

**Hampton Roads Partnership  
Strategic Plan Final Report  
January 16, 2004**

**I. Transportation**

**A. Goal: Develop a strategy to improve mobility in Hampton Roads**

- The Partnership successfully mobilized twenty-four local and regional stakeholder groups in 2000 to advocate for better transportation in Hampton Roads. The effort focused on five key points in support of the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan. To assist in these activities the Partnership:
  - Funded a comprehensive transportation study entitled *Better Transportation: A Foundation for a Hampton Roads Region that Works in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (1999) as a primary source document for a public advocacy program and other communications to better inform and involve business, citizen and elected leaders in building consensus on regional transportation matters.
  - Conducted a region-wide public opinion survey (2000) which confirmed Hampton Roads residents overwhelmingly view transportation as one of the region's top challenges.
- The Partnership, with support of the twenty-four stakeholder groups, was quite active in the advocacy of General Assembly actions which established the Joint Sub-committee to study funding of unfunded transportation projects in Hampton Roads (2001) and allowing for the regional transportation referendum (2002). To assist in these activities, the Partnership:
  - Actively participated in meetings of the Joint Sub-committee during 2001.
  - Conducted a second public opinion survey in 2001 to determine interest and support for possible transportation funding solutions.
  - Formed *Virginians for Transportation Solutions*, a coalition with Northern Virginia to advocate for the passage of legislation that would allow regions of Virginia to put to a referendum the question of whether to raise funds specifically for transportation solutions in their area.

- Upon the passage of the referendum legislation, the Partnership was active in organizing the campaign effort and bringing together the team to manage it. To support its efforts, the Partnership, with assistance from the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission staff, developed critical educational tools that served as the basis for the referendum campaign collateral materials, speeches and presentations. The Partnership:
  - Developed and disseminated 1,500 hard copies of *Transportation Challenges and Opportunities*, a briefing book designed to educate the public on details surrounding the transportation referendum. This information was also frequently downloaded from the Partnership's website.
  - Printed and distributed 7,000 HRPDC-produced informational brochures on the referendum.
  - Printed and distributed 31,500 one-page information sheets.
  - Purchased print and online advertising featuring facts and frequently asked questions regarding the transportation referendum that ran September 5, 2002 through November 5, 2002 throughout Hampton Roads.
- The transportation issue remains a top legislative priority for the Partnership. Our 2004 legislative agenda calls for increased transportation funding and the appropriate considerations for such.

**B. Goal: Advocate quality, affordable air service as well as the efficient operation of facilities in the region.**

- The Partnership monitored the work and outcome of two major airport studies as outlined below:
  - Partnership President Jimmy Eason served on the Hampton Roads Airport System Study Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee was established in 1998 upon the recommendation of the Hampton Roads Partnership and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. The Advisory Committee strongly supported regional air service objectives, including more non-stop flights, lower fares, greater use of jet aircraft, and more convenient times for flights to primary origin and destination markets. The study, completed for the Advisory Committee in 1999, did not suggest that closing or relocating airports would further any of these objectives. The study also looked at the governing

structure of the current two-airport system. The Advisory Committee and its consultant concluded that an ongoing working group representing the Boards of both, Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport and Norfolk International Airport, as well as staff should be established to encourage effective communication, as well as complementary marketing and capital development strategies. This model was preferred over an actual governing board merger. The ongoing working group has been established by the Executive Directors of the Airports.

- The Virginia Department of Aviation Eastern Virginia Airport System Study (EVASS) report was completed in 2000 with a final report submitted to the FAA and various local government entities. The purpose of the EVAS study was to identify the long-term commercial aviation needs of Eastern Virginia, evaluate the ability of the area's aviation system to meet those needs, and present recommendations for meeting them. The final report recommended a governmental entity in Hampton Roads consider pursuing the development of a regional airport located in the vicinity of Isle of Wight County and, upon its completion, the existing airports would be used by other aviation users. No Hampton Roads entity has indicated any plans to pursue the recommendation of the EVASS and the FAA does not intend to pursue the recommendation of this study.
- The Partnership continues to monitor issues as they relate to air service in the region, determining the level and extent of its involvement where appropriate.

