

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 internationally 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:
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ABSTRACT

Title:	2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy “ <i>Vision Hampton Roads</i> ”
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Subject:	Multi-Year Planning and Development Program
Date:	Adopted by Unanimous Resolution on February 19, 2010
Regional Planning Organizations:	Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP) President & CEO: E. Dana Dickens, III Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Chairman of the Board: Bruce C. Goodson, Chair, Board of Supervisors, James City County Executive Director/Secretary: Dwight L. Farmer
Source of Copies:	Hampton Roads Partnership 430 World Trade Center, Norfolk, Virginia 23510 Download at http://VisionHamptonRoads.com
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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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Regional Summary

WHY WE NEED THIS PLAN.

Hampton Roads is a region that depends on its maritime-rich geography including all the benefits 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 which began in late 2007 has also placed a strain on our economy with reductions in workforce through layoffs, transfers or closing within a number of large firms such as Hampton’s TeleTech (532), West Corp. call center (450) and Alcoa Howmet (375); Norfolk’s Cox Auto Trader (170), CooperVision (570) and USAA (436); Virginia Beach’s Verizon Call Center (450). 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 impending decommissioning of an aircraft carrier, the threatened movement of an aircraft carrier group to a new homeport and closure of the Oceana Naval Air Station, all place strains on the region’s economy.

**Hampton Roads has many great assets;
we must acknowledge their related vulnerabilities.**

B. Sponsorship

WHO FACILITATES THE PROCESS.

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.

HRP and HRPDC facilitate the process; citizens will drive it, though.

C. Approach

HOW WE GET WHERE WE NEED TO BE.

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 to create a plan achievable within a five (5) year horizon.

Economists from Old Dominion University (ODU)'s College of Business and Public Administration and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission drafted and reviewed a preliminary Strength /Weakness /Opportunities /Threat (SWOT) analysis with the Strategy Committee and each of the Sub-committees. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Hampton Roads region were indentified from background data already available from work done by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and the Annual Forecast and State of the Region Reports provided by the ODU Forecasting Project (<http://bpa.odu.edu/forecasting/index.shtml>).

Opportunities and Threats were proposed by members of the Sub-committees and the Strategy Committee during meetings held throughout the summer, fall and winter of 2009. The results of this process are provided in **Section IV. Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities.**

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(in the early 1990s)*
- *Regional Competitiveness Program*
- *2004- A Call to Action*
- *2007 Strategic Plan and Metrics*
- *Hampton Roads Performs*

**The fundamental difference between this effort and past plans is:
we are beginning with an implementation plan in place.**

D. Themes

BROAD ISSUES EMERGED.

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
- 21st 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

Those regions that thrive will be the ones cultivating innovation, truly educate their workforce, invest in infrastructure and create quality places.

E. Goal

WHAT WE WILL BECOME.

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 internationally as a region fueled by
Innovation, Intellectual and Human Capital, Infrastructure and a Sense of Place.**

F. Implementation

WHY THIS PLAN WILL WORK.

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 CEDS Strategy Committee, in tandem with the Hampton Roads Partnership and 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 an “Operations-Tactical Component.”

The Hampton Roads Partnership will serve as the Program Manager for both the “Strategic” and “Operations-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, regional identity

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 “Operations-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 “Operations-Tactical Component” of the *Vision* will be driven by these Task Forces:

