



# Hampton Roads Partnership Board of Directors Retreat Summary "Leading the Way Forward"



The Williamsburg Lodge  
September 17-18, 2009

*"It was worth every minute."* – William Harrell, Chesapeake City Manager

*"...terrific retreat that raised the bar on how to put the HRP board to work for the benefit of the region!"*  
– Jim Babcock, First Virginia Bank (retired)

*"I'm impressed by the level of thought going into this."* – Terry O'Neill, Hampton Planning Director

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Quotes like these have been received about this year's Board Retreat, signifying renewed interest and revived energies about the Partnership's and the region's successes. Working together, we have accomplished much and will accomplish even more.

## **Thursday, September 17, 2009**

**Welcome Reception & Dinner** - Provided by Colonial Williamsburg. CW Foundation President Colin Campbell was on hand to welcome everyone, and the Fife and Drum Corps led the way to dinner in grand colonial style.

HRP Co-Chairs David Bernd and Jack Ezzell guided us through the evening with a special welcome from The Honorable Jeanne Zeidler, Mayor of the modern City of Williamsburg, and invocation by Williamsburg City Manager, Jack Tuttle.

HRP President and CEO, Dana Dickens, welcomed everyone as well, including Admiral John C. Harvey, Jr., the new Commander at U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

The evening's highlight was a traditional colonial meal, and the appearance of **The Honorable Patrick Henry Governor of Virginia**. Governor Henry served as the first post-colonial Governor of Virginia from 1776 to 1779 and in 1784 to 1786. He entertained with his wisdom, wit and anecdotes: *How many Virginians does it take to fix a broken wagon wheel? Well, disliking change, Virginians would sit down to talk about how good the old one was rather than change the wheel.*

Despite the presence of two modern day women in politics, Williamsburg Mayor Jeanne Zeidler and Hampton Mayor Molly Joseph Ward, Governor Henry explained that colonial women shied from politics as they had the hardest, most crucial work of all, that of homemaking and raising and educating the children.

And, proving that transportation issues have come a long way and yet not very far, Governor Henry explained that in his day, it took 17 days to travel from Boston to Hampton Roads. An astonishing feat of only 11 days of travel was experienced during the battles of Lexington and Concord, the first military engagements of the American Revolution. It took an average of 2 days to travel from Richmond to the colonial capital at Williamsburg. Commerce, even in Governor Henry's day, knew no boundaries.

Governor Henry also shared with us that the 13 original colonies were the birthplace of the concepts of working together for strength, speaking with one voice and engaging citizen support. With his mighty passion for working together as a region and as a nation, we could almost hear him cry, "Give me Liberty (Regionalism), or Give me Death."

## **Friday, September 19, 2008**

**Administrative Reports** - HRP Co-Chair David Bernd called the meeting to order. HRP President and CEO, Dana Dickens, reported on behalf of the **Board**

### **Development Task Force:**

In relationship to the question of the size of the HRP Board, the Task Force has confirmed the size as appropriate and encouraged growth up to the 150-person limit allowed by the bylaws to include broader geographical and industry representation within Hampton Roads. The Task Force also encourages more regional CEO-level engagement, especially Partnership founders, military commanding officers and Fortune 500 companies. More will be reported at the December Board meeting.

**Budget and Audit Report** - HRP Treasurer Robert Shuford explained that the final FY09 Budget shows that the Partnership has been very conservative in these trying economic times. A carryover was approved by an unqualified audit due to the economic climate and lack of significant earnings. The Executive Committee reviewed this year's proposed budget. With a motion from Mr. Shuford and second by Mr. Charlie Henderson, the budget was approved as presented to the Board.

**Annual Review** –Dana Dickens provided the President's Report after thanking HRP staff for an extraordinary amount of work provided this year on behalf of the Board:

In 1996 when the Partnership formed, it's mission was the same as it is today: to provide leadership to focus on the strategic issues that will improve Hampton Roads' competitive position in the global economy.

Over the years, HRP has made a significant impact by convening, collaborating and working with others, including Board members as partners funding the work. A few of the accomplishments include:

- **Modeling & Simulation** instruction benefitted from infrastructure funding with a similar budget package being prepared for Senator Mark Warner;
- **Regional Competitiveness Program** monies leveraged to acquire workforce development grants;
- **Opportunity, Inc.** was formed to focus on workforce training ranging from computer skills to truck drivers;
- **Square One**, the first "training the trainer" regional program focused on early childhood education, was founded; in 2008, the proportion of "school ready" South Hampton Roads kindergartners rose above Virginia's average;
- **Hampton Roads Film Office** was launched as a central point of contact for the rich sites in Hampton Roads for film opportunities; recently "*eish Safari*" traveled here from Dubai, UAE for a 30-day shoot which provided a \$2.5 Million impact to the economy; the program will be aired at least 31 times in the Middle East, providing international exposure for the region;
- **Hampton Roads Research Partnership** was formed and funded to leverage higher education and federal labs here promoting technology transfers and high tech commercialization;
- **Hampton Roads Technology Council/Hampton Roads Technology Incubator** were founded and funded, HRTC, the first and only regional tech-advocacy organization and HRTI enhancing regional entrepreneurial culture;
- **Port of Virginia**, our greatest economic engine, was impacted by funding for dredging to secure our competitive position among east coast ports;

- **Hampton Roads Transit's** formation was encouraged as the first merged transit system in America from the Tidewater and Peninsula Transits of old.