**C. Goal: Promote a Hampton Roads connection to the northeast and southeast corridors of the high-speed rail development on the East Coast.**

- The Partnership appropriated funds to help further efforts to bring High Speed Rail to both sides of Hampton Roads, supporting activities of Virginians for High Speed Rail as well as the Southeastern Economic Alliance. These leadership organizations have accomplished the following:
  - The establishment of a state rail development authority has been a long-time goal of Virginians for High Speed Rail. The 2003 General Assembly agreed to study forming such an entity. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation was directed to investigate it and recommend

to the Governor and General Assembly a structure and means of obtaining revenues essential to the authority's purposes, and what powers and duties it could have. It is anticipated that legislation will be introduced in the 2004 legislative session to establish the Virginia Rail Transportation Development Authority. The Authority will be an essential structural and operational element of the state's rail development program.

- The position of Virginians for High Speed Rail has been to connect high speed rail to the Peninsula and southside of Hampton Roads. In March, 2003, Virginians for High Speed Rail requested of Governor Warner that \$150 million be earmarked in TEA 21 Reauthorization for rail corridor improvements (including increased frequency of trains and the purchase of modern trainsets) for the Washington to Richmond to Newport News (CSX) Corridor for Jamestown 2007.
- An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is currently underway to compare and contrast the CSX and 460 corridors for high speed rail, with recommendations for the best options. The EIS is a follow up to the report authorized by the State in 2000 to study the feasibility of high speed rail along the Route 460 corridor, linking south Hampton Roads with the planned Richmond-Washington High Speed Rail via Petersburg. The results of the study were positive for high speed rail along this route. It is anticipated the EIS will be completed in 2004.
- At the federal level, the Railroad Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (RIDE 21) – H.R. 2571, was introduced in 2003. The Act calls for a \$60 billion appropriation for high speed rail and rail infrastructure projects throughout the United States. This legislation allows states to select and design their own corridors, choose whether to use steel-wheel or Maglev trains, and also determine how and on what schedule they will finance and construct projects.
- Efforts of the Southeastern Economic Alliance have resulted in \$750,000 in federal funds to the FY 2004 Transportation Appropriations bill to study the feasibility of a high speed rail infrastructure connecting major southeastern cities to Washington, DC.

## **II. Technology Based Economic Development**

### **A. Goal: Support Hampton Roads' evolution into a major technology center.**

- The Partnership successfully advocated for the development of physical infrastructure necessary to nurture technology companies, especially broadband telecommunications infrastructure. In most instances, the Partnership played a catalytic role in convening relevant stakeholders to identify challenges to meeting the goal and helping to develop potential solutions that others are now implementing.
  - The Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP) brought together major government and higher education users of bandwidth to develop a Hampton Roads "Grid" that would support sharing of computer resources throughout the military, scientific and academic communities. The Partnership then worked with Old Dominion University in organizing the discussions into a formal working group. ODU has since taken ownership of the initiative and is bootstrapping it with in-house staff while pursuing federal funding.
  - The Partnership funded a study to develop a Hampton Roads network access point (NAP). A NAP is a key extension of the Internet that allows local access providers and businesses to connect and exchange data directly. Although discontinued due to lack of private sector support, the organizational agreements and framework developed by our consultant were provided to Old Dominion University and Norfolk State (RISE) for their respective GRID initiatives.
  - The Partnership's Smart Region project partnered with WHRO to secure a grant from Virginia's Center for Innovative Technology to implement a pilot program for sharing resources across school district boundaries. Called "Smart Learning," the system provides a variety of distance learning services to school districts including teacher training and executive briefings. WHRO has taken the project to a higher level through its recently awarded, \$3.2 million (\$638,000 per year for 5 years), No Child Left Behind Enhancing Education Through Technology Program grant to support teacher training activities. Again, the Partnership through its Smart Region initiative, served as a catalyst to initiate the Smart Learning project which was then implemented by a partner organization, WHRO.

- The Partnership has worked to increase regional technology commercialization activity first by evaluating existing capability and then developing a strategy for enhancing it. The HRP engaged the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) to develop a plan to foster more effective commercial application of intellectual property assets at the region's universities and labs. The resulting report, "Technology Commercialization Assessment, Phase 1: Needs Assessment," concluded "that no individual institution has the capability to drive economic development. Collectively, the technology transfer capability of the eight academic Hampton Roads Research Partnership (HRRP) members is more effective, but the collective effort still lacks the strength to have an extraordinary economic impact. If the capabilities of the eight HRRP members are combined and enhanced, they could become a key ingredient in a regional economic development model." The Partnership has since worked to implement the RTI recommendations through the efforts of the HRRP and, most recently, through the creation of the Hampton Roads Research Institute which would have as one of its core functions a shared and enhanced technology commercialization function.
  