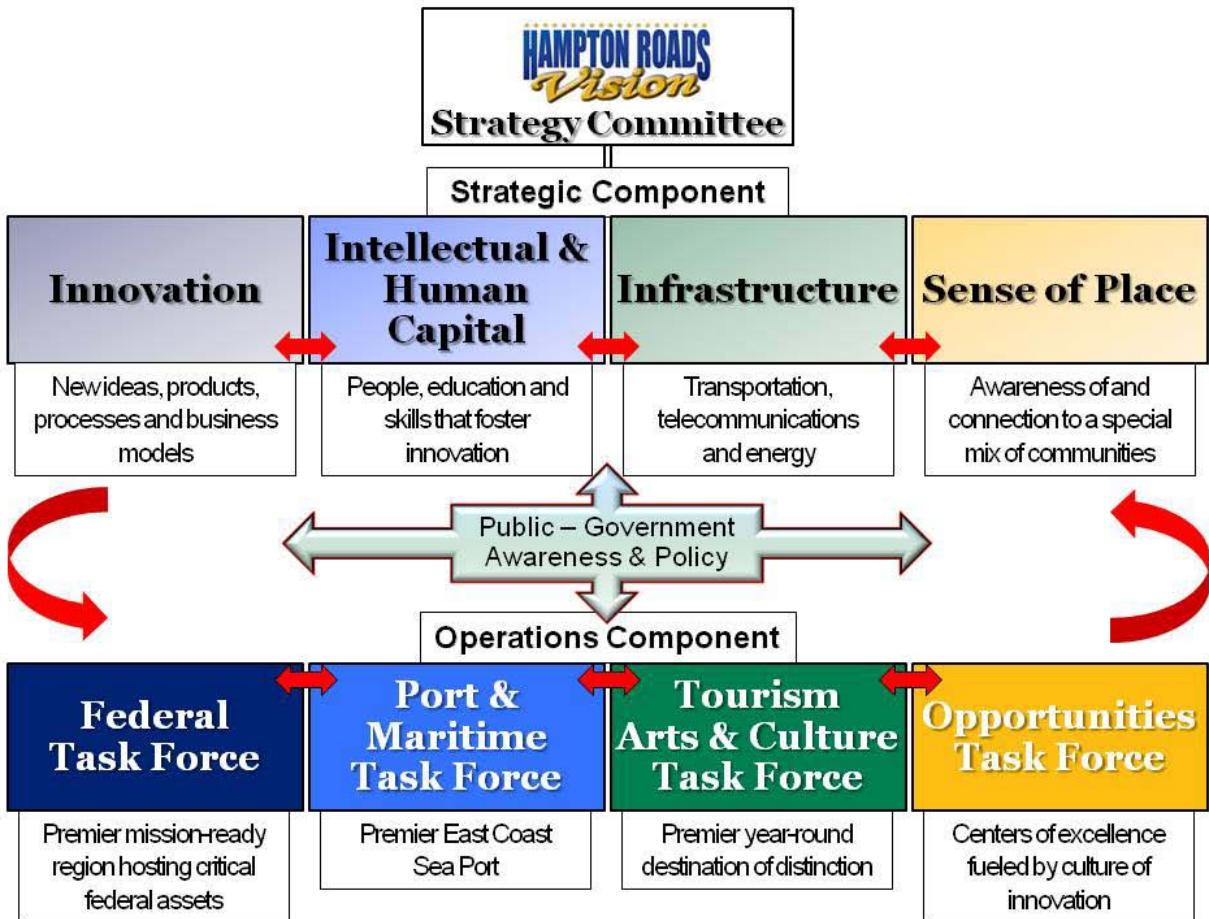
- Federal
- Port / Maritime
- Tourism / Arts & Culture
- Opportunities

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

To emphasize, 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 Organizational Chart that follows depicts the relationship between the Partnership and the various organizations that will play leadership roles within the strategic and operations-tactical implementation plans.

**We will be more successful when the entire region is aligned
to achieve the goal and objectives of *Vision Hampton Roads*.**



G. Performance Measures

HOW WE MEASURE PROGRESS.

In February of 2009, the Partnership launched the web-based *Hampton Roads Performs* (<http://HamptonRoadsPerforms.com>), a regional resource for data that shows how the region is performing on thirty-six (36) key indicators, including areas featured in the 2007 *Strategic Plan and Metrics* document. The site will be used as a performance measuring tool showing the impact of the CEDS, also known regionally as *Vision Hampton Roads*, implementation.

Seven categories of indicators, aligned with those reported on the state's data resource *Virginia Performs*, measure progress related to quality of life: Economy, Education, Health and Family, Public Safety, Natural Resources, Transportation, and Government and Citizens.

Quality of life indicators answer the question, "How is the Hampton Roads Region Doing?" and the results are used to compare Hampton Roads to state and national averages, other regions within Virginia, and peer metropolitan areas outside of Virginia.

The **Hampton Roads Scorecard** gives a quick snapshot of the progress the region is making in all seven categories. (<http://hamptonroadspersons.org/extras/Scorecard/HR-Scorecard.htm>) These measures will be reviewed and discussed by the CEDS Strategy Committee at every meeting. Data is updated year-round, as available.

For the purposes of *Vision Hampton Roads*, we will track those ten (10) indicators in the Economy Category of *Hampton Roads Performs*:

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;** and
10. **Workforce Quality.**

H. Public Participation

HOW WE ENGAGE CITIZENS.

The Public Comment Period (January 5 to February 5, 2010) provided invaluable updates in finalizing this initial *Vision* plan. Total number of respondents was 446. A total of 363 respondents (81.4%) provided comments via the online survey; the remaining 83 responded via email, letter and social media.