The collaborative efforts of the region have led us to positive gains in Gross Regional Product (GRP) over the past thirty-five (35) years, with an average of 3.4% growth. Few MSAs can boast this same steady growth.

Today's activities of HRP include:

- **Communication Outreach and Engagement**, using the HRP-run regional blog, <http://SmartRegion.org>, an electronic newsletter and social media, bringing understanding of the region's interdependence to our 1.6 Million citizens with Board-exclusive information forthcoming; and
- **Accountability, Value Proposition and Performance Measures**, using the HRP-run website, <http://HamptonRoadsPerforms.org>, as well as a new *Annual Impact Statement* and *Dashboard*. The *Dashboard* provided in Retreat packets represents measures of the 2007 Strategic Plan and will be adapted to the new measures identified from the strategic planning process underway (CEDS or "*Vision*").

A few highlights from the new ***Dashboard*** include:

- Improving Standard of Living (at 1.9%, Hampton Roads has the fastest growth rate among Virginia's metro areas since 2000);
- Improving total cargo tonnage moved through the Port of Virginia; and
- Improving employment, wages and economic impact of the Modeling and Simulation industry.

As for "**Leading the Way Forward**," the theme of this year's retreat, HRP with the help of partner municipalities and many, many other regional organizations, institutions, industries and individuals, will harness the collective strength and energy to move the needle farther and faster toward our goal of improving Hampton Roads' competitive position in the global economy.

The work we do today and in the future represents a *Vision* for Hampton Roads. We are in transition, a transformation. As our Co-Chair, David Bernd, and others have recommended, HRP will move from a staff-driven model to a committee or task force-driven one. With over 125 people already participating in the *Vision* process and the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) grant approval, *VisionHamptonRoads* is moving forward with great strides and focus.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) -**

Dwight Farmer, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Executive Director and CEDS/ *Vision* Co-Chair, and Doug Smith, Kaufman & Canoles Consulting, presented a synopsis of the on-going process, including a timeline of key accomplishments, work updates and organizational structures. Highlights:

- Having a CEDS in place allows localities of Hampton Roads to be eligible for federal EDA funding. The CEDS should be regarded as a living, breathing document, a *Vision*, an economic roadmap for development in the region.
- The most compelling case for development of the *Vision* is that the region needs to be more competitive on a national and international level. We have powerful economic assets and potential. For example, we have:
  - The world's best natural harbor and the third largest Port on the east coast with the real potential to be number one;
  - World class railroads, distribution centers and highway system;

- Access to two-thirds of U.S., 200 Million people, within two-day drive;
- World class workforce with high-tech capabilities; and
- Leadership and vision with a “fire in the belly” to work together.
- The public, as well as the private sector, must be engaged in its development.
- The “process” consists of analyzing the current situation and then establishing a consensual set of goals and objectives by looking at investment priorities and probable funding sources.
- Clearly defined and meaningful performance metrics are then set in place to measure regional and locality successes.
- Human capacity is an important component. Representation on the Strategy Committee is diverse and broad-based, beyond just the business community.
- CEDS allows the region flexibility. The document is important, but the “process” used to build it and maintain it is more important. It’s about regional “buy in.” It’s about developing a process we can use in the future, too.
- The *Vision* is about hanging onto assets we have, growing them and leveraging them for other opportunities.
- Work has been divided into four (4) subcommittees: Federal, Tourism, and Port as major drivers of the Hampton Roads economy, and Opportunities (formerly known as Diversification) which is addressing other ways to grow the economy and reduce our dependence on federal spending.
- Cross-cutting issues are addressed within each of the subcommittees. These issues are: Education & Workforce, Infrastructure/Land Use/Technology, Energy & Environment and Quality of Life.
- An initial SWOT Analysis (Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat) was reviewed and is included in packets (see attached).
- On September 16<sup>th</sup>, a presentation was made to HRPDC. We are by no means at a finished product yet. HRP Board members have the opportunity to influence and shape the outcome with their input.
- For a deeper dive into the process and for full transparency, the website <http://VisionHamptonRoads.com> is tracking all activity, from participants to meeting notes to related information, presentations, data, etc. including an extensive “Resource Library” providing one online location for citizens to use.
- Next steps:
  - Take recommendations and observations from today’s Break-out Sessions back to Sub-Committees for consideration and refinement;
  - Meet with the region’s Directors of Economic Development to incorporate their regionally-focused plans;
  - Complete draft CEDS document;
  - Submit draft to EDA for preliminary approval;
  - Submit draft to citizens for Public Comment Period;
  - Present final CEDS document to HRPDC and HRP;
  - Finalize CEDS document with approval by Strategy Committee;
  - Submit final CEDS document to EDA for approval; and
  - Present to each jurisdiction after final EDA approval.