- The Partnership has enhanced the region's entrepreneurial culture by helping to found and fund the Hampton Roads Technology Incubator (HRTI) which has multiple locations in the region. HRP has played an ongoing role in helping guide HRTI activities through involvement in the Hampton Roads Technology Council and the Incubator Advisory Board. The HRTI's 12 clients and 5 alumni employ approximately 110 people (full time) with annual revenues of over \$20M. Moreover, a recent study by the National Business Incubation Association placed HRTI in the 87<sup>th</sup> percentile of all incubators in terms of client revenue and job growth. In addition, the Incubator is involved in regional small business mentoring and angel investment activities.
  
- The Partnership contributed to the region's availability of venture capital by playing a catalytic role in organizing the preliminary meetings and discussions that led to the establishment of Invest Entrepreneurial Investments, a venture capital firm located in Virginia Beach.
  
- The Partnership pursued several strategies that helped to develop and maintain a competitive business climate by strengthening the region's high technology assets.
  - The Partnership established, funded and helped to guide the activities of the Hampton Roads Technology Council (HRTC), Hampton Roads' first and only region wide technology advocacy organization. The HRTC successfully promoted regional economic development by strengthening high technology

businesses through its networking, communication, education and advocacy programs. HRTC has become the public face of high technology in Hampton Roads and provided value through hundreds of functions, conferences and educational offerings.

- The Partnership helped to fund the NASA Aeronautics Support Team (NAST) to promote NASA aeronautics funding thereby strengthening NASA's Langley Research Center (LaRC). LaRC is one of the region's premiere technology assets and its closure could result in the loss of several thousand technology research jobs in the region. NAST has successfully defended against significant reductions in NASA aeronautics funding. The Partnership's funding was critical to NAST's success in its first three years. Currently, the Partnership supports NAST through the active participation of Lee Beach, Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Research Partnership, in the NAST Executive Committee.
- Through its Smart Region initiative, the Partnership facilitated communications from Hampton Roads' Congressional delegation in support of locating the Navy's consolidated Information Technology and Information Operations Command (NETWARCOM) in Hampton Roads rather than in one of the other locations under consideration.
- The Partnership helped to fund the "Route 199 Crossroads Development Study" that identified options for high value added economic development in the Monticello/Route 199 corridor of the Upper Peninsula. HRP staff also contributed to the Crossroads working group activities. The study has resulted in the Newtown project, the objective of which is to create a "Renaissance Downtown" for the Greater Williamsburg area. Crossroads/New Town, which recently marked the beginning of the construction phase of the project, has had several major successes including:
  - Establishing a Technology and Business Center at The College of William and Mary that assists technology business development.
  - Luring the Institute for Computational Genomics (INCOGEN) to settle in Crossroads' New Town. Relocation will eventually result in 60 new high-level jobs.
  - Establishing a Center for Excellence in Aging and Geriatric Health.
  - Developing a partnership between The College of William and Mary and Thomas Nelson Community College to

establish *Discovery Center of Greater Williamsburg* for workforce training and development.

- Establishing a new campus of Thomas Nelson Community College in James City County.
- The Partnership funded a study, "Marine Science as a Catalyst to Regional Technology Based Economic Development" that resulted in the Gloucester Point Gateway Project. In conjunction with the Center for Applied Marine Science and Technology and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Gloucester Point Gateway Committee was established to study, discuss, plan and propose a land use model to address the needs of the Gloucester Point area. The plan reflects a 20-year project to address such issues as tourism, planning, and marine science based economic development. A final report with proposed initiatives was submitted and approved by the Gloucester County Board of Supervisors in 2002.
- The Partnership formed and funded the Hampton Roads Research Partnership (HRRP) to increase the region's research capabilities by encouraging a more comprehensive and uniform collaboration among the region's colleges and universities. Through the HRRP, the HRP has:
  - Raised awareness of both the importance of research capabilities to the region's economic development and the challenges Hampton Roads faces in trying to compete against other regions with greater research activity. Through a series of papers and legislative recommendations, the Partnership has publicized the region's need to increase university based research and development (R&D) and advocated for additional state resources for the region's colleges and universities.
  - Developed partnerships among the universities and in some cases assisted in proposal writing to pursue several collaborative grant opportunities including a successful National Science Foundation Grant.
  - Developed a regional resources database with the names of 700 university scientists from throughout the region along with specialty and contact information. The database will enable scientists to more easily identify potential partners for multidisciplinary research projects; businesses to identify expertise for partnerships/assistance; and economic developers to identify expert assistance for high technology marketing efforts.

