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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ONLY

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

### ***“Vision Hampton Roads”***

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process provides Hampton Roads with a roadmap, i.e., a regional plan, describing economic conditions for the Hampton Roads metropolitan region and includes broad strategies and specific actions of prioritized importance that will position Hampton Roads as a leader in the global economy.

The CEDS experience in Hampton Roads is about creating an ongoing economic development process that is embraced by our region. Vision planning has placed Hampton Roads on a path to regional transformation by embedding a working process in all that we do... to think, live and act regionally.

**With proper foresight, continuous planning and dynamic economic development,  
Hampton Roads will be recognized as a region fueled by  
Innovation, Intellectual and Human Capital, Infrastructure and a Sense of Place.**

For more information on CEDS, visit:

<http://www.eda.gov/PDF/CEDSFlyer081706.pdf>

To follow the process in Hampton Roads, visit:

<http://VisionHamptonRoads.com>

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## ABSTRACT

Title: 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
“*Vision Hampton Roads*”

Author: Hampton Roads Partnership

Subject: Multi-Year Planning and Development Program

Date: January 2010

Regional  
Planning

Organizations: Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP)  
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Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)  
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Content: The strategy is an economic development planning tool intended to aid local governments in decision-making. The document provides an analysis of regional and local economic conditions within the Hampton Roads region, defined as including the ten (10) cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg; the six (6) counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York; and the town of Smithfield. Projects, programs and initiatives have been identified that will address economic development in Hampton Roads.

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## Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>4-8</b>
	A. Regional Summary .....	4
	B. Sponsorship .....	4
	C. Approach .....	5
	D. Themes .....	5
	E. Goal .....	6
	F. Implementation .....	6-8
<b>II.</b>	<b>Process Overview</b> .....	<b>9-16</b>
	A. Background detailing Community and Private Sector Participation .....	9
	B. Capabilities of the Hampton Roads Partnership / Evolution of Economic Planning in Hampton Roads .....	9-13
	C. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) Approach ...	13-16
<b>III.</b>	<b>Background</b> .....	<b>17-27</b>
	A. The Region’s History .....	17
	B. The Region’s Demographics .....	17-18
	C. The Region’s Economy .....	18-20
	D. The Region’s Military Presence .....	20-21
	E. The Region’s Port and Harbor .....	21-22
	F. The Region’s Tourism Industry .....	22-23
	G. The Region’s Housing Market .....	23-24
	H. The Region’s Transportation System .....	25
	I. Summary and Complete Regional Profile .....	26-27
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities</b> .....	<b>28-31</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Vision Hampton Roads Goals and Objectives-Defining Regional Expectations</b> .....	<b>32-54</b>
	A. Federal Objectives, Strategies and Actions .....	33-36
	B. Port / Maritime Objectives, Strategies and Actions .....	37-40
	C. Tourism / Arts & Culture Objectives, Strategies and Actions .....	41-44
	D. Opportunities Objectives, Strategies and Actions .....	45-54
	1. Technology-based business innovation and education	
	2. Coastal energy solutions	
	3. Environmental distinction	
	4. Health and life sciences	
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities: Identifies regional projects, programs and activities designed to implement the Goals and Objectives of the Vision:</b>	
	Suggested Projects .....	<b>55-58</b>



## Table of Contents (continued)

<b>VII.</b>	<b>Vision Hampton Roads Plan of Action</b> .....	<b>59-74</b>
	A. Alignment .....	59-60
	B. Plan of Action Organizational Chart .....	60
	C. Strategic Component .....	61-66
	1. Innovation	
	2. Intellectual and Human Capital	
	3. Infrastructure	
	4. Sense of Place	
	D. Tactical Component .....	67-69
	1. Federal	
	2. Port / Maritime	
	3. Tourism / Arts & Culture	
	4. Opportunities	
	E. Integrating CEDS with the State's economic development priorities .....	70-74
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Performance Measures:</b> Used to evaluate the Planning Organization's successful development and implementation of the CEDS .....	<b>75-104</b>
	1. Business Start-ups	
	2. Employment Growth	
	3. Modeling & Simulation	
	4. Net Migration	
	5. Personal Income	
	6. Port / Maritime	
	7. Poverty	
	8. Research & Technology	
	9. Unemployment	
	10. Workforce Quality	
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Public Participation</b> .....	<b>105-111</b>
	A. Purpose .....	105
	B. Guideline .....	105-106
	C. Definitions .....	106
	D. Outline (Template) .....	106-109
	E. Timeline .....	110-111
<b>X.</b>	<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>112-134</b>
	A. Strategy Committee membership .....	112-113
	B. Sub-committee membership .....	113-116
	C. SWOT Analysis and Data Sources .....	116
	D. Questions each Sub-committee addressed .....	116-118
	E. Resource Library contents .....	118
	F. Missing research .....	118-119
	G. Acronyms legend .....	120-121
	H. Governmental support and buy-in .....	122
	I. Public Comment Survey .....	123-133
	J. Public Responsiveness Summary (at completion of Public Comment) ..	133-

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. Regional Summary

Hampton Roads is a region that depends on its maritime-rich geography including all the blessings that come with it, such as commerce derived at its ports, tourism and real estate drawn to its beaches, and the waters that allow it to be one of the most concentrated naval strongholds on the planet. Those same geographic attributes, however, bring with them interconnected vulnerabilities that, if not managed and planned for properly, have the potential to overpower the positive.