## **CEDS Sub-Committee Reports**

### **Port & Maritime – Russell Held, Co-Chair**

“Hampton Roads will be the Premier East Coast Port of the Future.” With great representation from all related sectors, passionate discussion and expertise, the Port Sub-Committee has been a prime example of interdependence. We have a good thing going with this group, and we want to keep it going. Our preliminary discussions bring us to this point:

Our first objective is to maintain the Port as an economic engine, not just for Hampton Roads and Virginia, but for the nation as well. To do this, we must:

- Have adequate surface transportation to reach inland markets;
- Leverage economic development tools or create new ones;
- Develop our workforce from fork lift drivers to managers of shipping lines;
- Have ease of navigation of our waterways, including the “Virginia class” ships of the future (aka “post-Panamax” or “Suez class”)

Our second objective is to grow and enhance the Port and be the port of call of choice for all major shipping lines by maximizing our competitive advantages. Despite our regional transportation issues, we have the opportunity to become a “Hub Port,” or a “feeder port” for other East Coast Ports. We can handle more military cargo; we can support the energy industry.

Our third objective is to achieve better public awareness and appreciation of the Port. We need to create better transportation infrastructure within land use plans while being good stewards of the environment especially our waterways. A stronger message is needed to include international focus to enhance recognition of Hampton Roads.

Our fourth objective is about growing other Port-related entities, the Navy, cruise business, ship repair, etc. The Port & Maritime focus is not just about port cargo. There are many symbiotic industries and organizations. There are also emerging industries to address such as mega yacht repair and maritime construction.

Our sub-committee has lots of momentum. Our Achilles’ heel is regional transportation, and our competitors can use this against us.

### **Tourism, Arts & Culture (TAC) – Rob Cross, Chair**

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, Governor Kaine announced the annual economic impact figures for tourism in Virginia. As one of Virginia’s largest industries, tourism generated \$19.2 Billion in revenue, a 2.8% increase over 2007, and supported over 200,000 jobs.

Leaders from a wide range of regional organizations, Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVBs), performing arts, hotel-motel associations, cruise industry, attractions, etc. have come together to work on the TAC sub-committee. Our preliminary discussions bring us to this point:

“Hampton Roads will be recognized as the premier tourism destination as well as arts and culture center between Washington and Atlanta” is our preliminary goal. The breadth and depth of TAC in Hampton Roads is our best kept secret. We have world-class venues and are headquarters to state organizations such as Virginia Arts Festival, Virginia Opera and Virginia Symphony.

We must educate the public and our community leaders as to the value of TAC and create a sustainable TAC effort with consistent funding and a more coordinated effort. We have challenges: the Travel Promotion Act of 2009 will provide funding for marketing to international travelers, but the Virginia Tourism Corporation's funding is \$25 Million behind their numbers from the mid 90s.

TAC is a quality of life issue, too. Many of our largest companies cite our TAC offerings as a primary reason for locating here. We have a lot going for us. Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Colonial Williamsburg have all achieved certification as eco-friendly travel destinations. But we also need to find out what the community will or wants to support and augment our marketing strategies. And, we need to take better advantage of what we have; example: Fort Monroe.

We need to promote a brand promise that Hampton Roads is a "gateway to a Virginia vacation." We need to develop an extended season to better utilize our capacity, especially the April-May and September-October time periods. Virginia Arts Festival was created as a regional product to help fill April-May period. Now, 13 years later, 25% of increased attendance is from out of our local market.

Getting to and getting around Hampton Roads is critical to TAC. Air travel from New York to Atlanta and Washington, DC, especially for guest artists is critical. Studies show that travelers to the oceanfront or Colonial Williamsburg, visit more than just a single destination when they come here.

We must pool our resources. Tour operators visiting here recently show us that we're not telling the story together. We're not in competition with one another; we complement each other.

### **Federal / Military – Roy Whitney, Chair**

"Hampton Roads will be the Premier Mission-Ready Region hosting various Federal Centers of Excellence." At 40% of the region's economy, the federal / military sectors are important to economic health and diversity. Hampton Roads aka "Pentagon South" for the military sector requires political will for success.

The Sub-Committee has discussed what we're doing now in the region and how we can go about creating our "vision," solving problems as a region with a regional perspective. Our preliminary discussions bring us to this point:

To retain what we have here, there are different challenges to address in stages, such as the Augustine Commission Report and its affect on NASA and Jefferson Lab upgrades that will allow JLab access to multi-Billion dollar upgrades. Right now, we don't always have a clear picture of what the next incremental step is and a regional "vision" is imperative.

To attract new investments and expand on what we have, transportation is a key issue, especially to the military. And, we need to have a strategy in place for alternative energies. There are lots of opportunities; are we going after the right one? We must have "plug and play" processes in place to determine the right next step.

We must achieve public awareness and appreciation of the value of this sector. Ancillary activities must be addressed as well as quality of life, education pipeline from pre-K to higher ed, and integration into the private sector. We do a fair job now of capturing exiting military here, but is it a focus in the entire region?

We must address having a plan to support the educational efforts and communication tie-in with key technology capabilities, inc. M&S.

### **Opportunities – Art Collins, Chair**

We've been charged with finding new, innovative ideas. There are a lot of very smart people working on this, including 6 PhDs on the sub-committee. Our preliminary discussions bring us to this point, focused on four (4) areas:

1. Technology-We must appreciate the breadth and depth of what we have here, such as EVMS, robotics, JLab, etc. DoD has provided a great "seed" that we must nurture. And, we need to appreciate how our cross-cutting issues fit together as well.
2. Energy-Sen. Frank Wagner has spear-headed this effort sharing with us the nuclear potential of Northrop Grumman AREVA, wind, and cutting edge technology like algae biodiesel. While any of these may be controversial, they all must be explored.
3. Environment- You know what they say about Virginia: "We start slowly and then taper off." Not this group. We recognize that the region must be leading edge and not wait until others venture forward to join in.
4. Healthcare

We're unique in Virginia with a one-term Governor. It's tough work to develop continuity with on-going initiatives. But, reasonable people with good intentions, including bringing together all of our jurisdictions, can work together. The current economic climate won't last forever. We must take advantage of and be prepared.