- Developed a business plan to create a Hampton Roads Research Institute that would be owned by the partner institutions and take the HRRP concept to a higher level by focusing on stimulating regional technology based economic development through:
  - The expansion of targeted collaborative research
  - Commercialization of intellectual property/business incubation
  - Engagement in regional economic development efforts
  - Promotion of collective capabilities both internally and external to the region.

**B. Goal: Develop Leadership To Champion The Strategic Plan.**

- The Partnership has worked through its Board Members and other regional leaders to champion various strategic plan initiatives. These include:
  - Hampton Roads Research Partnership and Research Institute
  - Center for Applied Marine Science and Technology
  - Venture Capital Initiative

**C. Goal: Determine the existence of industry clusters in Hampton Roads.**

- The Partnership identified and focused its technology based economic development efforts on areas where the region has a distinct competitive advantage – otherwise known as “clusters.”
  - The Partnership engaged the Research Triangle Institute to identify effective ways to leverage the region’s research and development assets to enhance regional economic development. The report identified near and long term opportunities in 12 different technology areas where efforts could be focused on using existing assets to build industry clusters. The Partnership has used the report in organizing its efforts in technology based economic development, particularly the Hampton Roads Research Partnership, and encouraged others to do the same.
  - The Partnership funded the “Marine Science as a Catalyst to Regional Technology Based Economic Development” to identify

Hampton Roads' key marine science and technology resources and determine a means to integrate them to encourage regional economic development and job creation. The study resulted in the creation of the Center for Applied Marine Science & Technology to develop a critical mass of marketable marine science technology coming out of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. The Center itself is now dormant due to lack of funding but its mission is continued by the College of William and Mary's Office of Economic Development.

- The Partnership funded a study to examine the region's Modeling and Simulation Industry assets and create a plan to utilize and develop those assets. The study was provided to the City of Suffolk and ODU's Virginia Modeling Analysis and Simulation Center (also in Suffolk) for consideration in their development efforts. Additionally, the plan recommended several broad goals, many of which the Partnership has pursued through implementing the various components of its strategic plan.
  - Create an entrepreneurial business environment
  - Provide leadership, particularly political leadership, in support of technology development (with an emphasis on Modeling and Simulation).
  - Establish diverse, creative strategies for funding start-up companies
  - Develop essential operating support structures needed to build modeling and simulation capability within the region, in particular, supporting R&D, business incubation and internet based information/communication/referral networks.
  
- The Hampton Roads Partnership contracted with Kaufman and Canoles Consulting for Mr. Barry DuVal (former Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade and HRP President) to prepare a report, "Overview of Economic Development Structure & Programs for Virginia & Hampton Roads," detailing a plan for improving relationships with state economic developers and providing strategic thinking with regard to economic development. The report served to offer Mr. DuVal's candid assessment on how the region could boost its technology and general economic development efforts. The final report was presented and distributed to the region's economic development leadership in June 2003.

### III. Ports

#### A. **Goal: Advance the major port growth issues – channel dredging, fourth terminal expansion, construction of the third crossing and the Virginia Intermodal Partnership Project.**

- The Partnership funded a full time port ombudsman to advance major growth issues to improve the port's competitiveness. The results and activities included:
  - State funding of the inbound channel dredging project was accelerated with the receipt of \$17,475,000 in 2000.
  - Secured state funding in the amount of \$2,400,000 to continue the Craney Island Expansion Study.
  - Secured state funding in the amount of \$75,000,000 to study the impact and feasibility of the third crossing.
  - Secured state funding in the amount of \$55,000,000 for the I-564 Connector to Hampton Boulevard.
  - Secured state funding in the amount of \$6.3 million for engineering design and analysis for the Hampton Boulevard/Terminal Boulevard grade crossing (funds were frozen due to the state budget crisis).
  - Secured state funding in the amount of \$24 million for Hampton Boulevard/Greenbrier Avenue rail grade crossing essential to the Intermodal Partnership Project (funds were frozen due to the state budget crisis).
  - Advocated for state funding in the amount of \$25 million to study improvements to US Route 460 between Petersburg and Chesapeake.
  - Advocated enactment of ballast water exchanges to avoid introducing invasive, non-native species in our channels, harbors and the Chesapeake Bay.

#### B. **Goal: Enhance maritime economic development**

- The Partnership provided funding for the Peninsula Alliance for Economic Development, Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance and the Virginia Port Authority, to make a unified regional

appeal to current port-users and prospects in targeted markets – Detroit, Michigan and Los Angeles, California.