The online survey used as a primary means to collect public comment was by no means considered scientific research or statistical analysis. Public comment by its very nature requires people to self-select their participation. Our results, however, are representative of a population interested in economic development.

The Public Comment Period provided invaluable updates in finalizing the initial *Vision* plan. Based upon responses, email was overwhelmingly the best way to disseminate the survey link and generate public participation (57.0%) followed by word-of-mouth at a distant second (12.1%). Based upon comments received, future survey questions will need to be formatted for clarity and understanding in order that “underserved” demographics will be better represented.

Some citizens were less than impressed and thought *Vision* was unremarkable. A clear majority, however, embraced this new *Vision* process and relished the opportunity to participate. Several citizens who took the time to read and review *Vision Hampton Roads* have volunteered their energy and expertise with implementation.

“I want to be part of the solution and continued success of Hampton Roads,” said one new volunteer.

The breadth and depth of feedback was such that individual responses would be impossible for each. Comments which affect the final document are singled out in the Addendum entitled Public Responsiveness Summary, and all comments are included at the end of the same summary as a permanent record of *Vision Hampton Roads*.

Demographics

WHO AND WHAT IS HAMPTON ROADS.

For a relatively young region (median age is 35.2), our respondents trended a bit older; 74.3% of respondents are aged 45 and over. With a higher than national average African American

population (33%), much work needs to be done for future engagement; this public comment period only attracted 9.2% of African Americans to participate.

The majority of citizens providing public comment were highly educated (79.6% college graduate or above), in a higher socio-economic status (42.3% have household incomes over \$100,000), and have lived in the region most, if not all, of their lives (73.9%).

However, regional awareness, especially of assets such as the Ports, Federal and Military, Tourism/Art & Culture and the vital role they play in our economy and as quality of life factors, is still a point of contention and highlights the need to further define who and what is Hampton Roads.

Themes

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT.

A recurrent and resounding theme from citizens to accomplish the *Vision* and see results was: “Get the local governments, industry, state and federal government to work together like every other metropolitan area....One simple phrase E pluribus unum (Out of many, one) seems to apply here,” said one respondent. Several respondents went so far as to suggest consolidation of municipalities if not, at the least, government services.

“We need leadership. The political ‘leaders’ have often shown that they are mired in partisanship and short-sightedness. Our other community leaders have to pick up that slack and make a difference. Our various news publications and TV/radio stations need to help with this change...,” added one resident.

And via our social media platforms, another resident added, “The old expression ‘United we stand, divided we fall’ comes to mind. So does ‘Greater than the sum of its parts.’ Except, right now, from where I stand, we feel like stray parts strewn across a garage. What I like about the Hampton Roads Partnership is they feel like the organization trying to put it all together.”

According to a majority of respondents, transportation and education are the most important parts of the Hampton Roads economy not receiving a priority status in the *Vision*. It was even suggested to merge related Strategies and Actions from each of the four Objectives into their own Task Forces.

Feedback received also helped with definition of terms and initiatives in the final *Vision* document.

Respondents on the whole were positive in their support of *Vision* but cautioned that this was “not a blank check” for raising taxes but rather encouraged use of creative ideas from a multitude of resources to move the region forward as a self-supporting, balanced, well-managed and growing regional economy.

“While I agree strongly with this report, resource constraints must be considered, and priorities set,” said one citizen.

Ideas

WHAT IS NEW.

Ideas for regional improvements included both the unique and the tried-and true; for example:

- holding a marine-themed World’s Fair,

- increasing telecommuting,
- promoting in-home businesses,
- increasing telecommuting,
- applying new truck designs,
- phasing out of the business professional occupational license (BPOL) tax and the machine and tool tax at the state and local level,
- producing ethanol using cattail rhizomes,
- providing every high school student with a laptop loaded with digital books,
- mitigating congestion to enable more bike paths,
- privatizing rest stops,
- garnering energy savings and protecting the environment by painting roofs white and planting roof-top gardens,
- expanding Norfolk International Airport to compete as a regional hub and add direct West Coast passenger air service,
- starting direct-to-family consumer goods programs,
- improving access to local agriculture and aquaculture farm products,
- utilizing NASA's wind tunnels with NASCAR and Formula 1™ racing,
- providing free education via distance learning/computer-based training in fields with high demand for workers, and
- coordinating between economic development agencies and increasing resources to make a national and international impact.