Good jobs follow smart people; we have opportunities in our own backyards with university-generated research and private industry. We must develop an entrepreneurial support system to bring new ideas to market.

**Break-out Sessions** - Doug Smith laid the "ground rules" for these sessions by explaining the key questions addressed so far by each sub-committee. A task sheet was placed in the binders for each sub-committee as well as their preliminary draft Goal(s)/Objectives/Strategies and a synopsis of work accomplished within each to date.

### **Port & Maritime – Allegheny Room A**

Russell Held/Bobby Bray, Co-Chairs; Greg Grootendorst, Facilitator

**Participants:** Regina Brayboy, James Brown, Bill Cofer, Joe Dorto, Herb Haneman, Dewey Hurley, Maurice Jones, Jim Oliver, Bob Sharak, Andrew Sinclair (HRP)

Draft objectives and strategies were reviewed. If the goal is to be the premier port on the East Coast, then the first objective needs to be broadened to include the U.S. not just Hampton Roads and Virginia. We should also think broadly of the harbor to include the military. It was clarified that all uses and aspects are intended under the term "port" and allowed that it may need to be better defined. Language should be added to include the multiple aspects of the port and its economic engine.

The question was raised as to what workforce skill gaps needed to be addressed. Alliance, TX serves as a good example for workforce training with it being all encompassing and done on-site at the intermodal park. Current workforce training needs are being met, and TCC is offering good programs.

It was asked what the second strategy under the first objective meant: “Explore tax structure opportunities while maintaining sound fiscal policies that support the Port including economic development tools and Right to Work State and avoiding poor political choices.” It is mainly in reference to container fees and other localized taxes.

The suggestion was made that there may be too many things listed for one objective. There may be some issues that better fit under objective three and added that NC and SC have very favorable tax structure for companies, something that VA should pursue. It was agreed that VA has a “messy” tax structure which benefits the port but is hard on host localities which makes a vibrant public awareness campaign necessary for people to know the value. The point was made that the port is more than just a local asset, so more than just local support is needed.

It was noted that VPA is limited in what it can do as a state agency, but that HRP could play the role of advocate in Richmond and avoid appearing as a special interest. It was lamented that the public doesn’t understand how VPA, VIT, and the port industry work. VPA was praised for the success it has had with the toughest issue (labor relations with the ILA) and thought that by comparison, public awareness should be easy. Current public relations efforts underway at VIT were discussed, but the public still sees the port as a user of assets and not an economic engine. Support from political leadership is necessary, and the tax structure needs to change in order to reward the host communities.

Public relations need to be a sustained effort. VIT can’t promote itself but must go through outside organizations like VMA, etc. Other current efforts to promote the port include green initiatives and the “Keep It In Hampton Roads” campaign. VPA can do education but not lobbying.

The port is more than the 3 VIT terminals and containers: there are 52 other terminals in Hampton Roads which do more tonnage than containers. In raw tonnage, Hampton Roads is the largest port on the East Coast already. It was recommended to investigate the national “strategic ports initiative.”

#### **Recommended Changes:**

Objective 1: Maintain a diverse Port as an economic engine for the Hampton Roads region, the Commonwealth of Virginia, **and the nation.**

\*\*\*Note: there was some question of whether “diverse” was the correct word to capture the idea of multiple elements and activities in the Port and bears further deliberation.

Objective 1; Strategy 2: **Ensure government at all levels** maintains sound fiscal policies that support the Port including economic development tools, status as a Right to Work state, and avoiding poor political choices.

\*\*\*Note: Tax incentives and workforce training were listed as specific economic development tools worth mentioning. There was also some question of the value in stating “avoiding poor political choices”; this could bear further wordsmithing.

Objective 3: **Gain public support** and appreciation of the economic value of the Port to the Hampton Roads region, the Commonwealth, and the nation.

Additional Strategy: Engage public in issues of importance to the Port.

\*\*\*Note: It was suggested by at least one member that HRP lead this effort.



## **Tourism, Arts & Culture (TAC) – Allegheny Room B**

Rob Cross, Chair; Larry Filer, Facilitator

**Participants:** Jim Babcock, Mark Duncan, Angelica Light, Doug Powell, Lesa Roe, Bert Schmidt, Robert Shuford, Jack Tuttle, David Tynch Jeanne Zeidler, Missy Schmidt (HRP)

Chair Rob Cross gave a brief overview of the sub-committee's work, highlighting:

- Both for profit and nonprofit representatives sit on the sub-committee
- A recurring theme has emerged that marketing TAC should be telling our story outside the region as a region; tour operators that visit are surprised at what we have here and we need to do a better job
- Also, telling the story better inside the region is needed to garner support as TAC comes under attack during budget cuts as "incidental" or "luxury" rather than the economic engine it really is
- An honest analysis if the region's venues here is being done, and we must focus on not "cannibalizing" each other; also we must have supports in place once a venue is built to insure sustainment
- TAC is an economic engine in two (2) ways:
  - Creating jobs and direct economic impact
  - Creating Quality of Life as indirect impact for business to be drawn here