- Eight economic development professionals from communities on the southside and Peninsula participated in each marketing trip.
- Seventy-five personal visits with prospects were made on these trips and prospects remain on a personal follow-up schedule.
- The initiative was showcased at a seminar entitled “Business Attraction Strategies” sponsored by the American Association of Port Authorities in Baton Rouge, Louisiana April 17 & 18, 2000.
- As a result of these efforts, other collaborative trips and activities between the Peninsula and Southside economic development agencies have occurred (i.e., technology-focused trip to Toronto)

**C. Goal: Communicate the needs of urban core cities**

- The Port Ombudsman successfully advocated for the enactment of statutes necessary for the increased assistance to the port host cities to offset negative impacts associated with a declining tax base.

**D. Goal: Bring attention to the importance of preserving the environment of the Elizabeth River while enhancing the economic growth of the port and its related industries.**

- The Partnership appropriated funds to the Elizabeth River Project “River Stars Program,” a grassroots program to involve the business sector in a community-wide initiative to restore the environmental health of the Elizabeth River. The River Stars Program is one of the most successful local pollution prevention and habitat restoration programs in Virginia. Since it began in 1997 the River Stars Program has documented the reduction of hazardous waste by more than 141 million pounds and restored or conserved more than 60 acres of urban habitat.

**E. Goal: Provide a forum for information exchange on port-related issues.**

- The Partnership hosted a strategic plan checkpoint meeting for Port Planning Committee members in 2001. The Hampton Roads Maritime Association continues to host periodic meetings on port-related issues for their membership, elected officials and other interested parties from the region and state.

**IV. Workforce Development**

**A. Goal: Foster the development of a regional workforce development system in Hampton Roads.**

- The Partnership has contributed to the development of a region-wide, systematic, employer-driven approach to workforce development. This regional approach to workforce development recognizes that we are one region, one economy and one workforce. Specifically, the Partnership provided leadership in assisting the communities of South and Western Hampton Roads to develop a vision for workforce development to comply with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The result was Opportunity, Inc. the regional workforce development organization for South/Western Hampton Roads. Partnership board members and its President have since been actively involved in discussions between both the Peninsula WIA board and Opportunity, Inc. to develop a plan for merging the two organizations into a single, regional workforce development board. Without The Hampton Roads Partnership's (HRP) leadership (and funding for both Opportunity, Inc and the Peninsula workforce effort) it is conceivable the region would have had three WIA boards (separate boards in South and Western Hampton Roads in addition to the Peninsula WIA board) and it is unlikely merger discussions would have proceeded as far as they have to this point.
- In the Fall of 1999 the Hampton Roads Partnership provided leadership and funding for a workforce survey of 10,000 regional employers. The survey, conducted by ERISS Corporation was a first attempt at defining workforce development needs and came at a time when it was necessary for the region to address pressing workforce development issues brought about by record low unemployment and a strong local economy. The survey information was used to create a database profiling occupations, wage rates, training and skills requirements, as well as training providers and is made available to the public via a website. The site provided relevant workforce information to employers, job seekers, and workforce development professionals.

Regional collaboration shown in the survey effort was noteworthy and underscored the regional character of the Hampton Roads Workforce.

**B. Goal: Support development of Hampton Roads' "emerging workforce."**

- The Partnership has pursued the goal of helping children to be born healthy and enter school ready to learn through the creation and funding of the Square One early childhood initiative. Square One has:
  - Monitored the region's progress in addressing early childhood issues through an annual outcomes report on the status of healthy births and school readiness for children aged 0-5 in Hampton Roads.
  - Increased the skills of the region's municipal early childhood services staff through a partnership with the Virginia Institute for Social Services which has provided training for 500 since 2001.
  - Increased the skills of the region's childcare professionals as administrator of the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) program – a program that provides scholarships to childcare providers for additional education and pay increases. The program has had 46 participants to date.
  - Raised awareness of early childhood issues, especially the importance of reading to children, through an active early literacy campaign.
  - Secured outside resources for local government early literacy efforts through the award of a 17 month, \$804,000 federal Early Learning Opportunities Grant (much of which was or will be sub granted out to several localities).
- By funding the Hampton Roads Community Learning Center Network (HRCLCN), the Partnership brought access to computer technology and training to individual citizens in underserved communities and helped to close the technology literacy gap, or "digital divide" in Hampton Roads. During the time it was funded by the HRP, HRCLCN:
  - Established, or became affiliated with, 33 Community Learning Centers in 15 Hampton Roads Communities (Peninsula and in South Hampton Roads).
  - Trained 3,700 children, adults and seniors (52% served were at or below the poverty level).