The region is increasingly vulnerable to changes in defense spending including the military dynamic of an increased reliance on “boots on the ground” over naval ships and naval aviation. Our magnificent geography demands a transportation infrastructure that is reliant on a complex and expensive system of bridges and tunnels - a system of bridges and tunnels that today is inadequate. That inadequacy results in traffic congestion that has negative ripples throughout our economy. Firms will not move here, and some will not stay here, if they cannot move their product in and out of the region. Tourists will not come here if they cannot easily get into and move around the region.

Hampton Roads has dealt with the closure in 2006 of Ford Motor Company’s truck plant in Norfolk with more than 3000 workers, and in 2011, Fort Monroe, home of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), closes as a result of 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) actions. The recession of 2009 has also placed a strain on our economy with reductions in workforce within a number of large firms such as Smithfield Packing Company (650) and TeleTech (532). International Paper announced that they will close their Franklin based paper mill beginning in January 2010 in a move that will eliminate about 1,100 jobs. The closing could trigger an additional 2,400 job losses in the region. These reductions, coupled with the threatened movement of an aircraft carrier group and closure of the Oceana Naval Air Station, all place strains on the region’s economy.

## B. Sponsorship

In early 2009, a group of regional organizations and community leaders began collaborating to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (“*Vision Hampton Roads*” or simply “*Vision*” <http://VisionHamptonRoads.com>). This *Vision* will provide Hampton Roads with a roadmap, i.e., a regional plan, including broad strategies and specific actions of prioritized importance that will position Hampton Roads as an impactful leader in the global economy.

The Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP, <http://HRP.org>), chartered in 1996 to “focus on the region's strategic issues for the purpose of enhancing our competitiveness in the global economy with resulting income and job growth for our citizens,” is the lead organization in this process. Comprised of the chief elected officials of seventeen communities, private sector, education, military, and labor representation from both South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula, the Partnership is the logical lead for the planning effort. The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC, <http://HRPDC.org>) is playing a critical role in the CEDS process as the co-sponsor.

### **C. Approach**

Hampton Roads' approach to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process is to build upon previous regional planning efforts and to leverage existing regional organizations to provide both leadership and support. The *Vision* Strategy Committee decided that by focusing on the three main pillars of the current Hampton Roads economy – The Port, Tourism and Federal Assets - and analyzing opportunities to diversify the regional economy, we can better identify the assets we have, determine how we are doing and identify those areas for improvement.

The Strategy Committee and the four Sub-committees established – *Federal; Port / Maritime; Tourism / Arts & Culture; and Opportunities* - worked very deliberately to build upon previous regional strategic planning efforts, many of which were championed by the Hampton Roads Partnership. Those previous plans included:

- *Plan 2007*
- *Regional Competitiveness Program*
- *2004- A Call to Action*
- *2007 Strategic Plan and Metrics*
- *Hampton Roads Performs*

### **D. Themes**

As the Strategy Committee and its Sub-committees continued their work of developing Goals, Objectives and Strategies for enhancing and diversifying the regional economy, broad themes emerged in nearly every discussion. Those themes or consistent topics of concern included:

- Adequate Transportation
- Regional Awareness
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education
- Innovation Economy

During the course of their deliberations of these themes the Opportunities Sub-committee encouraged the larger group to look at the Brookings Institute's *Blueprint for American Prosperity*. The basic premise of the *Blueprint* is that economic development occurs without regard to jurisdictional boundaries. Instead economic development occurs on a regional level and big demographic, economic and environmental forces rewrite the rules that drive prosperity within regions. These forces assign enormous value to a relatively small number of assets, and reward those regions where these assets come together.

According to the Brookings Institute, those assets include:

- Innovation – new products, processes and business models
- Human Capital – education and skills that further innovation
- Infrastructure – transportation, telecommunications, energy distribution
- Quality Places – special mix of distinctive communities

## E. Goal

Given the similarity of our broad themes to those championed by Brookings and the clear connection of those themes to previous regional planning efforts, the Strategy Committee agreed to create *Vision Hampton Roads* in a manner that recognizes and builds those regional assets identified by Brookings. The overriding goal for *Vision Hampton Roads* became:

**With proper foresight, continuous planning and dynamic economic development, Hampton Roads will be recognized as a region fueled by Innovation, Intellectual and Human Capital, Infrastructure and a Sense of Place.**

## F. Implementation

The process of implementation will actually be one of alignment. The intent of this process is to align the missions and objectives of many regional organizations behind the implementation of the plan and process that is *Vision Hampton Roads*. The Hampton Roads Partnership in tandem with the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission will work to support and facilitate this alignment of organizational missions and strategies with the objectives and strategies of *Vision Hampton Roads*.