### **Discussion:**

- Goal is confusing as worded as it sounds like we're marketing ourselves to one small geographic area only while tourists from the Northeast are very important, too; after much discussion, this was offered: "Hampton Roads will be one of America's premier tourism, arts and cultural destinations."
- Marketing/branding ourselves as the Hampton Roads region:
  - The strength of Virginia Beach is everything else they have behind them, i.e. the rest of the region
  - Don't undermine existing well known brands, though, like Virginia Beach and Colonial Williamsburg, but associate Hampton Roads with them in some way, in ads, etc.
  - Use "Hampton Roads" rather than "Southeast Virginia" which dilutes the name adopted by the region
  - Integrate the various tourism marketing efforts in the region; don't get hung up on the name
  - Objective # 3-"Promote a Brand Promise as the gateway to a Virginia vacation" should have priority and be moved to #1
  - Joint branding does occur, such as the "Historic Triangle" i.e. Williamsburg, Yorktown and Jamestown
  - Other efforts are disjointed
  - Why add "Hampton Roads" to individual marketing unless it means something
  - At issue is who are we trying to sell to? Primary markets are in the Northeast. A survey done there 15 years ago found that 48% knew the name Hampton Roads and could name specific cities, too; due for another survey
  - Universities co-brand with localities and with Hampton Roads in their marketing
  - Perception is that tourism industry is "holding out" on regionalism

- Style Guides for local media use “Hampton Roads” now
- AAA Tour Books include a “Hampton Roads” section
- The tourism alliance, consisting of the region’s CVBs, should be recognized and encouraged to continue/expand collaboration as a vehicle for sustaining regional actions and activities
- Support and community awareness is important, too
  - Tourism is an “export” industry
  - Objective #1 is a priority, creating coordinated, sustainable funding
  - Continuing education, especially in customer service training, i.e. anticipating needs of visitors and provide a quality experience
  - Without a good product, good promotion is a waste
  - “Gateway to a Virginia vacation” promotes the wealth and breadth of the experience here; multiple destinations are important to visitors
  - The tourism alliance brings professionals together; they should lobby together as well, esp. with state legislature, and speak with one regional voice
  - Self-help strategies must be implemented, too, and don’t rely on the state for help; Williamsburg, Norfolk and Virginia Beach have dedicated funding sources that goes into their respective marketing funds, but what about other communities?
- What are we missing?
  - Does “culture” include sports as well?
  - Are we providing everything that our citizens want?
  - What about cross-over opportunities for other industries? Science focus? M&S focus? Virtual experiences?
- Transportation and lack of mobility are serious threats
  - Lack of air service
  - Bottle necks in ground transportation
- Metrics for TAC
  - Include surveys of visitors to venues, attractions on customer satisfaction
- Attracting investment in Objective #2
  - A process must be developed for asking the region what they want/need
  - If voices aren’t being heard, how do we capture them?
  - We need actionable strategies in place

### **Federal / Military** – *Allegheny Room C*

Roy Whitney, Chair; Deborah Dowd, Facilitator

**Participants:** Frank Bowers, Doug Dwoyer, Carolyn Meyers, Mac McReynolds, Albert “Bull” Mitchum, James “Pete” Peterson, Owen Pickett, Leonard Sledge, Randy Wheeler, Donna Morris (HRP)

Chair Roy Whitney briefed the group on the sub-committee’s approach to developing the goals and strategies to be considered today. He referenced the general questions that were adapted for each sub-committee as well as other specific questions that were also useful in developing the draft goals and strategies. Some of the other questions the sub-committee considered include:

- What are emerging opportunities within the federal sector? Do we have a regional strategy to address the emerging opportunities?

- Are we training our politicians – giving them a channel of communications, educational support, and/or government support?
- How do we take advantage of our proximity to Washington DC?
- How do we measure how we are doing?

Draft goal and strategies were consider as to whether we are on the right track, have the right balance and if there are gaps or issues we have missed.

**Make International connections:** “Look from the region out,” a perspective we may not have considered. Start by asking the question: “What can Hampton Roads do on a larger scale, starting with the assets that are here?” Examples:

- NATO Research Facility is located in Norfolk;
- Having a fiber optic port or “cyber port” allows us the opportunity to connect to Singapore, Rotterdam, or Dubai;
- Use our relationship with large companies that have a regional presence (and a major investment ) like InBev to help promote our region internationally.

**Quality of Life:** Hampton Roads is a wonderful place to live, with an excellent quality of life. U.S. demographics are changing and we must not forget the social impacts and be prepared to manage them. Take advantage of the fact Hampton Roads is a great place to retire – we can be a retirement destination!

**Research Capabilities:** Hampton Roads does not have a R1 level university (R1 was a classification used by Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching to rate research universities), but the Hampton Roads Research Partnership brings area institutions together to promote their collective research capability.

**Strengthening Military and Federal Presence:** How much focus is placed on preserving and growing the region’s federal labs and military assets? Localities (particularly those localities with military facilities within their boundaries) typically have someone on staff assigned to watchdog federal DoD transformation efforts (i.e. BRAC).

The Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance (HRMFFA) was put into place by the region’s Mayors and Chairs in 2006 to address issues relative to preserving and enhancing federal assets in the region. HRMFFA receives a good deal of its funding from the localities in the region. They contract with Aikin Gump to advocate on behalf of the region on Capitol Hill. Funding seems to be the biggest problem. Even the state’s commitment was not at a level as it should be. The state (VNDIA) program was not considered particularly effective.

It was recommended that the scope of work done to preserve and enhance our federal assets be upgraded. There is a culture within the military that needs individuals who understand that culture, those having served at a high rank (i.e., 4-Star)

**Wireless Region/Education:** Regarding the region’s fiber connectivity, a goal or strategy should be to provide wireless access to every household in the region. It was mentioned that 15 states offer students access to virtual high school. A key challenge is determining who pays for it. The Virginia Beach Public Schools has a virtual learning program called e-Learning (<http://www.vbschools.com/distance/profile.asp>).

**Support for non-military federal assets:** The NASA Aeronautics Support Team (NAST) is a not-for-profit coalition of citizens and aeronautics researchers dedicated to the advancement of aeronautics research at the National Aeronautics and Space

Administration (NASA) and other agencies. The NAST coalition is funded by community and private contributions. They determined fairly quickly that our local legislative delegation knows very little about NASA. Bottom line – state and federal legislators need to become knowledgeable and actively engaged in supporting non-military federal assets like NASA Langley Research Center and Jefferson Lab. We no longer have representatives on key Congressional committees to help us with the issues impacting these facilities.

**Revolutionary – not evolutionary approach needed:** Our overall goal to be world class is good, but the strategies offered were incomplete, more incremental. We must be bold and that will require a change in the business model. The region’s current condition was described in football terms as “each player is running his favorite play.” We have the players, not the playbook. We must integrate the things we do.

Are we trying to convince ourselves we are world class? We need a revolutionary (not evolutionary) approach. Our strategies must support the “world class” vision including the required financial and political commitment. Resource is a way to get us there. We are on the edge, but waiting to jump.

**Other key points made by participants:**

- Another goal to consider is requiring graduates to be bi-lingual.
- We must also work to stay ahead of the trends or at least be able to anticipate them.
- If we are setting benchmarks to measure our progress, what is the benchmark for world class?

**Flip chart notes:**

1. Look at Hampton Roads in an international context
  - a. If we are a leader, then we need to communicate/associate with other leaders
  - b. Must keep our fingers on the pulse with what leaders are doing (Example: InBev)
2. Psycho-social aspects must be considered (quality of life)
3. Research universities are key
4. “Wireless region” – every household accessible
5. Strengthen HRMFFA with 4-star level leadership to gain competitive edge
6. Recognize emerging trends that affect our existing federal facilities
7. Take advantage of the fact Hampton Roads is a great place to retire – we can be a retirement destination!
8. Telecommuting/telework can help transportation
9. Virtual high schools are worth pursuing
10. Graduates need to be bilingual
11. Build Congressional awareness/engagement of value of non-military federal assets
12. Need revolutionary, not evolutionary approach! Resource—execute!

**Opportunities** – *Colony Room C*

Art Collins, Chair; Doug Smith, Facilitator

**Participants:** Dan Aston, Jim Batterson, Lee Beach, David Bernd, Bill Butler, Jack Ezzell, Dwight Farmer, Richard Glasser, William Harrell, Mike Kerner, Terry O’Neill, Rick Pearce, Robin Ray, Doug Russell, Digby Solomon, Ken Stepka, Alan Witt, Joyce Thacker (HRP)

**Reaction to Goal:** Hampton Roads recognized internationally as host region for Centers of Excellence fueled by its culture of innovation and economic diversity.

- Needs wordsmithing

- Regarding “internationally” - We are not even recognized locally or nationally; Virginia doesn’t recognize and value HR. There are 3 regions recognized in the state as drivers – Northern VA, Richmond and Hampton Roads – others see HR as a “Backwater.”

**Change economic diversity to economic opportunities:** just like the sub-committee; not only diversify but we need to strengthen things we’re already doing.

**Branding:** We need to stay focused on the branding effort to achieve the recognition deserved. True, citizens and others don’t recognize the value in HR, but we need to jump past that and if what we are doing is world class, the branding and recognition will follow. Examples – Medical simulation training, M&S in general. Medical residency training using simulation could be elevated to make us a destination for that type of training – world class. Connect the dots we have in place. There is a lot going on. There has been a lot of talk about branding in all the committees.

If we don’t have “world class” housing, we can’t attract “world class” companies and workforce. *Brand* could include that we have the best quality housing. Our graduates are going to NC and DC – lifestyle is an issue. We have eliminated our manufacturing base in this country, but we do make quality housing – 50% of the GNP is related to the housing industry.

**Why not expand the America’s First Region campaign** to Hampton Roads is First In – housing, culture, etc. “HR – First and Finest Door to America” i.e. build on Port’s *Gateway to the World* theme. Our problem is no one knows Hampton Roads. It’s harder to brand HR. We’re sprawled over a large area and it’s hard to understand Hampton Roads for new people. Pick 3 or 4 things to brand.

**However, if we are successful with our centers of excellence, the branding will follow.** We need to understand, branding won’t happen quickly. It will take years. I don’t cringe about branding the region as a whole but if we don’t have a ground swell of interest from the citizens, it’s very difficult for the politicians. Our city is only as good as the region we’re in.