- Obtained over 1,400 donated computers to date for use in centers.
- Used its technical support facility, in which computers are refurbished for use in Community Learning Centers, to provide workforce training in repairing computers and peripherals.
- As part of the Partnership's concentration on the emerging workforce, we initiated a number of discussions and activities on K-12 and specifically as they related to career and technical education. Our rallying cry centered around the fact that more and more occupations require some kind of credentials, a certificate, license or some type of degree. Our conclusion to this was to formulate a model that focused on certifications. We worked with professionals to prepare the whitepaper, "High Stakes Accountability: Skill Certification in the New Economy." This was followed by a survey of current courses taught in the region's high schools, "Career and Technical Education in Hampton Roads' High Schools." Upon completion of this report, we began to express our goal of having more students presenting proof of credentials in skills needed by current and prospective employers. To provide details as to how this could be done we worked with a consultant to prepare "Hampton Roads Partnership Career and Technical Education Opportunities." It addressed the identified needs of :
  - Middle School Career and Technical Education Transition Skills
  - Employability Skills
  - Career and Technical Education Rigor

The Partnership is currently looking for someone, or an existing entity, to assist us in implementing what we, with the help of consultants and guidance of the region's superintendents, have developed.

## **V. Regionalism and Regional Cooperation**

### **A. Goal: Promote public awareness of the benefits of regionalism**

- The Partnership has worked to raise the visibility of regional issues and facilitate discussion about regional solutions by increasing public knowledge and awareness of the interdependence between our region's cities and counties. To assist in these activities the Partnership:

- Conducted a poll to determine public attitudes toward regionalism and regional cooperation (1999)
- Hosted two regionalism-focused workgroup meetings, one with the Mayors/Chairs, and the other with two members from each city council and county board.
- Appropriated funds supporting the Regionalism Studies Institute at Old Dominion University designed to study regional issues particularly those that promote unity within our region. The “State of the Region Report,” has been an annual project of the Institute since 2000. The reports tell us how we are doing as a region, the state of our regional health and implications of that information
- Co-hosted with the seventeen communities of Hampton Roads, a forum on regionalism with over two hundred participants featuring Dr. Ted Hershberg, Professor for Public Policy and Director of the Center for Greater Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Hershberg is a well-known lecturer and author of numerous works on issues relating to regional cooperation
- Encouraged the region’s local elected officials and the commissioners of Tidewater Regional Transit and Peninsula Transit to form Hampton Roads Transit, the first merged transit system in the country.
- Advocated the benefits of regional cooperation through a co-sponsored program with WHRO-TV entitled, *Hampton Roads, Inc.*, a televised simulated stockholder meeting that presented Hampton Roads as a corporation. The stockholders were the citizens of Hampton Roads. The program received public feedback on strategic issues such as transportation, workforce development and technology.
- Delivered numerous presentations focused on the benefits of regionalism to local councils and boards, civic leagues, professional associations and leadership classes throughout Hampton Roads.
- Met individually with eight print and broadcast media professionals to share information about the Hampton Roads Partnership and to seek advice and assistance regarding opportunities to spark public awareness and interest in matters of regional consequence.

**B. Goal: Foster cooperation and coordination between local governments whenever possible for the benefit of the region.**

- The Partnership has encouraged collaboration in our activities by:
  - Convening representatives from the local governments for a number of purposes: assist in determining the scope of consultants' engagements, receive, review and discuss the work of consultants, participation in the MAPS process, and discussion of certain aspects of other Partnership strategic issues including workforce development and transportation.
  - Establishing a committee of senior government staff members to identify the functions and services currently conducted by multiple localities. The purpose is to demonstrate we perform as a region in many respects now, to provide responses to criticisms of not acting together or charges of inefficiencies and to identify opportunities for increased joint activities. This committee will help guide us through the new strategic planning process.

**VI. Plight of the Cities**

**A. Goal: Enhance public awareness of the strength and importance of cities**

- The Partnership has used numerous opportunities to actively promote the value of cities as the core of regional competitiveness. To support the presentations the Partnership staff has done extensive research and has compiled information relative to the importance of cities. The most recent of many documents is *Condition and Needs of Virginia's Cities* (September 2003).