Intellectual and Human Capital

WHAT ABOUT BRAIN DRAIN.

Building and retaining a creative class, young professionals and “brain drain” were often referenced.

“I would love to see our city cultivating reasons for its own youth to be vitally involved in the city and wanting to stay and build a future here,” said one citizen.

Another respondent suggested some of the drawbacks of the region that need to be addressed in order to help mitigate migration away from Hampton Roads include green spaces, recycling, bike friendliness, youth activities and music scene.

“Given the diverse population that lives in Hampton Roads area, especially with military imports, how come we don’t have a more diverse and [international] cultural scene?” another pointed out.

On retaining exiting military personnel here in the region, one citizen commented, “we should make an effort to determine what personnel can easily re-purpose their skills to fill needed jobs in, i.e., engineering, solar energy plant construction, safety, preventive medicine, wellness, other medical skills. We should determine what skills do not convert efficiently to necessary civilian jobs and let them go.”

“Adding jobs is great, but if no one wants to live here, it won’t matter how many jobs there are,” warned another concerned citizen.

Sense of Place

WHERE WE ARE.

Nearly 22% of all public comment respondents weighed in on **Fort Monroe** as not only a regional threat but an opportunity as well, and, therefore, the SWOT analysis was updated. Ninety-six citizens recommended that *Vision Hampton Roads* embrace a vision for Fort Monroe, as it is being vacated by the Army in 2011, as a self-sustaining, pays-its-own-way Fort Monroe National Park. According to more than one citizen, Fort Monroe could qualify as a World Heritage Site, an international designation of a place of either cultural or physical significance, and as a potential addition to the Historic Triangle, i.e., the Historic Quadrangle, to add Civil War stories and thereby completing the full story of America's formation.

When evaluating the best things about living in Hampton Roads, a wide range of attributes were noted involving our geography and environment as important, i.e., the scenic beauty, recreational and cultural activities but also a sense of community and regional identity.

“Get a vision of the region as a perfect youth, middle age and retirement community; playground for all ages and keep our population healthy and fit,” added one resident.

However, when evaluating the **biggest challenges** to living in Hampton Roads, transportation was far and away the primary point of contention followed by job opportunities. Education was a distant third. Lack of regional spirit and cooperation as pertains to government were also noted in the write-in comments.

“We are not taking advantage of the potential we have in Hampton Roads as a region. Individual governments are not willing to give up control and we have suffered because of that,” said one citizen. And more than one respondent asked “what is our region’s business identity?”

“What is stopping us from getting an NFL franchise in Hampton Roads? Suffolk or Chesapeake are the logical places for a stadium. Much smaller markets have NFL teams and thus national recognition...why can't we pull off a major league team in any sport?” added yet another citizen.

Economic Sectors

WHAT ABOUT BUSINESS IDENTITY.

When ranking the economic sectors that should receive priority attention, there were two distinct tiers: the first included the **port and maritime business, quality of life improvements and the military** while the second included **high-tech, small business and the environment**.

However, most additional comments as to ranking economic sectors in this section related to, first and foremost, **transportation** as a missing element:

- “Transportation and connectivity is the key to being competitive.”
- “Transportation is missing – it relates to quality of life improvements, tourism, port, etc. We must have strong transportation for all of this to work.”
- “The *Vision* is going to increase traffic from both sides [of the harbor] and this will increase congestion. Have to explore other transportation avenues.”

And then, secondly, pointed to **education** as a key economic sector:

- “Education should be the most important. A committed and sincere investment in education will inevitably lead to an increase in everything else. An educated community makes for a more critical thinking, efficient and productive society.”
- “Make it easier for students to dream about going to college and earn a degree that will help them be productive citizens of Hampton Roads.”
- “Cultural appreciation derives from solid educations. You can't impose culture on people who lack the education to appreciate it.”

Entrepreneurism within economic sectors was a common theme as well. “Support for high-growth, innovation-based business. Note: this is not a ‘Small Business’ issue. Studies have consistently shown that approximately 75% of new job growth in the U.S. comes from high-growth entrepreneurial ventures that start as ‘small businesses’ but are designed to grow,” said one respondent.

GOAL

When rating the goals of the *Vision*, over one-half of citizens responding (51.7%) ranked the overall goal as the appropriate one. After reviewing all comments collectively and recognizing the preponderance of regional awareness issues, the Strategy Committee opted to add “internationally” to the overall regional goal to better define the recognition sought:

“Hampton Roads will be recognized internationally as a region for centers of excellence fueled by Innovation, Intellectual and Human Capital, Infrastructure and Sense of Place.”