**Economic diversification:** How do we bring in the concept of growing what we have? Encouraging entrepreneurship – working with existing businesses, helping them grow.

**Objectives:**

1. **Region of Excellence for clusters of cutting edge technology based on business innovation and education;**
2. **Region of Excellence for developing and implementing energy solutions;**
3. **Region of Excellence for environmental distinction;**
4. **Region of Excellence for healthcare.**

We all know there are divisions between the cities and counties in HR. We need something everyone can champion that’s not divisive (example: transportation) like a professional sports team. Look at what’s happened with ODU football. We need something that will bind the region together. How do we get people to be citizens of “Hampton Roads”?

The political set-up in Virginia makes it very difficult for localities to work together. If the citizens don’t buy-in first, political divisions will remain.

Remember the failed Metropolitan Area Projects Strategies (MAPS)?

What I'm hearing is that we need a "sense of place."

It's important to put together a real regional plan. I see this effort as better than most things that have happened before. This could be a real regional plan. Perhaps we can get the citizens to appreciate what this could do for them and for their grandchildren and can get pressure on the legislators to give us the authority to do something. The localities must work together.

The only entity that can raise taxes is the General Assembly. Branding is something we can do together. It doesn't have the opposition that other issues have.

**What's missing in these big categories:**

- EDUCATION
  - Change to K-20, not K-12 – better yet make it Pre-K-20. We must transform our education model for our classrooms. This needs to become the 5<sup>th</sup> point not simply education under #1. There was general agreement that Pre-K-20 needs to be separate point. There is a huge push to change to simulation based classroom teaching.
  - We have an opportunity to be out in front on simulation-based teaching. Teach the teachers. That's the problem. There aren't teachers training in the "new way."
  - Can we define ourselves as a world-class region with our current K-12 education?
  - Can we transform our education system and become known for the way education is delivered in HR. We have things in place – distance learning at ODU, WHRO. Let's leverage what we already have.
- MEDICAL
  - We must diversify. With EVMS and M&S, we can become known as a destination for medical training and education; why not healthcare, too? EVMS is the best kept secret in the State. Could we make healthcare an opportunity? We need to discuss this in-depth.
  - Should a sub-group under Opportunities for healthcare be formed? Mike Kerner of Bon Secours could chair.
  - With all the other things going on in the region, why healthcare specifically? It's a leading employer in the region. We have building blocks in place – EVMS, M&S, ODU, HRRP clusters.
  - How about calling it healthcare/life sciences? It's a portal for synergy. Robotics can be included as well. It's a quality of life issue, too.
  - There is a difference between this being a quality of life issue and a diversification issue.
  - As has been said, HR can be a destination for medical training and education and as a result, destination for healthcare in the Duke or Johns Hopkins model – diversification.

## **Reports to Group from Break-out Sessions** - Cathy Lewis, Moderator

### **Port & Maritime** – Bill Cofer, Reporter

- “Port” needs a better definition; there are 52 terminals; do we know what the “Port” really is?
- Port of Virginia has grown from #30 to #3 in container traffic; we are #1 in tonnage on the East Coast; we need a better handle on the true scope of the Port
- We need public and legislature awareness to maintain our competitive advantages, i.e. “right-to-work,” no user fees, no taxes on business licenses, etc.; It’s important to maintain sound fiscal policy
- The world is coming to Hampton Roads because of the Port; let’s take advantage of more than just “drive” tourists
- Other Southern states have economic development incentives for Port users, but Virginia doesn’t
- Rather than “achieve public awareness,” we want to “gain public support”

### **Tourism, Arts & Culture (TAC)** – Larry “Chip” Filer, Reporter

- The goal needs wordsmithing to remove the perceived geographical barrier from the verbiage currently used; consider “Hampton Roads will be recognized as one of America’s premier tourism, arts and culture destinations.”
- It was agreed that the four objectives of (1) Maintain/Sustain, (2) Grow, (3) Branding /Awareness and (4) Transportation were appropriate for this sector
- Branding is important as a “Hampton Roads” footprint is desirable, but don’t undercut the well known brands like “Colonial Williamsburg” and “Virginia Beach”
- While we recognize the existing collaboration as a strength, it needs to be addressed to a greater extent with opportunities to cooperate and collaborate among localities and attractions, venues
- We recognize the existing rail on the Peninsula but it needs to be augmented to improve reliability and frequency
- Private sector transportation has been ignored (example: cabs, rental cars, shuttles)
- Think about aligning attractions with industry partnerships, for example using high tech capabilities like M&S
- Workforce development is good but adding continuing education, especially in customer service, is needed; creating brand ambassadors for the region
- Need a regular proactive process whereby regional visitors are surveyed for satisfaction levels and “what’s missing”
- Consider a global strategy, leveraging existing international companies (example: INBEV, Maersk, other Port-related companies) with built-in potential marketing access; develop Public Relations Partnerships
- TAC entities need self-help strategies for funding issues
- Under Objective 3 on the “Brand Promise,” a strategy should be added: develop integrated tourism marketing for the region as a whole and/ or as natural sub-groups, for example, by geography or themes
- Under Objective 4, address existing public transit enhancement needs -HRT, WAT