**B. Goal: Encourage a change in state policy as it relates to localities.**

- The Partnership has been an active advocate in promoting the need to address the mismatch of revenue capacity and service burdens between the state and local governments.
  - Numerous presentations have been made and articles written and published that have raised awareness, increased understanding and strengthened support for the need to address the mismatch of revenue capacity and service burdens between state and local governments. We believe this has had some influence in the assigned tasks and work by the commissions established by the Commonwealth --

Commission on Condition and Future of Virginia's Cities, Commission on Virginia's State and Local Tax Structure for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Joint Sub-Committee to Study and Revise Virginia's State Tax Code, and The Commission on Virginia's State Tax Code and the Streamlined Sales Tax Project Agreement Report. Unfortunately, no actions have been taken by the State to date regarding policy changes.

## **VII. Tourism Related Economic Development**

### **A. Goal: Encourage the development of tourism product.**

- The Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP) provided financial assistance to the Art of Glass. The Art of Glass exhibit was a unique cooperative endeavor between the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk and the Contemporary Art Center in Virginia Beach. By bringing world-class art glass to Hampton Roads, the Art of Glass helped create regional name recognition and promoted Hampton Roads as a tourism destination with varied activities and offerings. Over 100,000 people visited the two museums throughout spring and summer 1999.
- In an effort to leverage the success of the Art of Glass, the Partnership, the Chrysler Museum, Contemporary Arts Center and other regional museums sought to develop a sequel to the Art of Glass sometime during the 2003 Arts Festival. However, due to a lack of available funds the organizers decided not to pursue the event. Even so, the organizers built consensus for a sequel to Art of Glass and laid the groundwork for a future exhibit should funding become available.
- The HRP has been a major funding partner of the Virginia Arts Festival, helping it to bring in top artistic talent that attracts significant out of town visitorship, reduces tourism seasonality and brings national and international recognition for Hampton Roads. The Festival has received several National Awards and typically contributes several million in economic impact each year.
- The Partnership was a major sponsor of OpSail 2000, the national tall ship festival held in 2000 that made a stop in Hampton Roads. The festival, which was organized and coordinated through Norfolk Festevents, brought national recognition to Hampton Roads as well as significant out of town visitorship. A total of 1.6 million people attended the various offerings – 30% from out of town and 8% as first time visitors to Hampton Roads. Attendees spent a total of \$58 million throughout the region. The Partnership's financial support both before and after the festival helped make it a great success.

- Working again through Festevents, the Partnership has sought to leverage the momentum and relationships built during OpSail to develop a festival promoting the maritime image of Hampton Roads. The effort has resulted in:
  - A major motor and sail boat show involving dealers and distributors from throughout Hampton Roads coming to the Norfolk and Portsmouth waterfronts in September 2005.
  - A regional coordinating committee that continues to meet to plan for and coordinate regional events in relation to Celebration 2007.
- The HRP played an early, facilitative role in bringing representatives from around the region together to discuss creating a regional sports commission to attract amateur and non major league professional sporting events. The Commission is housed under the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and funded by the participating localities. This is in keeping with the Partnership's role as a catalyst promoting topics of regional importance. The commission has successfully attracted major events including the 2001 National AAU Junior Olympics (the region will also likely host again in 2006) and 2003 Summer National Senior Games. Each of these major events has had an economic impact of approximately \$30 million.
- The Hampton Roads Partnership has promoted regional tourism and quality of life through efforts to attract a major league sports team. The Partnership conducted three studies that show the region as an attractive market for major league sports (Professional Sports Market Analysis, Major League Baseball Stadium Feasibility Study and Professional Sports Corporate Market Analysis). It has also been involved in several past efforts to attract a hockey, baseball or basketball team. These activities have served to put Hampton Roads on the map of the major leagues (particularly Baseball). Most recently, the Partnership has assisted a current effort to attract a Major League Baseball team. The relationships built and data gathered through past Partnership efforts have helped the credibility of the current effort and ongoing HRP participation brings a valuable regional perspective to the discussions.
- The Hampton Roads Partnership funded a study quantifying the economic impacts of expanding the existing Virginia Marine Science Museum. The study showed significant increases in visitorship, economic benefits and taxes attributable to the proposed expansion. While the expansion was cancelled due to controversy over a proposed dolphin exhibit, the concept of museum expansion is still relevant and will eventually be necessary for it to remain competitive.

The Partnership funded study showed such an expansion was not only economically feasible but quite desirable and could serve as a baseline for future planning.