OBJECTIVES ranked as “strongly agree” include the following top three (3):

1. Hampton Roads will be recognized as a region for Centers of Excellence fueled by a culture of innovation and economic opportunities. (53.9%)
2. Hampton Roads will be the premier East Coast port. (53.7%)
3. Hampton Roads will be the premier year-round destination of distinction and appeal to travelers while significantly increasing quality of life for residents by leveraging the variety of attractions, arts and culture, venues and performances and recreational opportunities that exist in the region. (50.0%)

STRATEGIES ranked as “strongly agree” include the following top three (3):

1. Achieve an adequate transportation system to enhance regional mobility, facilitate ease of travel from outside the state and allow for full participation in the diversity of the Hampton Roads tourism and arts and culture experience upon arrival. (73.5%)
2. Hampton Roads will be a region of excellence for clusters of cutting edge technology-based business innovation and education. (60.2%)
3. Maintain the Port as an economic engine for the Hampton Roads region, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Nation. (55.7%)

ACTIONS

More focus on technology was another recurring theme with comments such as:

- “How about ensuring that all Hampton Roads residents have online access to job applications, communication tools, community news, etc?”
- “Technology is the future for Hampton Roads; we could easily become the Silicon Valley of the east.”

One citizen tackled the adequate transportation issue through technology as “wiser use of existing infrastructure. This implies encouraging and assisting with more telecommuting. Providing more fiber optic networks and capabilities is cheaper and more environmentally friendly than roads.”

Of the 65 Action items listed, nine (9) ranked above 50% as “strongly agree.” This may help the Strategy Committee to prioritize. They follow:

1. Address **transportation** by roads and the constant congestion of the area and continue to investigate the possibility of additional Hampton Roads Harbor crossings. (78.2%)
2. Address **educational needs** for a successful 21st century workforce. (70.0%)
3. Provide adequate surface connections (road and rail) to enhance regional mobility and access to inland markets, recognizing **infrastructure** improvements create jobs and wages today. (69.7%)
4. Address **transportation** by rail with the expansion of the current light rail project to continue to the oceanfront of Virginia Beach and encourage the possibility of higher speed rail to facilitate travel from the Northeastern corridor through to Southside Hampton Roads. (68.9%)
5. Provide adequate surface connections (road and rail) to enhance regional mobility and access to federal facilities and to Washington DC, recognizing **infrastructure** improvements create jobs and wages today. (66.7%)
6. Grow our 21st century workforce by including the knowledge, skills and capabilities of key Hampton Roads technologies in the curriculum of all pre-K, K-12 and higher **education** institutions. (64.5%)
7. Support **transportation** policies including investment in transit and programs that will promote more compact land use. (61.6%)
8. Leverage the strong R&D capabilities (wind tunnels, aerodynamics, advanced materials, bio-algae fuels and photovoltaics in NASA and regional universities) and mid-Atlantic coastal location near a power grid connection point to become a **Coastal Energy Center of Excellence** that studies and develops renewable energy sources. (60.3%)
9. Continue to enhance the current culture and movement that reinforces relationships with **Hampton Roads communities and organizations in the region to work together** on mutual goals. (54.9%)

MEASURES

As for indicators to measure the progress of *Vision Hampton Roads*, the only metrics to gain a “strongly agree” from over one-half of the respondents were:

- 1. Workforce Quality**, annual percent change of higher education or technical degrees awarded (57.9%), and
- 2. Employment Growth**, annual percent change of jobs added (53.8%).

One resident suggested adding a “Happiness scale, degrees of social isolation among people” with the rationale that “happy people are productive people.” And another said, “Good jobs make a good community.”

“We need more opportunities like this to voice our opinion for the future of Hampton Roads,” said another.

Citizen’s Conclusion

“As you move forward with this activity, make certain you are seeing these visions through the eyes of the different generations, i.e., k-12, college age, new career starters, mature family builders, and retiring people. Each group's vision is affected by their current life needs,” cautioned one resident.

“*Vision Hampton Roads* is a comprehensive, objective and very credible document. If it does in fact increase momentum to think and act regionally, its value - and impact - to the area's economic vitality and quality of life will be tremendous. So, to the many organizations and citizens involved in the Strategic and Tactical teams, here's a vote of confidence, a note of thanks, and a word of encouragement,” added one respondent.

Overall

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 as we...

... *think, live and act regionally.*

