value of a regional perspective, appointed the Partnership President and CEO to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

The Partnership has been visible at every local Council/Board in Hampton Roads, attending work sessions, public hearings, and Council/Board meetings throughout the region during deliberations over the Hampton Roads Transportation Authority. Personal meetings or phone calls were held with nearly every Council/Board member and the Partnership provided briefing papers and other support materials to those members looking for answers to questions about this very complicated issue.

In summary, the Hampton Roads Partnership is positioned to play a prominent role in the region and we have very important work ahead. As we develop our plans for next year and beyond, among the many opportunities before us are our Regional Citizenship initiative, creating a regional compact, the Indicators Project, M&S industry cluster development, and our role in the transportation discussion as it matures. Equally important will be expanding opportunities to involve the general public in discussions around regional issues with an ultimate goal of helping regional citizens become regional stewards of the incredible assets that we enjoy in Hampton Roads – America’s First Region.

## **Hampton Roads Partnership**

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