Previous economic development planning efforts have positioned the Hampton Roads Partnership to take the lead role aligning the missions and objectives of the many organizations that will impact the success of *Vision Hampton Roads*. Different organizations will actually drive different components of the *Vision* itself while other organizations will support and enhance those efforts in a more tactical manner. The implementation of *Vision Hampton Roads* will have a “Strategic Component” and a “Tactical Component.”

The Hampton Roads Partnership will serve as the Program Manager for both the “Strategic” and “Tactical” components of the *Vision* Action Plan.

The “Strategic Component” will address the long term strategy development for the enhancement of the big demographic, economic and environmental forces of:

- Innovation – new products, processes and business models
- Intellectual and Human Capital – education and skills that further innovation
- Infrastructure – transportation, telecommunications, energy distribution
- Sense of Place – special mix of distinctive communities

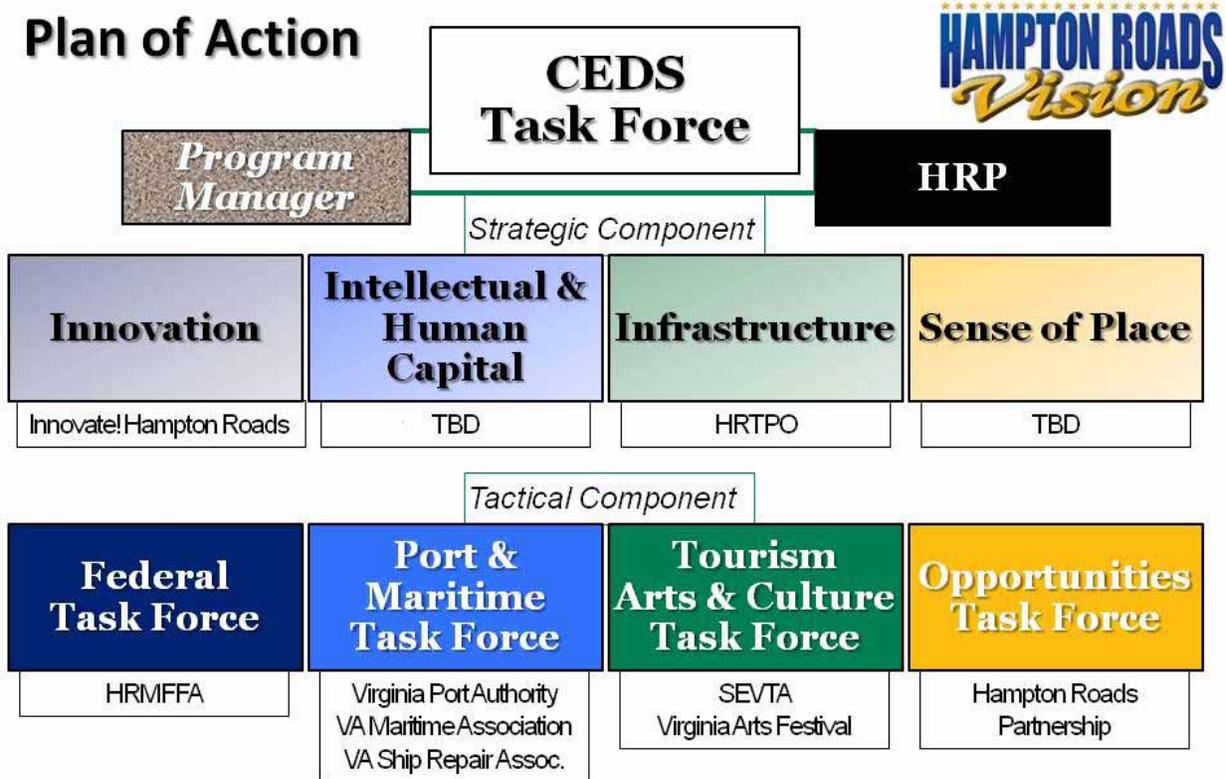
The Executive Committee of the Hampton Roads Partnership will develop and monitor this plan of action which will have a distinct strategy for each of the four forces.

The “Tactical Component” will address the implementation of specific actions that will have the greatest short term impact on maintaining and growing the three (3) pillars of our regional economy and nurturing those regional assets that have the most realistic chance of diversifying our economy. The “Tactical Component” of the *Vision* will be driven by these Task Forces:

- Federal
- Port / Maritime
- Tourism / Arts & Culture
- Opportunities

Each Task Force will be driven by a specific regional organization that is working in that arena. We will build upon regional activities and initiatives that are already underway.

The Organizational Chart below depicts the relationship between the Partnership and the various organizations that will play leadership roles within the strategic and tactical implementation plans:



The CEDS experience in Hampton Roads is about creating an ongoing economic development process that is embraced by our region. *Vision* planning has placed Hampton Roads on a path to regional transformation by embedding a working process in all that we do...

... to think, live and act regionally.