### **Federal / Military** – Al Mitchum, Reporter

- Our first challenge is that if we want to be considered “world class,” we need to start acting “world class; the localities need to agree to act as a region and lookoutward

to learn from others how to function at the level to which we aspire. Examples: Port of Dubai, NATO

- Address the psycho-social needs, quality of life; try to keep exiting military here or have them return here when they retire
- We must have wireless in every household; use existing telecommunications to our advantage; we have a natural e-Port here; who else competes against us in this realm (example: Omaha, NE)
- Emerging trends: world class athletes without a common play book can't advance the team; we must build on existing relationships to develop our common, regional "play book"
- Expand our focus from evolutionary to revolutionary
- Weakness in education was discussed especially access to electronic media, virtual high schools, etc.
- Our biggest competitor hired a prior Navy 4-Star to advance their regional priorities

### **Opportunities – Doug Smith, Reporter**

- Concern was expressed over the goal saying we would be "recognized internationally" when we're not recognized "nationally"
- Growing our own workforce should be a separate Objective rather than a strategy; expand educational reach to Pre-K to 20 and emphasize the value of STEM; address how learning is delivered
- Objective 4 should be expanded to "healthcare and life sciences" and a strategy should be added to attract R&D here because we provide a component of healthcare not available elsewhere; consider giving Healthcare it's own sub-committee because it's that important
- Branding efforts; how are we telling our story? Are we a "backwater"? do we generate world-class outcomes first and then the "branding" will follow?
- Consider building on the America's First Region brand; develop/market ourselves as First in Housing, First in Innovation, First in Energy, First in Learning
- Hampton Roads is a "Gateway"
- The sub-committee has developed the right general objectives
- Energy is very important; policy level decision-making is required
- Environment objective needs more work
- We have issues with our "sense of place" (for example, do we have world class housing that the captains of industry would live in?)
- The MAPS project failed in the past due to the Dillon Rule; the General Assembly won't let us do what is needed



## **Follow-up Discussion** - Cathy Lewis, Moderator

Three themes appear to be emerging from across all sub-committees:

1. **Transportation**
2. **Workforce development and education**, i.e. transforming education for the development of a world class workforce
3. **Public awareness**

**Healthcare:** Also appears to be a critical issue for promotion, from transforming our lifestyles to insure a healthy workforce to developing a less expensive workforce due to their health lifestyles and in terms of delivery and management of healthcare. How do we promote this?

**Scope:** The goals discussed today are not small goals. They are audacious. Are they realistic? You can't do everything at once. What is most important to start first? This group of leaders is the only group that can put forth the Centers of Excellence concepts and lead the transformation of education piece.

**Education:** With education transformation, everything else falls into place. It is a paramount priority. The potential for significant impact is great and requires an outside group for help. What do we need in our next generation? How do we get there? The high school experience hasn't changed much in the last 50 years. Is the Partnership the group that takes this on? Or wants to take it on? What are our fundamental principles? Increase the graduation rate, since far too many drop-out of high school and college, which is a tremendous waste of resources? Can we affect this in the short term?

Improving graduation rates is not enough; we need fundamental change and it must be supported with adequate funding. Our current education materials are still based on our knowledge of science in the 60s. New discoveries are not even included in the curriculum. We can't continue to create an underclass that will be a drain on society. We have programs in place for the kids at the very top and very bottom; what about the majority who are in the middle and falling behind? We do a disservice to our kids if we only focus on small, achievable metrics.

**Regionalism:** What about the people, places and products we know nothing about? There appears to be a general lack of awareness of what's going on in the region.

**Branding:** This effort is key in a down economy; smart money is placed on those who increase their marketing efforts and build their market share while others retreat. We haven't done a good job of telling the Hampton Roads story inside the region. Branding will create future opportunities, but it is a costly endeavor. The cities may financial incentives to use "Hampton Roads" and soften their geographical boundaries. We all know there are spill-over effects; it may just be a case of education needed. Branding cuts across all of the goals and sub-committees; we need a groundswell from citizens.

## **Lunch Discussion with Wrap-Up / Next Steps** - Cathy Lewis, Moderator

**HRP's Committee Focus:** This new structure is “absolutely the way to go.”

***Vision Hampton Roads Strategy Committee:*** Should be kept in place and responsible for implementing the strategies as part of the final plan. Don't dissolve them. Research best practices from around the country to truly make this *Vision* we come up with a dynamic, living, breathing plan. Build in accountability to demonstrate progress.

We have good players in the region, but we haven't had a regional game plan for leadership to use. *Vision Hampton Roads* is the game plan we've needed. We need to avoid silos, though. HRP is needed to integrate the plan and provide the “glue” and communication that the cities and other organizations need to make this work.

Progress must be well-measured and track back to elected leaders. Do we need a steering group to keep the progress moving forward with the main industries identified?

**Building a Creative Class:** Pick an industry and decide that we're “it.” Convince youth that “it” is where the jobs and the money are. They'll tell other people. To grow here we need to attract new people here, disproportionately. Focusing on what people are looking for is how to create wealth. In New York, it's Wall Street. In Los Angeles, it's Hollywood. What is our “it”?

**Transformation of Education:** This is so important that a separate sub-committee should stand up. There is a virtual high school under creation by WHRO, owned by the region's school systems.

## **Meeting Adjourned**