- The Partnership sought to build the region's national and international image and recognition by attracting a major, privately owned, tourist attraction, or "icon." Consultants Nottingham & Associates and J.B. Research Company met with regional tourism professionals to develop strategic thinking to plan for such an icon. The group's findings were as follows:
  - For a region its size, Hampton Roads has a rich mix of national and regional destination attractions.
  - The region has many strengths and assets to build upon. To build on these strengths, the region should develop a tourism development plan that includes the following:
    - Regional research.
    - Regional marketing and public relations.
    - Regional branding, identification, and way finding.
    - Coordination between economic and tourism development.
    - Regional customer service.
    - Targeted business investment.
- The Partnership funded a one-time allocation to the Virginia Air & Space Center (VASC) to support the Aviation World's Fair. The Aviation World's Fair was to be held at the Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport in 2003 and the VASC was to market the Fair through a variety of means to showcase our region's role in aviation. Although the World's Fair did not come to Hampton Roads, the Partnership's allocation was used to acquire a replica of the 1903 Wright Flyer and develop a Wright Brothers Exhibit, both of which remain on display in the Air & Space Center.

**B. Goal: Support the Marketing of Hampton Roads as a Premier Tourism Destination**

- The Partnership has helped to build regional identity, name recognition and image as a premier tourism destination by developing and launching a dynamically-driven, regional tourism web site ([www.visithamptonroads.com](http://www.visithamptonroads.com)). Unlike the various attraction or locality based sites serving Hampton Roads, the Partnership's is a truly regional website that captures the tremendous diversity of tourism assets in Hampton Roads.

- Attractions that are difficult to find can leave a bad impression on the traveler. In response to requests from several local communities, the Partnership funded an assessment of the adequacy of existing tourism signage that has provided a roadmap for developing comprehensive, easy to understand signage to enhance the tourist experience in Hampton Roads. The Partnership retained the Lees/Dawson Associates to complete the study which came to the following conclusions:
  - Cohesive directional information between the interstate and tourist destinations works, to some degree, only for major destinations.
  - Traffic to most second and third level attractions is not effectively directed via guide signs after leaving interstate highways.
  - On local roads...there are conspicuous gaps in the flow of directional information between the interstate system and final tourism destinations.

The final report was presented to regional tourism and transportation officials for their review and implementation. Virginia Beach tourism officials continue to express interest subject to funding availability. Hampton tourism officials have been working with state legislators and the Virginia Department of Transportation to fund the necessary interstate signage improvements. In addition, a Hampton stakeholder group has begun meeting to implement local signage improvements which they anticipate to be addressed over the next two years.

## **VIII. Military Partnering**

### **A. Goal: Seek opportunities to connect the military and the private sector**

- The Partnership successfully completed a study, conducted by the Urban Land Institute, for the conversion of St. Juliens Creek Naval Base to civilian use as a regional business/industrial park. The study was undertaken on behalf of the cities of Chesapeake and Portsmouth which continue to show interest in developing St. Juliens Creek. Although currently at a standstill due to lack of redevelopment funds, St. Juliens remains an active project for the City of Chesapeake which has fielded requests from private sector developers interested in the property.

## **IX. Metropolitan Area Projects Strategies (MAPS)**

- Through the Metropolitan Area Projects Strategies (MAPS) initiative, the Partnership sought to provide a unique vehicle for all of the municipalities of Hampton Roads to benefit from infrastructure that they would be unable to afford individually. This was to be accomplished by:
  - Identifying projects that would enhance the region's competitiveness.
  - Identifying a revenue source limited in duration.
  - Pursuing a region wide referendum to approve the revenue source.

The Partnership solicited and received 14 infrastructure projects for funding from project sponsors throughout Hampton Roads and identified a sales tax increase as the potential revenue source. All 17 Hampton Roads localities committed to providing a senior staff member as part of a "MAPS Evaluation Committee." The Committee reviewed and prioritized the projects submitted for funding, however, in December 2001, the Partnership's Executive Committee decided to pursue the transportation referendum in lieu of a MAPS referendum. Despite not moving forward on MAPS, the effort:

- Helped lay the groundwork for the transportation referendum. The transportation referendum was structured similar to MAPS in significant respects. Moreover, transportation issues were discussed and examined as part of MAPS which put the region in a considerably better position to pursue the transportation referendum than it would have been in otherwise.
- Exhibited a new way of doing business as it opened the region's leaders to the concept of pursuing, regionally, initiatives strategically important to Hampton Roads' well being and paying for such initiatives from a regional revenue source.